IRISH MEMORIES

BY

R. BARRY O'BRIEN

IRENE GREENE OWEN ANDREWS.

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R. BARRY O'BRIEN

AUTHOR OF "THE LIFE OF CHARLES STEWART PARNELL," "LORD RUSSELL OF KILLOWEN," "THOMAS DRUMMOND," ETC.

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PLANS

KING BRIAN

THE statement may seem incredible, but is, nevertheless, true ; we have more authoritative information about King Brian than about Sarsfield. From the materials at our command we can get nearer to the great monarch of the eleventh century than to the gallant soldier of the eighteenth. We have Brian's story from one who knew him, and who was familiar with the events of his life. "The War of the Gaedhil with the Gaill" (if one who unfortunately cannot read the work in the original may express an opinion on the point) is, assuredly, among the most interesting Irish MSS. that have come down to us. The author was the secretary of King Brian, and, doubtless, was either an eye-witness of many of the transactions he describes, or heard of them from those who spoke at first-hand. He was, of course, an ardent admirer of his chief, and it may be writes at times in language of extravagant eulogy ; but there is no reason for

doubting that the narrative substantially gives a true picture of the times, and of the man. It must also be borne in mind that the story told by MacLiag—the name of the author—is corroborated by the Norse Saga Burnt Njal. Indeed, I once heard a distinguished British authority say that nothing could better show what a real historic personage Brian was than the mention made of him, and the high tribute paid to his abilities and virtues, in the Saga in question. Dr. Todd, in his translation of "The War of the Gaedhil with the Gaill," relates a curious anecdote to show the reliability of MacLiag's narrative. In the account given by MacLiag of the Battle of Clontarf he states that the full tide in Dublin Bay on the day of the battle (April 23, 1014) coincided with sunrise, and that the returning tide in the evening aided considerably in the defeat of the enemy. To test the accuracy of this statement, and, by testing it, to gauge the general accuracy of the work, Dr. Todd submitted the following problem to the Rev. Samuel Haughton, of Trinity College, Dublin, without stating the object of the inquiry: "What was the hour of high water at the shore of Clontarf, in Dublin Bay, on the 23rd of April, 1014?" Dr. Haughton communicated the particulars of his calculation to the Royal Irish Academy, showing that the full

tide on the morning of April 23, 1014, did coincide with sunrise, as stated by MacLiag.

In studying the history of Brian many reflections occur to one. It is well known that at the period Ireland was divided into four provincial kingdoms — Ulla (Ulster), Mumhain (Munster), Laighin (Leinster), and Connacht (Connaught). Over the provincial kings there was a supreme king called the Ardri, who reigned at Tara, and possessed as his special domain the territory of Meath. Unfortunately there was no national life; each provincial king thought only of his own province. He had no country beyond it. The allegiance which he paid to the Ardri was merely nominal. There was no supreme authority, no central government; provincial kings attacked each other; tribe warred against tribe, and the general good was made subservient to local interests and local passions. Brian was, so far as I know, the first man who made the power of the Ardri real. He was the first man who seems to have had any conception of national government. He put the provincial kings in their place. He made his authority supreme. This is all the more remarkable when we consider how imperfectly the idea of national government was developed at the period. There is another fact to be noted. At the time—and indeed at later times

—Irish chiefs rarely followed up their victories. They fought a battle, won it, and then rested on their laurels. It appeared as if they thought that the battle was the beginning and the end of the business. In this respect, as in many other respects, Brian was ahead of his age. He scarcely fought a battle which he did not win; he never won a battle which he did not follow up; he never defeated an enemy whom he did not crush. His contemporaries, and unfortunately many Irish chiefs who came after him, were, in the main, warriors, and warriors only. He was a warrior and a statesman.

The want of national cohesion made Ireland a prey to the Norse pirates who swept down upon the country in the ninth and tenth centuries. The invaders were, no doubt, beaten in many a pitched battle, but their power upon the whole remained unbroken. They settled in Waterford, Limerick, and Dublin, and thence made incursions into the interior, spreading ruin and havoc around. A united and organised Ireland could have easily reduced them to submission. But mere local efforts, however gallant and however successful (as they were eminently in the reign of Malachy I., 846), must always fail to achieve great national results; and so, despite many defeats and disasters, the power of the Norsemen remained unbroken until Brian came to

infuse national life into the country, and to weld the people together in one grand movement against the fierce and barbarous invaders.

Brian was born at Kincora in 941. Twenty-three years after his birth (964) his brother, Mahon, became King of Munster. The Norsemen held Munster in thrall. Ivar, the Dane, reigned in Limerick. Danes ruled in Cork and Waterford. After many struggles, Mahon was forced to take refuge in the fastnesses of Clare. Thence he issued from time to time to attack the foe. But his efforts were unavailing. Ultimately he made a peace with Ivar, which still left the Danes supreme in Munster. Brian would be no party to this peace. With a faithful band of followers he went into the wilds and woods, and there held his ground; falling now and again upon the enemy, as occasion offered, sometimes beating them and sometimes being beaten by them, but always keeping his flag flying. After this desultory warfare had gone on for a space Brian urged Mahon to take the field once more. The brothers met. Mahon said it was hopeless to fight the Danes; they were invincible. But Brian did not take this view. He denied that they were invincible. He had fought them often, and beaten them often. But even if they were invincible it were better to die on the battlefield than bow

beneath the yoke of the stranger. The young orator prevailed. Mahon consented to call the Dalcassians together—for Mahon and Brian sprang from the race of Dalgas—to consider the situation. In 968 the Dalcassians met in council, and with one voice, declared for war. They encamped at Cashel, and thence made inroads into the enemies' settlements. Ivar was surprised and enraged, and joined by two traitors—Molloy of Desmond, and Donovan of Hy Carbery—he determined to march with a great army to Cashel, and to destroy the Dalcassians. But Mahon—who, we may take it, was inspired by Brian throughout this campaign—did not await the coming of the foe; he set out to meet them half way. A great battle was fought at Sulcoit (968) (a place which Mr. Joyce—to whom all students of Irish history are deeply indebted for his admirable books—locates as near the present Limerick Junction).

There is a brief description of this battle given in "The War of the Gaedhil with the Gaill," which I shall quote:—

"When the Dalcassians arrived at Sulcoit the foreigners came against, and to meet them, and there was a fierce, bloody, crimson, violent, rough, unsparing, implacable battle fought between them. They were from sun-rise till mid-day striking and slaughtering each

other. However, the foreigners were at length routed, and they fled to the ditches, and to the valleys, and to the solitudes, and to the great sweet flowery plains."

But the victors did not give them breathing time. "They were followed," continues the narrative, "by (the Dalcassians) quickly and rapidly throughout the great plain, who killed and beheaded from that time until evening." Nor did the victors pause until they reached Limerick itself. The battle was continued in the streets, and did not cease until the Danish force was annihilated. Then the Dalcassians burned the town. The Danes took refuge in Scattery Island, and in other islands in the Shannon. But Brian and Mahon did not yet pause. They followed up their great victory, and defeated Ivar in a series of pitched battles, ultimately breaking his power in Munster, and driving him from the land. Then they turned their arms against Donovan and Molloy, chastised them, and took hostages for their future behaviour. Afterwards Mahon reigned for many years in peace in Munster.

But Molloy and Donovan remained traitors to the end. They plotted against Mahon. They kept up communication with Ivar, who had fled to Wales, and who, finally, returned to Ireland, taking up his quarters in Scattery Island. In 976, Mahon, suspecting no

treachery, visited Bruree, Donovan's home, on the invitation of Donovan. Donovan gave him up to Molloy, who was in league with Ivar, and he was basely assassinated in the Pass of Barnaderg. The news flew quickly to Kincora, and found Brian ready for vengeance. He first fell on Ivar. He sent a force to Scattery Island, destroyed the Danish settlement, and slew the Danish King. Then he advanced into Hy Carbery, slew Donovan and captured the traitor's stronghold. Next he turned on Molloy, fought a pitched battle in the Pass of Barnaderg (978)—the very spot where Mahon had been murdered—routed Molloy's army, and left Molloy slain by the hand of Murrough, Brian's son, then a lad in his teens—with 1,200 men dead upon the field. He attacked the Decies of Waterford, who were in close alliance with the Danes, reduced them to submission, and ravaged the country to the Port of Waterford itself. He subdued Ossory, and forced the Gillapatricks to give hostages. He marched into Leinster and received homage from its King. Thus within eight years (984) of the assassination of Mahon, Brian was not only King of Munster, but he was King of the whole southern portion of Ireland.

He was a great man and a strong personality, and he had the defects of his qualities.

He could not brook a rival. He could not rest content with the sovereignty of a province; and I think it is clear that, from an early date, he contemplated the sovereignty of the whole island.

We read that he sailed up the Shannon in command of three hundred boats and overran Meath, and that he sent a force into Connaught to make his power felt in that province. It is no wonder that the Ardri, Malachi II., himself a famous man (who had become High King in 980, and who had beaten the Danes on many a field), should have taken alarm at the operations of the King of Munster. He made an effort to enforce his authority over Brian, but in vain; and finally (in 998) he and Brian met on the shores of Lough Ree and agreed to divide the sovereignty of Ireland between them: Malachi to be High King of the North, Brian to be High King of the South—an arrangement which seems to have been received by the whole country with infinite joy. But peace, unhappily, was of short duration. Mailmora, King of Leinster, was not satisfied with the compact of Lough Ree, and he joined with the Danes of Dublin in promoting a revolt against the High Kings. In 999 the Danes of Dublin rebelled, and Mailmora joined them. Brian and his son, Murrough, flew over the Wicklow Mountains

to attack Dublin and crush the rebellion on the instant. They paused in the valley of Glenmama, where they were joined by Malachi. The Danes of Dublin, under Harold, and the Leinstermen, under Mailmora, hastened to meet them, and a great battle was fought at Glenmama which ended in the complete rout of the Danes and Leinstermen, of whom, it is said, four thousand were slain, including Harold, the Danish leader himself. Mailmora, in flying from the field, concealed himself in a yew-tree, but he was discovered by Murrough and made a prisoner.

As usual, Brian followed up his victory. He marched into Dublin and took possession of the city. Sitric, the Danish King of Dublin, fled to the North to seek the help of O'Neil, King of Ulster. Brian sent in pursuit of him, and O'Neil surrendered him to Brian's followers, by whom he was brought back to Dublin.

Brian, having subdued his enemies, resolved on a policy of peace, and bent his energies to consolidate the strength of the country, and, it must be added, to break the compact of Lough Ree, and to make himself supreme king.

It is quite clear that it was not Brian's intention now, or perhaps at any time, to expel the Danes from Ireland. He wished to break their power, and to make them Irish subjects. Neither did he wish to revolutionise

the political institutions of the country. He accepted the provincial kings and princes—whether Irish or Danish—but he insisted that the supreme authority of the Ardri should be real. To draw the Danes into union with the Irish he adopted the policy so often adopted by modern kings and statesmen—the futile policy of matrimonial alliances. He married Gormlaith, the mother of Sitric, and the sister of Mailmora (a woman who had been previously married to Amloff Cuaran, the father of Sitric, and who had also been married, and repudiated by Malachi) and gave his own daughter (by former wife) in marriage to Sitric. He took Mailmora into favour, and admitted Danes into his army. His last step was to march into Meath, and to call upon Malachi to abdicate, in order that he himself might become Ardri. Malachi asked for time to consider. The time was granted; but Brian meanwhile encamped at Tara. Malachi went to Ulster to appeal to O'Neil to take up arms against Brian; but he appealed in vain. The King of Munster was too formidable an antagonist even for the O'Neils to attack. Malachi, having failed in his mission, returned to Tara, frankly told Brian what had happened, and abdicated. Brian then (1002) became King of all Ireland, and Malachi sank into the position of a vassal as King of Meath. The

new Ardri next made a circuit throughout Ireland, taking with him an army composed of Leinstermen, Munstermen, Connaughtmen, and Danes. He penetrated to the North, and laid offerings on the altar of the church at Armagh, and then, after a brief sojourn in Eastern Ulster, he disbanded his army and returned to Kincora.

Tranquillity came upon the land, and Brian devoted himself to the arts of peace. In the words of the contemporary authority, "he erected noble churches. He sent professors and masters to teach wisdom, and knowledgment, and to buy books beyond the sea and the great ocean, because their writings and their books in every church and sanctuary were burnt, and thrown into the water by plunderers from the beginning to the end, and Brian himself gave the price of learning and the price of books to every one separately who went on this service. Many works also and repairs were made by him. By him were made bridges, causeways, and high roads. By him were strengthened also the duns and fastnesses of the island, the celebrated royal ports of Mumhain. He built also the fortifications of many places. He continued in this way prosperously, peacefully, giving banquets, hospitality, just judging, wealthily, venerated, chastely, and with devotion, and with law, and

with rule among the clergy ; with progress, and with valour, with honour and with renown among the laity ; and fruitful, powerful, firm, secure for fifteen years in the chief sovereignty of Erin."

But Sitric and Mailmora were disloyal in heart all the while, though it was Mailmora who, for the second time, kindled the spark which was to set the country again in a blaze. On one occasion he was on a visit at Kincora. Gormlaith, whom the Norse Saga describes as "the fairest of all women, and best gifted in everything that was not in her own power, but it was the talk of men that she did all things ill over which she had any power," was also false to the King. She roused the spirit of rebellion which slumbered in the heart of Mailmora. She said it did not become one of his race to bow to the sovereignty of Brian, and encouraged him to revolt. Later on, during his visit, Mailmora stood by while Murrough was playing at a game of chess. He suggested a move by which Murrough lost the game. "You also gave advice to the Danes at Glenmama," said Murrough, "by which they lost the battle." "I will give them advice next time," retorted Mailmora, "and they will not be defeated." "Then you had better have a yew-tree to receive you," replied Murrough, whose tongue was as sharp

as his spear-point. Mailmora, enraged, flew from the room, and was on his way to Leinster before Brian had learned the cause of quarrel. A messenger was despatched to bring him back, but he would not return. On reaching home he roused his people, stated that both he and the province had been insulted, and urged them to repair the wrong in battle. Sitric and he ultimately joined forces, took the field, and attacked Malachi, whom they defeated near Swords. They then dashed into Meath and plundered Malachi's territories. Brian and Murrough, finding that Malachi could not hold his own against the rebels, hastened to the scene of action. Murrough, commanding one army, marched into Leinster, destroying everything before him, and pushing his way victoriously onward until he reached Kilmainham, where he encamped. Brian, at the head of another army, had marched through Ossory, sweeping every enemy from his path, and not resting until he joined Murrough at Kilmainham (September, 1013). Father and son then laid siege to Dublin. Sitric held his ground, and Brian, whose army had run short of provisions, returned to Kincora at Christmas. He immediately prepared to renew hostilities in the coming year. Nor was Sitric or Mailmora idle. Gormlaith, whom Brian had now put away, also took a prominent part in

the contest. She urged Sitric to seek help from his Norse kinsmen, and he gladly followed her advice. He went to the Orkneys, and secured the help of Earl Sigurd, who, however, stipulated that the reward for his services should be the Kingdom of Ireland and hand of Gormlaith, a reward which Sitric quickly promised. He then went to the Isle of Man and secured the services of Earl Brodar, who also stipulated that the Kingdom of Ireland and the hand of Gormlaith should be his reward; and Sitric promised him both. Gormlaith approved of everything. "Spare nothing," she said to Sitric, "to get them into thy quarrel, whatever price they ask." And then a mighty host of Norsemen from all quarters hastened to the shores of Ireland, and Mailmora put forth all his strength to help the invaders. Brian girt his loins for the struggle, and resolved to risk all on a single battle. On the 17th of March, 1014, he set out for Dublin, and encamped once more at Kilmainham. He did not now lose time in besieging the city. He laid waste the country all round, and at length forced the Danes to come forth and fight in the open.

Breaking up his camp at Kilmainham, he marched to the north side of the city, and on the 23rd of April, 1014, the great battle of Clontarf was fought.

The Irish army consisted of Munstermen,

Connaughtmen, and the men of Meath. On the Danish side were the forces of Sigurd and Brodar, the Danes of Dublin, and the Leinstermen. "The battle-ground," Mr. Joyce tells us, "extended from about the present Upper O'Connell Street to the Tolka and beyond—along the shore towards Clontarf. The Danes stood with their backs to the sea; the Irish on the land side facing them."

There was no manœuvring. It was straightforward fighting all the time. Murrough, with the Dalcassians, led the van on the Irish side, Sigurd on the Danish. Brian, who was in his seventy-third year and in failing health, took no part in the actual fighting, though, doubtless, his counsel was sought by his gallant son, the real commander on that day. Sitric witnessed the struggle from the ramparts of Dublin.

From dawn to sunset the battle raged. Murrough began the attack with his Dalcassian warriors, throwing himself upon the forces of Sigurd and Brodar. The Norsemen were cased in armour, but it afforded them little protection from the battleaxes of the furious Dalcassians. Yet both Norse and Irish fought with desperate and equal valour. At first the Norsemen drove back their assailants, and Sitric said to his wife (Brian's daughter), who stood by his side watching the battle: "Well do the foreigners reap the field;

many a sheaf do they cast from them." But she answered: "The result will be seen at the end of the day," for she thought only of her own people. Murrough, seeing that his men were falling back before the Norse forces, placed himself in the front of the fight, urging his warriors forward. At length he came face to face with Sigurd, and Sigurd did not shrink from the conflict. Hand to hand both warriors fought, and valiantly the retainers of each rallied to their chief. But Murrough with one crushing blow cleft the helmet of the Norse commander in twain, and with another struck him lifeless to the ground. Then the Dalcassians dashed madly forward, and the Norsemen fled to the sea. Sitric and his wife still watched the scene from the ramparts of Dublin. "Methinks," she said, "that the foreigners have gained their patrimony." "What meanest thou, woman?" he asked. "Are they not rushing to the sea, their natural inheritance?" was her answer.

And so it was. The foreigners were literally driven into the sea. The rout was complete; the battle was decisive. "What hast thou to tell me of my men?" Harfu the Red, who had escaped from the field, was asked by Earl Flosi. "They all fell there," was the reply. But the victory was dearly purchased. Murrough fell pursuing the flying

foe, but not until the traitor Mailmora was numbered among the slain. Turlough (Murrough's son), a youth of much promise, was found in the tide with his hand firmly clutching the hair of a dead Viking. Brian, whose failing health prevented him from taking an active part in the battle, remained in his tent, and from time to time asked his attendant, Laiten, how went the fortunes of the day.

"The battalions," replied Laiten, "are mixed together in deadly struggle, and I hear their blows as if a vast multitude were hewing down Tomar's Wood with heavy axes. I see Murrough's banner standing aloft, with the banners of Dalgas around it."

And again he asked how the battle fared, and Laiten said, "They are now mingled so that no living man could distinguish them ; and they are all covered with blood and dust, so that a father could scarce know his own son. Many have fallen, but Murrough's banner still stands, moving through the battalions."

"That is well," said the King. "As long as the men of Erin see that standard they will fight with courage and valour."

And again Brian asked what news from the front, and Laiten again answered, "It is now as if Tomar's Wood were on fire, and the flames burning and the multitude hewing down

underwood, leaving the tall trees standing. For the ranks are thinned, and only a few great heroes are left to maintain the fight. The foreigners are now defeated, but the standard of Murrough has fallen."

Brian said, "Evil are those tidings. If Murrough has fallen, the valour of the men of Erin is fled, and they shall never look on a champion like him again."[1]

Some Norse stragglers now worked their way to Brian's tent.

"Many flying parties of foreigners are around us," said Laiten; "let us hasten to the camp, where we shall be in safety."

But the King said, "Retreat becomes us not; and I know that I shall not leave this place alive, for Eevin of Craglea, the guardian spirit of my race, came to me last night and told me I should be slain this day; and what avails me—now in my old age—to survive Murrough and the other champions of the Dalgas?"

The stragglers came nearer to the tent, and among them was Brodar and two other Norse warriors.

"I see some people approaching," said Laiten.

"What manner of people are they?" asked Brian.

[1] See Joyce, "Short History of the Irish People."

"A blue, stark-naked people," answered Laiten.

"They are Danes in armour," said the King, "and it's not good to thee that they come."

Then Brian, who had been resting on a couch, rose and unsheathed his sword. Brodar advanced, but heeded him not. But one of the Norsemen said, looking at Brian, "Cing, cing, it's the King!"

"No, no; but priest, priest," said Brodar.

"Not at all," said the Norseman; "it is the King Brian."

Then Brodar turned and raised his battle-axe. But Brian struck him with his sword, inflicting a mortal wound. Brodar staggered under the blow, but for a moment recovered his balance, and brought his axe full on the monarch's head, and both fell to the ground, dead.

Thus three generations were destroyed in a single day. It is sometimes asked, Why did not the Irish follow up their success and take Dublin? Because Brian and Murrough, and, it may be, even Turlough, were no more. No one was left behind to show the skill and energy which Brian and Murrough had shown on many a field. Without striking another blow, Malachi retired to Meath, and Donogh (Brian's youngest son) marched back to Kincora.

Thus all the fruits of victory were not gathered. The power of the Danes, which had been undermined during the rule of Brian, was, no doubt, destroyed at Clontarf. But the strong National Government which that monarch had established also came to an end. The dream of Danish dominion vanished. But the work of national consolidation was stopped.

SHANE O'NEIL

PART I

JUSTICE has never been done to Shane O'Neil. That the English should have maligned him goes without saying, for he was one of the most formidable enemies they ever had in Ireland. But that his own countrymen should not have defended him is strange indeed. The fact is we have, in the main, been disposed to accept the English estimate of Shane. We have been rather inclined to regard him as a desperate character, a great fighter, but a man possessing no real intellectual qualities. Mr. Froude, summing up the English opinion, describes Shane as "an adulterous, murdering scoundrel"—strange words, it will be admitted, from the panegyrist of Henry VIII.

Shane's matrimonial arrangements were unquestionably irregular. He ran away with another man's wife, which was certainly unjustifiable, but he ran away with the husband

at the same time, which was at least original. But more of this anon. That he was a "murderer," Mr. Froude gives no proof whatever. Of course, he refers to the death of Matthew O'Neil, Shane's illegitimate brother. But there is no evidence to show that Matthew was "murdered." He was killed in a quarrel between his people and Shane's people; but, however the matter was brought about, there is no evidence to show that Shane was present, or that he had anything to do with the business.

It is Mr. Froude's own hero—"Bluff King Hal"—whom the description "adulterous, murdering scoundrel" suits to perfection.

Shane O'Neil was something more than a mere fighter; he was a man of real intellectual force. He proved himself the equal of Elizabeth's generals on the field, and of her statesmen in negotiation. Nor is there evidence wanting to show that the great Queen herself appreciated his vigour and *finesse*. At all events, she recognised that he was a power in his own province, and she put forth all her strength to crush him. He hurled defiance at England at the time when England was hurling defiance at Europe.

Shane came of a good stock—O'Neils upon one side, Geraldines on the other; for his father, Con Bacagh, had married Alice, daughter of the Earl of Kildare.

From the beginning his path was strewn with trouble. In 1541–2 Con Bacagh had, with other Irish chiefs, made submission to Henry VIII., renouncing the title of "The O'Neil" and receiving the "Earldom of Tyrone" instead. About the same time his illegitimate son Matthew was made Baron of Dungannon, with the succession to the earldom and the territory of Tyrone. Shane, who was younger than Matthew, but the eldest of the legitimate children, protested against the injustice which had thus been done to him, and finally persuaded his father to right the wrong. Matthew was disinherited, and Shane confirmed in his position. Matthew appealed to the English. The English espoused his cause. Con was invited to Dublin Castle to discuss the subject. But once there, he was held fast. Treacherously entrapped, he was made a prisoner. Shane protested, and demanded his father's release. The Government refused, and Shane declared war.

In 1551 Sir James Croft, the Lord Deputy, sent an army into Ulster to crush him. The English began their operations by attacking Shane's allies—the Macdonnells of Antrim in Rathlin Island. The Macdonnells were victorious, and Croft's army was annihilated. In 1552 another army was sent to the North; it was routed by Shane's allies near Belfast.

Matthew O'Neil advanced to the help of the English; Shane suddenly fell upon him, and scattered his forces to the winds. Yet a third attempt was made; it also ended in failure. Negotiations were then opened with Shane, but nothing came of them. "We found nothing in Shane," said the English Ambassadors, "but pride and stubbornness." At length Croft retired from the combat, released Con Bacagh, and left Shane master of the situation.

For about six years there was peace between Shane and the English. Con Bacagh had been again invited to Dublin Castle, where he remained until his death in 1559. In the same year Matthew O'Neil had been killed in an encounter between Shane's people and his own —killed in battle, Shane said.

Shane now, repudiating the English title of "Earl of Tyrone," adopted the old Irish title of "The O'Neil," and was elected Chief of his Clan. The English Government took alarm. Shane had again flaunted them. In defiance of English law, according to which the eldest son of Matthew was now Baron of Dungannon, he had himself, according to Irish law, been elected Chief of the Clan. It was clear that he meant to hold his own, and to withstand the English to the face. In these circumstances the Lord Justice, Sir Henry

Sidney, resolved to bring the recalcitrant Ulster Chief to book. He marched with an army to Dundalk, and "summoned" Shane to appear before him. Shane, with that touch of humour which is so delightful in his despatches, calmly ignored the "summons," but invited Sidney to his house, where there was to be an interesting function in a few days, viz., a christening. In fact, Shane said he would be delighted if the Lord Justice would stand sponsor for the young O'Neil. Sidney was, perhaps, a humorist, and might have been tickled by the invitation, or with Croft's example before him he might have thought it wiser, on the whole, to treat Shane in a conciliatory spirit. At all events, he accepted the invitation, and visited Shane's castle.

Sidney seems to have been well pleased with his visit, and was apparently captured by this "adulterous, murdering scoundrel." He and Shane discussed the whole situation amicably. Shane said, in effect, that Matthew O'Neil *père* was a bastard. That being so, his eldest son could not inherit. Shane, on the other hand, was admittedly the legitimate son, and had been elected, according to Irish law, Chief of the Clan. This was Shane's case. Doubtless, Sidney reminded Shane, as Elizabeth herself reminded him subsequently, that Con Bacagh had acknowledged Matthew; and

Shane, in all probability, said to Sidney, as he subsequently said to Elizabeth, with characteristic humour, that his father was "too good a gentleman to deny any child that was sworn to him." In the end Sidney seems to have been quite won over by Shane, and promised to represent his case in a favourable light to the Queen. Sidney was a peaceful man; he also appreciated Shane's abilities.

Every one is familiar with Henry VII.'s answer to those who told him that all Ireland could not govern the Earl of Kildare. "Then," said the King, "let the Earl of Kildare govern all Ireland."

Sidney probably at that time thought that the best solution of the Ulster difficulty would be to let Shane rule Ulster, provided he could be got to acknowledge Elizabeth as his Sovereign—a concession Shane was ready enough to make, for it in reality meant little to him. So long as he could rule Ulster he did not care what Elizabeth called herself, and to rule Ulster he was resolved.

By the end of 1559 Sidney was, however, recalled, and the Earl of Sussex became Lord Lieutenant. Sussex despised the methods of Sidney. He had methods of his own—the arm of the soldier, the dagger or poisoned cup of the assassin. He tried all, and he failed in all. At the outset, however, Elizabeth,

whether through policy, through fear, or merely as a blind (as Mr. Joyce seems to think) advised peace. Shane was in possession, she said; he was legitimate; let him be. Then an interesting correspondence passed.

It is strange that Shane, unaccustomed to Courts (as he himself tells us he was), yet knew how to write like a courtier. Of course, he had never seen Elizabeth, and yet he played on her foibles as if he knew every turn of her mind. He flattered, he cajoled, was submissive, firm, always most respectful and deferential; but ever driving his points irresistibly home. It was an age of dishonest diplomacy. Perhaps every age is an age of dishonest diplomacy. Shane was, at all events, a master of the art. When I say that he was a match for Cecil and Bacon with their own weapons, I shall, perhaps, have said all that is necessary to give an accurate idea of the diplomatic skill of Shane O'Neil.

Elizabeth summoned him to London to justify the position he had taken up. In 1560 he replied to this "summons," and the letter is a good specimen of his epistolary style. I shall take a single paragraph. He begins with deference, and, it may be, with veiled sarcasm, humouring the while the vanity of her Majesty. He says:—

. . . . .

"And now that I am going over to see you, I hope you will consider that I am but rude and uncivil, and do not know my duty to your Highness, nor yet your Majesty's laws, but am brought up in wildness far from all civility." He then proceeds more boldly, revealing the true character of "Shane the Proud." "Yet have I a good will to the commonwealth of my country; and please your Majesty to send over two Commissioners that you can trust that will take no bribes nor otherwise be imposed upon, to observe what I have done to improve the country, and to hear what my accusers have to say." Having boldly thrown down this challenge, he adds with defiance: "Then let them go into the Pale and hear what the people say of your soldiers, with their horses, and their dogs, and their concubines. Within this year and a half three hundred farmers are come from the English Pale to live in my country, where they can be safe."

This single paragraph marks the character and the abilities of Shane. It is a despatch written with the spirit of a ruler of men. Courteous, skilful, dignified, bold; challenging inquiry, exposing the English methods of bribery and falsehood; denouncing the Government of the Pale.

"Within this year and a half three hundred farmers are come from the English Pale to live

in my country, where they can be safe." This is not the language of a vassal. It is the language of one Sovereign conveying rebuke to another in courtly and dignified phraseology.

Nor did Shane write without warrant. Sidney had visited Shane's country, and he reported that Tyrone was so "well inhabited as no Irish county in the realm was like it." Campion, a contemporary authority, wrote :—

"(O'Neil) ordered the North so properly that if any subject could approve the loss of money or goods within the precinct he would assuredly either force the robber to restitution, or at his own cost redeeme the harme to the loser's contentation."

And Campion adds :—

"Sitting at meals, before he put one morselle into his mouth, he used to slice a portion above the dayly almes, and send it to some beggar at his gate, saying it was meete to serve Christ first."

Shane having challenged Elizabeth to send Commissioners to his country, and having exposed her own method of government in the Pale, states, as a condition precedent to his visit to England, that he will need an advance of £3,000 English money "to pay my expenses in going over to you, and when I come back I will pay your deputy three thousand pounds Irish, such as you are pleased to have current

here;" and he, adopting the role of courtier once more, ends by adding: "Also I will ask your Majesty to marry me to some gentlewoman of noble birth, meet for my vocation."

While Elizabeth corresponded with Shane in a friendly spirit, she was really contemplating his destruction. Mr. Froude does not blink the fact. He says:—

"For Shane the meaning of his summons to England was merely to detain him there 'with gentle talk' till Sussex could return to his command and the English army be reinforced. Preparations were made to send men and money in such large quantities that rebellion could have no chance; and so careful was the secrecy which was observed to prevent Shane from taking alarm that a detachment of troops sent from Portsmouth sailed with sealed orders, and neither men nor officers knew that Ireland was their destination till they had rounded Land's End."

It was doubtless hoped that while the fleet was on its way to Ireland, Shane would be on his way to England, and that thus Tyrone, in the absence of its Chief, would be at the mercy of Sussex's soldiers. But either Shane was, in some unaccountable manner, put upon his guard, or the natural shrewdness of the man kept him out of danger. At all events he did not move. He was expected daily in Dublin

to start on his journey to London, but he constantly gave some excuse. "At one time his dress was not ready, at another he had no money, and pressed to have his loan of three thousand sent to him. He was polite; he was courteous; he was friendly; but he stopped in Tyrone."

Meanwhile Sussex had returned to his command, and he laid a deep scheme for the destruction of Shane. He resolved to raise up the rival Princes of Ulster against the Chief of Tyrone, and he employed the familiar methods of bribery and corruption. O'Reilly of Brefney was made an Earl. O'Donnell of Tyrconnell was promised an Earldom. Means were used to draw away the Scots from their alliance with O'Neil. Then a grand combined attack was to be made upon the arch-enemy. O'Donnell and O'Reilly were to march on Tyrone from the West, the Scots were to fall upon the "rebels" from the North and East, while Sussex would advance from the South to give him the *coup de grace*. It was a well-laid scheme. But vain are the schemes of "mice and men." The gods smiled on Shane. Mars fought upon his side, and even Cupid flew to his assistance.

O'Donnell was married to the sister of the Earl of Argyle, popularly called the "Countess of Argyle," a woman who has been described

as "not unlearned in Latin," speaking French and Italian; and "counted sober, wise, and no less subtle." It was Sussex' calculation that with O'Donnell, representing a powerful Irish clan, and the Countess of Argyle representing the Scots, as his allies, the way for the destruction of Shane would be made easy. But Sussex counted without his host. The Countess of Argyle loved Shane O'Neil; and for aught we know to the contrary, though we have no evidence on the point, may have revealed Sussex' plot to him. In any case, Shane was forearmed. Suddenly he dashed into O'Reilly's country and ravaged it with fire and sword. Then he swooped down upon O'Donnell and carried him and the Countess off. Fifteen hundred Scots surrounded the lady, but not one of them raised a hand against Shane. It was a master stroke. With O'Donnell in his hands, the Clan of O'Donnell was paralysed. With the Countess in his hands, the Scots' alliance was made safer than ever. Sussex accepted defeat, and did not move a man out of the Pale to molest the invincible Chief of Tyrone.

Shane should be painted with his scars. It must be confessed that his domestic arrangements were highly unsatisfactory. He was a married man, yet he ran away with O'Donnell's wife, and asked Elizabeth to find him "some

noble English lady, meet for my vocation"—which, let us hope, was a diplomatic joke. Shane was no saint, and his transgressions—were Elizabeth aware of them they must have faintly recalled the memory of her respected father—cannot be concealed or condoned. All that can be urged in extenuation—if anything can be urged—is, as Mr. Richie reminds us, that his age was the age of Henry VIII. of England and of Henry IV. of France. After the failure of Sussex' plans, Shane was again urged to pay his long-promised visit to Elizabeth. "We still treated with Shane," wrote Sussex, "for his going to your Majesty, making him great offers if he would go quietly."

But Shane was not yet ready "to go." First, his terms had not been granted. He had not received the three thousand pounds, nor a penny of it. Next, he had not received, as he demanded, a safe conduct "there and back."

Sussex now resolved to try force once more. He marched with a powerful army to the North, entered Armagh, seized the Cathedral and fortified it. Making this his base, he prepared to invade Tyrone.

A thousand men were sent forward to sweep the country clear of cattle and supplies. They encountered no opposition, and were returning to Armagh rich with spoil, when suddenly an

Irish army, inferior in numbers, broke upon the view, and with the cries "Laundarg Abo!" ("Strike for O'Neil") dashed into their midst. The English were panic-stricken. The cavalry, in confusion, rode down the infantry, while Shane, at the head of his troopers, cut the infantry to pieces. The English fled, and Shane stood once more upon the field triumphant. Sussex himself has described the battle: "Never before durst Scot or Irish look on Englishmen in plain or wood since I was here; and now Shane in a plain three miles away from any wood, and where I would have asked of God to have had him, hath with a hundred and twenty horse, and a few Scots and galloglasses, scarce half in number, charged our whole army, . . . and was like in one hour to have left not one man of that army alive, and after that to have taken me and the rest at Armagh."

Beaten in battle and in negotiation, Sussex tried other methods. He employed an agent to assassinate Shane. He tells the story himself without a blush—tells it to Elizabeth, who apparently read it also without a blush:

"August 24, 1561.

"May it please your Highness,

"After conference with Shane O'Neil's seneschal I entered into talk with Neil Grey; and perceiving by him that he had little hope

of Shane's conformity in anything, and that he (Neil Grey) therefore desired that he might be received to serve your Highness, for that he would no longer abide with (Shane) and that if I would promise to receive him to your service, he would do anything that I would command him. I swore him upon the Bible to keep the secret, that I should say unto him, and assured him if it were ever known during the time I had the Government there, that, besides the breach of his oath, it should cost him his life. I used long circumstance in persuading him to serve you to benefit his country, and to procure assurance of living to him and to his for ever by doing of that which he might easily do. He promised to do what I would. In fine, I broke with him to kill Shane; and bound myself by my oath to see him have a hundred marks of land by the year to him and to his heirs for his reward. God send your Highness a good end."

Whether Neil Grey was humbugging Sussex, or whether his courage failed him at the sticking point, nothing came of what Mr. Froude mildly describes as this "undesirable" proposal.

"Elizabeth's answer — if she sent any answer," says the English historian, "is not discoverable. It is most sadly certain, however, that Sussex was continued in office; and inas-

much as it will be seen that he repeated the experiment a few months later, his letter could not have been received with any marked condemnation."

The assassination plot having failed, Shane, with amusing irony, was once more urged to hasten his departure to England to confer with her "Highness." His cousin, the Earl of Kildare, was sent to Dundalk to confer with Shane, for Shane trusted Kildare. They met, and Shane again set out his terms :—(1) A loan of three thousand pounds ; (2) a safe conduct there and back ; (3) that it should be borne in mind that he came to England as a victorious enemy to be conciliated ; (4) that the Earls of Ormond, Desmond, and Kildare should receive him in state at Dundalk, and escort him to Dublin ; (5) that Kildare should accompany him to England ; (6) that a guard of galloglasses should attend him ; and (7) that Armagh Cathedral should be evacuated by the English. These terms were discussed in the English Privy Council. The propriety of acceding to all of them was advocated, Cecil treacherously urging "that in Shane's absence from Ireland something might be cavilled against him or his for non-observing the covenants on his side ; and so the pact being infringed, the matter might be used as should be thought fit." Sussex was in favour of agreeing nominally to the evacuation of

the Cathedral. He wrote to Elizabeth that "the Earl of Kildare was put as surety for the fetching away the soldiers now stationed at Armagh; but," added this noble trickster, "no word has been inserted forbidding others to be at any time brought thither."

Elizabeth herself, however, seems to have interposed, and to have agreed to all Shane's terms, except the evacuation of Armagh Cathedral. When the decision of the Queen was conveyed to Shane, he replied that, although for "the Earl of Sussex he would not modify one iota of his agreement," yet to please her Highness he would waive the stipulation about the evacuation of the Cathedral. And thus, at length, it was settled; and on the 2nd of January, 1562, Shane, accompanied by Kildare and a guard of galloglasses, sailed for England.

Shane was received in London by Cecil and Bacon at the Lord Keeper's house. They censured him for his high crimes and misdemeanours. Shane listened contemptuously and then asked for the balance of the three thousand pounds (he had received a thousand before leaving Dublin) promised to him. They gave him another thousand, and spoke of his late rebellion. Shane answered that two thousand pounds was a poor present from so great a Queen. They expressed the hope that he would be a better subject in future. He

asked for the remaining thousand pounds due to him.

At length it was arranged that he should make his "submission" to the Queen in the presence of the Council, the peers, the bishops, and the foreign Ambassadors, and this performance was gone through on the 6th of January. Mr. Froude, basing his account on "Camden," describes the scene :—

"O'Neil stalked in, his saffron mantle sweeping round and round him, his hair curling on his back and clipped short below the eyes which gleamed from under it with a grey lustre. . . . Behind him followed his gallo-glasses, bare-headed and fair-haired, with sheets of mail which reached their knees, a wolfskin flung across their shoulders, and short, broad battleaxes in their hands." The "submission" made, the "business" of the visit was next taken in hand. Shane stated his terms. He asked to be acknowledged Chief of his Clan, Lord of Tyrone, and, under the suzerainty of Elizabeth, ruler of Ulster. These were high terms, but Shane would not abate them one jot. Weeks and months passed, and no decision was arrived at. The terms were not granted; they were not refused. At length Shane grew weary and said he must return to his own country. The English Ministers used every device to detain him. They said that

no decision could be arrived at until the young Baron of Dungannon—the son of Matthew the Bastard—had appeared before the Queen to state his case. An order (which Shane saw) was sent to Ireland summoning the young Baron to England. But a private letter (which Shane did not see) was sent at the same time to prevent the Baron from coming. Weeks passed, and, of course, the young Baron did not come. Shane declined to remain any longer, and demanded his safe conduct. The Ministers refused to give it. Shane reminded them that it had been promised to him. They replied: "Yes; that a safe conduct had been promised, but no time was specified for his return." Shane saw at a glance that he had been for once outwitted. But he was equal to the occasion. Brushing Cecil and Bacon aside, he appealed directly to Elizabeth. He wrote in his usual style. He flattered; he cajoled; he said she was his sole hope, "having no refuge nor succour to flee unto but only her Majesty." His prolonged absence was endangering the peace of his province, so that in Elizabeth's own interests it was vital that he should return immediately. Still he was her slave, and if she wished him to stay he would stay. But the peril would be great. He besought her Majesty again to get him an English wife, "such as he and her Majesty

might agree on." "He loved sport," he said, "and would like to learn to ride after the English fashion, to run at the tilt, to hawk, to shoot, and use such other good exercises." But Elizabeth was as inexorable as her Ministers. She would not let Shane go. Then came the news that Ulster was in a blaze, and that the young Baron of Dungannon had been killed in a skirmish by Turlough Lynnagh O'Neil. A Cabinet Council was hastily summoned, and it was decided not only to let Shane go, but to grant him almost all his terms. He was to take an oath of allegiance to Elizabeth at Dublin Castle, and he was not to wage war without the sanction of the Viceroy; or make alliances; but, for the rest he was acknowledged Chief of Tyrone and Ruler of Ulster; and so Shane returned to Ireland more triumphant than ever.

Sussex was ill-pleased with the terms, yet he thought that there was one clause in the agreement which would enable him to lay the "rebel" by the heels. By the agreement, Shane was bound to visit Dublin to take the oath of allegiance before the Deputy. Sussex sent him a "summons" to come, with the intention (as Sussex informed Elizabeth) of making him a prisoner. But Shane declined the invitation. Some time or other, he said, substantially, he would come, but not for the

present. When Shane had asked for his safe conduct in England, he was told that no particular time was specified for his return. As the Queen's Ministers had then dealt with him, he now dealt in effect with the Lord Deputy. No particular time had been specified for his visit to take the oath of allegiance, and the state of his province made his absence undesirable for the present. Sussex tried another ruse. Shane had asked Elizabeth to get him an English wife; Sussex had a sister, and the Lord Deputy wrote to Shane saying that if he would visit Dublin "he could see and speak with her, and if he liked her and she liked him, they should both have (Sussex') good will." But Shane did not stir. "He had advertisement out of the Pale," wrote the unconscionable Sussex to Elizabeth, "that the lady was brought over only to entrap him, and if he came to the Deputy he should never return."

This trick having failed, Sussex again wrote to Elizabeth, begging her to allow him to march once more against Shane, saying that if the Chief of Tyrone was not crushed Ireland would be lost to the English Crown. Elizabeth consented, and Sussex set out for Ulster in April, 1563. Sussex' diary of this campaign is highly diverting:—

"April 6.—The army arrives at Armagh.

"April 8.—We return to Newry to bring up stores and ammunition which had been left behind.

"April 11.—We again advance to Armagh, where we remain waiting for the arrival of galloglasses and Kerne from the Pale.

"April 15.—The galloglasses not coming, we go upon Shane's cattle, of which we take enough to serve us; we should have taken more if we had had galloglasses.

"April 16.—We return to Armagh.

"April 17, 18, 19.—We wait for the galloglasses.

"April 21.—We survey the Trouagh Mountains, said to be the strongest place in Ireland.

"April 22.—We return to Armagh.

"April 23.—Divine service."

This superb scoundrel, who tried twice to assassinate Shane, did not forget to say his prayers. But neither his prayers, his assassination plots, nor his cattle raids could destroy the chief; and, having waited for the galloglasses that did not come, and for the supplies which they were to bring, and being now wholly without resources—Shane in the end had apparently starved him out—he returned to Dublin discomfited and disgusted. "It is but a Sisyphus labour," he wrote to Elizabeth, "to expel Shane."

The agreement of London had made Shane

supreme ruler of Ulster. He was acting on that agreement. Hence his offence. No doubt he had refused to visit Dublin to take the oath of allegiance. But we now know that had he gone to Dublin he would never have returned to Tyrone. He ruled his province strongly, and curbed disaffected chiefs. In fact, he defined his position frankly and imperiously to the English Commissioners who were sent to confer with him. He said: "I care not to be an earl unless I am better and higher than an earl, for I am in blood and power better than the best of them; and I will give place to none but my cousin of Kildare, for that he is of my house. For the Queen, I confess she is my sovereign, but I never made peace with her but by her own seeking. Whom am I to trust? When I came to the Earl of Sussex (on his way to London) on safe conduct, he offered me the courtesy of a hand lock. When I was with the Queen she said to me herself that I had, it was true, safe conduct to come and go, but it was not said when I might go; and they kept me there till I had agreed to things so far against my honour and people [meaning the clauses compelling him to take the oath of allegiance in Dublin, and not to wage war, nor to enter into alliances without the consent of the Deputy] that I would never perform them while I live. My ancestors were

Kings of Ulster, and Ulster is mine, and shall be mine. O'Donnell shall never come into his country, nor Bagenal into Newry, nor Kildare into Dundrum or Lecale. They are now mine. With this sword I won them, and with this sword I will keep them."

Elizabeth had now grown weary of the constant struggle with Shane, and she gladly accepted terms of peace proposed by Sir Thomas Cusak, a member of the Irish Privy Council. Sussex was thrown over. The clause in the London agreement compelling Shane to visit Dublin to take the oath of allegiance was abrogated, and his demand for the evacuation of Armagh Cathedral was granted. The new peace was signed at Benburb in 1563, and it declared, once and for all, that O'Neil "was to have the pre-eminence, jurisdiction, and dominion which his predecessors had over all who were accustomed to pay service to his predecessors."

Shane's victory was complete. He had triumphed all along the line, baffling the statesmen of Elizabeth, defeating her generals, humbling herself. Monarch of Ulster, he had now reached the zenith of his career ; and there I shall leave him, in all his glory, reserving for another chapter the story of his downfall and death.

PART II

We left Shane on the highest pinnacle of fame. The Treaty of Benburb was his greatest triumph. Shortly after it had been signed—"as a first evidence," says Mr. Froude, "of returning cordiality"—a present of wine was sent from Dublin to Shane. The present was accepted. The wine was drunk. Shane and half his household were brought to death's door. The Dublin offering was a poisoned cup. Who was the criminal? I prefer to let the hostile historian, Mr. Froude, answer this question.

"The guilt could not be fixed on Sussex. The crime was traced to an English resident in Dublin named Smith, and if Sussex had been the instigator, his instrument was too faithful to betray him. Yet, after the fatal letter in which the Earl had revealed to Elizabeth his own personal endeavours to procure O'Neil's murder, the suspicion cannot but cling to him that the second attempt was not made without his connivance. Nor can Elizabeth herself be acquitted of responsibility. She professed the loudest indignation, but she ventured no allusion to his previous communication with her, and no hint transpires of any previous displeasure when the proposal had been made openly to herself."

Shane complained bitterly to Sir Thomas Cusak of this last act of treachery, and Cusak told the story to the Queen. As Mr. Froude says, she "professed the loudest indignation." She wrote to Sussex saying "how much it grieveth us to think that any such horrible attempt should be used." But, to quote Mr. Froude again :—

"It is in human nature to feel deeper indignation at a crime which has been detected and exposed than at guilt equally great of which the knowledge is confined to the few who might profit by it. Yet after the repeated acts of treachery which had been at least meditated towards Shane with Elizabeth's knowledge, she was scarcely justified in assuming a tone of such innocent anger; . . . and it is not to be forgotten that Lord Sussex, who has left under his own hand the evidence of his own baseness, continued a trusted and favoured councillor of Elizabeth."

An inquiry was ordered into the circumstances under which the wine had been sent. Smith confessed his guilt, and said that no one was responsible but himself. He was sent to prison for a few months, and then let free. Shane showed no disposition to have Smith punished. He wished to get at the man whom he believed to be the real culprit—the "murdering scoundrel" (to adopt the language

of Mr. Froude once more), who represented English authority in the island. Finding that Sussex was beyond his reach, he was indifferent about the fate of the creature who was but Sussex' instrument.

. . . . .

And now the melancholy part of this story of the career of Shane O'Neil has to be told.

Shane, it is scarcely necessary to say, had no faith in the English. He did not believe in their treaties; he did not believe in their promises. "Whom am I to trust?" he had asked. He knew full well that he could only trust his own right hand—the strong hand of the O'Neils.

Despite all treaties, despite all promises, despite all show of friendliness, he had ample proof that the English meant his destruction if they could only see their way to bring it about.

Who were to be the masters in Ireland? English or Irish? That was the question as Shane now saw it. And he knew that the Irish could only be masters when the English were driven out; and to drive them out became the ambition of his life.

Like Brian, he too was inspired by the idea of nationality. He knew that the English could only be beaten by a united Ireland, and that a united Ireland could only be made by the establishment of a strong Irish central

Government. Brian had made princes and chiefs subordinate to himself; because there must be a supreme authority if life is to be given to a State, and this was the theory of the old Irish Constitution, for, according to that Constitution, the provincial kings were subject to the Ardri. As Brian thought and acted, Shane thought and acted. Shane's sphere of influence was Ulster. He did in Ulster what Brian had done all over Ireland.

"My ancestors were Kings of Ulster," he said, "and Ulster is mine, and shall be mine." And be it remembered that while Ulster was Shane O'Neil's it was well ruled. Says Mr. Joyce: "Sidney when he went North was surprised at the prosperous look of the country, and said 'Tyrone was so well inhabited as no Irish county in the realm was like it.'" "O'Neil," wrote Sidney, "is at present (1566) the only strong and rich man in Ireland, and he is the dangerousest man." As years passed his political horizon was enlarged, and, having bent Ulster to his pleasure, there can be little doubt that he meant to make himself King of Ireland, for "his ancestors were kings of Ireland, too." A united Ireland, under Shane O'Neil, would have swept the English into the sea.

Shane knew it, and the English knew it. "The time is come," he wrote to the King of

France in 1566, "when we all are confederates in a common bond to drive the invaders from our shores, and we now beseech your Majesty to send us six thousand armed men. If you will grant our request there will be soon no Englishmen left alive among us." In the same year he wrote to John of Desmond: "Now the time or never to set upon the enemies of Ireland. If you fail, or turn against your country, God will avenge it on you."

What Shane knew, Sidney, who had been sent back to Ireland to replace Sussex in 1565, also knew.

"Ireland," he wrote to Cecil, "would be no small loss to the English Crown, and it was never so like to be lost as now. O'Neil has already all Ulster, and if the French were so eager about Calais, think what the Irish are to recover their whole island."

Had all Ireland united under Shane, the "invaders" would have been "driven from our shores." Had the chiefs of the North and the Norman barons of the South—the O'Donnells the O'Reillys, the Maguires, the Desmonds, and the Kildares—rallied to his standard, the power of England would unquestionably have been broken. But unhappily there was no national cohesion among them. None of them possessed any national feeling in the sense in which Brian had possessed it, in the sense in

which Shane possessed it. Each chief and baron thought only of being the ruler of his own territory; and there were occasions when each was, unfortunately, willing to combine with the English to secure that end. They did not love England; far from it. But none of them saw, as Shane ultimately came to see, that, with the English supreme in any part of the island, the independence of Celtic chief and Norman baron would, sooner or later, come to an end. For the O'Donnells of that day—in the next generation they nobly retrieved their treason to Shane—it is questionable if Ireland had any existence outside Tyrconnell. They did not then recognise, as Shane recognised, that the question of the hour was, who should possess Ireland—the Irish or the strangers? It was the policy of Brian to destroy the dominion of the foreigner; that was the policy of Shane too. Both rulers were statesmen. Both saw that the first step towards the building of the nation was the destruction of the power of the "foreign invader." Both saw that the power of the "foreign invader" could not be destroyed until the Irish people were consolidated under the central sway of an Irish chief. The clan system was fatal to the growth of nationality. Brian knew this, and he practically destroyed the clan system in his day. It revived with full vigour on his death.

Shane would have destroyed the clan system too, but he was not strong enough, and Ireland suffered in consequence. The clan system was ultimately destroyed by the foreigners themselves, and the steady growth of Irish nationality may be traced to that event. Shane, in his day, played his part with foresight and skill. In the end fortune deserted him. But the memory of great men "rightly struggling to be free" is a heritage which should be fondly treasured, because, as a source of guidance and inspiration, it makes for freedom too.

. . . . .

Sir Henry Sidney was again sent to Ireland about 1565. When he had previously been in the country he showed a willingness to conciliate Shane. He changed his policy now. He had come to the conclusion that Shane should be destroyed. It is possible that Shane, as well as Sidney, had undergone a change since the earlier years. Had the English played fairly with Shane, he might or might not have been content to remain simply ruler of Ulster, acknowledging the sovereignty of the English Queen. But, after the systematic treachery with which he had been treated, he had come to the conclusion that no faith could be placed in the English, and this knowledge stimulated, if it did not actually create, the feeling of nationality which ultimately possessed him.

Sidney's tactics were to stir up the rival clans of Ulster against Shane. Shane ruled with a strong hand; and he ruled well. He did not suffer treason to exist within his realm. He put down disorder and anarchy; he made his authority felt, and the result was seen in the prosperity and security of Ulster. In 1565 the Scots had, Shane said, been troublesome. Shane fell upon them and crushed their power. Sidney now resolved to work upon all the enemies which Shane had necessarily made in consolidating his strength. Of all the clans of Ulster, the O'Donnells were, next to the O'Neils, the strongest; and, unhappily, the O'Donnells leagued themselves with the English to accomplish the ruin of Shane.

The rest of the story may be told in a few words. In 1566 Sidney marched into Ulster. Shane advanced to meet him. Two pitched battles were fought before Dundalk and Derry, both of which towns were held by the English. Shane was defeated in both engagements, though the victory at Derry was dearly bought by the death of the English General, Randolph. Shane now retreated to his own borders.

For nearly fifteen years the redoubtable Ulster Chief had held his own against all the forces which England had brought against him; but he was destined in the end to die by the hands of the Scots of Antrim. In 1567 the

O'Donnells, stirred up, as I have said, by Sidney, invaded Tyrone, and ravaged the country. Shane retaliated by marching into Tyrconnell. In May a pitched battle was fought between the rival clans on the west bank of the Swilly, near Lifford. Shane bore himself throughout the day with characteristic prowess, but before night fell the army of the O'Neils was annihilated and their chief chased from the field with but a handful of followers. In this plight he threw himself on the protection of the Scots of Antrim.

He came to their camp at Cushenden accompanied by the Countess of Argyle, who remained attached to him amid all the vicissitudes of his career, and attended by a guard of over fifty men. The Scots received him with professions of friendship and hospitality ; but, in the midst of an evening's carousal, some pretext of quarrel was seized, and the doomed chief and his retainers were massacred to a man. His body was flung into a pit ; but the English Commander at Carrickfergus carried the head to Dublin, where it was hung from the ramparts of the Castle. So perished Shane O'Neil, one of the fiercest and subtlest foes that ever faced the English in Ireland.

HUGH O'NEIL AT CLONMEL

On August 13, 1649, Oliver Cromwell sailed from Milford Haven for Ireland. On the 15th he reached Dublin, and, on the 3rd of September, appeared before Drogheda with an army of 10,000 men. Though the massacre of Drogheda is a familiar story, yet there is one point in connection with it on which I wish to touch. Cromwell's apologists say that he was not worse than his times. The times were rough. He acted roughly, that was all. But at Drogheda Cromwell was worse than his times. His officers and soldiers promised quarter, but he would not give it. Sir Arthur Aston, the governor, made a last stand at the Mill Mount. It was here that Cromwell's soldiers, having broken down the defences, offered quarter. But Cromwell, arriving suddenly upon the scene, said that no quarter should be granted. Then the garrison was slaughtered almost to a man. "The deed of horror," says the English historian, Mr. Gardiner, "was all Cromwell's

own." In truth, Cromwell's own evidence is decisive on the point. He says : "The enemy made a stout resistance, and near one thousand of our men being entered, the enemy forced them out again. But God giving a new courage to our men they attempted again, and entered, beating the enemy from their defences. The enemy had made their entrenchments both to the right and left where we entered, all which they were force to quit. Being thus entered we refused them quarter, having the day before summoned the town. I believe we put to the sword the whole number of the defendants. I do not think thirty of the whole number escaped with their lives ; those that did are in safe custody for the Barbadoes. I do not believe, neither do I hear, that any officer escaped with his life, save only one lieutenant. The enemy retreated, divers of them to the Mill Mount, a place very strong and difficult of access, being exceeding high, having a good graft, and strongly pallisaded ; the Governor, Sir Arthur Aston, and divers considerable officers being there, our men getting up to them, were ordered by me to put them all to the sword ; and, indeed, being in the heat of action, I forbade them to spare any that were in arms in the town, and I think that night they put to the sword about 2,000 men ; divers of the officers and soldiers being fled over the

bridge into the other part of the town, where about 100 of them possessed St. Peter's Church Steeple, some the west gate, and others a round strong tower next the gate called St. Sunday. This being summoned to yield to mercy refused, whereupon I ordered the steeple of St. Peter's Church to be fired, when one of them was heard to say in the midst of the flames, 'God damn me. God confound me. I burn, I burn.' The next day the other two towers were summoned, in one of which was about six or seven score, but they refused to yield themselves, and we, knowing that hunger must compel them, set only guards to secure them from running away, until their stomachs were come down, from one of the said towers. Notwithstanding their condition they killed and wounded some of our men. When they submitted their officers were knocked on the head, and every tenth man of the soldiers killed, and the rest shipped for the Barbadoes. The soldiers in the other tower were all spared, as to their lives only, and shipped likewise for the Barbadoes. I believe all their friars were knocked on the head, but two, the one of which was Father Taaffe, brother to the Lord Taaffe, whom the soldiers took next day and made an end of. The other was taken to the Round Tower under the repute of a lieutenant, and when he understood that the officers in that tower had no quarter,

he confessed that he was a friar, but that did not save him. . . . This hath been a marvellous great mercy. . . . I wish that all honest hearts may give the glory of it to God."

Let us place side by side with this statement the statement of Ormonde :—

"Cromwell continued his battery all Monday and Tuesday till about four of the clock in the afternoon. Having made a breach which he judged assaultable, he assaulted it, and, being twice beaten off, the third time he carried it, all his officers and the soldiers promising quarter to such as would lay down their arms, and performing it as long as any place held out, which encouraged others to yield. But when they had once all in their power, and feared no hurt that could be done them, then the word no quarter went round, and the soldiers were, many of them, forced against their wills to kill their prisoners. Sir Edmund Kenny, Colonel Warren, Colonel Well, and Colonel Byrne were all killed in cold blood, as was also the Governor, and, indeed, all the officers, except some few of least consideration that escaped by miracle. The cruelty exercised there for five days, after the town was taken, would make as many several pictures of inhumanity as are to be found in the Book of Martyrs, or in the relation of Amboyna."

Cromwell's excuse for the atrocities com-

mitted at Drogheda was that the massacre would prove a salutary example, and that the rest of Ireland would calmly submit. He says: "I am persuaded that this is a righteous judgment of God upon these barbarous wretches who have imbrued their hands in so much innocent blood; and that it will tend to prevent the effusion of blood for the future, which are the satisfactory grounds to such actions which otherwise cannot but work remorse and regret." Nevertheless, Cromwell, according to his own account, was forced to repeat these "actions" at Wexford. "Indeed" (he wrote to the Speaker Lenthall), "it hath not without cause been deeply set upon our hearts, that we, intending better to this place than so great a ruin, hoping the town might be of more use to you and your army, yet God would not have it so; but by an unexpected providence in His righteous justice, brought a just judgment upon them, causing them to become a prey to the soldiers."

Mr. Gardiner explains how the "just judgment" was "brought upon them." He says: "At Wexford, Irish soldiers and townsmen resisted after the defences of the place had been captured, and, striving to inflict a purposeless loss of life on the victorious enemy, paid the penalty in their own persons."

The people of Wexford, undeterred by the

"example" of Drogheda, fought to the death for their homes and liberties; hence they paid the penalty in their own persons. "This town," wrote Cromwell to Lenthall, "is now so in your power that of the former inhabitants I believe scarce one in twenty can challenge any property in their houses. Most of them are run away, and many of them killed in this service."

The "example" of Drogheda was now fortified by the example of Wexford; yet what happened at Waterford? Cromwell arrived before that town in November, and, to quote Mr. Gardiner, "found his undertaking desperate." The inhabitants acted with spirit and self-confidence. They refused not only to surrender the town to Cromwell, but they would not allow Ormonde, representing the Royal cause, to enter it, believing, and believing rightly, that he had the interests rather of the English King than the interests of Ireland at heart. Castlehaven, representing Ormonde, urged them to admit his army, but they sternly refused. They sent a message to Ormonde, who was at Thomastown, saying that they would take reinforcements from him, but that he should send them Ferrall's Ulster Celts and no other troops. They wanted no soldiers tainted with English influences to enter the town. Ferrall's Ulster Celts were sent; but

Cromwell, who, it is said, lost 1,000 men through sickness and the hardships of the weather before the town, raised the siege, and went into winter quarters. Thus, as the men of Wexford had not been cowed by the "example" of Drogheda, the men of Waterford were not cowed by the "examples" of Drogheda and Wexford combined.

In February, 1650, Cromwell again took the field, and in March laid siege to Kilkenny. Though the plague was raging in the town, the garrison offered a stout resistance, and every attempt made to storm the main defences failed. Finally Cromwell granted favourable terms to the besieged. The garrison was allowed to march out with the honours of war, and the inhabitants on the payment of £2,000 were saved from further plunder.

But the best proof that the Irish were not cowed by the "example" of Drogheda is to be found in the defence of Clonmel by Hugh O'Neil. Hugh O'Neil was the nephew of Owen Roe O'Neil, and had served under that great commander in the Low Countries, ultimately following him to Ireland to fight for Faith and Fatherland. On the untimely death of Owen Roe in November, 1649, Hugh marched southwards with an Ulster army, to take part in the operations against Cromwell in Leinster and Munster. In February, 1650,

a Cromwellian force appeared before Clonmel. Ormonde seems to have thought that Clonmel could not be defended, and accordingly left it ill equipped with military stores and provisions. But O'Neil felt that it could and ought to be defended, and in February he threw himself into the town with 1,500 Ulster Celts —all infantry—and 50 Ormondist cavalry, under the command of Captain Fennell. The citizens appointed O'Neil Governor, and he soon prepared to put his house in order. He believed that if Ormonde would only co-operate with an army in the field, and if the supplies of provisions and ammunition were increased, he could defy the enemy. He wrote to Ormonde urging the Royalist leader to send help and to show fight. The citizens and the army, he said, "had joined in a solemn protestation and oath in union for God, King, and Country, and for the defence of the town to the uttermost of their power." He added: "The garrison is of good courage and resolution. The safety of the kingdom depends on Clonmel." He concluded by beseeching Ormonde "to prevent any bloody tragedy from being acted here as in other places. Your army ought to march night and day to our succour, and provisions should be sent for the people and the garrison." But Ormonde and the Ormondists acted with characteristic incapa-

city and irresolution, and the town was left to its fate.

In May, Cromwell joined the besieging army. He sent a summons to O'Neil calling on the garrison to surrender, and offering favourable terms. O'Neil replied: "I am of a different resolution than to give up the town on quarters and conditions till I am reduced to a lower station, and so I tell you to do your best." Cromwell promptly opened his batteries upon the town, and so the siege in earnest began. The English pounded away without, however, in the first instance producing any serious results. Nor did O'Neil content himself with merely acting on the defensive. He sallied out from time to time, met the enemy in the open, and inflicted serious losses on them, "some days killing 200, other days 300, other days 400, other days 500 men." Cromwell did not expect this resistance, and was, we hear, weary and impatient. Having failed to win by force, he seems to have had recourse to "wiles and stratagems." We learn from a contemporary Irish authority that he got into communication with the Ormondist Fennell, and bribed him to betray the town. For a sum of £500 Fennell agreed to open one of the gates to the enemy on a given night at twelve o'clock. O'Neil had taken the precaution of directing that the guards at all the gates should consist of at least

two-thirds of Ulster Celts. On the night in question he visited the various posts before retiring to his quarters. On reaching one of the gates he found that the guard consisted exclusively of Fennell's men. He sent for Fennell and demanded an explanation. Fennell explained, the explanation was not satisfactory, and Fennell was placed under arrest. "Tell me freely the truth," said O'Neil, whose suspicions were now thoroughly aroused, "or you are likely to suffer for it." Then Fennell confessed everything. At a given signal 500 of the enemy were to enter the gate unopposed, the rest to follow. O'Neil at once changed the guard, replacing the Ormondists by Ulster Celts. Then he ordered Fennell to give the signal, while he placed a chosen body of Ulster men to await the foe. Five hundred Cromwellians advanced and entered the open gate, but not one of them returned. The rest of the English force, coming to the support of their comrades, were stopped on the threshold, and driven back. Then the gates were closed, and the safety of the town was once more secured.

Cromwell (according to other authorities), baffled and perplexed, sent to Lord Broghill for reinforcements, and Broghill flew to his assistance with men and guns. Again the English batteries opened on the town, and at

length, at nightfall on the 8th of May, a breach was made, too late, however, to afford the besiegers a favourable opportunity of storming it then, and accordingly they suspended hostilities until the morrow. O'Neil was undismayed by this disaster. Ever vigilant, we learn that he sallied from the town, surprised a small English garrison, which held an unfinished fort near the river, and destroyed them before succour could arrive from the main body.

That night no one slept in Clonmel. Soldiers and citizens—men, women, and children—all worked at the defences, under the eye of O'Neil, preparing for the inevitable struggle on the morrow. A lane was made, running in a semicircular direction, from the breach into the town. Strong walls were raised on either side. At the end, concealed from any force entering the lane, a ditch was dug, and close to this ditch, and also out of view, two guns were planted. Houses overlooked the lane to the right and left.

At eight o'clock on the morning of the 9th Cromwell gave the order to storm the breach. The stormers advanced rapidly, singing hymns. On approaching the breach they found no obstruction. They entered it without opposition. They reached the middle of the lane, and not a soul was to be seen. Soon the lane was blocked by the storming party. Then,

those in front, suspecting a trap, called "halt," but those in the rear, believing that the Irish would not fight, called "forward." On went the stormers. Suddenly they came upon the unexpected ditch. Then the Irish guns thundered; a raking fire broke from the houses around, and the Ulster Celts sprang upon the foe. A terrible death-wrestle followed. Man to man, musket to musket, pike to pike—Ironside and Celt—the one accustomed to victory, the other ever buoyant in defeat and always gallant in action. To and fro the masses of men swayed, the Ironsides pushing forward, the Celts thrusting them back, until at length the impetuous charge of O'Neil's men bore down all opposition, and the stormers were shot through the breach. Cromwell hurried to the scene of action, and rallied his disordered forces. Once more the Ironsides, under the eye of their commander, entered the breach, and once more the Celts met them man to man. Another fierce death-wrestle, which, it is said, lasted for four hours, followed. The Celts were driven from the breach, and thrust back into the town. Then a galling cross-fire was opened on the enemy from the houses. Again the Celts, pike in hand, sprang at the foe, and on went the struggle until the lane flowed with blood. Colonel Culin fell at the head of the storming

party, and many English officers were struck down in the thick of the fight. Still the Ironsides held their ground, until the Celts, inspired by the spirit and example of their leader, made one final effort and drove the enemy pell-mell through the breach. Twice on that memorable day Ironside and Celt had met in fair fight, and twice the Ironside was worsted. At Drogheda the Cromwellians slaughtered over 2,000 souls. Over 2,000 Cromwellians, it is said, fell at Clonmel.

"We found in Clonmel," wrote one of Cromwell's soldiers, "the stoutest enemy this army has ever met in Ireland; and there was never seen so hot a storm, and so long continuance, and so gallantly defended either in England or Ireland."

That night of the 9th of May, Cromwell, we learn from Irish sources, sat sorrowfully in his camp. He had never been so stoutly resisted before; and could he expect better fortune were he to renew the attack on the morrow?

While depressed by these melancholy reflections a messenger entered and announced the unexpected intelligence that the Mayor of Clonmel (Michael White) had arrived at the camp and sought an interview. The interview was readily granted. Cromwell, we hear, complimented the Mayor on the defence of the town, and said that the garrison was "invin-

cible." The Mayor said he had come to surrender the town provided the English commander would grant favourable terms. After some discussion a treaty of surrender was agreed upon and duly signed. It provided: "1. That the said town and garrison of Clonmel, with arms, ammunition, and other furniture of war that are now therein shall be surrendered and delivered up into the hands of his Excellency. 2. That, in consideration thereof the inhabitants of the said town shall be protected, their lives and estates from all plunder and violence of soldiery, and shall have the same rights, liberty, and protection as other subjects under the authority of the Parliament of England have, or ought to have, and enjoy, within the dominion of Ireland."

After the treaty had been signed, Cromwell asked the Mayor if O'Neil knew that he had come to surrender the town. The Mayor replied "No," for that O'Neil and the garrison had departed two hours before. Then we are told that Cromwell flew into a rage, and said to the Mayor: "You knave, have you served me so, and why did you not tell me so before?" The Mayor replied: "If your Excellency had demanded the question I would tell you." Cromwell then told the Mayor to give back the paper. But the Mayor pressed him not "to break the conditions, or take them back, which

was not the repute his Excellency had, but to perform whatsoever he promised." Cromwell, growing calmer, next asked what manner of man was this Hugh Duff O'Neil, and the Mayor replied that "he was an over-the-sea soldier, who had been born in Spain;" and Cromwell answered: "I will follow this Hugh Duff O'Neil wheresoever he goes."

On the morning of the 10th of May Cromwell entered Clonmel; but he found no garrison, no military stores, no "furniture of war." Hugh O'Neil and his Ulster Celts were gone. Old men, old women, and children alone remained behind. But Cromwell kept the treaty.

This is what had happened in the interval. Hugh O'Neil had fired his last shot in driving the stormers back on the 9th of May. Not only was his ammunition spent, but all provisions were exhausted. The fall of the town was inevitable. In these circumstances O'Neil sent for the Mayor, and said that he proposed to withdraw the garrison under the cover of the night; for the rest, he directed the Mayor to open communications with Cromwell for the surrender of the town some hours after the garrison had departed. The Mayor, as we have seen, carried out these directions admirably, and so the garrison was saved to fight another day, and honourable terms were obtained for the citizens. Cromwell was

beaten in battle and outwitted in negotiations. Shortly after the surrender of Clonmel he returned to England, leaving Ireton and Ludlow to finish his work in Ireland.

Hugh O'Neil marched from Clonmel to Waterford, and then to Limerick, where the citizens immediately appointed him Governor. In 1651 Ireton appeared before the walls. The plague was raging in the town, as in so many towns of Ireland at the time, but O'Neil would not surrender.

Ireton opened his batteries, and soon made a breach ; but the stormers were repelled, as they had been repelled at Clonmel. The siege dragged on four months. O'Neil, struggling under great difficulties — famine, pestilence, internal discord (for the town was full of Ormondists ever ready to treat with the enemy) —gallantly held out. At length, when garrison and citizens were stricken with sickness, and when provisions were exhausted, he surrendered on honourable terms. The inhabitants were guaranteed life, liberty, property, but O'Neil himself and all who took a leading part with him in the defence were excepted from the treaty. On the 29th of October, 1651, O'Neil gave up the keys to Ireton.

Then a court-martial was appointed to consider the cases of those who stood outside the conditions, and almost all of them were hanged.

Geoffrey Baron, who had marched with O'Neil from Clonmel, and who had fought gallantly at Limerick, was summoned before the court. He was asked why he had fought against the English army. He gave a brave and noble answer. He said: "I have fought for the same cause as you say you are fighting for. I have fought for my religion and my country." But, as Cromwell said of the friar at Drogheda, "that did not save him." He was hanged within twenty-four hours. Then Hugh O'Neil was summoned before the court. He could but answer as Baron had answered. He too had fought for Ireland.

The majority of the court wished to save the life of this gallant soldier, but Ireton was inexorable, and O'Neil was sentenced to death. Then the officers, with Ludlow, apparently, at their head, besought Ireton to spare O'Neil, and Ireton again summoned the Irish leader to the court. Ireton spoke of the "blood which had been shed at Clonmel." But O'Neil could only answer that he "had always demeaned himself like a fair enemy." And there was no one present who could deny the fact. Nevertheless, Ireton was again inexorable, and for the second time O'Neil was sentenced to death. Ludlow and the other officers now redoubled their efforts to save the life of the foe whose gallantry had won their

admiration. Again they pressed Ireton to cancel the sentence; and finally Ireton declared in effect that he would wash his hands of the business, and leave the fate of O'Neil to the court. For a third time the court met (possibly under the presidency of Ludlow, for Ireton did not attend), and the capital sentence was cancelled.

O'Neil was sent a prisoner to the Tower of London. There he remained for a twelvemonth, when, on the intercession of the Spanish Ambassador, he was set free. He spent the rest of his life in the service of Spain. He died, it is said, on the battlefield.

SARSFIELD

PATRICK SARSFIELD is a popular Irish hero. Yet little is known of the story of his life. In 1690 he drove William III. from the walls of Limerick. On that achievement his reputation rests. Sarsfield and Limerick are still names to conjure with in Ireland.

The Sarsfields—De Saresfeld—were Normans. They came to Ireland with Henry II. There were two branches of the family. The head of the one, Dominic, was made a baronet by James I., and afterwards ennobled as Viscount Kinsale;[1] the head of the other, William, held the manor of Lucan, and was knighted while Mayor of Dublin by Sir Henry Sidney in 1566. The grandson of this William Sarsfield married Anne O'Moore, daughter of the famous Irish chief Rory O'Moore, and became the father of William, Patrick, and Mary. William married Mary, a natural daughter of

[1] In the reign of Charles II. the title was changed to Viscount Kilmallock.

Charles II. and sister of the Duke of Monmouth. On his death without male issue the family estates of Lucan descended to Patrick, the subject of this sketch.

Patrick Sarsfield was born, probably at Lucan, about 1650.[1] Beyond the fact that he was educated at a French military school, nothing is definitely known of his boyhood and youth. The first authentic bit of information which we get about him is to be found in Dalton's "Army List" for 1678, where his name appears as a lieutenant in Monmouth's regiment of Foot. We learn from Sarsfield himself that he was in London in the summer of 1678 (whither he had come from France), lodging in the house of the king's saddler at Charing Cross, and that some time previously he had received a commission in Captain Dangan's regiment of Horse. This commission, he said, had been given to him by "Colonel Dempsey or Mr. Trant at the Crown and Scepter Tavern, Pick-a-Dilly."[2]

The next glimpse we get of him is in the journal of Narcissus Luttrell, where we read (under date September 9, 1681): "There has

[1] Dr. Todhunter, "The Life of Patrick Sarsfield."

[2] Deposition made by Sarsfield before the Mayor of Chester. The Mayor had arrested certain persons on their way to Ireland without passports, Sarsfield among the number. In this deposition Sarsfield gives an account of himself to calm the Mayor's fears. For details see Dr. Todhunter's "Life."

been a tall Irishman to be seen in Bartholomew Fair, and the Lord Grey being to see him said he would make a swinging evidence," probably in allusion to the witnesses in "the Popish plot," "on which one Captain Sarsfield, an Irishman, sent his lordship a challenge, taking it as an affront on his countrymen." No duel, however, seems to have been fought. Later on we read (under date September 18, 1681): "Captain Sarsfield, who challenged the Lord Grey, was taken into custody, but hath since made his escape out of the messenger's hands." Sarsfield, however, did take part in a duel on December 16th following. Says Luttrell: "There was a duel fought between the Lord Newburgh and the Lord Kinsale as principals (two striplings under twenty) and Mr. Kirk and Captain Sarsfield as seconds: the principals had no hurt, but Captain Sarsfield was run through the body near the shoulder very dangerously." Over three years later we find him playing an important part on another stage. At the battle of Sedgemoor (July 6, 1685) he fought in the Life Guards under Feversham and Churchill.

"Monmouth's Foot," says Macaulay, "though deserted, made a gallant stand. The Life Guards attacked them on the right, the Blues on the left, but the Somersetshire clowns with their scythes and the butt ends of their muskets

faced the Royal Horse like old soldiers. Oglethorpe made a vigorous attempt to break them, and was manfully repulsed. Sarsfield, a brave Irish officer, whose name afterwards obtained a melancholy celebrity, charged on the other flank. His men were beaten back. He was himself struck to the ground, and lay for a time as one dead."

When the Revolution came Sarsfield remained faithful to the king. He led the Irish Horse at Wincanton in the first brush with the enemy, followed James to France, and returned with the ill-fated monarch to Ireland. In all that he did he acted like a gallant soldier and a chivalrous Irish gentleman. Yet he was no favourite with the king, nor with Tyrconnel, the Irish viceroy. "A brave man, but no brains," said James, a competent authority, no doubt, on bravery and brains. This was not the verdict of D'Avaux, the French Ambassador, who accompanied James on his Irish expedition.

"Sarsfield," he wrote to Louvois, "is not a man of the birth of my Lord Galway nor of McCarthy (Mountcashel), but he is a man distinguished by his merit, who has more influence in this kingdom than any man I know. He has valour, but, above all, honour and probity which are proof against any assault." James landed at Kinsale in March, 1689, and set out

immediately for the capital. In the Parliament, which he then summoned, Sarsfield sat for the county Dublin. He took no part in the siege of Londonderry, but commanded in Connaught. "I had all the trouble in the world," says D'Avaux, "to get Sarsfield made a brigadier; my Lord Tyrconnel strongly opposed this, saying he was a very brave man but had no head. Nevertheless, my Lord Tyrconnel sent him into the province of Connaught with a handful of men; he raised 2,000 more on his own credit, and with these troops preserved the whole province to the king." Afterwards James, apparently, began to think that Sarsfield possessed "brains" as well as "bravery." In exchange for some French troops a number of Irish recruits were sent to France in 1689—the first instalment of that brigade whose fame filled Europe, and the memory of whose deeds is still fondly cherished by the Irish people. D'Avaux asked James for Sarsfield to command these recruits, but James refused to grant the request.

"I asked the King of England," says D'Avaux, "for Sarsfield for one of the colonels to go to France and command the corps. The king was so pleased with his success in Connaught that when I asked for Sarsfield he told me that I wanted to take

all his officers, that he would not give him to me, and that I was unreasonable, and walked three times round the room in great anger. I bore all this meekly; and meanwhile I had a notion of my own, a very good one, as to Sarsfield. I obtained a promise from him that he would not go to France except to command this corps under the orders of McCarthy; so that if McCarthy (captured by the English) got out of prison he should still have chief command with Sarsfield under him; while if he remained prisoner (he escaped soon afterwards), Sarsfield should have sole command."

D'Avaux adds: "Sarsfield will, I believe, be extremely useful, as he is a man who will always be at the head of his troops, and will take great care of them."

Sarsfield commanded his regiment of Horse —Sarsfield's Horse—at the Battle of the Boyne. On the morning of July 1, 1690, he reconnoitred the English forces in company with Lauzun, Tyrconnel, and Berwick. "While William," says Macaulay, "was at his repast a group of horsemen appeared close to the water on the opposite shore. Among them his attendants could discern some who had once been conspicuous at reviews in Hyde Park and at balls in the gallery of Whitehall, the youthful Berwick, the small fair-haired Lauzun, Tyrconnel, once admired by maids

of honour as the model of manly vigour and beauty, but now bent down by years and crippled by gout, and, overtopping all, the stately head of Sarsfield."

William began the battle by an attempt to outflank the Irish left and get possession of the road to Dublin. Sarsfield's Horse and the French auxiliaries were sent to check this movement, and to secure the line of retreat, which they did. Meanwhile the English centre had forced the passage of the Boyne right under the Hill of Donore, from which vantage point James witnessed the fight. The Irish infantry, raw levies infamously led by Tyrconnel, gave way under the combined onslaught of English, Dutch, Danes, and Huguenots, but the cavalry, under Hamilton, made a gallant stand. Dashing into the stream, they checked the onset of Solmes' Blues, drove back the Danish Brigade, scattered the Huguenot regiments, and overwhelmed the Enniskilleners. Caillemot, the Huguenot leader, Schomberg, the veteran Dutch commander, and Walker of Derry fame, fell while rallying their broken forces. It was the crisis of the day. Had James possessed "bravery" or "brains" he would have hurled Sarsfield's Horse upon the enemy. But he showed neither the capacity of a general nor the courage of a soldier. Panic-stricken,

he fled from the field while the battle was still raging, and carried Sarsfield's Horse with him. Far differently acted William. Seeing the peril of the situation, he hastened to the scene of danger, flung himself into the thick of the fight, galloped from point to point, wherever the conflict was hottest, brought up every available man, rallied every wavering regiment, and ultimately defeated the Irish Horse, which, though unsupported, yielded only when their ranks were decimated and their commander was a prisoner in the hands of the enemy. "In war," says Napoleon, "a Man is everything." At the Boyne the Prince of Orange, and not the English king, was the "Man."

"Change kings," Sarsfield is reported to have said subsequently, "and we will fight you over again."

Flying from the Hill of Donore, James did not draw rein until he reached Dublin Castle. "The Irish ran," he said to Lady Tyrconnel, who met him on the threshold. "Your Majesty seems to have won the race," was the witty rejoinder.

From Dublin James hurried to the coast, and embarked for France. Ireland saw him no more.

After the Battle of the Boyne the Irish fell back on Limerick. William marched immediately against that city.

The commanders of the Franco-Irish army—Lauzun, Tyrconnel, Boisseleau, Sarsfield—held a council of war. Lauzun believed that Limerick could not be held. He laughed at the "fortifications." "It's unnecessary," he said, "for the English to bring cannon against such a place as this. What you call your ramparts might be battered down with roasted apples." Tyrconnel agreed with the French General. But Sarsfield said the town could be, and should be, defended. He would defend it. Then Lauzun and Tyrconnel retired with the French troops to Galway, and Sarsfield and the Irish soldiers remained to face the foe. Boisseleau remained with them. In describing the scenes which followed I shall borrow from what I have written elsewhere on this subject.

On August 9th William sat down before the town with an army of 28,000 men. The defenders numbered an effective force of 10,000 infantry and 4,000 horse. William at once sent a message to Boisseleau to surrender. Boisseleau sent back a courteous reply. "Tell the English king," he said, "that I hope I shall merit his opinion more by a vigorous defence than by a shameful surrender of a fortress which has been entrusted to me."

William was not prepared for this reply. He had heard that Lauzun and the French had departed. He did not believe that the

town, thus abandoned, would attempt to hold out. He was resolved to await the arrival of a siege train which was coming up from Waterford with guns, ammunition, and stores. On August 11th this siege train arrived at the little village of Ballyneety, within ten miles of William's camp.

The day before the news of its approach had reached Limerick Sarsfield saw at a glance that the fate of the town must depend on the arrival of the siege train, and he resolved that arrive it never should. On the night of August 10th he issued from the city with a force of five hundred horse, and, under the direction of a faithful guide, moved by a circuitous route towards Ballyneety, whither he had learned that the convoy guarding the siege train were bending their way. During the day of the 11th he remained concealed in the Keeper Mountain. In the evening the siege train arrived at Ballyneety. That night Sarsfield resolved to surprise the convoy and destroy the train. His first step was to learn the password of the enemy. Here fortune favoured him. The wife of a soldier attached to the convoy had lagged behind in the march. One of Sarsfield's troopers came up with her, and was struck with her forlorn position—friendless, tired, deserted. He dismounted and placed her on his horse. He learned who

she was, and she told him that the password of the convoy was "Sarsfield." At two o'clock on the morning of the 12th Sarsfield's Horse approached the lines of the enemy. The English sentinels challenged, and the password was given—"Sarsfield." The Irish Horse passed on, drawing nearer and nearer, until at length they came within striking distance of the foe.

The sentinels again challenged, when the leader of the foremost troop, placing himself at the head of his men and waving his sword, answered: "Sarsfield—Sarsfield is the word, and Sarsfield is the man." The Irish Horse charged, the English outposts were driven in, the camp was surprised. Sixty Englishmen were killed, one officer was taken prisoner, the rest fled, leaving behind waggons, guns, ammunition, and stores. Then "the victorious Irish made a huge pile of waggons and pieces of cannon. Every gun was stuffed with powder and fixed with its mouth in the ground, and the whole mass was blown up. The solitary prisoner was treated with great civility by Sarsfield. 'If I had failed in this attempt,' said the Irish General, 'I should have been off to France.' Intelligence had been carried to William's headquarters that Sarsfield had stolen out of Limerick, and was ranging the country.

"The king guessed the design of his brave enemy, and sent 500 horse to protect the guns. . . . At one in the morning the detachment set out, but had scarcely left when a blaze like lightning and a crash like thunder announced to the wide plain of the Shannon that all was over.

"Sarsfield had long been the favourite of his countrymen, and this most seasonable exploit, judiciously planned and vigorously executed, raised him still higher in their estimation. Their spirits rose, and the besiegers began to lose heart. William did his best to repair his loss. Two of the guns which had been blown up were found to be still serviceable. Two more were sent for from Waterford. Batteries were constructed of small field pieces, which, though they might have been useless against one of the fortresses of Hainault or Brabant, made some impression on the feeble defences of Limerick. Several outworks were carried by storm, and a breach in the rampart of the city began to appear."[1]

On August 27th William ordered an assault on the city. At three o'clock in the afternoon the storming party advanced. The Grenadiers led the way. Firing their matchlocks and throwing their grenades, they sprang into the breach. The defenders, confused and dis-

[1] Macaulay.

mayed by the explosion of the grenades—a new experience to them—gave way all along the line and fell back rapidly. On came the English, flushed by success and accustomed to victory, and back went the Irish before them. Within a short distance of the breach they rallied and faced the foe, but the English charge was irresistible and bore down all opposition. The English had now penetrated well into the town, and their victory seemed assured. But the Irish, driven to bay, rallied once more, and this time made a determined stand. A fierce hand-to-hand fight, which lasted for several hours, now began. The citizens of Limerick joined the soldiers, and, seizing whatever weapons lay ready to their hands, rushed into the fray. The very women mingled in the contest, flinging stones, bottles, and other missiles at the assailants, and being, as the Williamite historian, who was at the siege, says, "nearer to our men than their own." Hour after hour passed, but still the fight went on. Backwards and forwards the surging mass of combatants swayed, till towards sunset the English slowly and sullenly, but steadily and surely, commenced to give way. A splendid German regiment, the Brandenburgers, had entered the town, and were working round to the rear of the Irish, when a mine exploded beneath their feet and blew them into the air.

Then, amid the ruin and carnage, the Irish redoubled their efforts and beat the English back to the breach. There the enemy made a last stand, but in vain. They were hurled from the city, and driven pell-mell to their entrenchments. William, who had witnessed the fight from an old ruin called Cromwell's Fort, now saw his retreating army flying from the victorious Irish. He quickly hastened to his tent and summoned a council of war. But it was decided that the attack should not be renewed. A few days afterwards William sailed for England, leaving General Ginkel in command of the army, and on August 31st General Ginkel marched away from Limerick. About the same time Lauzun and Tyrconnel retired to France, while Sarsfield and Boisseleau remained among the people whom they had so well and gloriously defended.

At the commencement of the war Sarsfield was the soldier of the king. He was now the soldier of Ireland. "The darling of the army" —so he has been described by a contemporary authority. "The king," said one of his colonels at Athlone, "is nothing to me. I obey Sarsfield."

The sentiment so expressed was no doubt general among the Irish soldiers, and may account for the fact that, despite the gallant defence of Limerick, James persisted in keep-

ing the hero of the siege in the background. He suspected and distrusted the one man who had served him with conspicuous success. After the victory Berwick was made the Jacobite Governor of Ireland. Sarsfield was sent to command in Connaught. Early in 1691 Tyrconnel, the evil genius of the Irish army, returned, and Berwick was recalled to France. A Frenchman, St. Ruth, was appointed Commander-in-Chief. Another Frenchman, D'Usson, was made second in command. Sarsfield was ignored—save, indeed, that he received the barren title of Earl of Lucan. Yet he never complained. He did his duty. He took measures for the defence of his province, and awaited orders. In May, 1691, the English army, under Ginkel, took the field, and marched on Connaught. Sarsfield waited for them at Athlone, the best strategic point in the line of defence.

One part of Athlone—the English town—stands in Leinster, the other—the Irish town—in Connaught. The Shannon runs between, and was in those days spanned by a stone bridge. After a stubborn resistance Ginkel succeeded in seizing the Leinster part of the town, but the Irish, retreating, destroyed two arches of the bridge, and so checked the English advance. The real fight now began. To reach the Connaught side the river had to

be forded or the bridge crossed. St. Ruth, who had hastened with his army from Limerick and taken up his position on the Connaught side, considered the town unassailable, and, though warned by Sarsfield to keep on the alert, showed neither skill nor energy in directing the defence. In fact, he would neither command himself nor allow Sarsfield to command. "At the crisis of the fate of Ireland," Macaulay justly says, "the services of the first of Irish soldiers were not used, or were used with jealous caution . . . if he ventured to offer a suggestion it was received with a sneer or a frown." High words, it is said, passed between St. Ruth and Sarsfield, and the latter was ordered to his camp.

On June 26th Ginkel opened a fierce fire on the Irish town, dealing death and havoc around. He then tried to cross the bridge, but the Irish offered a desperate resistance. Throughout the 26th and 27th the fight continued. The English repaired the broken arch on their side and succeeded in laying beams across to the Connaught side, and in placing planks on these beams. The position of the besieged was now perilous to the last degree. Yet, as Dr. Todhunter observes, "out of this peril came the most heroic action of the siege. A certain sergeant of Maxwell's dragoons, whose name, as given in James's 'Memoirs,'

was Custume, getting together a party of ten other stout fellows, volunteered to pull up the planks laid down by the enemy. Donning their breast and back pieces, that they might as long as possible keep their lives, they rushed boldly out upon the bridge, drove back the carpenters, 'and with the courage and strength beyond what men were thought capable of,' say the 'Memoirs,' 'began to pull up the planks, break down the beams, and fling them into the water; a tremendous fire from the whole English line was opened on them, and man after man fell; but plank after plank was torn up and hurled into the stream. Then the beams were attacked with saw and axe, but the eleven were all killed before their task was finished. Then eleven more sprang out, and the beams began to yield, though the men dropped one by one as before. Two got back alive to the town; the other nine were left dead upon the bridge. But the last beam was floating down the uncrossable Shannon.'"

The defence of the bridge filled St. Ruth with renewed hope, and Ginkel almost with despair. The English commander summoned a council of war. The question of an immediate retreat was discussed, but Talmash and Ruvigny urged that another attempt should be made to take the town. At one point the river was fordable. It was proposed to try the

ford this time. Maxwell guarded the ford on the Connaught side. He sent to St. Ruth for reinforcements. St. Ruth returned a scornful answer: "If Brigadier Maxwell is afraid," he is reported to have said, "another general shall be sent." Sarsfield also warned the Commander-in-Chief, but his warning was despised, and he himself was forced to take up a position in the rear.

On June 30th the English crossed the ford: the inadequate Irish force sent to guard the river were taken completely by surprise. Maxwell was made a prisoner, his men were dispersed, and Athlone was captured almost before St. Ruth knew that the English had crossed the Shannon. The gallant defenders of the bridge had fallen in vain. The bravery of the soldier was not proof against the folly of the general. Athlone fell because St. Ruth had failed to do his duty.

St. Ruth now crossed the river Suck and took up a position near the village of Aughrim, some twenty miles west of Athlone and about thirty miles due north of Limerick. There Ginkel found him ready, and indeed eager, for the fray. St. Ruth's ground was well chosen. His army was posted on the slope of a hill; in front lay a morass passable for infantry, but not for cavalry. On the right was a stream issuing from the morass; on the left an old

causeway only wide enough for two horses to pass at a time. Beyond the causeway was the Castle of Aughrim.

St. Ruth's dispositions were carefully made. In the centre, on the edge of the morass and screened by some old "hedges and ditches," were the infantry commanded by Dorrington and John Hamilton. De Tessé commanded the right wing facing the stream, and with him were the cavalry regiments of Tyrconnel, Abercorn, Prendergast, and Sutherland. Sheldon commanded the left wing, defending the causeway; in the Castle of Aughrim Walter Bourke with two hundred men was posted. Despite the lesson of Athlone, St. Ruth still treated Sarsfield with insolent *hauteur*. The most capable officer in the Irish army was, on this eventful day, placed in command of the reserves of cavalry, scarcely within sight of the field of battle, and with strict directions not to move until ordered. He was not taken into the confidence of the Commander-in-Chief, nor informed at any time of the operations in progress.

At five o'clock on the evening of July 12th the battle began. Ginkel tried to turn the Irish right, but failed utterly. Then he ordered a frontal attack. The Huguenot regiments led the way across the morass. The Irish held their fire until the enemy came to close quarters,

then a fierce combat ensued. The English Foot broke through the hedges, the Irish falling slowly back. Suddenly a flanking fire was opened on the Huguenots, who reeled under the shock. The Irish at the centre rallied and charged home ; supports were sent forward on both sides. A desperate hand-to-hand conflict followed, sword to sword and bayonet to bayonet. Finally, the English gave way and were chased across the morass to their own ground. Again and again the assault was renewed on the Irish centre, and again and again it was fiercely repelled.

"This repulse," says a contemporary authority, one who was on the field of battle, "was no sooner given than a grand corps comes pouring down on the Irish for the third time. It was now the combat seemed more violent than before, and as if it were the last effort. After an obstinate storm the English were constrained to retreat. The Irish followed, making use of club musket, whereby the foreigners suffered much. The regiment of Guards and the whole Royal Brigade was particularly noted by the field to have performed uncommon execution. The Irish pursued so far that they gained the enemy's ground and maintained themselves thereon. General Gordon O'Neil with his regiment took some of their cannon." "Hurrah!

my boys," cried St. Ruth, "the victory is ours. We will drive them along the road to Dublin."

The fight had now lasted for two hours. Ginkel, as after the heroic defence of the bridge at Athlone, was in despair. He meditated a retreat, but Mackay urged him to hold his ground. The attempt to turn the Irish right had failed; the attacks on the centre had failed. Mackay now advised a turning movement against the Irish left. Ginkel agreed. Mackay and Ruvigny led the Horse by twos along the old causeway under a heavy covering fire. St. Ruth saw the movement and laughed at it. His left was his strongest position. He waited to hear the thunder of the guns from the Castle of Aughrim, but Bourke's batteries were silent; the Irish had run short of ammunition. St. Ruth hastened to the spot. He sent to Sarsfield for supports, but madly would not allow Sarsfield to command these supports. For the third time, when the fate of Ireland hung in the balance, this gallant soldier was doomed to inaction. Sarsfield sent forward the supports, chafing under the order which fixed him to a spot from which he could not even see his men advance. St. Ruth was elated with joy. He believed that the English were delivering themselves into his hands. "Forward, my boys," he cried; "we will sweep them before us." The next instant he fell lifeless from his

horse : a cannon ball had carried off his head. The death of St. Ruth was followed by total inaction on the Irish left. No one seems to have taken command. The news was kept from Sarsfield. Nothing was done to check the English advance. The Irish left seemed paralysed. Meanwhile Mackay and Ruvigny pushed forward along the causeway, and got close to the Irish side.

Ginkel then ordered his centre to advance once more across the morass to engage the Irish infantry in front. The Irish infantry resisted this attack with the gallantry which they had shown throughout the whole day. "They behaved themselves like men of another nation," says the self-complacent story. "The Irish were never known to fight with more resolution," says the *London Gazette.*

But the fate of the bravest soldiers in the world depends on the will of the general. The English were well served by Mackay, whose turning movement was well conceived and well executed. The Irish, after the fall of St. Ruth, were practically left without a leader, for Sarsfield was kept completely in the dark. Yet the Irish centre presented a bold front to the enemy until Mackay had worked round on the left and threatened their rear. Then they gave way, and their flight was the first intimation which Sarsfield received that the day was lost.

He immediately took command, rallied the scattered forces, and retreated to Limerick. "Colonel Sarsfield," says an English authority in the French archives quoted by Dr. Todhunter, "who commanded the enemy in their retreat, performed miracles, and if he was not killed or taken it was not from any fault of his."

On August 25, 1691, an English army was once more before Limerick, and Sarsfield was again within the walls of the beleaguered town. Limerick held bravely out; but, with the rest of Ireland conquered, Sarsfield felt that he could do little more now than fight for honourable terms of submission. Strange as it may seem, Ginkel was as anxious to treat as Sarsfield. Though successful, the English General did not feel safe. William himself was eager for peace. "The king," says Burnet, "had given Ginkel secret instructions that he should grant all the demands the Irish could make that would put an end to the war." Ginkel, having secured a strong position on the Clare side of the river, shutting the garrison up in the town, expressed his willingness, on the initiative of Sarsfield, to discuss terms of capitulation. On September 24th there was an interview between Ruvigny and Sarsfield. Negotiations for peace were opened, and on October 3rd the rough draft of the famous

Treaty of Limerick was signed on a stone on the Clare side of the river, just over Thomond Bridge. By this treaty the Irish were guaranteed civil and religious liberty. As Burnet tersely puts it, "They were admitted to all the privileges of subjects on taking the oath of allegiance to their Majesties." When the draft came to be engrossed it was found that some words of vital importance had been omitted. Sarsfield's attention was called to the fact. He insisted on the restoration of the words. A warm discussion arose between himself and Ginkel. It seemed as if the conflict would be renewed.

Meanwhile a powerful French fleet had arrived off the coast. The French officers in Limerick urged Sarsfield to break off negotiations; but the Irish General said that he would observe the treaty if the English would observe it too by restoring the omitted words. The words were then restored. But, incredible as it may seem, they were again omitted in the draft submitted to William for signature. To his honour be it said, William, on learning of the omission, replaced the words and then signed the treaty.

The rest of the story of the Treaty of Limerick, the story of its violation—"violated," as John Bright once said, "almost incessantly during two centuries of time"—

does not properly belong to the story of Sarsfield's life, and shall not be told here.

In November Sarsfield, followed by 12,000 Irish soldiers, who marched out of Limerick with all the honours of war, sailed for France to enter the service of Louis XIV. The abilities of the gallant Irishman were quickly appreciated by the great General who now commanded the French army. On the recommendation of Luxembourg he was at once raised to the rank of Lieutenant-General.

He was soon destined to meet his old opponents—Mackay, Talmash, Ruvigny, Ginkel, William himself—in the campaign of the Netherlands. On the hard-fought field of Steinkirk his valour was conspicuous among the most valiant soldiers of Europe. There Mackay fell rallying the broken forces of England, and Sarsfield joined in the crowning charge which gave victory to the arms of France. Twelve months later he fought his last battle.

On July 19, 1693, Luxembourg and William met again on the field of Landen. The English held a strongly entrenched position in and around the villages of Neerwinden and Neerlanden, with a river, the Gette, in their rear. At four o'clock in the morning Luxembourg began operations, and for eleven hours the battle lasted. Neerwinden was the key of

the English position. Luxembourg concentrated all his strength against it. Again and again the French entered the village, and again and again they were driven back.

The Irish regiment of Dorrington, led by Barrett, were the first in the English trenches. Barrett died at his post, but not until the French supports had come up and the English were hotly engaged all along the line. Berwick, pushing impetuously forward, was taken prisoner. Solmes, bravely resisting the "fiery onset of France," fell at the head of his men. Ruvigny was captured, but chivalrously allowed to escape, for his captors believed that if given up he would be doomed to a traitor's death. So the fight went on. Sometimes the scale went down on the side of England, sometimes on the side of France. At length Luxembourg ordered the Household Troops —the conquerors of Steinkirk—to advance. Driving the English before them, they entered Neerwinden.

Rallying under the eye of William himself, the English stubbornly disputed every inch of ground. But the Household Troops dashed on. Neerwinden was taken and held. William, covering the "slow retreat of England," fell back over the Gette.

Sarsfield, who from the early morning till the turn of the day was in the thickest of the

fight, now pressed forward at the head of a French cavalry regiment in hot pursuit of the beaten foe.

The scene of Aughrim was reversed, and Ginkel, flying from his old antagonist, narrowly escaped a grave in the waters of the river.

The field was fought and won. But in the arms of victory Sarsfield fell. Struck by a bullet in the breast, he was borne mortally wounded from the ground, and three days later died at the hamlet of Huy. The Irish people still fondly cherish the tradition which tells how, as he was carried dying from the battle-field, he exclaimed: "Oh, would that this were for Ireland!"

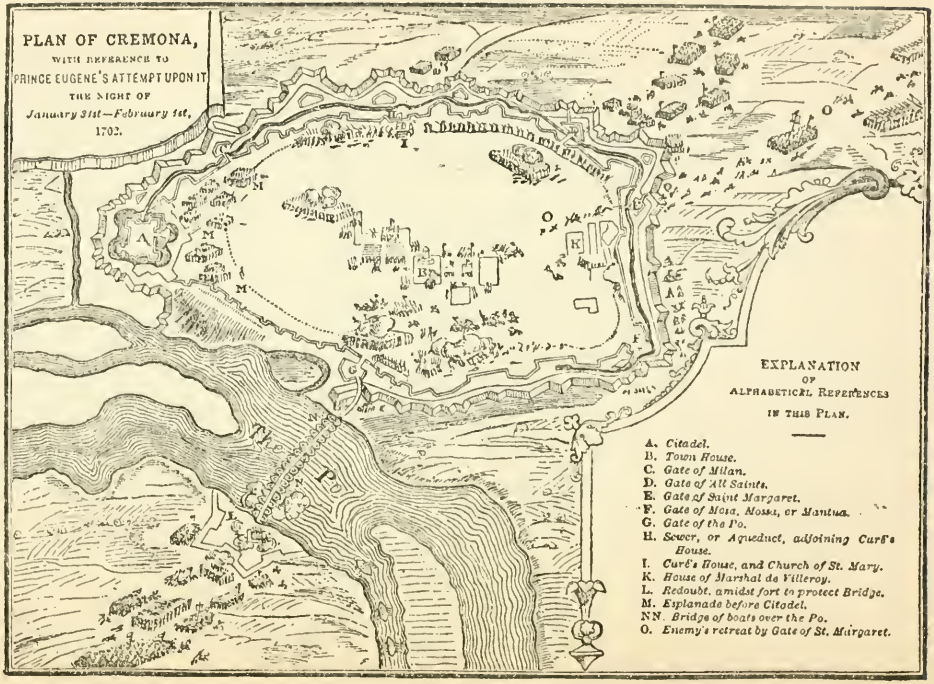
THE IRISH BRIGADE AT CREMONA

In 1701 the War of the Spanish Succession began. The King of Spain, Charles II., weak, sickly, imbecile, had no issue. There were rivals for the throne in France and Germany. Louis XIV. had married Charles's elder sister, Maria Theresa ; the Emperor Leopold his younger sister, Margaret. Louis claimed the throne for his son, the Dauphin ; Leopold for his son and heir, Joseph. To avert a conflict, a Partition Treaty had been made, under which certain parts of the Spanish dominions were to go to Louis' grandson, the son of the Dauphin, Philip of Anjou ; other parts were to go to the younger son of the Emperor, the Archduke Charles of Austria. In November, 1700, Charles II. died, when it was found that he had made a will, leaving all his dominions to Philip. Louis accepted the will and refused to carry out the Treaty. Leopold protested, and in September, 1701, declared war against

France. Before the end of the year Europe was in a blaze.

Ten years before the outbreak of this war, when, on the fall of Limerick, all hopes of Irish National Independence were for the time extinguished, 15,000 Irish soldiers, under Sarsfield, left their native land to take service in the armies of France. All students of history know that these exiles formed the nucleus of the famous Irish Brigade, whose deeds are among the proudest memories of the Irish nation. Before 1701 they had distinguished themselves on the battlefields of Europe, at Marsiglia, at Steinkirk, at Landen. Now they were destined to take the field once more, and to add fresh laurels to those they had already won.

In the winter of 1701 the armies of France and Austria were in Italy. The French headquarters were at Cremona, then a Spanish possession. The Austrians lay to the north-east and south-east of the town, one army occupying the country between Mantua (held by a French garrison) and the river Oglio, the other commanding the course of the river Po from Cremona to Ferrara. Could the Austrians seize Cremona, they would destroy the main French army opposed to them, isolate the French garrison of Mantua, and become masters of the whole Duchy of Milan. To



From Quincy's Histoire Militaire de Louis XIV.

the capture of Cremona, then, the Austrian commander, Prince Eugene, bent all his energies and resources. Cremona was held by a French garrison about 8,000 strong, including two regiments—Dillon's and Burke's —of the Irish Brigade. It was well fortified. Its natural position was strong. Bounded on the south by the river Po (which was crossed by a bridge of boats, protected on the southern side by a redoubt), and strengthened by formidable works on the north, east, and west, it could scarcely be taken by assault. Eugene —one of the most successful captains of his age—resorted to stratagem.

On the north side of the town, not far from the gate of All Saints, lived the Curé, Cassioli by name. His brother was a spy in the Austrian army. Cassioli was corrupted. Every day he furnished Prince Eugene with ample information of all that went on. Near Cassioli's house was an old aqueduct, once used as a sewer.[1] The existence of this aqueduct suggested a brilliant idea to Eugene. Why not draft soldiers through it into Cremona? The co-operation of Cassioli was invited and readily given. He complained to the Governor that the aqueduct caused him serious inconvenience. It wanted to be cleared out, he said. The Governor fell into the trap. The aqueduct

[1] See plan.

was cleared out, the grating at the extreme end (the Austrian end) was removed, and the way innocently prepared for the enemy's entrance. This done, half a dozen soldiers were sent to make a passage through the aqueduct into Cassioli's wine cellar. Then men were cautiously drafted into Cassioli's house. The men drafted through the aqueduct into the town were, on the night of January 31, 1702, to co-operate with men outside in breaking down the unguarded wall near St. Margaret's gate. Eugene and General Merci, at the head of a strong Austrian force, some four or five thousand men, would enter by this breach. Eugene would seize the Town House in the Central Square, shut the French up in the citadel in the extreme west, and isolate the guard at the Mantua Gate in the south-east. Then Merci would dash for the Po Gate, overpower the guard, and seize the position, whereupon Prince Vaudemont, with the main body of the Austrian army, 5,000 or 6,000 strong, stationed at the south, would march across the bridge of boats, enter at the Po Gate, reinforce Eugene, overwhelm the French in the citadel, and reduce the town to submission. It was a well-conceived plan, and, up to a point, well executed.

The French were taken utterly by surprise. Marshal Villeroi seems to have thought that

the town was impregnable. He scarcely took any pains to keep watch or ward. Cremona would take care of itself. That was his view. On the east of the town, near the Gate of St. Margaret, a wall had been built to bar the ingress of the foe; but no sentinel was placed on the spot. Like carelessness was shown almost everywhere.

The French, light-hearted and fearless, had given themselves up to amusements and festivities, Cremona presented rather the aspect of a pleasure-resort than a threatened town. Marshal Villeroi did, indeed, ask for the last reports of the night, before retiring to rest. The reports were satisfactory; all was well. So assured, the Marshal laid his head on his pillow and slept like a top. At daybreak, on the 1st of February, he was aroused by the sound of musketry. Dressing hurriedly, he mounted his horse and rode for the Central Square. But he was at once surrounded by Austrian Cuirassiers and struck to the ground. Then Captain M'Donnell, an Irish officer in the service of Austria, rushed forward and saved the Marshal's life. "I am Marshal Villeroi," said the French Commander; "take me to my men and name your price!" "I am Francis M'Donnell, of Bagnis' Regiment," replied the Irishman, "and you are my prisoner"; and forthwith he handed the

French Marshal over to the Austrian General of Division, Stharemberg. Eugene had, in fact, seized the Town House before Villeroi was out of his bed.

Though stunned by the suddenness of the attack, the French quickly rallied, and fiercely attacked the foe. The Chevalier D'Entragues, Colonel of the Regiment des Clairveaux, was first ahorse. At the head of his men he dashed for the Central Square, sweeping the Austrian Cuirassiers from his path. Then the Austrian infantry came up. There was a desperate struggle round the Town House. D'Entragues was killed and his men were routed. The Marquis De Crenant succeeded Villeroi in command. He was immediately slain. The Marquis De Mongon succeeded De Crenant.

Leading a fresh attack upon the Town House he was unhorsed, trampled upon, and made a prisoner. Every attempt to dislodge Eugene failed. The French were repulsed at every point. It remained only to seize the Po Gate and the Austrians would be masters of the town.

The Po Gate was the key of the situation. All depended on what happened there. If it were seized, then Vaudemont's forces would pour like an irresistible flood into the town, sweeping all before them. If it were held, the French would get time to rally, the Austrians

would remain without reinforcements, and the situation might be saved. In an instant Merci was at the Po Gate. Before him he saw a barrier in the form of a palisade. He ordered his men to hold their fire and to take the position by the bayonet, reckoning, doubtless, on an easy victory over the sleeping guard. The Austrians advance quickly. Already they are at the barrier. One rush and the unsuspecting guard shall be at their mercy, and the Po Gate in their hands. "Charge!" cry the Austrian officers. The men dash forward. The next moment a raking fire from behind the barrier drives them back, in their turn surprised, scattered, dismayed. The Po Gate was held by a handful of Irishmen of Dillon's Regiment, who were wide awake. Late the night before Major O'Mahony, who commanded the regiment, had visited the guard. He told them to keep a bright look-out, and to be up at cockcrow in the morning, when he would review the regiment at the Gate. The men obeyed orders, did their duty, and were ready for the foe. Though staggered for the moment by the suddenness and steadiness of the Irish fire, the Austrians soon rallied, and tried once more to take the barrier at the point of the bayonet. Again they were driven back. They thrust their bayonets in between the bars of the palisade, but the assault at the point of

the bayonet was repelled at the point of the bayonet. Merci then attacked St. Peter's rampart and battery on the Irish left, commanding the Po Gate. The French guard were taken unawares, and the position was seized. Merci immediately turned the guns on the barrier. The Irish were now in sore straits. They could not shelter themselves from the fire of the battery. They were at the mercy of the Austrian General. They had but one hope, namely, that their comrades who were in barracks close by would be awakened by the sound of musketry, and would hasten to their help. Upon this they counted, and they did not count in vain. At the sound of firing the men in barracks sprang from their beds, seized their muskets, and in trousers and shirt, with O'Mahony at their head, shouting "To the Po Gate! to the Po Gate!" dashed forward. Welcome was the sound which soon broke upon the ears of the men behind the barrier. At a moment when all seemed lost a wild cheer, which they knew well, rent the air. The Austrians in front stood still, and then wheeled round. Merci suddenly turned the guns of the battery away from the barrier towards the town. Again the wild cheer was wafted on the breeze, and the Gaelic cry, "Faugh-a-Ballagh," was heard above the din of battle. The guard at the barrier then looked upon a sight which

cheered their hearts. They saw men half dressed—men in shirts and trousers—fighting desperately at the rear of the Austrians, and struggling splendidly to force their way to the barrier itself. Then the battery on the left was attacked, and men in white sprang up the ramparts. The situation was clear. A fierce attack had suddenly been developed on the Austrian rear and flank. The object of the attacking party was unmistakable. It was to recapture the battery, and cut their way to the barrier. On the rampart the eyes of the men behind the barrier were now fixed ; for those who held the battery would in the end hold the gate. Upward pressed the men in white, and backward went the Austrians before them. Cannon, musket, bayonet, all were brought into play, but onward and upward still pressed the men in white. Again and again the Austrians wavered. Again and again they rallied, but those fierce warriors who had turned out of their beds to fight, and who, with bare feet and torn rags, scrambled forward, could not be driven back. At length, as the rays of the morning sun fell upon the scene, Major Wauchop, commanding Burke's Regiment, recaptured the battery, and stood upon the ramparts' height triumphant. Below, in front of the palisade, the fight raged furiously, until half-naked men, grim and blood-stained,

waving their muskets on high, and hoarsely shouting the war-cries of their nation, clambered over the barrier, and the soldiers of Dillon's Regiment joined hands with their comrades. The Po Gate was saved. The Austrian General Merci was borne from the rampart mortally wounded.

Baron Friburg now took command, and quickly renewed the attack on the barrier. But Dillon's Regiment stood between him and it. At the head of the Imperial Cuirassiers he charged the Irish, who reeled under the shock of these splendid veterans. Friburg, waving his sword on high, shouted to his men to press forward through the broken ranks of their retreating foes. O'Mahony rallied his men, striving to close the horrible gaps which the cavalry had made. Burke's Regiment hastened to the succour of their comrades, falling on the Austrian flank. Onward rode Friburg, and vigorously the Austrians strove to break the Irish front. It was a fearful struggle—"the linen shirt and steel cuirass, the naked footman and harnessed cavalier." Friburg was the central figure of the fight. Risking everything, he cheered his men by word and example. He had ridden into the very midst of the Irish, and gallantly his troops followed their dauntless leader. O'Mahony, filled with admiration for the noble bearing and heroic courage of the

man, and seeing what Friburg did not see, the imminent danger to which he was exposed —for the Irish were now gathering around from all quarters—rushed forward, seized the rein of the Austrian's horse, shouting, "Quarter for Friburg." But Friburg answered, "No quarter for any one to-day," and driving his spurs into his horse's side, plunged forward, flinging O'Mahony from his path. In the next moment he fell to the ground shot through the heart. The fall of Friburg demoralised his men. The Irishmen redoubled their efforts, and slowly but surely back went the Imperial Cavalry.

It was now noon, and Vaudemont had not yet crossed the Po. O'Mahony, having withdrawn the men from the fort on the further side, destroyed the bridge of boats. What were the Austrians to do? Eugene had got into the town by a stratagem. He now resolved to break down the resistance of the Irish by a stratagem. He sent Captain M'Donnell, under a flag of truce to O'Mahony, offering the Irish the highest terms he could give if they would surrender the gate and enter the Austrian service.

O'Mahony gave a practical answer to this message. He made M'Donnell prisoner. "You have come," he said, "not as an ambassador to treat, but as a suborner to seduce. Your mission

is unworthy of you and of your prince. He will have to take the Po Gate before he gets you back." On learning M'Donnell's fate, Eugene tried another ruse. He sent Count Commerci to Villeroi, saying that the efforts of the Irish to hold the Po Gate were hopeless, and that if persisted in would lead to the utter annihilation of the force. Under these circumstances he urged Villeroi to stop further useless effusion of blood, by ordering O'Mahony to give up fighting. Villeroi replied: "I am a prisoner. I can give no orders Let the men at the Po Gate do what they like."

The men at the Po Gate cried, "No surrender!" and stoutly defied the foe. O'Mahony, having strengthened his position at the barrier, now resolved to take the offensive. He ordered Captain Dillon, with a detachment of Dillon's Regiment, to force a passage to the Gate of Mantua with a view of threatening the Austrian left flank. But Dillon was driven back with great slaughter. Again and again the attack was renewed, and again and again repulsed.

At length O'Mahony led the attack in person, pushing vigorously forward, until he got jammed half-way between the two gates by an Austrian force in front and rear. But he was resolved not to turn back. Relying upon succour from Wauchop, he pointed his sword towards the Gate of Mantua, and fiercely

shouted, "Forward!" Fiercely his men obeyed, and stoutly the enemy resisted. But the Austrians were now hard pressed in another part of the town by the French, who, issuing from the citadel on the west, had pushed their way northward and seized the aqueduct, thus co-operating with O'Mahony, who was forcing his way upward from the south and east. The tide of battle had at last turned in favour of France. The position of Eugene had become perilous.

Hopeless of aid from Vaudemont without, and his line of retreat threatened by the half-circling movement of French and Irish within, it was no longer a question of holding the town, but of getting safely away. A retreat was sounded, and the Austrians, attacked upon every side, fell back all along the line. O'Mahony had already reached the Gate of Mantua, and was still pressing forward, when Eugene, by supreme skill and gallantry, succeeded in holding the French and Irish in check, while his routed army flew through the Gate of St. Margaret's. The fight had raged from dark to dark, but the morning's sun found the French flag flying once more from the Central Square, and the ramparts guarded by those Irish exiles whose valour had saved the town.

FONTENOY

Between 1740 and 1748 the war of the Austrian Succession convulsed Europe. In 1713 Charles VI., Archduke of Austria, King of Hungary and Bohemia, and Emperor of Germany, had promulgated a new law called—*par excellence*—the "Pragmatic Sanction," by which, in default of male descendants, the succession to his dominions was secured in the female line. In 1740 he died, leaving no male issue, whereupon his daughter, Maria Theresa, succeeded to his ample possessions. But her rights were disputed. Frederic the Great claimed the province of Silesia, Charles, Elector of Bavaria, claimed the Kingdom of Bohemia, while the King of Spain made still larger demands. The dismemberment of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy seemed imminent; and each European State was eager to range itself upon the side which appeared most conducive to its own interests. England and Holland were among the Powers which fought in sup-

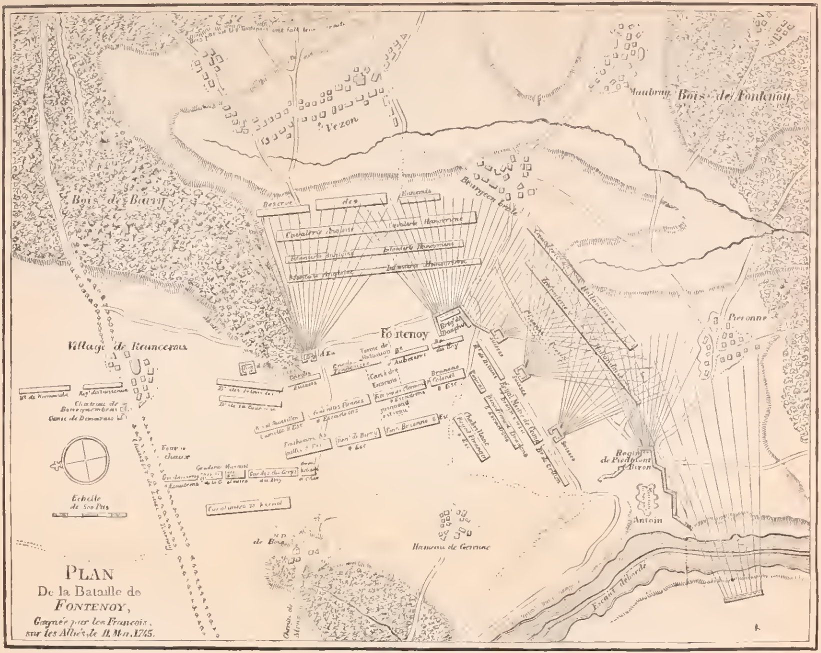
port of the Pragmatic Sanction. France ranged herself upon the side of the Elector of Bavaria —an old ally. Frederic and the Elector soon began hostilities. The one seized Silesia, the other marched into Bohemia, and was crowned King. The flame thus kindled spread over Europe, and blazed out in regions far beyond. "The whole world," says Macaulay, "sprang to arms." And, he adds, "On the head of Frederic is all the blood which was shed in a war which raged during many years, and in every quarter of the globe, the blood of the column at Fontenoy, the blood of the mountaineers who were slaughtered at Culloden. The evils produced by his wickedness [for he had struck the first blow] were felt in lands where the name of Prussia was unknown, and, in order that he might rob a neighbour whom he had promised to defend, black men fought on the coast of Coromandel, and red men scalped each other by the great Lakes of North America."

We need not follow the fortunes of this war. Irish interest in it centres in a single battle; and Irishmen who, it may be, know little else of the history of their country, can tell the story of Fontenoy.

In 1743 England and France came to blows in Germany, and France was defeated at Dettingen. In 1745 they came to blows again

in the Netherlands, and Dettingen was avenged. There was something more avenged too ; and the men who led the crowning charge at Fontenoy shouted, as they closed with the enemies of their race, "Remember Limerick! Down with the Sassenach!"

In April, 1745, a French army of 80,000 men, under Marshal Saxe (Count Lowendal being second in command), marched into the Austrian Netherlands, and in the presence of King Louis XV. and the Dauphin, laid siege to Tournai. An allied army, consisting of English under the Duke of Cumberland, Austrians under Marshal Koenigseck, and Dutch under the Prince of Waldeck (numbering in all some 60,000, of which 25,000 were English), advanced to save the town. Saxe, leaving 18,000 men before Tournai, threw himself across the enemy's path on the open plain which lies near the little villages of Antoin and Fontenoy. The position was well chosen, and its natural advantages were improved by the military skill of the French General. On the right were the villages of Fontenoy and Antoin, the river Scheld (Escaut) running close by the latter. On the left were the village of Ramecroix and the wood of Barri. In front was rising ground, and farther on were "bushy hollows" stretching away towards Vezon. To command the rising ground and the hollows,



Irish Memoirs

FROM DUMORTOUS HISTOIRE DES CONQUÊTES DE LOUIS XV

Saxe erected one redoubt on the left of Fontenoy off the Vezon road, and another (called d'Eu) opposite to it on the outskirts of the wood; and he calculated that the fire from the guns in the redoubts would make it impossible for any force to march across the plain at this point in order to attack the French centre.

He also erected a redoubt at Antoin (on the right flank), and the space between Antoin and Fontenoy (which was in front of Antoin) was protected—at the suggestion, it is said, of the Irishman Lally—by three more redoubts. Thus a force making any attempt on the French right would have to fight with these three redoubts in its front. An attack on the right flank would have been met by the batteries of Antoin. The French left was sheltered by the wood of Barri, while the centre was guarded by the redoubts d'Eu and Fontenoy.[1]

The centre was composed (among other forces) of the regiment of the King, the regiment of Aubeterre, the Swiss Guards, and the French Guards. The three redoubts on the right were manned by Swiss, while d'Eu and Fontenoy were held by French regiments. Frenchmen also composed the right and left wings generally. In reserve were the *régiment*

[1] See plan.

des vaisseaux and the Brigade of Normandy (both posted in the village of Ramecroix), and the Brigade of the Crown, and the Irish Brigade (posted nearer to the French left).

The Irish Brigade—"excellent troops," says a contemporary French authority—consisted of the infantry regiments of Clare, Dillon, Buckley, Ruth, Berwick, and Lally. There was also the cavalry regiment of Fitzjames, which, however, acted with the French Horse, and was, therefore, detached from the main body of their fellow-countrymen.

On the 10th of May the allies encamped at Vezon (within about six miles of Tournai) in front of the French position. After reconnoitring the situation, Koenigseck proposed that no direct attack should be made on the French, but that Saxe should be harassed and forced, by this means, to raise the siege of Tournai. But Cumberland insisted on a direct attack, and he overbore his colleagues.

On the 11th of May the allies were drawn up in battle array, Austrians and Dutch on the French right, English and Hanoverians on the left and in the centre.

At 5 a.m. operations began. Brigadier-General Ingoldsby was sent forward with an English force (comprising the 12th and 13th Foot and the 42nd Highlanders) to storm d'Eu ; but so warm was his reception, that he

retreated precipitately, and did not distinguish himself in any other part of the field during the remainder of the day. Afterwards he was tried by court-martial, and censured for his conduct before d'Eu. Between 5 and 8 a.m. there was a fierce artillery duel, and many fell on both sides; but the French redoubts were not silenced. At 8 a.m. the Austrians and Dutch were ordered to storm Antoin, and turn the French position. But they failed as signally as Ingoldsby had failed; nor did they show much inclination subsequently to renew the assault. Finding that the attacks on d'Eu and Antoin had been mercilessly repulsed, Cumberland opened fire on the redoubt of Fontenoy; but he too discovered that the French artillerists were invincible. There was now a pause in the conflict, and Cumberland surveyed the situation anew. The prospects were black, but not hopeless. The redoubt at Fontenoy could not be silenced. The redoubt at d'Eu could not be silenced. Antoin could not be turned. The three redoubts, raised at the suggestion of Lally, made it impossible to break through the French right between Antoin and Fontenoy. The French left was amply protected by the wood of Barri and the forces in its vicinity. In these circumstances only one course seemed open to Cumberland. It was a desperate course, but retreat

appeared to be the alternative. "Sans peur et sans avis" (to quote Carlyle), he resolved to cross the plain between the redoubts d'Eu and Fontenoy, and to grapple with the French centre beyond. Forming his men into three columns, he ordered them to march forward, trailing their guns with them, but reserving their fire until they had run the gauntlet of the redoubts and come to close quarters with the French centre. Riding at the head of the columns, he led the way, and English and Hanoverians marched forward. The batteries of d'Eu and Fontenoy open a terrific cross-fire; English and Hanoverians fall in hundreds; but Cumberland cries "Forward!" On press the men, doggedly, silently. Fiercely thunder the batteries; the columns are decimated; but Cumberland cries "Forward!" Saxe beholds the allied advance with amazement, and expects every moment to see the columns retreat under the terrible cannonade from the redoubts, but onward they steadily roll. Soon the three columns are crushed into one by the French fire. But Cumberland still cries "Forward!" Slowly and painfully English and Hanoverians march through the "bushy hollows," strewing the path with their dead; but Cumberland can see nothing except the French lines ahead. And now the column is abreast the redoubts. The slaughter is terrible, but,

though staggering under the fire, the column still reels onward. Saxe surveys the situation with some anxiety. Should the column run the gauntlet between d'Eu and Fontenoy successfully, he has erected no redoubt on the rising ground to bar its progress—the one oversight he committed on this memorable day, believing that no force could survive the cross-fire from the redoubts. Yet the column is forging steadily ahead, while the batteries are now playing fiercely on its right and left flank—for it is creeping past the redoubts—and English and Hanoverians fall as fast as ever. At length Cumberland, with decimated ranks, but undaunted spirit, has passed out of range of the redoubts, and is within striking distance of the French centre. Pausing to re-form, he prepares to force his way onward, and to drive the French before him. The French Guards quickly advance to check the English column, but are met with a furious musketry fire, and driven back in confusion. The Swiss Guards and the regiment of Aubeterre are sent forward to support their comrades; but the English dash up the rising ground, sweeping everything from their path, and not waiting to draw breath until they plant their guns on the top. Then Cumberland turns the tables on his enemies, and pours a deadly fire into them. Regiment

after regiment is sent forward to take the guns, but they are driven back, broken and pulverised.

Even as the redoubts of d'Eu and Fontenoy had decimated the column, the column now decimates the French regiments. Cumberland is master of the situation. Koenigseck gallops up to him, and congratulates him on his "victory." Saxe is in despair, and prepares to retreat. Turning to the King, he urges Louis to fly while there is yet time, for the Hanoverians are pressing the French right and threatening the line of retreat across the Scheld. But Louis refuses to quit the field, and expresses his determination to share the fortunes of the day with his army. The Duc de Richelieu, the King's aide-de-camp, rides from point to point to inspect the various positions. Antoin is safe. The redoubts between it and Fontenoy are still impregnable. At Fontenoy the ammunition is giving out; but d'Eu is still formidable. He rides to Ramecroix, and finds the Brigade of Normandy, which has not yet been in action, eager for the fray, and then passing to the Irish Brigade, also fresh and keen for the contest, he sees Lally carefully, and even hopefully, surveying the situation. We have seen that it was at Lally's suggestion that the three redoubts between Antoin and Fontenoy

had been constructed. The Irish Commander made a still more valuable suggestion now. The column, he said, could only be checked, in the first instance, by artillery. Then, under the cover of the guns, cavalry and infantry could advance, and drive the English from their position; and he indicated the point where the batteries might be placed. Richelieu appreciates the suggestion, and quickly submits it to the General. Saxe approves of the suggestion, and orders the guns to be brought forward.

It is now one o'clock. The battle had commenced at five in the morning by an artillery duel, and it seemed as if it would end by an artillery duel too. Fiercely the French guns open fire, and fiercely the English reply. French regiments, horse and foot, dash up the rising ground where the English resolutely stand; but they are blown from the cannon's mouth or scattered by a raking musketry fire. The column not only holds its own, but gains ground inch by inch. Still the French batteries thunder, and shot and shell break over the column or drive through its serried ranks. But Cumberland grimly holds his ground, and French cavalry and infantry throw themselves in vain against the English squares. Saxe, who is suffering acutely from dropsy, and has to be borne on a litter (sucking a leaden bullet all

day long to assuage his thirst), is carried around the field, where he encourages the men to make one supreme effort to recover the day. He passes the points at which the reserves are posted, and bids the Brigade of Normandy and the Irish Brigade to prepare for action. The French regiments—cavalry and infantry—on the right, left, and in the centre have been in the thick of the fight throughout the day, and are terribly cut up. Even the regiment of Vaisseau and the Brigade of the Crown, which were in reserve, had to be called out. The only fresh regiments are the Brigade of Normandy and the Irish Brigade.

The French on the right are now ordered to attack the Hanoverians. Richelieu at the head of the Household troops leads the way, and French and Hanoverians are soon locked in a death struggle. On the left Count Lowendal, placing himself at the head of the Irish Brigade, and followed by the Brigade of Normandy and the French Guards (which he had rallied), points to the English position. Lally addresses his men. "Forward," he says, "against the enemies of France and the enemies of Ireland. Reserve your fire; trust to the bayonet. Forward!" The Irishmen rush forward. A young officer—Anthony Macdonough—is in advance of his men. An English officer steps out of his lines, and dashes at the Irishman.

There is a struggle—short, sharp and decisive—the English officer is wounded, disarmed, and made a prisoner. A cheer breaks from the Irish lines, and the men press forward again. Then the French Carabineers, deceived by the red uniform of the Brigade, fire into them, and many fall; but this untoward mistake is soon put right by the Irish cries of "Vive la France!" and the Irishmen dash forward once more. Onward they go, and coolly and silently the English watch and wait. "Give them the bayonet; charge!" shouts Lally, and fiercely the men plunge at their enemies. There is a raking musketry fire from the English lines, and the Irish dead and wounded strew the ground in all directions. Clare falls pierced by two bullets, and is borne wounded to the rear. Dillon is killed at the head of his regiment; officers, bravely struggling to close the ranks, are struck down everywhere. But Lally bears a charmed life. Quickly he rallies his men, and fiercely they renew the combat. With cries of "Remember Limerick!" they close with the enemy. Foot to foot and bayonet to bayonet, English and Irish now fight for victory. Cumberland is the inspiring figure on one side and Lally on the other. The Coldstream Guards, in the English front, fight like lions, but the Irishmen charge home, and the famous Scotch regiment suffers severely. The

Grenadiers and the Royal Dragoons try to bar the way, but the onset of these Irish exiles, impelled by the memory of terrible wrongs, and facing the destroyers of their nation, is irresistible. Back they roll the foe ; and slowly and sullenly, but steadily and surely, Cumberland—desperately but hopelessly resisting the combined attack of Irish and Norman, and now pressed on all sides by rallying French—recrosses the plain, which a few hours before he had so gallantly traversed. That night the retreating allies pass along the Brussels road, and the Irish encamp upon the ground they had so splendidly won.

JOHN KEOGH

PART I

"THE peace after Limerick," said Henry Grattan, "was to the Catholics a sad servitude, to the Protestants a drunken triumph."

"The victorious party," says Hallam, "saw no security but in a system of oppression, contained in a series of laws during the reigns of William and Anne, which have scarcely a parallel in European history, unless it be that of the Protestants in France after the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, who yet were but a feeble minority of the whole people."

In France a "feeble minority" was oppressed by the nation. In Ireland the nation was oppressed by a "feeble minority."

It is this fact—the oppression of a nation by a "feeble minority"—which makes the story of religious persecution in Ireland unique. All the world over majorities have oppressed minorities. In Ireland alone the minority

oppressed the majority. And how came this to pass? Because the minority in Ireland was supported by the bayonets of a foreign Power stronger than the Irish nation. "They who carried on this system (the Penal Laws)," says Burke, "looked to the irresistible force of Great Britain for their support in their acts of power. They were quite certain that no complaints of the natives would be heard on this side of the water with any other sentiments than those of contempt and indignation. Their cries served only to augment their torture. . . . Indeed, in England, the double name of Irish and Papist (it would be hard to say which singly was the more odious) shut up the hearts of every one against them." The oppression of the Irish Catholics in the eighteenth century was, in truth, but another move in the game for the subjugation of the Irish people. The struggle of the Irish Catholics for freedom of conscience was but a continuance of the fight for national independence. "Who shall possess Ireland? The Irish or the foreigners?" That was the question in the eighteenth century as it was in the sixteenth century, and as it has been in all the centuries. The methods were different; the principles were the same. John Keogh and Shane O'Neil were inspired by the same sentiments. Both fought—each in his own way—in order that the

Celt might keep a grip on the land that bore him. The continuity of Irish history is the one ray of sunshine which penetrates the gloom that envelops the story of our country. The Irish have never given up the fight.

I need not retell the story of the Penal Code. It is well known. By it the Irish Catholics were ground to powder. Excluded from every position of power and emolument, stripped of property, deprived of education, told by their masters that it was only "by the connivance of the laws they were allowed to live," they sank into a state of degrading slavery. From 1693 to 1774 the Penal Code remained wholly unrepealed. In 1774 the first link in the chain which bound the Irish Catholics was snapped. A law was passed enabling them to take the oath of allegiance which, in their degraded condition, they valued, for it enabled them to become citizens of the State. From that time onward they have never ceased in the struggle to recover their rights, and to break the power of English Ascendency. The hero of that struggle in the eighteenth century was John Keogh.

John Keogh was born in 1740. He began the world as a humble tradesman, but by talent and energy, displayed under the most adverse circumstances, he, gradually, became one of the wealthiest merchants in the City of

Dublin. But the accumulation of wealth was not the end for which John Keogh worked. The object of his heart was the emancipation of the masses of the Irish people. "I have," he himself said, "devoted near thirty years of my life for the purpose of breaking the chains of my fellow-countrymen."

Twenty years after Keogh's birth the first organisation—the Catholic Committee—formed for the purpose of obtaining the repeal of the Penal Laws, was founded by Curry, Wyse, and O'Connor. But these pioneers of Catholic Emancipation made little progress. They raised the flag of agitation, but the down-trodden people could not rally to it; and the leaders themselves rather whispered their grievances than loudly demanded redress. Redress, indeed, came, but it was not through the efforts of the Catholic Association. It came when the Protestants of Ireland were in revolt against England, and when England was humbled to the dust by her American colonists. The Relief Act of 1778, which allowed Catholics to hold landed property on lease for 999 years, was passed the year after the battle of Saratoga, and at a time when 60,000 armed Irish Protestants threatened the very existence of English dominion in Ireland. It was a favourable moment for justice to the Catholics. England wished to conciliate them, in order that they

might not throw in their lot with the Protestant rebels, and the Protestant rebels were favourable to Catholic relief, because they knew not when they might want Catholic help. In a moment of panic and of fear England surrendered to Irish Catholics and to Irish Protestants, and Catholic Relief (1778) and Free Trade (1779) were the result. But the Irish Protestants did not rest on their laurels. Having won Free Trade by the threat of arms, they were determined to win Legislative Independence by the threat of arms, too, and in all they did they had the support of the Catholics. In 1782 England again surrendered, and the right of the Irish Parliament, and of "no other body of men," to make laws for Ireland was, in the words of the English Act of Parliament, "established and ascertained for ever." The Irish Protestant revolutionary movement of 1775–82 made for Catholic freedom, as well as for Protestant independence. Under its ægis the Act of 1778 was, as we have seen, passed. In 1782 further "concessions" were made. Catholics were allowed to keep schools (with the permission of the Protestant bishop of the diocese), and to hold land in the same way as Protestants, and the Acts against hearing or celebrating Mass, and against a Catholic owning a horse above the value of £5, and other obnoxious enactments,

were repealed. Catholics and Protestants had both been oppressed—the one by the Penal Code, the other by commercial restrictions. The common struggle against England in 1775–82 had at length bound the Irish population together. The Protestants discovered that Ireland was their country, and that the Catholics were their fellow-countrymen. "As the English in Ireland," says Burke, "began to be domiciled, they began also to recall that they had a country. The English interest, at first by faint and almost insensible degrees, but at length openly and avowedly, became an independent Irish interest, fully as independent as it could ever have been if it had continued in the persons of the native Irish."

John Keogh had, of course, joined the Catholic Committee, which during all these years had remained a very tame organisation, and was absolutely ineffective as an agitating power. Catholic relief between 1778 and 1782 was the result of Protestant treason. But unhappily the Protestants, having, with Catholic aid, wrung what they wanted from England, gradually—as English influence began once more to insinuate itself into their councils—became unmindful of Catholic interests. As a body, they failed to see what Grattan saw—that complete Catholic Emancipation was necessary for absolute Protestant

independence; that the power of England, which had been exercised to the injury of Catholic and Protestant alike, could only be successfully resisted when Catholic and Protestant stood shoulder to shoulder for Ireland. Legislative independence ought to have been immediately followed by the repeal of the whole Penal Code. But unfortunately the Protestant Episcopalians were timid, and England played on their timidity. Though the Irish Parliament was independent, the Irish Executive was wholly under English control, and the bureaucracy of Dublin Castle still worked to maintain English authority by weakening the union between all Irishmen, which had been the result of the struggle of 1775–82. Between 1782 and 1790 there were two parties in the Catholic Committee—a Moderate Party, led by Lord Kenmare; an Extreme Party, led by John Keogh. The Moderates believed practically in leaving everything to the Government. The Catholics might, indeed, state their grievances, but the measure of redress should be prescribed by the Ministers. Lord Kenmare and his party apparently thought that people who desired justice should be content with waiting, watching and petitioning. These were not the views of Keogh, who might well be called O'Connell I. He believed in agitation. He believed in formulating demands. He believed in thundering

at the gates of the Constitution until those who held the keys were forced to give them up. Kenmare's policy had had a fair trial, and the result was humiliating. In 1790 the Catholic Committee waited on the Chief Secretary, and requested him to support a petition to Parliament simply praying that the grievances of the Catholics might be taken into consideration. The request was refused. In the same year an address of loyalty to the Lord-Lieutenant was contemptuously returned to the Catholics because they had ventured to express the hope that there might be a further relaxation of the Penal Code. "In the beginning of 1791," says Mr. Lecky, "a deputation from the Catholic Committee went to the Castle with a list of the penal laws which they were anxious to have modified and repealed, but they were dismissed without the courtesy of an answer." Kenmare was prepared to suffer these insults to the end of the chapter; not so John Keogh. In 1791 Kenmare moved a resolution in the Committee proposing to "leave the measure and extent of future relaxations of the disabilities wholly to the Legislature." Keogh opposed the resolution, and it was defeated; whereupon Kenmare, followed by sixty-eight other aristocrats, retired from the Committee, and John Keogh became supreme in the councils of the association. It is creditable to the Catholics of

that time, as Mr. Lecky notes, that "resolutions were passed in almost all the counties and large towns of the kingdom approving of the conduct of the majority and censuring the sixty-eight seceders."

It was about this period, while the relations between Lord Kenmare and John Keogh were strained, that Wolfe Tone appeared upon the scene. Tone viewed the situation from a standpoint of absolute independence. He looked upon Catholics and Protestants alike as slaves, the difference between them being that the Protestants did not know it and the Catholics did. The national spirit of 1782 had, in his opinion, disappeared, and the demon of English Ascendency was presiding once more over Irish councils. He despised the Irish Parliament. In theory—such was his view—it was, no doubt, independent, but in practice it was as much as ever under English control. No laws could practically be passed without the sanction of the English Minister. The Executive was English, the influence of England overshadowed everything. "I made speedily," he says, "what was to me a great discovery, though I might have found it in Swift or Molyneux, that the influence of England was the radical vice of our Government, and, consequently, that Ireland would never be either free, prosperous, or happy until she was

independent, and that independence was unattainable whilst the connection with England existed."

The population of Ireland at this time was about 4,000,000 : three millions Catholics, half a million Protestant Episcopalians, half a million Presbyterians. Tone had little faith in the Episcopalians. They were the Ascendency Party. They possessed all positions of power and emolument. They had no grievances. But the Catholics and the Presbyterians had grievances ; and to unite Catholics and Presbyterians in one great movement for the overthrow of English authority became the aim of his life.

Belfast was a hotbed of Republicanism. The French Revolution had breathed a spirit of rebellion into the Presbyterian body. They were ripe for treason. "The triumph of the Volunteers in 1782," says Mr. Lecky, "formed a very dangerous precedent of a legislature overawed or influenced by a military force." The lesson was not forgotten. Though the Volunteers had dwindled in numbers, they were still "a formidable body," and their strength was in Ulster. "In 1790 Charlemont found that the Derry army alone was at least 3,400 strong ; and two years later Lord Westmorland (the Lord-Lieutenant) ascertained that the Volunteer force possessed no less than forty-four cannon."

"Towards the close of 1790," continues Mr. Lecky, "the Irish Government sent information to England that a dangerous movement had begun among the Volunteers at Belfast. Resolutions had been passed, and papers circulated, advocating the abolition of all tithes, or at least all tithes paid by Protestant Dissenters and Catholics, as well as a searching reform of Parliament and of Administration; eulogising the 'glorious spirit' shown by the French in adopting the wise system of Republican Government, and abrogating the enormous power and abused influence of the clergy; inviting the Protestant Dissenters to support the enfranchisement of the Catholics, and to co-operate with the Catholics in advocating Parliamentary Reform and the abolition of tithes. The Volunteers were reminded that whatever constitutional progress had been obtained had been due to them, and they were urged to make every effort at once to fill their ranks." In July, 1791, there was a great rebellious demonstration in the northern capital in commemoration of the French Revolution.

"Belfast," says Mr. Froude, "rivalled Paris in extravagance. . . . The ceremonial commenced with a procession. The Volunteer companies, refilled to their old numbers, marched past with banners and music. A battery of cannon followed, and behind the

cannon a portrait of Mirabeau. Then a gigantic triumphal car, bearing a broad sheet of canvas, on which was painted the opening of the Bastile dungeons. In the foreground was the wasted figure of the prisoner who had been confined there thirty years. In the near distance the doors of the cells flung back, disclosing the skeletons of dead victims or living wretches writhing in chains and torture. On the reverse of the canvas Hibernia was seen reclining, one hand and one foot in shackles, and a volunteer artilleryman holding before her eyes the radiant image of liberty. . . . In the evening three hundred and fifty patriots sat down to dinner in the Linen Hall. They drank to the King of Ireland. They drank to Washington, the ornament of mankind. They drank to Grattan, Molyneux, Franklin, and Mirabeau—these last two amidst applause that threatened to shake the building to the ground."

Tone quickly turned his attention to Ulster. In September, 1791, he published a pamphlet in Dublin signed "A Northern Whig," in which he urged the necessity of union between Catholics and Presbyterians. In October he went to Belfast, where the pamphlet had attracted much attention; and there, on the 10th of the month, in conjunction with Samuel Neilson, Henry Joy M'Cracken, and Thomas

Russell, he founded the famous "United Irish Society." At first this organisation was constitutional, its platform being union among all classes and creeds of Irishmen, Parliamentary reform, and Catholic Emancipation. Tone was, of course, a rebel from the beginning to the end; but his influence in the society was not at first paramount. Having got in touch with the men of the North, he next placed himself in communication with the leading democrats of the Catholic Committee in Dublin —Keogh, Braughall, M'Cormack, Byrne, and Sweetman—and Kenmare and the aristocrats having by this time seceded, a union between the Catholic Committee and the United Irishmen was soon formed. This union alarmed the Government. "The language and bent of the conduct of the Dissenters," wrote Westmorland to Dundas, "is to unite with the Catholics, and their union would be very formidable. That union is not yet made, and I believe and hope it never could be." Before the end of the year, however, it was made, and the English Cabinet resolved to consider the Catholic claims. In 1778 concessions had been made to the Catholics to draw them away from the Protestant Volunteers. Concessions were now to be made in order to draw them away from the Presbyterian Republicans. Half a million Protestants or half a million Presbyterians might

be easily dealt with. But either, supported by three millions of Catholics, would, as Westmorland had said, be "formidable." Dundas wrote to the Lord-Lieutenant in December, 1791, referring to the attempt to unite Catholics and Presbyterians, and hoping that the Catholics would not be seduced from their "quiet and regular demeanour." In another letter he said that England might soon be at war, and in that event it would be advisable to conciliate the Catholics. "The example of the volunteers" (I quote Mr. Lecky's summary) "is but too plain, and Catholics had their part in the triumph of 1782."

The demands of the Catholic Committee were the admission of the Catholics to the legal profession, to the magistracy, to the Grand Jury, to the Municipal Corporations, and, above all, to the elective franchise. Pitt and Dundas were prepared to consider these demands in 1792. The storm in Europe was rising. They wished to pacify Ireland. But the Castle bureaucrats were opposed to all concessions. "The Irish frame of Government," wrote the Lord-Lieutenant to Pitt, "is a Protestant garrison in possession of the land, magistracy, and power of the country, holding that property under the tenure of British power and supremacy, and ready at every instant to crush the

rising of the conquered." It was the duty of England, Westmorland said, in effect, to support the "garrison" and to keep the "conquered" down. The Chief Secretary Hobart took the same line. "Be assured, my dear sir," he wrote to Dundas, "that you are on the eve of being driven to declare for the Protestants or the Catholics," adding: "The connection between England and Ireland rests absolutely on Protestant Ascendency." Hobart went to London to press the Castle view on the Cabinet. "I may add," he wrote to Westmorland from London on the 25th of January, 1792, "that all idea of a Catholic game (if such ever was entertained) is at an end, and the British Government will decidedly support the Protestant Ascendency, which opinion seemed to have been Mr. Pitt's from the beginning, and Dundas's ultimately." Yet the British Cabinet did not in the end "support the Protestant Ascendency decidedly." The British Cabinet was afraid of the union between the Catholics and the Presbyterians, and abandoned the extreme Protestant party, ordering the Castle to support a Bill introduced in February, 1792, by Sir Hercules Langrishe (one of the leaders of the Liberal Protestants), which proposed to admit Catholics to the Bar, to the rank of King's Counsel, to allow them to be solicitors, to keep schools without the license of the

Protestant Bishop of the diocese, to intermarry with Protestants, provided the service was performed by a clergyman of the Established Church, and to employ in trade any number of apprentices they chose. This Bill passed practically without opposition. In the course of the debate two petitions—one on behalf of the Catholic Committee, praying for the admission of the Catholics to the franchise, and the other on behalf of the Presbyterians of Antrim, praying for complete Catholic Emancipation—were presented to the House. The Castle and the extreme Ascendency party opposed both petitions. The reception of the Catholic petition was moved by Mr. Egan, member for Tallaght; the reception of the Presbyterian by Mr. O'Neil, member for the county Antrim. Mr. Latouche proposed the rejection of the Catholic petition. Mr. Ogle supported him. "I rise," said Mr. Ogle, "to say that the claims that are every moment being made on the Protestant Ascendency must be met; a line must be drawn somewhere, beyond which we must not recede. . . ." Said Mr. Latouche, "If this petition be complied with it will affect our establishments in Church and State." "Protestant Ascendency must be maintained," said General Conyngham, "and by Protestant Ascendency I mean a Protestant King, a Protestant House of Lords, and a Protestant House of Com-

mons." "Tell the Catholics boldly," said Mr. W. B. Ponsonby, "that we will not grant their claims." "Regarding the Protestant Constitution," said the Chief Secretary, "as I do, I cannot concur with this (the Catholic) petition, nor have I any fear in rejecting it." Grattan, Curran, and Colonel (afterwards General) Hutchinson appealed to the House to do justice to the masses of the nation.

Hutchinson made the speech of the night.

He said: "In times of dread and danger the Catholics were your associates, your soldiers, your defenders; now, in a moment of tranquillity, when you think you have no occasion for their services you reject and calumniate them. You called upon them in 1779 to assist you in recovering your commerce, in re-establishing your Constitution, in defending your country against foreign invasion; your call was a proof of your weakness and your fears; their obedience was a proof of their affection and of their strength. Did they seize on a dangerous and critical moment in order to embarrass your affairs? Did they then remember the oppression and the miseries of ages? They saw in the establishment of Protestant liberty, if not their own emancipation, at least the pride and glory of the country which had given them birth."

This was a noble appeal, but the influences

of the Castle prevailed against it. The Catholic petition was rejected by 208 to 23 votes. The Presbyterian petition was then brought forward, and rejected too.

But John Keogh did not despair. He determined to carry on the war until the franchise was conceded.

PART II

Immediately after the rejection of the petition praying for admission of the Catholics to the Parliamentary franchise in 1792, John Keogh prepared to reorganise the Catholic Committee on a broad, popular basis. The plan of reorganisation, drawn up by Myles Keon, of Keonbrook, County Galway, was as follows :—

Two members from each county, and one from each leading city, were to be associated with the General Committee in Dublin. The election of the county members was to be carried out thus : Each parish was, in the first instance, to nominate the men of its own choice, and then the men so nominated were to become the candidates for election in counties, the polling for which was to take place at the chief towns in each county, much on the same principle as a Parliamentary election would be conducted. The city members were

to be elected in the same way as an ordinary borough member of Parliament would be elected. It was a necessary qualification for election that the candidates should be residents of the counties or cities they sought to represent. The ordinary routine business of the association was to be carried on as usual by the General Committee in Dublin; but whenever matters of an extraordinary nature were to be transacted, such as petitioning Parliament or making arrangements generally for a parliamentary campaign, &c., the county members were to be summoned to meet in full convention in the Metropolis.

As John Keogh was the forerunner of O'Connell, the reorganised Catholic Committee of the eighteenth century was the forerunner of the great Catholic Association of the nineteenth.

Keogh brought his co-religionists throughout the country into touch with each other; he taught them the value of combined action. He gave them their first lesson in self-help and self-reliance. In truth, he laid the foundation of almost all the popular organisations which have since his time sprung up in the country. As soon as Keogh's plan was published in the daily press, the Ascendency took alarm. The plan was denounced as illegal and seditious, and the Government was called on to crush the

Catholic Committee. Keogh took the prosaic course of submitting a case to counsel. Simon Butler and Beresford Burton were asked to answer the following queries :—

"1. Have his Majesty's subjects of Ireland professing the Catholic religion a right to petition his Majesty and the Legislature for the redress of grievances equally with Protestants, and, if not, wherein do they differ?"

"2. If they have this right, may they lawfully choose delegates for the purpose of framing such petition, and presenting the same in a peaceable and respectful manner; and, if they may not, by what law or statute are they forbidden to do so?"

Both these queries were answered in the affirmative. "Delegation," said Butler, "has always been considered not only as the most effective mode of obtaining the general sense, but also as the best security against tumult and disturbance."

Armed with this opinion, Keogh pushed vigorously forward with his plans. Wolfe Tone was now the paid agent of the Catholic Committee, and the work of issuing counter manifestoes in reply to the attacks of the Ascendency fell to his hands—a work which he executed with skill and success. Keogh's policy was to cling closer than ever to the Presbyterian alliance, and to draw the Catholic Bishops into

the movement. It was a bold and a difficult policy. But Keogh felt that the combination of the Catholic Church and the Ulster Republicans would bring the English Government to their bearings. The Church did not like the alliance. The Presbyterians did not like it. Wolfe Tone did not like it. But Keogh never showed his strength so much as in uniting these naturally divergent forces against the common enemy. Keogh well understood that the Catholic Church was one of the permanent institutions of the country, and he was resolved, despite the timidity of the Bishops, that the Church should rally to the nation in this struggle. One of his first acts, after the reorganisation of the Committee, was to go on a mission to the South and West, visiting eminent ecclesiastics, and satisfying them of the legality of his agitation.

In July he visited Belfast with Tone, and conferred with the Presbyterians on the general situation. There was a great demonstration at the Linen Hall on the 14th of July, and Catholics and Presbyterians united in demanding complete religious equality. "We know nothing," said Samuel Neilson, "of a Roman Catholic question, or a Church question, of a Presbyterian, a Quaker, or an Anabaptist question. The question is, Shall Irishmen be free or not?" A Protestant clergyman, the

Rev. J. Kilburn, said: "It is time to quit this foolery (of saying that the Protestant mind is not yet prepared to give, or the Catholic mind to receive, complete emancipation) and to join hands and voices with your Catholic brethren to recover the birthright which you both have lost." "I would rather," said another Protestant clergyman, "transport myself to Botany Bay than live in a country which keeps itself in abject slavery by internal divisions." There was a banquet in the evening, when the following toasts were proposed: "The National Assembly of France," "The French Army," "Confusion to the Enemies of French Liberty," "May the Glorious Revolution of France teach the Governments of every Country Wisdom."

Keogh now resolved to summon a great convention of the Catholics in Dublin for the purpose of petitioning the King to grant the franchise to the Catholics. This was a bold step. We can scarcely at the present day realise its boldness. The convention was little short of a Catholic Parliament; and was, in fact, called the "Back Lane Parliament." The Ascendency felt that if the convention met all would be lost, and every effort was made to prevent the success of Keogh's plans. But Keogh was absolutely within the law, and the English Cabinet shrank from prohibiting the

election of the delegates for the convention. Yet the Cabinet was in a vacillating state of mind; sometimes disposed to consider the Catholic claims in a favourable light, sometimes disposed to make no concession. But the Castle was consistent in advising a policy of "No surrender" from the beginning to the end. In September an event took place which threw the Cabinet on the side of the Catholics. The allies of England were beaten by the French at Valmy. Tone appreciated the meaning of this victory. He notes in his diary: "Huzza, huzza! Brunswick and his army are running out of France, with Domouriez pursuing him. Huzza, huzza! If the French had been beaten it was all over with us." The news was received with joy in Dublin and Belfast. Both cities illuminated. In the northern capital the Volunteers turned out and fired three *feux de joie* in honour of the day. A mass meeting was held, consisting of armed and unarmed citizens, to congratulate the French on their "glorious" victory. Illuminated devices were exhibited throughout the town displaying the following mottoes: "Perfect Union and Equal Liberty to the Men of Ireland;" "Vive la Republique;" "Vive La Nation;" "Liberty Triumphant;" "France is Free—So May We;" "Irishmen Rejoice;" "Union Among Irishmen;" "We are En-

slaved—We have only to Unite and be Free."

December was fixed for the meeting of the Catholic Convention. In October twenty-two counties and most of the cities had already chosen delegates. In October Westmorland wrote to Pitt: "The Catholic Committee are attempting, and have, to a certain degree, gained a power over the people . . . and if the Convention should meet, will probably have such influence and authority as will be quite incompatible with the existence of any other Government." Some time later he wrote again—and the letter shows how completely Keogh had anticipated O'Connell: "The Catholic Committee have already exercised most of the functions of a Government. They have levied contributions; they have issued orders for the preservation of the peace—a circumstance, perhaps, more dangerous than if they could direct a breach of it; they maintain the cause of individuals accused of public crimes; their mandates are considered by the lower classes as laws; their correspondences and communications with different parts of the kingdom are rapid, and carried on, not by the post, but by secret channels and agents. If the Committee have acquired this degree of power, what may not be apprehended from the power of the Convention?"

In November he wrote again :—

"The Democratic leaders (Keogh and the Committee) have forced the clergy into co-operation and the gentry into acquiescence. The elective franchise is accepted by them all. They mean to press it as a prelude to the abolition of all distinctions. The attainment of the franchise they consider decisive of their future power in the State. They have coalesced with the United Irishmen and with every turbulent spirit in the country."

The hope of Westmorland and the Castle was that the English Cabinet might be persuaded to prevent the meeting of the Convention. But they received cold comfort from England. "England," wrote the Cabinet, "requires all the force she possesses at home to protect her from foreign and domestic enemies. . . . You must act on your own responsibility."

Left to his own responsibility, Westmorland did not attempt to prevent the meeting of the Convention. It met on the 3rd of December, 1792. A petition was prepared praying for the admission of the Catholics to the franchise, and it was decided that the petition should be presented to the King in person. Five delegates were chosen to undertake this duty : John Keogh, Sir Thomas French, Patrick Byrne, James Devereux, and Christopher Bellew.

The delegates proceeded to London *viâ* Belfast, where they met with a warm reception from their Presbyterian allies. In London they were introduced to the King by Dundas. The King, we are told, received them "graciously." In January, Westmorland and Hobart (the Chief Secretary) wrote again to the Cabinet, urging Pitt and Dundas not to give way, declaring that concessions to the Catholics would be fraught with great danger to the State. But Dundas replied, in effect, that concessions would have to be made; adding, "had the franchise being granted a year ago, it would have been enough; now it will probably not be enough."

In February, 1793, Hobart was forced to rise in his place in the House of Commons, and to move the first reading of a Bill admitting Catholics to the parliamentary franchise, to the Magistracy, to the Grand Jury, to the Municipal Corporations, to the Dublin University, to many civil and military offices; and allowing them, subject to certain restrictions with reference to the possession of property, to carry arms.

All opposition to the concession had by this time broken down, and the Bill soon became law. An amendment for the admission of Catholics to Parliament was defeated by 136 to 69 votes; and the measure was deprived of much grace by the Act which accompanied

it, preventing the holding of conventions in future.

Yet the concession was substantial; and it was the one great victory of Keogh's life.

In the events which followed he did not play a leading part; but after the Union he resumed his place as a Catholic leader, and took an active part in the deliberations of the reformed Catholic Committee. His day, however, was over, and in November, 1817, he passed away at the ripe age of 77. But he had lived long enough to see his mantle fall upon the shoulders of Daniel O'Connell.

WOLFE TONE

Theobald Wolfe Tone has a distinct place in Irish history. He is the Irish Separatist *par excellence.* Irishman there have been who began as Constitutional agitators and ended as rebels. Such men were among Tone's own colleagues in the United Irish movement, and such men gathered around Thomas Davis and Gavan Duffy half a century later. Irishmen there have also been who began as rebels and ended as Constitutional agitators. They are in our midst to-day. But Tone began and ended as a rebel. His disciples are the founders of the Fenian organisation.

Tone was a formidable rebel. A competent authority bears testimony to the fact. "Wolfe Tone," says the Duke of Wellington, "was a most extraordinary man, and his history is the most curious history of those times. With a hundred guineas in his pocket, unknown and unrecommended, he went to Paris in order to overturn the British Government in Ireland.

He asked for a large force, Lord Edward Fitz-Gerald for a small one. They listened to Tone;" and the Bantry Bay expedition was the result. For the failure of that expedition Tone was not responsible. He had organised victory — an incompetent French general contrived defeat. "The army," says Mr. Froude, "was composed of fifteen thousand of the very best troops which France possessed, with heavy trains of field artillery, and sufficient spare muskets and powder to arm half the peasants in Ireland. The reputation of General Hoche (the commander) was second only to that of Napoleon. The next officer in command was Grouchy." The ship bearing Hoche never reached the Irish coast. But on December 21, 1796, Grouchy, with thirty-five sail, opened Bantry Bay. "At any time during that day or the next had (he) ventured to act on his own responsibility he might have chosen his own point of landing, and Cork must inevitably have fallen. It had no land defences, and on the side of the sea no batteries which a couple of line-of-battle could not have silenced." But "then, as twenty years later, on another occasion no less critical, Grouchy was the good genius of the British Empire. He continued to cruise as he was directed, standing off and on upon that uncertain coast" until a storm arose and swept his fleet to sea.

His incapacity to grasp a great opportunity lost Ireland as it lost Waterloo. Recalling these events, one may well repeat what Mr. Goldwin Smith has said of Tone: "Though his name is little known among Englishmen, he . . . brave, adventurous, sanguine, fertile in resource, buoyant under misfortune . . . was near being as fatal an enemy to England as Hannibal was to Rome."

Wolfe Tone was born in Dublin in 1763. A graduate of Trinity College and a member of the Bar, he entered politics in 1790–1. Catholic Emancipation and Parliamentary Reform were the questions of the hour. The Catholic organisation had just fallen under the influence of John Keogh, and a secret political society, pledged to reform, had been established in Belfast. Tone flung himself into the Catholic cause and joined the Ulster Reformers. Visiting Belfast in 1791, he met the members of the secret political society and co-operated with them in founding the United Irish movement. This movement was, in the beginning, Constitutional. The majority of its founders were Parliamentary Reformers. But, as I have said, Tone was always a rebel; he has himself placed the fact beyond controversy. "To subvert the tyranny of our execrable Government," he says, "to break the connection with England, the never-failing source of

our political evils, and to assert the independence of my country—these were my objects. To unite the whole people of Ireland, to abolish the memory of our past dissensions, and to substitute the common name of Irishmen in place of the denomination of Protestant, Catholic, and Dissenter—these were my means." Tone strove earnestly to bring the United Irishmen and the Catholic Committee into touch. He succeeded. In 1792 the Catholic leaders visited Belfast, and then and there was sealed the bond of union between them and their Ulster brethren.

In the same year Tone became assistant secretary to the Catholic Committee. Catholic and United Irishmen now worked together for a common cause. Catholic Emancipation and Parliamentary Reform was the cry of both. The Catholics were organised as they had never been organised before. Agents of the Committee were sent throughout the country. Communications were opened between Dublin and the provinces. There was a consolidation of forces and a concentration of aims which made the agitators formidable. "I have made men of the Catholics," said Keogh. It was no idle boast. He had infused a spirit of independence into the Catholic body, which gave life and energy to the Catholic movement. The country was roused. The Ministers were

alarmed. The union between Northern Presbyterians and Southern Catholics sent a thrill through the Cabinet. Troubles on the Continent increased. England's allies were routed by the soldiers of France.

The principles of the Revolution spread to Ulster. Protestant Volunteers marched through the Protestant capital, cheering for the French Republic and bidding defiance to England. The victory of Valmy gave joy to many a Northern and many a Southern heart. The Government felt that the United Irishmen and the Catholics were driving in the direction of Separation. How were they to be stopped? By a policy of conciliation which would break up the union of their forces, satisfying the one and isolating the other. So thought Pitt; and acting on the conviction, he resolved to grant the most urgent demands of the Catholics. In 1793 they were accordingly admitted to the Parliamentary Franchise. At the last moment Tone urged the Committee to insist on complete emancipation. But Keogh refused to move from the line of battle originally drawn up. The Franchise was within his reach; he would take it and bide his time for the rest. "Will the Catholics be satisfied with the Franchise?" says Tone; and he adds, "I believe they will, and be damned." He was disgusted with Keogh's moderation. "Sad,

sad!" he notes. "Merchants, I see, make bad revolutionists." But Tone was not conciliated. No concession would satisfy him. His goal was separation, and he was not checked for an instant in his onward course. In 1794 he plunged more deeply into treason, and others followed or anticipated his example. Measures were then taken for reorganising the United Irish Society on a rebellious basis. But the work of revolution was checked by the arrival of Lord Fitzwilliam in January, 1795. He came with a message of peace. He was sent to emancipate the Catholics. In February, 1795, a Bill for this purpose was read a first time in the House of Commons, practically without opposition. The hopes of the people were raised to the highest pitch, and then they were dashed suddenly to the ground. The King revolted at the notion of further concessions to the Catholics. Pitt flinched. Fitzwilliam was recalled. The policy of concession was abandoned. An era of terror and revolution commenced. Fitzwilliam left Ireland on March 25, 1795, amid the sorrow and the blessings of a grateful people. On March 31st the new Viceroy, Lord Camden, made his State entry through the streets of Dublin amid the angry growls of a sullen and despairing multitude. The policy of concession was replaced by a policy of coercion. But the

work of revolution was not stopped. On the contrary, it grew apace under the new *régime*. Camden began his reign by a State prosecution. On April 23rd the Rev. William Jackson, a Protestant clergyman who had been sent in 1794 by the French Government on a mission to the United Irishmen, was put on his trial for high treason. There was a clear case against him, and he anticipated the sentence of the law, dying in the dock by his own hand. On May 10th the United Irish Society became a distinctly rebellious organisation. Soon afterwards Tone, who had been in direct communication with Jackson, and was under the surveillance of the authorities, resolved to leave for America. Before departing he explained his plans to the United Irish leaders, Thomas Addis Emmet, Thomas Russell, Neilson, Simms, McCracken, and to the Catholic leader, John Keogh. In Dublin he saw Emmet and Russell. "I told them that my intention was, immediately on my arrival in Philadelphia, to wait on the French Minister to detail to him fully the situation of affairs in Ireland, to endeavour to obtain a recommendation to the French Government; and if I succeeded so far, to leave my family in America and to set off instantly for Paris, and to apply in the name of my country for the assistance of France to enable us to assert our independence."

A few days later, on the summit of McArt's Fort, on the Cave Hill, near Belfast, he, Neilson, Sims, McCracken, and Russell "took a solemn obligation never to desist in our efforts until we had subverted the authority of England over our country and asserted our independence."

On June 13th Tone sailed from Belfast to America. He was true to the duty he had undertaken, and after a short stay in the United States set out for France. Arriving at Havre in January, 1796, he immediately placed himself in communication with the French Government, established close relations with De la Croix, Carnot, General Clarke, and Hoche, and finally persuaded the Directory to send an expedition to Ireland. On December 16, 1796, the expedition, consisting of forty-three sail, with an army of fifteen thousand men under the command of Hoche and Grouchy, left Brest. Tone, who now held the rank of Adjutant-General in the French service, was on board the *Indomptable*. In the night the ships were scattered. The *Fraternité*, with Hoche on board, never reached Ireland. But Grouchy, with thirty-five sail, including the *Indomptable*, made Bantry Bay on the evening of December 21st. Tone was in favour of landing immediately. But Grouchy hesitated, standing off and on the coast until at length

the elements warred for England and swept the French fleet from the Irish shore. "It is sad," says Tone, "after having forced my way thus far, to be obliged to turn back; but it is my fate, and I must submit. Notwithstanding all our blunders, it is the dreadful stormy weather and easterly winds which have been blowing furiously since we made Bantry Bay that have ruined us. Well, England has not had such an escape since the Spanish Armada, and that expedition, like ours, was defeated by the weather; the elements fight against us, and courage here is of no avail."

Buoyant under misfortune, Tone did not relax his efforts. He urged the French Government to despatch another expedition. He was supported in his appeal by delegates from Ireland and backed by the great influence of Hoche. Another expedition was prepared by the Dutch Republic in union with France.

But the Dutch fleet, under De Winter, was destroyed by the English fleet, under Duncan, at Camperdown on October 11, 1797. A month before the battle Hoche, in whom Tone had kindled a real interest for Ireland, died.

Tone's cup of disappointment was filled to the brim, but he did not despair. He applied himself with fresh vigour to persuade the French Government to make one last attempt

in the cause of Irish freedom. Meanwhile events had been moving rapidly in Ireland.

The policy of coercion had borne fruit. Martial law, "half hanging," indiscriminate torture and wholesale oppression and cruelty, had done their work. The United Irish leaders found their ranks filled by a harassed and desperate peasantry. North joined hands with South; Catholic combined with Protestant. The timid and the fearful for very safety sought refuge in revolution. The people were dragooned into treason. "Every crime, every cruelty, that could be committed by Cossacks or Calmucks has been transacted here." So wrote Sir Ralph Abercombie when he took over the command of the troops early in 1798. Shortly afterwards he was forced to resign. His humanity was too great a strain upon the endurance of the Ascendency faction.

Grattan and the Constitutional party begged the Government at least to temper coercion with concession. But a stern *non possumus* was the only reply. "We have offered you our measure," Grattan said to the Ministers in the House of Commons in 1797; "you will reject it. Having no hope left to persuade or dissuade, and having discharged our duty, we shall trouble you no more, and from this day we shall not attend the House of Commons."

As the doors of the constitution closed, the

path of revolution opened. In 1796 the United Irish Society had become a military organisation. Before the spring of 1797 a supreme executive had been established in Dublin; and Provincial Directories were formed in Ulster and Leinster. A competent military chief had taken command. Lord Edward Fitz-Gerald had joined the rebels. Arrangements were pushed forward for an insurrection. The Ulster Directory proposed the end of 1797 for the rising; the Leinster Directory the beginning of 1798: the last date was fixed upon. But the Government struck suddenly and struck hard. Before the end of March, 1798, all the leaders in Ireland except Lord Edward Fitz-Gerald and McCracken were seized and imprisoned. But Fitz-Gerald and McCracken resolved to take the field. May 23rd was the day appointed for the commencement of hostilities. But on May 19th Fitz-Gerald's hiding-place was discovered, and after a desperate resistance he was dragged to gaol, surrounded by a troop of dragoons. The insurrection, nevertheless, broke out on May 24th.

Left without leaders, the insurgents fought wildly and desperately, sometimes rushing into excesses, which were, however, exceeded by the forces of the King. The rebels overran the county of Kildare and the bordering parts of Meath and Carlow. They seized Dunboyne,

Dunshaughlin, and Prosperous, and took possession of Rathnagan, Kildare, Ballybore, and Narraghmore. But the troops made a stand at Naas and Carlow, drove back their assailants, and reoccupied the captured towns. The rebels rallied on the hill of Tara; but were once more routed and dispersed. On June 7th McCracken, with a strong force, attacked the town of Antrim. Successful in the first onset, he was ultimately repulsed after a fierce battle, and some days later arrested, tried by court-martial, and hanged.

But the rebels of county Wexford made the stoutest fight of all. Taking the field on May 27th, they seized Oulart, marched on Ferns, captured Enniscorthy, and occupied Wexford itself. In a few days the whole county was in their hands, with the exception of the fort of Duncannon, and the town of New Ross. On June 4th New Ross was attacked. The battle raged for ten hours. The town was taken and retaken, but in the end the rebels were defeated and forced back on Gorey. A few days later they took the offensive again, and advanced on Arklow. Reinforcements were despatched from Dublin to succour the garrison. On June 9th Arklow was attacked. Another fierce battle, closing only with sunset, was fought. Victory remained still doubtful, when at 8 p.m. the rebel

captain was struck down, killed by a cannon-ball. Then his men, who had throughout the day maintained the struggle with desperate courage, retreated sullenly, falling back once more on Gorey.

Fresh troops now arrived from England, and General Lake, who had succeeded Abercombie as commander-in-chief, took the field in person. On June 21st the rebel army was attacked in its last stronghold on Vinegar Hill and annihilated. The insurgents, retreating through the counties of Dublin and Wicklow, were hunted down with merciless vengeance. "The carnage was dreadful," wrote Lake to Castlereagh; "the determination of the troops to destroy every one they think a rebel is beyond description." Before the end of July the fire was put out in Wexford. But before the end of August an attempt was made to rekindle it in the West.

When news of the insurrection reached France the Government, yielding to the importunities of Tone, resolved to despatch another expedition to Ireland. The plan was to send detachments from various French ports. For this purpose General Humbert was quartered at Rochelle with 1,000 men; General Hardy at Brest with 3,000 men; General Kilmaine was held in reserve with 9,000 men. At the last moment the Government grew dilatory,

and Humbert determined to strike at once on his own responsibility. Accompanied by Tone's brother Matthew and another United Irish exile, Bartholomew Teeling, he left Rochelle towards the middle of August, and landed at Killala on the 22nd of the same month. General Lake hastened to meet him. A pitched battle was fought at Castlebar on August 22nd. Lake was beaten and driven from the field. He retreated so rapidly, that the battle is to this day known as the "Races of Castlebar." Cornwallis, who had become Viceroy in June, came quickly to Lake's help, and forced Humbert to surrender at Ballinamuck on September 8th. Matthew Tone and Teeling were arrested, and, despite the protestations of Humbert, were hurried to Dublin and hanged. Yet another effort was to be made. On September 20th the last French expedition sailed from Brest. It consisted of a fleet of one sail of the line, the *Hoche* (seventy-four guns), eight frigates, *Loire*, *Resolvue*, *Bellone*, *Coquette*, *Embuscade*, *Immortalité*, *Romaine*, *Semellanté*, and one schooner, the *Biche*, under the command of Admiral Bompard, and of an army of 3,000 men under General Hardy. Tone was on board the Admiral's ship, the *Hoche*. As on the previous occasion, the ships were scattered on the voyage; but on October 10th Bompard arrived at the entrance of Lough

Swilly with the *Hoche*, the *Loire*, the *Resolvue*, and the *Biche*. He was instantly signalled from the shore. At daybreak next morning a British squadron, consisting of six sail of the line, one razee (sixty guns), and two frigates, under the command of Sir John Borlase Warren, hove in sight. Bompard signalled the French frigates and the schooner to retreat; and cleared the *Hoche* for action. A boat from the *Biche* came alongside the *Hoche* for last orders. The French officers gathered around Tone and urged him to escape. "The contest is hopeless," they said. "We shall be prisoners of war; but what will become of you?" He answered, "Shall it be said that I fled when the French were fighting the battles of my country? No; I shall stand by the ship." The British Admiral having despatched two sail—the razee and a frigate—to give chase to the *Loire* and the *Resolvue*, bore down on the *Hoche* with the rest of the squadron. The French ship was surrounded; but Bompard nailed his flag to the mast. For six hours the *Hoche* stood the combined fire of the British ships. Her masts were dismantled; her rigging was swept away; the scuppers flowed with blood; the wounded filled the cockpit. At length, with yawning ribs, with five feet of water in the hold, her rudder carried away, her sails and cordage hanging in shreds; her bat-

teries dismounted, and every gun silenced, she struck. Tone commanded a battery and fought like a lion, exposing himself to every peril of the conflict. The *Hoche* was towed into Lough Swilly, and the prisoners landed and marched to Letterkenny. The Earl of Cavan invited the French officers to breakfast. Tone was among the guests. An old college companion, Sir George Hill, recognised him. "How do you do, Mr. Tone?" said Hill. "I am very happy to see you." Tone greeted Hill cordially, and said, "How are you, Sir George? How are Lady Hill and your family?" The police, who suspected that Tone was among the prisoners, lay in waiting in an adjoining room. Hill went to them, pointed to Tone and said, "There is your man." Tone was called from the table. He knew that his hour had come, but he went cheerfully to his doom. Entering the next apartment, he was surrounded by police and soldiers, arrested, loaded with irons and hurried to Dublin. On November 10th he was put on his trial before a court-martial. He said to his judges, "I mean not to give you the trouble of bringing judicial proof, to convict me, legally, of having acted in hostility to the Government of his Britannic Majesty in Ireland. I admit the fact. From my earliest youth I have regarded the connection between Ireland and Great Britain as the curse of the

Irish nation, and felt convinced that, whilst it lasted, this country could never be free nor happy. My mind has been confirmed in this opinion by the experience of every succeeding year, and the conclusions which I have drawn from every fact before my eyes. In consequence, I determined to apply all the powers which my individual efforts could move, in order to separate the two countries."

He made but one request. He asked to be shot like a soldier. The request was refused, and he was ordered to be hanged within forty-eight hours. On the morning of the 12th of November Curran moved the Court of King's Bench for a writ of *habeas corpus*.

"I do not pretend," he said, "that Mr. Tone is not guilty of the charges of which he is accused. I presume the officers were honourable men. But it is stated in this affidavit, as a solemn fact, that Mr. Tone had no commission under his Majesty, and therefore no court-martial could have cognisance of any crime imputed to him whilst the Court of King's Bench sat in the capacity of the Great Criminal Court of the land. In times when war was raging, when man was opposed to man in the field, courts-martial might be endured; but every law authority is with me, whilst I stand upon this sacred and immutable principle of the Constitution, that martial law and civil law are

incompatible, and that the former must cease with the existence of the latter. This is not, however, the time for arguing this momentous question. My client must appear in this court. He is cast for death this very day. He may be ordered for execution whilst I address you. I call on the Court to support the law, and move for a *habeas corpus*, to be directed to the Provost-Marshal of the barracks of Dublin, and Major Sandys, to bring up the body of Tone."

Chief Justice: "Have a writ instantly prepared."

Curran: "My client may die whilst the writ is preparing."

Chief Justice: "Mr. Sheriff, proceed to the barracks and acquaint the Provost-Marshal that a writ is preparing to suspend Mr. Tone's execution, and see that he be not executed."

The Sheriff hastened to the prison. The Court awaited his return with feverish suspense. He speedily reappeared. "My lord," he said, "I have been to the barracks in pursuance of your order. The Provost-Marshal says he must obey Major Sandys. Major Sandys says he must obey Lord Cornwallis."

Curran: "My lord, Mr. Tone's father has just returned after serving the writ of *habeas corpus*, and General Craig says he will not obey it."

Lord Chief Justice Kilwarden: "Mr.

Sheriff, take the body of Tone into custody, take the Provost-Marshal and Major Sandys into custody, and show the order of the Court to General Craig."

The Sheriff hastened once more to the prison. He returned quickly. He had been refused admittance, and was told that Tone had attempted suicide and that he lay in a precarious state. A surgeon was called to corroborate the Sheriff's statement.

Lord Chief Justice: "Mr. Sheriff, take an order to suspend the execution."

At the prison Tone lay on his pallet dying. On the evening of the 11th of November, while the soldiers were erecting the gallows before his window, he cut his throat with a penknife, inflicting a deep wound. At four o'clock next morning a surgeon came and closed the wound. As the carotid artery was not cut, he said that Tone might recover. "I am sorry," said Tone, "that I have been so bad an anatomist." He lingered till the morning of November 19th. Standing by his bedside, the surgeon whispered to an attendant that if he attempted to move or speak he would die instantly. Tone overheard him, and making a slight movement, said, "I can yet find words to thank you, sir; it is the most welcome news you can give me. What should I wish to live for?" Falling back with these

expressions upon his lips, he instantly expired. So perished Wolfe Tone. So ended the rebellion of 1798.

. . . It has well been said that Tone needs to be defended against himself. He is, in truth, ridiculously outspoken. He carries frankness to an extravagant pitch. He not only confesses his faults, he exaggerates them. But the judicious reader and the generous critic need scarcely be told that the evidence of a man against himself is not always to be taken *au pied de la lettre;* and there is no other evidence against Wolfe Tone. Harsh use has been made of his confessions by his enemies. But had he possessed only a tithe of the hypocrisy and solemn self-love characteristic of his censors, he might now appear before us as a hero *sans reproche*, as he certainly is a hero *sans peur*. He wrote for his friends. He knew that they would not misjudge him. He was profoundly indifferent to the approbation of those "superior" persons who represent what for the want of a better (or a worse) name is called "the world." Tone loved adventure and romance. In early life he sought an outlet for his restless energy in odd enterprises. He sometimes went to bed drunk and got up ill; and he swore frightfully. These are his faults. It is a grave thing to mix wine with politics. But is the thing unknown in British history?

In the days of the great General Monk, drinking, we are told, was a sport, and the first of sports. A good drinker was held in as high esteem as a good player at any fashionable game is held now. "Pray excuse my style," says Courtin (French Ambassador to England in 1665); "I have been writing all the night, and drank more than I ought." Monk himself was a hard drinker. He attracted the attention of Cominges (another French Ambassador) by the unparalleled splendour of his drinking capacities. In one of his despatches the Ambassador describes a little fashionable fête, the style of which looks now very old-fashioned indeed. "An amusing affair happened last week in this Court. The Earl of Oxford, one of the first noblemen of England, Knight of the Garter, and an officer of the Horse Guards, asked to dinner General Monk, the High Chamberlain of the Kingdom, and some few other Councillors of State. They were joined by a number of young men of quality. The entertainment rose to such a pitch that every person happened to become a party to quarrels, both as offended and offender; they came to blows and tore each other's hair; two of them drew their swords, which luckily had a cooling effect on the company. Each, then, went away according as he pleased. Those who followed the General wanted some more drink,

and it was given them. They continued there till evening, and therefore wanted food. Having been warmed by their morning and afternoon doings, each resolved to see his companion aground. The General, who is obviously endowed with a strong head, struck a master stroke; he presented to each a goblet of the deepest. Some swallowed the contents, and some not; but all peaceably remained where they were till the following morning, without speaking to each other, though in the same room. Only the General went to Parliament, as usual, with his mind and thoughts nothing impaired. There was much laughter at this."

In Tone's own day the British statesman was not above his bottle or more of port.

But it is a sorry business exhuming the foibles of the dead. Let a man be broadly judged by the mark which he has left on the history of his time.

The Duke of Wellington's measure of Tone is the true measure. With a hundred guineas in his pocket, unrecommended and without friends, he went to France and persuaded the French Government to send an army of 15,000 men to overthrow the British authority in Ireland. This was an achievement of genius. The hero of the enterprise was indeed "near being as fatal an enemy to

England as Hannibal was to Rome." Tone was light-hearted, full of fun and frolic, witty, genial, gay, but beneath all lay the serious purpose of an earnest man. Monk sat up drinking with brawlers. But he brought back the Stuarts. Pitt, according to tradition, reeled even under the Speaker's eye, but he ruled England for twenty years. Tone enjoyed a carouse with his friend Russell, but he almost wrested Ireland from England's grasp. The Duke of Wellington is assuredly right. This was the work of an "extraordinary man." Tone was not born into Irish politics like Grattan, O'Connell, Davis. He was nearly thirty years of age before Irish affairs occupied his thoughts. But when at length he threw in his lot with his country he bore himself courageously and unselfishly, acting throughout with a singleness of purpose and a steadiness of aim which made amends for the heedlessness of youth.

He saw more clearly than any one of his time the great blot on the Irish Constitution. There was an independent Parliament but a foreign Executive; and the Parliament and Executive were almost constantly in conflict. "I called a Parliament in Ireland," pleaded Strafford when accused of arbitrary government. "Parliaments," said Pym, "without Parliamentary liberties, are but a fair and

plausible way to servitude." The liberties of the Irish Parliament were fettered by the action of the English Executive. No doubt the Parliament did some good work both before and after the revolution of 1782. But that work was accomplished by the help of outside forces, which for the time being awed the Executive into submission. Free Trade (1779) and Legislative Independence (1782) were won by the Volunteers, and the Franchise Act (1793) was obtained by the rebellious combination of the United Irishmen and the Catholic Committee. When the strength of that combination was impaired by the concession of 1793, and by the hopes raised by the promise of further redress, the Executive once more gained the ascendency. The recall of Lord Fitzwilliam and the abandonment of the policy of conciliation and justice was the result. The remedy for this condition of things, Tone saw, was in the destruction of the Executive. But the Executive could not, he felt, be destroyed while the connection between the two countries lasted. He therefore went straight for separation, struggling to unite all classes and creeds of Irishmen in the common cause of Irish independence.

The overthrow of established government is a serious affair. The man who attempts it must be judged not only by the intrinsic justice

of his cause, but by the practical character of his plans. To attempt an insurrection without the faintest hope of success is worse than a blunder. Bentham has, I think, fairly stated the ethical aspect of the case. He says: "Governments rest on no other foundation than their utility; their so-called right to make laws depends on the utility of the laws they make; and it is allowable, if not incumbent on every man, as well on the score of duty as on interest, to enter into measures of resistance when, according to the best calculation, he is able to make the probable mischiefs of resistance (speaking with respect to the community in general) appear less to him than the probable mischiefs of submission." Writing on an earlier period of Irish history, Mr. Froude says: "The Irish were not to be blamed if they looked to the Pope, to Spain, to France, to any friend on earth or heaven, to deliver them from a power which discharged no single duty that rulers owe to subjects." These words are applicable to the condition of Ireland in the eighteenth century. "America has been lost," said Lord Camden, "because she has had bad governors, and Ireland may one day be lost for the very same reason—bad government." "What does Ireland want?" said Pitt to Grattan in 1794. "What would she have more?" At that time the Catholics, consti-

tuting the vast mass of the population, were shut out from all part in the government of the country. A Catholic could not be governor, nor deputy governor, nor commander-in-chief of the forces. Catholics were excluded from Parliament, from the Judicial Bench, from the Privy Council, and from the rank of King's Counsel. A Catholic could not be sheriff, nor sub-sheriff, nor lord-lieutenant of a county. The peasantry were sunk in the lowest state of degradation, and the Protestant Ascendency faction was maintained in defiance of popular opinion by British bayonets. Enlightened Irish Protestants felt that this condition of things should cease, and in 1795 an earnest attempt was made by the Irish House of Commons to end it. But the British Minister interposed, and upheld the infamous system of monopoly and exclusion by which he hoped to divide and to enslave. "Rebellion against tyrants is obedience to God," and rebellion against English rule in Ireland was obedience to the first instinct of man's nature—the instinct of self-preservation, for English rule was killing the body and the soul of the nation.

Was there hope of success? That is the final question. Mr. Froude and Mr. Goldwin Smith answer it in the affirmative. There can be no doubt of the fact. Had Grouchy been

equal to the situation, had he yielded to the importunities of Tone and landed at Bantry Bay in December, 1796, Ireland would have then been lost to Britain.

Tried, then, by the intrinsic merits of the cause and the practical character of his plans, Tone must stand justified to posterity.

We live in better times, and brighter prospects still are dawning on us, but we should never forget the men who

> "Rose in dark and evil days
> To right their native land."

And a pitiful creature, indeed, must be the Irish Constitutional agitator who refuses to sing with the young Ireland poet—

> "Who fears to speak of Ninety-Eight?
> Who blushes at the name?
> When cowards mock the patriot's fate,
> Who hangs his head for shame?
> He's all a knave, or half a slave,
> Who slights his country thus;
> But a true man like you, man,
> Will fill your glass with us."

CURRAN

"I'M going to tell you that I'm deeply and desperately in love! And what makes my case particularly deplorable is that there's not the least prospect of the dear man lending me so much as a little finger to pull me out of the mire into which he has plunged me! Were I possessed of the same mean spirit of bartering as you, I'd have you to guess his degree; but you'd as soon bethink yourself of the Great Cham of Tartary as the Right Honourable John Philpot Curran, Master of the Rolls, Ireland! ! ! I wish I could give you any idea of his charms, but, alas! my pen does not, like Rousseau's, *brûle sur le papier;* and none but a pen of fire could trace his character or record the charms of his conversation. Don't set me down for mad, for I assure you I'm only bewitched, and perhaps time and absence may dissolve the magic spells. He had the cruelty to tell me he liked me, and then he left me. Had my eyes been worth a button they'd soon

have settled the matter; but there's the misery of being sent into the world with such mussel-shells!! I (a modest maiden) said nothing, and it seems they were silent; and so we parted, never to meet again!!! But, seriously, I have been very much delighted and gratified by a visit from this most extraordinary being, 'whose versatility of genius' (as Sir John Carr justly observes for once) 'is the astonishment and admiration of all who come within its range.' I'll certainly live seven years longer for having seen him." [1]

So wrote Susan Ferrier when Curran was Master of the Rolls in Ireland.

Curran is remembered not as a judge, but as a great advocate, a staunch patriot, a brilliant wit, and a brave man. A Protestant, he was ever the friend of Catholic liberty. A constitutional lawyer, he defended the United Irish rebels with zeal and courage.

A charming companion, full of fun and frolic, bubbling over with joyousness and mirth, the very soul of good-humour and good-fellowship, he was the delight of every society in which he moved. A true friend, a chivalrous foe, the champion of the oppressed, the enemy of the little tyrants who overran his country, he was admired by the profession which he adorned, and beloved by the people whom he tried to serve.

[1] "Memoir and Correspondence of Susan Ferrier."

I have quoted the letter which Miss Ferrier wrote about him. I may also quote the letter which he wrote to her.

"What I wish to say in verse I must even say in prose. I thank you extremely for your kindness and courtesy; it is simpler than song, and full as true. I thought also to have wrote a line or two on the verses you gave me, but my jade of a muse was, it seems, engaged, and disappointed me. She sent word, however, that on the road she'd pop in and whisper something, but I could scarcely believe her. I have been courting her all my life, and she has been uniformly coy and cruel. I don't, indeed, much wonder that a poor Irishman should have so little chance with her in Scotland. If, however, she should say anything to me, I'll not keep her secret, but let you know."

Every one knows Curran by his witticisms; but perhaps few English readers are familiar with the story of his life.

Of humble origin, he was born at Newmarket, in the County Cork, on July 24, 1750. As a boy he was allowed to run wild. His father did not in the least appreciate the talents of the lad, though his mother always said that "Jacky" would be a great man. He spent his time generally at fairs and "wakes," and enlivened the company wherever he was.

Upon one occasion Mr. Punch's show visited the town of Newmarket. "Jacky" revelled in the entertainment. One day Mr. Punch's man fell ill. There was a crisis. What would become of the show? Mr. Punch was disconsolate, when suddenly "Jacky" volunteered his services and they were accepted. Never was there such a Punch's show in Newmarket before or since. The whole town came to hear the performances. But suddenly it was discovered that Mr. Punch was familiar with the inner life of Newmarket: all the secrets of the village, all the scandals, the private affairs of every man and woman in the place, were introduced into the performance. At first people roared with laughter at the fun which Mr. Punch made of their neighbours; but when it was found that nobody escaped, that each in his turn was held up as a subject of merriment by the provokingly impartial Mr. Punch, a set was made upon the show and Mr. Punch was banished.

Curran was rescued from a life of "every kind of idleness and mischief" by Mr. Boyse, the Rector of Newmarket. "One day," he tells us himself, "I was playing at marbles in the village ball alley. . . . Suddenly there appeared among us a stranger of very venerable and cheerful aspect. His intrusion was not the least restraint upon our merry little assemblage; on

the contrary, he seemed pleased and even delighted. . . . He took a particular fancy to me . . . and bribed me with sweetmeats to go home with him. . . . I learned from him my alphabet and my grammar and the rudiments of classics; he taught me all he could, and then sent me to school at Middleton—in short, he made a man of me." From Middleton Curran went to Trinity College, Dublin, and finally began to read for the Bar.

While keeping his terms in London he found himself one day without a penny in his pocket. He had no friends in London. His Irish fellow-students had all returned to Dublin. He put the best face he could upon the business, and acted like a philosopher. When the dinner hour came he went for a walk in the park. Sydney Smith's doctor once told him that he ought to take a walk "on an empty stomach." "On whose?" asked Sydney. Curran now took a walk on his own. He sat on a bench, and, after a while, began to whistle a melancholy Irish air. At the other end of the bench was an old gentleman. The tune attracted his attention.

"Pray, sir," said he, addressing Curran, "where did you learn that tune?" "I learned it in my native country—Ireland," was the reply. "How comes it," rejoined the stranger, "that while other people are dining you are

whistling old Irish airs?" "Alas, sir," said Curran, "I too have been in the habit of dining of late; but to-day my money being all gone and my credit not yet arrived, I am forced to come and dine upon a whistle in the park." The stranger smiled and said, "Ah, well, I think I can see that you deserve better fare. Come with me and you shall have it." The stranger was the famous Irish actor Macklin.

Some years afterwards, when Curran had made a name, Macklin was in Dublin. They met at a dinner party. But Macklin failed to recognise in the now distinguished barrister the dinnerless law student of the London park. Curran said nothing. The dinner went on. Stories were told of the good luck which came to some people in distress. Curran struck in, and gave a graphic account of the scene in the park when fortune sent Macklin to help him. "Ah," said Macklin, remembering the scene, "we have met before." "Yes, Mr. Macklin," rejoined Curran, "and though you have appeared upon many a stage, you never *acted* better than you did that night."

Curran was called to the Bar in 1775. Five years later he appeared in a *cause célèbre* at the Cork assizes. It was a singular case, and served to display the courage which was his distinguishing characteristic. A Catholic peasant had fallen under the censure of the

Church. His sister was the mistress of a territorial magnate, Lord Doneraile. She begged his lordship to force the parish priest to remove the censure. Lord Doneraile, accompanied by a military fire-eater, Captain St. Leger, called upon the priest. The priest would not yield, and Lord Doneraile horse-whipped him. An action for assault was the result. But there was not a member of the Munster circuit who would hold a brief against the great nobleman. The story of the outrage shocked Curran. He volunteered his services. They were accepted.

It was his first *cause célèbre*. Every one came to see the young Protestant advocate fight the battle of the Catholic priest, and beard the all-powerful nobleman. Curran denounced Doneraile, riddled St. Leger (who was a witness), told the jury to act like men and find for the plaintiff. The jury were carried away by the resistless eloquence, the fierce invective of the courageous advocate, and the defendant was mulcted in damages and costs. The case was something more than a mere lawsuit. It was, in truth, a battle for Catholic freedom, fought at a time when the shadows of the penal code still darkened the land. Nor did Curran's "duties in the cause" end with the verdict. St. Leger challenged him to mortal combat. He accepted the challenge. They met. St.

Leger fired first, and missed; then Curran fired in the air. "It was not necessary," said the incorrigible humorist afterwards, "for me to fire at him; he died in three weeks after the duel of the report of his own pistol."

I shall give another instance of the dauntless spirit of the man in the days of his early struggles at the Bar. He was pleading before an ignorant and a venal judge. "I have consulted all my books," he said, "and cannot find a single case to support the contention of my friend." "I suspect, Mr. Curran," said the judge with a sneer, "that your library is rather contracted." Curran stopped; there was a moment's silence. All faces were turned towards the young advocate. Was he crushed? Looking steadily at the judge, and flashing a defiant and angry glance from his dark lustrous eyes, he said slowly and deliberately: "It is very true, my lord, that I am poor, and the circumstance has certainly rather curtailed my library. But I have prepared myself for this high profession rather by the study of a few good books than by the composition of a great many bad ones. I am not ashamed of my poverty, but I should be of my wealth could I stoop to acquire it by servility and corruption. If I rise not to rank, I shall at least be honest; and should I ever cease to be so, many an example shows me that

an ill-acquired elevation, by making me the more conspicuous, would only make me the more universally and the more notoriously contemptible." "If you say another word, Mr. Curran," said the judge, "I shall commit you." "And if you do, my lord," was the retort, "you will have the consolation of knowing that it was not the worst thing you committed."

Every one knows Dunning's famous reply to Lord Mansfield. "Oh, if that be law, Mr. Dunning," said his lordship, "I will burn my books." "Better read them, my lord," was the retort. Dunning's reply was witty; Curran's was overwhelming.

Lord Clare was Curran's inveterate enemy. Upon one occasion, when the court was convulsed with laughter at Curran's sallies, Clare interposed, calling upon the sheriff to take any one who "disturbed the decorum of the court into custody." "Do, Mr. Sheriff," said Curran. "Go and get ready my dungeon, prepare a bed of thorns for me, and upon that bed I shall to-night repose with more tranquillity than I should enjoy were I sitting upon that Bench with the consciousness that I disgraced it."

Curran's practice at the Bar grew rapidly, and he soon rose to the front rank in his profession. He had all the qualities of a great advocate. He was eloquent, judicious, pains-

taking, good-tempered; quick to see the faults in an adversary, and always ready to turn them to the best advantage; a master of invective and a master of humour; able to amuse, coax, convince; a favourite alike with judges who were not corrupt, and with juries who wished honestly to do their duty; a popular orator and a perfect cross-examiner.

As a cross-examiner, indeed, Curran's skill was unrivalled. He was ingenious, witty, trenchant, raking a witness by a fire of raillery or overwhelming him by a series of perplexing questions. "My lord," cried one of his victims, "I cannot answer Mr. Curran, he is putting me in such a *doldrum*." "A *doldrum!*" exclaimed the judge; "what is a *doldrum*, Mr. Curran?" "Oh, my lord," replied Curran, "it is a common complaint with persons like the witness. It is a confusion of the head, arising from a corruption of the heart."

Lundy Foot, a well-known tobacconist and snuff-dealer, was once under cross-examination. Curran asked a question which floored him. Lundy paused. "Eh, Lundy," said Curran, "that's a poser—a devil of a *pinch*."

Cross-examining a squire who disputed a coal bill, Curran said, "On your oath didn't you get the coals?" "Yes," said the witness, "but——" "But," interjected Curran, "your payment was *slack*."

There was one Irish judge—*mirabile dictu*—a dull black-letter lawyer, who did not relish Curran's wit. On one occasion when Curran rose to cross-examine a witness, the witness laughed. "What are you laughing at?" said Curran. "Let me tell you that a laugh without a joke is like—is like——" "Is like what, Mr. Curran?" growled the judge. "Like a contingent remainder, my lord, without any particular estate to support it," was the reply.

"How do you get your living?" Curran asked a witness. "Please, sir, I keep a racket court," was the answer. "So do I," said Lord Norbury (himself a bit of a wit), in allusion to the uproar caused by Curran's sallies and, indeed, by his own jokes.

It was by his defence of the United Irishmen, however, that Curran's fame was established. The United Irish Society, originally a constitutional body, ultimately became a revolutionary organisation, whose object was the separation of Ireland from England by force of arms.

Curran was more than the advocate of the United Irishmen. He was their friend. Though himself not a Separatist, he sympathised with their aspirations, and admired the courage and self-sacrifice with which they devoted themselves to the national cause. His task was difficult, even perilous, but he risked everything for his clients. "In the

days," says Charles Phillips, "from which he dates his glory, peril beset his path, armed men composed his auditory, exasperated authority denounced his zeal, and faction scowled upon the dauntless advocate it burned to make its victim."

One of the judges—Lord Carleton—warned him that if he defended Samuel Neilson—one of the founders of the United Irish Society—he would lose his silk gown. "Well, my lord," said Curran, "his Majesty may take the silk, but he will leave the *stuff* behind." [1]

In 1794 he defended Hamilton Rowan for seditious libel. The United Irishmen of Dublin had issued an address, in 1792, to the volunteers, beginning, "Citizen soldiers," condemning the policy of the Government, advocating the claims of the Catholics, and calling on the nation "to arm" in defence of its liberties. Rowan, as secretary, had signed the address, which was, however, written by Drennan.

Mr. Lecky has described Curran's speech for the defence as "one of the most eloquent speeches ever delivered at the Bar." When he rose, the court was filled with troops. He said, "Gentlemen of the jury, when I consider the period at which this prosecution is brought forward; when I behold the extraordinary

[1] "Curran and his Contemporaries."

safeguard of armed soldiers resorted to—no doubt for the preservation of peace and order—when I catch, as I cannot but do, the throb of public anxiety which beats from one end to the other of this hall . . . it is in the honest simplicity of my heart I speak when I say that I never rose in a court of justice with so much embarrassment as upon this occasion."

The finest passage in the speech—one of the finest passages, perhaps, in any speech ever delivered at the Bar—was on the justice of "universal emancipation."

In advocating the claims of the Catholics the address demanded "universal emancipation." Before the trial came on, Parliament granted a measure of Catholic relief. Curran fastened upon this fact. "Are you," he said in effect, "going to condemn this man for pleading the cause of Catholic freedom when Parliament itself has just taken a step in that direction?" He then went on: "Do you think it wise or humane at this moment to insult them," the Catholics, "by sticking up in a pillory the man who dared to stand forth as their advocate? I put it to your oaths: do you think that a blessing of that kind—that a victory obtained by justice over bigotry and oppression, should have a stigma cast upon it by an ignominious sentence upon men bold enough and honest enough to propose that measure—to propose

the redeeming of religion from the abuses of the Church, the reclaiming of three millions of men from bondage, and giving liberty to all who had a right to demand it; giving, I say, in the so much censured words of this paper, 'universal emancipation'? I speak in the spirit of British law, which makes liberty commensurate with and inseparable from British soil—which proclaims even to the stranger and sojourner the moment he sets his foot upon British earth, that the ground on which he treads is holy, and consecrated by the genius of universal emancipation. No matter in what language his doom may have been pronounced—no matter what complexion, incompatible with freedom, an Indian or an African sun may have burnt upon him—no matter in what disastrous battle the helm of his liberty may have been cloven down—no matter with what solemnities he may have been devoted upon the altar of slavery—the moment he touches the sacred soil of Britain, the altar and the god sink together in the dust; his soul walks abroad in its own majesty, his body swells beyond the measure of his chains, which burst from around him, and he stands redeemed, regenerated, and disenthralled by the irresistible genius of universal emancipation."

These words were received with an outburst of applause in the court, and when Curran

went into the street afterwards his appearance was the signal for a popular ovation.

He himself has described the scene. The people gathered around him. He feared that they might take him off his legs and carry him on their shoulders about the town. He begged them to "desist." "I laid great emphasis," he says, "on the word desist, and put on my best suit of dignity. However, my next neighbour, a gigantic brawny chairman, eyeing me with somewhat of contemptuous affection from top to toe, bellowed out to his companion, 'Blood and turf, Pat, don't mind the little creature; here, pitch him up this minute upon my shoulder,' which was accordingly done."

In 1798, Curran defended the brothers Sheares for high treason. They were the sons of a banker in Cork. Both were educated at Trinity College, Dublin; both were members of the Bar; both were United Irishmen. John, the younger of the two, aged thirty-two, took an active part in the movement. He was an organiser, and stood high in the confidence of the leaders. Henry, aged forty-five, was not equally implicated. Indeed, the principal evidence against him was a treasonable proclamation found in his desk. It was written by John and put in the desk without Henry's knowledge. An unscrupulous scoundrel named Armstrong (Captain Armstrong) wormed him-

self into the confidence of the brothers, and betrayed them. He received a sum of £29,000 —spread over a period of sixty years—for this act of infamy. The trial took place on July 4th amid a scene of intense public excitement and anxiety. The judges acted like partisans, and no consideration was shown either to the prisoners or their counsel. After a continuous sitting of sixteen hours, Curran asked for a short adjournment. "I protest," he said, "I have sunk under this trial. If I must go on, the court must bear with me; the jury also may bear with me. I will go on until I sink; but after a sitting of sixteen hours with only twenty minutes' interval, I should hope it would not be thought an obtrusive request to ask for a few hours' interval of repose and recollection." "What say you, Mr. Attorney-General?" said the judge. "My lords," said the Attorney-General (Toler, afterwards Lord Norbury), "I cannot consent." "We think it better to go on, Mr. Curran," said the judge, hinting at the same time that much had been conceded to the prisoners. Curran: "Gentlemen of the jury, it seems that much has been conceded to us. God help us. I do not know what has been conceded to me; if so insignificant a person may have extorted the remark. Perhaps it is a concession that I am allowed to rise in such a state of mind and body, of collapse and depri-

vation, as to feel but a little spark of indignation, raised by the remark that much has been conceded to the counsel for the prisoners! Much has been conceded to the prisoners! Almighty and merciful God, who lookest down upon us, what are the times for which we are reserved, when we are told that much has been conceded to prisoners who are put upon their trial at a moment like this—of more darkness and night of the human intellect than a darkness of the natural period of twenty-four hours —that public convenience cannot spare a few hours to those who are accused for their lives, and that much has been conceded to the advocate almost exhausted in the poor remark which he has endeavoured to make upon it. My countrymen, I do pray you by the awful duty which you owe your country—by that sacred duty which you owe your character—and I know how you feel it—I do beseech you by the Almighty God to have mercy upon my client—to save him, not from the consequences of his guilt, but from the baseness of his accusers and the pressure of the treatment under which I am sinking."

On Friday morning, at eight o'clock, the jury returned a verdict of guilty. Then the court adjourned for a few hours. At three p.m. the prisoners were sentenced to death. On Saturday morning they were hanged.

In July, '98, Curran defended Oliver Bond, a wealthy Dublin merchant (though a native of Ulster), and a United Irishman. He was one of the most powerful men in the organisation. It was at his house that the Leinster Directory used to hold their meetings. Through the treachery of an informer—Reynolds—the house was surrounded by military in March, '98, and the members of the Directory seized. According to the practice of the times, the court was filled with soldiers.

When Curran was addressing the jury there was a sudden clash of arms. "What is that?" he cried. Those who were nearest to him scowled fiercely at him, as if they would do him violence. "You may assassinate, but you shall not intimidate me," cried the fearless advocate. So great was the turmoil that he had to resume his seat. Three times he rose, and three times he had to sit down before he could be heard. "I have very little, scarcely any, hope," he said, "of being able to discharge my duty to my unfortunate client—perhaps most unfortunate in having me for his advocate. I know not whether to impute these inhuman interruptions to mere accident; but I greatly fear they have been excited by prejudice."

An extract from Curran's speech denouncing the informer Reynolds (who under cross-examination was shown to be a reckless ruffian

whom no code of religion or morality could bind) may be given.

"Are you prepared, in a case of life and death, of honour, and of infamy, to credit a vile informer? The perjurer of one hundred oaths —whom pride, honour, or religion could not bind—the forsaken prostitute of every vice, calls on you with one breath to blast the memory of the dead and blight the character of the living. Do you think that Reynolds is a villain? It is true he dresses like a gentleman, and the confident expression of his countenance and the tones of his voice savour strong of growing authority. He measures his value by the coffins of his victims, and in the field of evidence appreciates his fame as the Indian warrior does in fight by the number of the scalps with which he can swell his victory. He calls on you by the solemn league of eternal justice to accredit the purity of a conscience washed in its own atrocities. He has promised, and betrayed—he has sworn, and forsworn; and whether his soul go to heaven or to hell, he seems perfectly indifferent, for he tells you he has established an interest in both places."

Curran was a member of the Irish House of Commons, but his political speeches are not remarkable. He was, of course, a staunch Nationalist, and resisted the Union like all the incorruptible Irishmen of the day. "Ah!"

said he to Grattan, when the Union resolutions were carried, "where are our eighty thousand men?" The Legislative Independence of Ireland had been established by the Volunteers—sixty thousand men with arms in their hands.

"When Grattan rose none dared oppose
The claim he made for freedom;
They knew our swords to back his words
Were ready did he need them.

. . . . .

Remember still through good and ill,
How vain were prayers and tears—
How vain were words till flashed the swords
Of the Irish Volunteers."

The Volunteers were disbanded, and the Parliament was destroyed. When all was over, Curran was standing one day outside the Parliament buildings. A nobleman—who had been ennobled because he had voted for the Union—came up and said, "Curran, what do they mean to do with that useless building? For my part, I hate even the sight of it." "I do not wonder," rejoined Curran. "I never yet heard of a murderer who was not afraid of a ghost."

Curran was, of course, the most charming of companions, the life of every house he entered, the soul of every company he joined. "I had often seen Curran," says Charles Phillips, "often

heard of him, often read him, but no man ever knew anything about him who did not see him at his own table with the few whom he selected. He was a little convivial deity. He soared in every region, and was at home in all; he touched everything and seemed as if he had created it; he mastered the human heart. You wept and you laughed and you wondered, and the wonderful creature who made you do all at will, never let it appear that he was more than your equal, and was quite willing, if you chose, to become your auditor." "I regret," says Samuel Rogers, "that so little of Curran's brilliant talk has been preserved. How much of it Tom Moore could record if he would only take the trouble!" Rogers then tells a story, in which, however, the laugh was against Curran. At a dinner party Curran, speaking with vehement exaggeration, said, "I would rather be hanged upon twenty gibbets than do it." "Don't you think," said a young lady of the company, "that one gibbet would be enough for you?"

The famous Sir Boyle Roche once scored off Curran too. "I am the guardian of my own honour," said Curran in the House of Commons. "Indeed!" exclaimed Sir Boyle; "why, I always thought that the right hon. member was an enemy to sinecures." Upon another occasion, however, Curran scored off

Sir Boyle. The worthy baronet was married to the *eldest* daughter of Sir John Cave, and he boasted of the fact to Curran. "If he had an older one, Sir Boyle," said Curran, "he'd have given her to you."

Lundy Foot, the rich tobacconist, asked Curran to give him a motto for his carriage. "*Quid rides*," said Curran.

A stingy barrister went abroad for a holiday. Somebody told Curran that he had taken with him only one sovereign and one shirt. "Well," said Curran, "he'll change neither till he comes back."

"The learned Serjeant's speech," said Curran, in reply to a diffuse and irrelevant oration of Serjeant Hurst, "put me exactly in mind of a familiar utensil in domestic use commonly called an 'extinguisher'—it began at a point, and on it went widening and widening until at last it fairly put the question out altogether."

"Is that hung beef, Mr. Curran?" said Lord Norbury (familiarly known as the "hanging judge") to Curran at a Viceregal dinner party. "No, my lord," was the reply; "your lordship hasn't tried it."

Curran and a friend were walking together one day at Cheltenham. An Irish acquaintance who aped English manners was seen coming along lolling his tongue out in a remarkable

fashion. "What on earth does he mean by that?" said the friend. "He's trying to catch the English accent," said Curran.

One dark shadow hangs over the life of Curran—the fate of Robert Emmet. Emmet, the brother of one of the most gifted of the United Irishmen, Thomas Addis Emmet, and himself an enthusiastic rebel, was the leader of the hopeless attempt which a handful of men made to seize Dublin Castle in 1803. Emmet loved Curran's daughter Sarah. They were engaged to be married.

Curran knew nothing of the fact. He saw Emmet frequently at his house, but suspected nothing. Then the rising came. After its suppression Emmet could have escaped. But he wished to see Sarah Curran once more. He concealed himself in a house near Curran's. He wrote to Sarah—tried to see her. Then his hiding-place was discovered. He was arrested. His relations with Sarah Curran became public. Curran's house was searched for papers, and Curran himself had to undergo an examination before his inveterate enemy Lord Clare. Curran was indignant. He refused to defend Emmet, refused even to see the doomed rebel.

"I did not expect you," wrote Emmet, "to be my counsel. I nominated you because not to have done so might have appeared remark-

able. Had Mr. —— been in town I did not wish even to have seen you, but as he was not, I wrote to you to come to me at once. I know that I have done you very severe injury, much greater than I can atone for with my life; that atonement I did offer to make before the Privy Council by pleading guilty, if those documents were suppressed."

Then, referring to his love for Sarah Curran, and to Curran's refusal to see him, he concluded:

"I know not whether this"—his love for Sarah—"will be any extenuation of my offence—I know not whether it will be any extenuation of it to know that if I had" the first "situation" in the land "in my power at this moment I would relinquish it to devote my life to her happiness. I know not whether success would have blotted out the recollection of what I have done; but I know that a man with the coldness of death on him need not be made to feel any other coldness, and that he may be spared any addition to the misery he feels not for himself but for those to whom he has left nothing but sorrow."

On September 20, 1803, Emmet was hanged; he was only twenty-four. Sarah Curran spent the rest of her days in England, where she died in 1808. Moore has enshrined her memory in immortal lines—

"She is far from the land where her young hero sleeps,
And lovers around her sighing;
But coldly she turns from their gaze, and weeps,
For her heart in his grave is lying.
She sings the wild song of her dear native plains,
Every note which he lov'd awaking;—
Ah! little they think, who delight in her strains,
How the heart of the minstrel is breaking.

He had lived for his love, for his country he died,
They were all that to life had entwined him;
Nor soon shall the tears of his country be dried,
Nor long will his love stay behind him.
Oh! make her a grave where the sunbeams rest
When they promise a glorious morrow;
They'll shine o'er her sleep, like a smile from the West,
From her own loved island of sorrow."

In 1806 Curran became Master of the Rolls. But he did not like the post, and resigned in 1814. Afterwards he spent much time in London, mingling in the society of such friends as Sheridan, Erskine, Moore, and William Godwin. His last days were spent in gloom and sorrow, but Ireland was to the end uppermost in his thoughts. While dining with Moore in the summer of 1817 he was suddenly struck down by paralysis. Fatal consequences were, however, averted for the moment. In October there was a renewal of the attack at his lodgings, 7, Amelia Place, Brompton, and he succumbed at once. The brilliant genius which had delighted and dazzled, given life to every society, and brought joy to many hearts, was put out for

ever. He was buried at Paddington; but his remains were removed to Ireland in 1834, and reinterred in Glasnevin Cemetery, Dublin.

The strongest proof of Curran's worth is, perhaps, to be found in the fact that his neglect of Emmet—one of the most popular of Irish heroes—has in no wise diminished the affection in which his memory is held by the masses of the Irish people. Were it otherwise the people would, indeed, be unjust, for Ireland has had no braver, nobler son than John Philpot Curran. His place at the Bar is higher than that of any Irishman except O'Connell, while in politics he has left an untarnished, if not an illustrious name. As an orator Brougham puts him next Grattan and Plunket. As a disinterested, fearless patriot, devoted to the cause of Irish prosperity and Irish freedom, he stands in the foremost ranks of those famous men whose struggles, achievements, and even failures are among the fondest and proudest recollections of the nation.

FIVE TIMES ARRAIGNED FOR TREASON

In the autumn of 1899 I spent three weeks in Switzerland with my friend the late Sir Charles Gavan Duffy. He was then eighty-three years of age, but full of intellectual vigour. Youthful in mind and manner, a more genial host or a pleasanter companion (at his best) could not be desired. Duffy had a wide experience of men and books, and possessed a special faculty for collecting and telling good stories. He was the best *raconteur* I, at all events, ever met. He had a keen sense of humour, a ready and caustic wit. "What place will you give me in your ministry, Mr. Duffy?" a charming young woman once said to him in Melbourne. "Indeed," replied Duffy, "considering that the last Government consisted of old women, we might have one young woman at least in the present ministry."

Born in 1816, and dying in 1903, his life covered an eventful period of Irish and of

English history. One of the founders of the Young Ireland party, tried as a rebel, Prime Minister of Victoria, and ultimately Speaker of the Legislative Assembly in that Colony, he passed through many vicissitudes. I have before me a letter which Duffy, on the occasion of forming his first ministry, wrote to his friend John Cashel Hoey.

"CHIEF SECRETARY'S OFFICE, MELBOURNE,
"*July 14th*, 1871.

"MY DEAR HOEY,—I have such a strange story to tell you that it will need your unswerving friendship not to take it for a romance. When I commenced to frame an administration the two first men I communicated with, who hitherto have been, and been proud to be, lieutenants of mine, advised that I should put a respectable nonentity at the head of the Government (taking any other place I thought proper) to avoid the rooted prejudice against having an Irish Catholic in that position. I replied that I would see the Parliament of Victoria translated wholesale to Pandemonium before I would consent to degrade my race and people by permitting the Emancipation Act to be repealed in my person. They declined to act, and the next person I addressed had the same tale. These gentlemen even had their man ready, and recommended him to me for

his feebleness, 'which would leave me virtual, &c., &c.' I washed my hands of these feeble friends and formed a Government every member of which indeed, except the Law Officers, had been in office before, but only two of whom had much reputation for ability. I was met with a cry in which 'No Popery' yells mingled with a laugh of derision. Nevertheless on the day I met my constituents the anxiety to hear the policy of the Government was something without parallel. Every journal in the Colony telegraphed the speech or a summary of it; a number of M.P.'s made a long journey to be present, and the place of meeting was full to bursting. I send you the speech, and you will wonder, as I do, what people found in it; but the *immediate* effect was to array a majority of the whole people on our side, to change the tone of the entire press except the *Argus* and a little penny parasite of the *Argus* called the *Daily Telegraph*, and to place the administration by common consent in an unassailable position. It was of course *the policy* which produced this effect. We have had invitations to banquets, and other public entertainments in the principal towns in the Colony, all the ministers then in office were elected without opposition, which has never happened before in this Colony (one of the Law Officers since chosen has still his election to

win), and I have had the audacity for the first time to place *three* Catholics in the administration, relying on the favour of the people to overcome their prejudice. I am willing to admit that I have never had a success before if you choose, but this time I have hit the centre of the target. Unless I commit some blunder a dissolution would give me as good a majority as Gladstone got on the Irish Church; and I will carry out the policy which has satisfied the people without delay or hesitation.

"There now, after that tremendous blast on the trumpet, I have done."

Twenty-three years before this letter was written Duffy stood in the dock in Green Street, Dublin, arraigned for Treason. Walking one day with him in the grounds in Sonnenburg, above Lucerne, he turned suddenly to me and said, "Do you remember my trial?" I said I did not. "Then you ought to be shot." I admitted the fact and said, "Well, tell me all about it now"; and Duffy with characteristic directness plunged *in medias res.*

"The Government was determined that whoever might escape I should be convicted. Indeed, the frigate which was to take me to Van Diemen's Land was already named by the officials of the Castle. In August, 1848, I was put upon my trial. The charge was Treason Felony. As I stood in the dock waiting for the

jury to be empanelled, the junior counsel for the Crown came quickly into court, dashed up to the Attorney-General, said something hurriedly to him; then there was a consultation of the Crown lawyers, and the Attorney-General rose and said: 'My lord, I shall ask to have the prisoner Gavan Duffy put back; we do not propose going on with the trial this sitting.' I was amazed, could not make out what it meant. Sir Colman O'Loghlen (one of my counsel) came to me. I said, 'What is the meaning of this?' He replied, 'They have found a letter of yours in Smith O'Brien's portmanteau, and they think that it gives them a chance of indicting you for High Treason.' The letter which they thought would condemn me turned out to be my salvation in postponing my trial and leading the Castle into a succession of pitfalls. The Government thought that instead of transporting they might be able to hang me. I was accordingly put back. In October, 1848, I was put forward again. Up to the night before the opening of the Commission I did not know what I was to be tried for or where I was to be tried. On the morning O'Loghlen came to me in prison. 'Would you like to have your trial postponed again?' he said. 'Certainly,' I said, 'if they play the game of postponement we will play it too.' 'Well,' said O'Loghlen, 'they can't try you to-day, because, in order to get a

safer jury, they have transferred you from the City to the County, and they have failed to give the necessary notice.' The Government thought that a jury of County Dublin squires would be more reliable than a jury of Dublin tradesmen. When we came into court, Butt, my leading counsel, rose and asked in his bland and pleasant way, 'In whose custody is Mr. Duffy, my lord?' 'Why, of course, Mr. Butt,' said the judge, 'in the custody of the Sheriff.' 'But, my lord, which Sheriff?' The Judge having asked for the calendar, replied, 'The Sheriff of the County Dublin.' 'Then, my lord,' said Butt, 'the trial can't go on. This is a change of venue. We are entitled to ten days' notice. We have not received ten days' notice or one day's notice.' The point was argued. But the judges had to decide in favour of Butt, and I was again put back.

"In December I was put forward again. The indictment was the longest which, I believe, was ever seen. It was a hundred feet of parchment. There was a new count charging me with inciting Smith O'Brien to rebellion. My counsel attacked the indictment count by count and riddled it. The judges ruled that four out of the six counts were bad in law. When the indictment was reduced to this condition, Butt said, 'My lord, we are now ready to go on.' But the Crown said there was no

necessity to go on ; that as I had demurred I had admitted the facts, and all that was necessary now was to pass sentence. Butt protested, saying that in cases of High Treason the prisoner could plead as well as demur, and that the same rule applied to Treason Felony. The Crown denied this, and the point was hotly contested. Ultimately the judges decided in favour of Butt. 'But,' said the judges, 'we cannot go on with the case now because we have arrangements which call us elsewhere, and the sittings must be adjourned,' and so I was put back for the third time.

"In February, 1849, I was put up for the fourth time. We did not get a copy of the panel, so I had no materials for preparing my challenges, but when the names were read out in court, Butt challenged the array, and while the arguments were proceeding I had copies of the panel taken and printed, and I sent them round to my friends to get information about the jurors. On the panel was the name of Martin Burke. Burke was a Catholic, but hostile to the National Cause, and wholly under the influence of the Castle.

"That the Crown would put him on the jury was likely enough. His presence would give a colour of impartiality, while in reality I would be as safe in the hands of any Protestant. That we should object to Martin

Burke went without saying. But on the morning of the trial Mrs. —— called on me with a message from Mrs. Burke. "Don't object to Martin, whatever you do. Don't let your counsel object. Let him go on the jury. My daughter and I will be in court, and we will sit opposite the jury box." That was enough for me. Martin Burke was called. Butt wanted to object, but I said 'No.' O'Loghlen told me that Butt would object on his own responsibility, as he considered the exclusion of Martin Burke vital, but I insisted that Martin Burke should not be challenged. I said, 'I shall take all the responsibility; let the consequences be on my head.' And Burke was sworn. The jury was soon empanelled and the trial began. Butt fought like a lion, as he did all the time. In due course the jury retired to consider their verdict. When they returned to court the Foreman said they could not agree. Eleven were for a conviction, one, Martin Burke, was for an acquittal. The jury were locked up for the night, but Martin Burke held out. In the morning the jury were discharged. I thought that I should be discharged too, after eight months' imprisonment and all the abortive attempts which had been made to bring me to book. But the Crown was resolved to keep me in its clutches, and I was again put back.

"In April, 1849, after I had been ten months in jail, I was put up once more. This was the strangest trial of all. All the other Young Irelanders had been tried by common juries. It was the rule to try felony cases by common juries. But the Crown was now resolved to try me by a special jury, believing that such a jury would be sure to convict. Special jurors are drawn from the same class as grand jurors, and, as you know, a grand juror who has found a true bill against a prisoner cannot sit on the petty jury which is to try him. So many indictments had been sent up against me that several special jurors were disqualified from trying me because they had sat on the grand juries that considered these indictments. That was point number one. Again, several of the special jurors resided out of Dublin, and it was necessary that the jury which was to try me should consist of residents of the City of Dublin, where my offence was committed. Thirdly, Butt argued successfully that no one over sixty years of age could serve on a jury. He said it was not a question of option, but compulsion, and so the Court ruled.

"The special jury panel contained 170 names. Of these only ninety attended, despite heavy fines. The prisoner was entitled to challenge twenty peremptorily, which we did. This reduced the number to seventy. Three were

away through illness—'sick,' a witty barrister said, 'of the Queen against Gavan Duffy.' Sixty-seven names then remained from which to select a jury. The empanelling of the jury gave rise to great merriment. A juror was called. He stepped into the box and took the book. Butt rose, and with a genial smile said, 'May I ask, sir, if you served on any of the grand juries which found a true bill against the prisoner?' The juror answered 'Yes.' 'Very sorry, sir,' said Butt, 'that we cannot have your services in this case; I must ask you to stand aside,' and he waved the juror out of the box. Another and another and another came forward, to be asked the same question and to disappear the same way. At length a juror came forward who had not been on any of the grand juries. Butt said, 'May I ask, sir, where you reside?' The juror said, 'In Blackrock.' 'Very sorry, sir,' said Butt, 'that we cannot have you in the case, but you live out of the district.' Another came who lived in Rathfarnham, another who lived in Kingstown, until a score was disposed of. Then some one was called who had not served on any of the grand juries, and who did not live out of the district. 'May I ask, sir,' said Butt, 'if you are over sixty years of age?' And the juror answered, 'Yes.' 'Very sorry, sir,' said Butt, 'that we cannot have the

benefit of your experience in this trial; I must ask you to stand aside.' Finally the list was so attenuated by this process that the Crown was forced to put on the jury Catholics who were not 'tame' and Protestants who were Liberal. Then the trial went on. It was Good Friday, and long after nightfall, the jury retired to consider their verdict, and I was permitted to retire too. I was sent for at midnight, and came back to find the court crowded in every part. The Sheriff was sent to the jury-room to ask if the jury were ready. He came back in ten minutes to say they were writing their verdict. Then they came in, conferred with the Sheriff, and the Sheriff announced that they could not agree. There were six for a conviction and six for an acquittal. They were locked up for the rest of the night. When they came into court next morning the foreman said that they had not agreed and that there was no chance of their agreeing. There were seven now for an acquittal and five for a conviction. The Crown lawyers put their heads together, the judges deliberated, the jury was discharged, and—I was let out on bail."

Over a quarter of a century later Duffy had to defend his Government in Victoria against a vote of censure. He was attacked himself

as an Irish rebel. He replied in a memorable speech :—

"I will soon have to account for my whole life, and I feel that it has been defaced by many sins and shortcomings; but there is one portion of it I must except from this censure. I can say without fear, and without impiety, that when I am called before the Judge of all men I shall not fear to answer for my Irish career. I did what I believed best for Ireland, without any relation to its effect on myself. I am challenged to justify myself for having been an Irish rebel, under penalty of your fatal censure; and I am content to reply that the recollection that when my native country was in mortal peril I was among those who staked life for her deliverance is a memory I would not exchange for anything that parliaments or sovereigns can give or take away."

IRISH HISTORY AND IRISH POLITICS

Some English Liberals, who are sincerely desirous of doing the best they can for Ireland, view the Irish question altogether from a wrong standpoint. They think that it is merely a question of local grievances such as might exist in an English county, and that it can be dealt with in all respects as if Ireland were an English shire. The Irish question is not a question of local grievances ; it is a question of nationality. The causes of the trouble in Ireland lie deep down in the history of Ireland —in the history of her international relations with England.

An English Unionist statesman said in the days of the Home Rule controversy that history bound the English and Irish people together. This was an extraordinary statement. Renan once declared in effect that of the various factors which went to make a nation—factors of race, factors of creed, factors of language,

factors of geography—the most important of all was the factor of history.

The English and Irish people are not only less bound together, but they are more kept apart by history than, perhaps, any two people on the face of the globe. Examine the story of the last three hundred years. There is not a single event of that period which the masses of Irishmen and Englishmen view in the same light—which they regard with the same sympathies or the same antipathies. Take the great landmarks of the time—the Protestant Reformation and all that happened up to the Revolution of 1688, the Revolution of 1688 and all that has happened since. There is nothing more remarkable in this retrospect than the fact that events which, in the eyes of Englishmen, are associated with the freedom and greatness of their country, are, in the eyes of Irishmen, associated with the subjection and degradation of theirs. Take the long duel between England and France, which began towards the end of the seventeenth century and went on to the beginning of the nineteenth —there is not one event which happened in that struggle that stirs the same emotions in the breasts of English and Irish. In the roll of English victories, from Blenheim to Waterloo, the representative Irishman takes no interest and feels no pride. Ask him to name the

victories over which he rejoices, and he will answer Landen—though a shade of sorrow hangs over Landen, for Sarsfield fell there—Cremona, and, above all, Fontenoy. The glories of England bring but bitter memories to the Irish, her humiliations joy. Derry, the Boyne, Aughrim, recall English triumphs, Irish defeats. Limerick is the story of Irish valour and English perfidy. For nearly a century after Limerick, Ireland was humbled to the dust; England trampled on her prostrate foe. At length the day of Ireland's resurrection came. It was the day of England's humiliation. Beaten by her American colonists, threatened by the children of her own blood in Ireland, England surrendered to the Irish demands, and Catholic and Protestant benefited alike by the embarrassments of the Power which had ill-treated both. The era of England's troubles was the era of Catholic relief, Free Trade, and legislative independence. The dawn of Irish freedom broke as darkness overshadowed the fortunes of England. England's difficulty was Ireland's opportunity.

Years passed, dark days came to Ireland again, and the historical gulf between the two people was made wider than ever. On one side of that gulf stand Pitt and Castlereagh, representing the unscrupulous power and the pitiless might of England. On the other lie the

victims of '98—traitors by English law, heroes and martyrs by the acclamation of their own people. In the background rises the noble figure of Henry Grattan vainly struggling to preserve the freedom of his country and to save the honour of England. A new century opens, and the gulf still remains as wide as ever. On one side now stand Peel and Wellington refusing the Irish demands in the name of England. On the other stands Daniel O'Connell rousing his nation to action, and hurling defiance at the foe. And so the story goes on; so the continuity of Irish history is maintained. It is not a story of wrongs perpetrated long ages ago, and wiped out by some great act of justice generously done in our own day. It is a story of wrongs perpetuated through centuries and never freely redressed; a story of bitter memories awakened by cruel oppression and kept alive for generations by neglect and insult; a story of national feelings outraged and national rights denied to this hour. The timid Liberal who has never studied the Irish question *au fond* will not like this retrospect; neither will the renegade Home Ruler, nor the perverse Unionist who tries to persuade himself that there is no longer an Irish question, save, indeed, in the sense in which there is a Yorkshire question, or a Kent question, or a London question. But, despite timid Liberals, renegade

Home Rulers, and perverse Unionists, the truth must be told. The Irish problem will never be solved until all its difficulties are understood. These difficulties lie in the fact that the masses of the English and Irish people are separated by a gulf, which is not merely made by differences of race, differences of religion, differences of character, differences of mode of thought, and of ideals of life, but that this gulf has been widened by the hand of history. The problem which English statesmen have to solve is how to bring together two people who naturally and historically stand as much apart as any two people in the world.

Gulfs made by differences of race, of religion, of character, of modes of thought, and ideals of life have been bridged before now. But they have not been bridged by those who saw no gulfs. In the case of England and Scotland the gulf—not so wide a gulf as that between England and Ireland—has been bridged. In the case of the masses of the Irish nation and the English colonists in Ireland, the gulf was bridged in 1775–82, though the bridge needed some finishing touches. England, however, instead of strengthening the bridge, shook it in 1795, and destroyed it in 1800. Two important facts should be borne in mind—(1) that the bridge which suits one case will not suit another ; (2) that this Irish question cannot

be dealt with as if it only involved a controversy about local affairs among a people bound together by the ties of a common race, a common religion, a common history, by identity of interests, aims, character, ideals.

What, then, it may be asked, is this Irish Question at the present moment? Perhaps the best answer may be given in the words of the school child who, on being asked, "What was the date of the Conquest of Ireland?" answered, "It began in 1169, and it is going on still." The settlement, if not the conquest, of Ireland, is "going on still." From the time of Edward VI. onward, the English idea for the settlement of Ireland was to root out the Irish race, to extirpate the Irish religion, and to pour in English adventurers to possess the land. The Irish fought to save their race, to hold their own—their own creed, their own laws, their own lands. The struggle for three centuries has been about these things.

In the reign of Elizabeth there was a war of extermination followed by wholesale confiscations. In the reign of James I. there was the famous plantation of Ulster. In 1641 the Irish struggled to recover the possessions of which they had been robbed. Then Cromwell came, and there were more wholesale confiscations. In 1688–91 the Irish were again in arms, fighting for all that men hold dear—worldly

possessions, religious freedom, national independence. The war of 1688–91 was ended by the Treaty of Limerick, whose liberal terms were alike a tribute to the valour of the Irish and to the justice of William of Orange. The Treaty was broken—"broken," as Mr. Bright has said, "almost incessantly during two centuries of time." After Limerick, instead of an era of peace, there was an era of religious persecution, accompanied by more wholesale confiscations. "What then," said Lord Clare in 1800, "was the situation of Ireland at the Revolution, and what is it to-day? The whole power and property of the country have been conferred by successive monarchs of England upon an English colony, composed of three sets of English adventurers, who poured into this country at the termination of three successive rebellions. Confiscation is their common title; and from their first settlement they have been hemmed in on every side by the old inhabitants of the island brooding over their discontents in sullen indignation."

Throughout the eighteenth century the fight went on, the "old inhabitants" struggling to recover the "power and property" of which they had been deprived, England and the "colony" bent on keeping them in slavery. Between 1775 and 1782 the "old inhabitants" and "the colonists" came together, and, as I

have said, commercial freedom, Catholic relief, and legislative independence were the result. In 1793 the "old inhabitants" won a great victory—they obtained the Parliamentary franchise. In 1795 they demanded admission to Parliament; and England, having at first held out hopes of granting the demand, ultimately prevented its concession. In 1800 the Union came, and the "old inhabitants" were again beaten to the ground. Nevertheless, they fought on. In 1829 they wrung Emancipation from a reluctant Ministry, and demanded complete religious equality, the Disestablishment of the Protestant Church, and the Reform of the Land Laws.

For years they fought in vain, but at length victory again crowned their efforts. Under the pressure of a formidable revolutionary movement the Church was disestablished in 1869, and the first great Land Act was passed in 1870. But the victories of the "old inhabitants" were not yet over.

In 1881 another great measure of agrarian reform, which practically revolutionised the laws of landed "property" in Ireland, was passed; and in 1898 local government was "conceded." Still the fight goes on as furiously as ever. Why?

Immaculate Englishmen may say that the cause of Irish discontent is the "double dose of

original sin" given to the Irish at the beginning ; and the remedy, the submersion of the island for four-and-twenty hours under the ocean. But, be the cause and the remedy what they may, there is no denying the fact that Ireland is still disloyal. English statesmen must face the fact. Church Acts have not brought peace ; Land Acts have not brought peace ; local government has not brought peace.

What, then, is to be done? The Irish people have stated distinctly what *they* want, namely, the right to make their own laws in their own land. Historically their claim is incontestable ; politically, it has never been stated with greater force than by Lord Rosebery. Speaking at Glasgow in 1887, he said—

"In the first place, Grattan's Parliament was what the Irish people wanted. There is no principle, gentlemen, which seems so simple, but which seems somehow to need so much instilling into some of our greatest statesmen, as the fact that the potato that one knows and likes is better than the truffle that one neither knows nor likes. And, therefore, when you wish to give a benefit to a nation, it is better to give something that it likes and understands rather than something that it neither likes nor understands."

What does Lord Rosebery now propose to do? Will he give us the "potato" we "like," or insist in forcing us to swallow the "truffle" which we don't "like"? He has said, I believe, that whatever has to be done for Ireland should be done "step by step." The "step by step" policy may be a good policy for dealing with the question of local reforms in England; it is not a good policy for dealing with Ireland, because the Irish question is not merely a question of local reforms. It is a question of repairing the wrongs of conquest, of reconciling to the English connection, in any shape or form, a people whom English policy has driven to dislike the English partnership altogether. In honest truth, the curse of Ireland, the misfortune of England in the management of Irish affairs, has been the "step by step" policy—the doing justice slowly, grudgingly, imperfectly; yielding to force; surrendering to treason.

Looking at the subject from a purely English point of view, assuredly Lord Rosebery must see that the work which lies before the English statesman in Ireland is the doing some act which will gratify the national aspirations and touch the national heart.

Throw the onus of Irish government on the Irish people; leave the guidance of Ireland to Irish hands; make the nation responsible for

the national well-being; restore the one institution whose existence on Irish soil can alone bring back the recollections of the days when Irish freedom and Irish honour were not inconsistent with Irish loyalty to a common Crown —let England do these things, for by them only can she make any atonement for the past, or build up any hopes for the future.

THE POLITICAL SITUATION

To gauge the political situation in Ireland an intimate knowledge of Irish History is necessary ; and this knowledge English statesmen do not possess, and never have possessed. As each particular Irish question rises to the surface, the English statesman, when the exigencies of the crisis make the effort imperative, takes it up and deals with it. He legislates hurriedly, imperfectly, ignorantly. But when he has placed on the statute book an Act of Parliament embodying his views, he thinks that he has "settled" Ireland.

"We thought," said Mr. Gladstone, "that the Irish question was settled by the Church Act of 1869 and the Land Act of 1870." This was an extraordinary confession, coming, too, from a man whose name will always be honourably associated with the Irish cause. Mr. Gladstone thought that he had settled the Irish question in 1869–70, because he did not know the History of Ireland. Any intelligent

student of Irish History could have told him that he had settled nothing by the Church Act of 1869 and the Land Act of 1870; on the contrary, he had unsettled everything. He thought that the legislation of 1869–70 was the end; in truth it was only the beginning of the end. The power of the Ascendency had been undermined; but the strength of the nation was not consolidated. The struggle between England and Ireland, which had been carried on in some form or other almost incessantly for three hundred years, had simply entered upon its last phase. If Mr. Gladstone had known the story of that struggle he would never have imagined that the Irish question had been settled by the disestablishment of the English Church in Ireland or the reform of the land system. The Church and the land system were the strongholds of the Ascendency. The destruction of these strongholds was not the end, it was only the means to the end; the end—the transference of power in the government of Ireland from a faction under English influence to the people dominated only by Irish thought and Irish ideals.

After the General Election of 1874 Mr. Gladstone retired temporarily from the leadership of the Liberal party, and Ireland practically passed from his thoughts. Mr. Disraeli came into office, and the Ascendency

got breathing-time. But the Home Rule movement had been founded in 1870: in a few years that extraordinary combination between Irish Constitutional Nationalists and Irish Revolutionists was formed; and above all Charles Stewart Parnell entered the political arena.

In 1877–80 Ireland was in a blaze; and Mr. Gladstone once more turned his attention to Irish affairs. In 1881 another Land Act was passed. The second stronghold of the Ascendency was shattered but not destroyed. Landlordism was scotched but not killed. The principle of Territorial Autocracy was doomed to extinction, but was not extinguished. I know not if Mr. Gladstone thought that the Irish question was settled by the Land Act of 1881. He probably did not; for the measure did not tranquillise Ireland for four-and-twenty hours. On the contrary, between 1881–84 Irish agitation was as fierce as ever; and it is possible that during those years the seeds of Mr. Gladstone's conversion to Home Rule were sown.

In 1884 another shot was fired into the Ascendency. A Reform Act was passed conferring household suffrage on the Irish people. There is nothing more remarkable in the story of English rule in Ireland than the inability of English statesmen to foresee the

consequences of their own acts. English Liberals thought that the Reform Act of 1884 would strengthen the Liberal party in Ireland. Ulster Liberal members told English Liberal politicians that it would have the opposite effect. But, of course, English politicians knew more about Ireland than Ulster members, or Leinster members, or Munster members, or Connaught members. However, at the General Election, 1885, the truth was unpleasantly brought home to these politicians. Not a single Irish Liberal member was returned to Parliament. The Nationalists swept the board in three-and-a-half provinces and the Ascendency only held their ground in the north-east corner of Ulster and in Dublin University.

Whatever might have been Mr. Gladstone's frame of mind before the General Election of 1885, that event which enabled Irish Nationalists to hold the balance between English Parties opened his eyes completely to the Irish case. He now saw clearly that the Irish question could not be settled by Church Acts, or Land Acts, or Education Acts, or Reform Acts; that what the Irish people wanted was the government of Ireland, in an Irish Parliament, by Irishmen possessing the confidence of the Irish nation; and such a government he resolved to establish. By force of his extraordinary personality, he drew the

majority of the Liberal party to the side of Ireland, and in 1886 introduced the first Home Rule Bill. He was beaten by a combination of Tories and dissentient Liberals, and driven from power.

Lord Salisbury came into office, and the Ascendency once more got breathing-time. But in 1892 Mr. Gladstone was Prime Minister again, and in 1893 he introduced the second Home Rule Bill. It was carried through the Commons, but rejected by the Lords. Mr. Gladstone did not dissolve. He ought to have dissolved. Dissolution was the Constitutional course, and Mr. Gladstone was the most constitutional of Ministers. But a majority of the Cabinet was bent on holding office, and Mr. Gladstone, lacking the nerve of former days (he was now eighty-four years of age), gave way.

That dissolution would have been the best thing for Ireland, there cannot be a particle of doubt. The process of educating English public opinion on the Irish question would have gone on. The Liberals might have been defeated at the polls, but Ireland would have held the field. The Tories might have come in by a small majority; but the Parliament would, probably, have been short-lived and the difficulties of governing Ireland in opposition to the wishes of the Irish people would have been emphasised by the continued confusion in

the ranks of English parties and the continued block in the working of the English Parliamentary machine.

The existence of a government kept in office by Irish votes, not to do Irish business—incapable of doing Irish business—but to do English business, was worse than useless to Ireland, and from the days of that government the decline of the Home Rule movement in England may be distinctly traced. The faith of English Liberals in the cause of Irish Nationality was sapped by the acquiescence of Irish members in a policy of inaction and drift. The Irishmen were good-natured. They wished to show their gratitude to Mr. Gladstone because he had tried to serve Ireland. But had they consulted Mr. Gladstone—and had he spoken his innermost thoughts—he would probably have told them not to let any government which they could destroy exist for four-and-twenty hours unless it was pledged to a fighting policy for Ireland.

That the refusal to dissolve—the refusal to "nail the green flag to the mast"—was beneficial to the Liberal party is more than doubtful. The postponement—I will not say the abandonment—of Home Rule by official Liberalism, and the lukewarm feelings with which in consequence eminent Liberal leaders came to regard the movement, have perhaps more than

anything else helped to divide and distract the Liberal party. Had Liberals stood shoulder to shoulder on the Irish question, the Liberal party would now be strong and united, capable, at all events, of forming a staple government if they got the chance. As it is, the Liberals have not been in office since 1895. They are disunited and demoralised, and there are those who think that they could not, if the opportunity offered to-morrow, form a government which would last a twelvemonth.

The Tories and Unionists have been in office since 1895, but the Ascendency have no longer got breathing-time. Much as the Tories opposed the Irish policy of Mr. Gladstone, they found it impossible to undo his work. The hands of the clock could not be turned back. They were not allowed even to stand still. They were pushed forward. The Tory-Unionist Government of 1895–1904 recognised that Ireland could no longer be ruled by a faction; that the power of the Ascendency was broken; that landlordism was on its last legs; and that the tide of Home Rule could not be kept out by the pitchfork of coercion, though it might (in their opinion) be diverted into a narrower channel by the spade of administrative reform. In 1898 a great revolutionary measure, the Irish Local Government Bill, was passed, transferring the

control of local affairs from the Ascendency to the people, and a disposition was shown to make popular appointments in almost all departments, so much so that the Ascendency declared that to be a Catholic or a Nationalist was the best passport to office. A few years ago I met a representative Irish landlord who denounced the Irish members. "Why, sir," said he, "these men would have been hung up in the last century, and they ought to be hung up now." I did not attempt to make a frontal attack (it was the time of the Boer War) by defending the Irish members, but I tried a turning movement by asking, "What do you think of the Balfours?" "The Balfours," said he; "why, damn them, they ought to be hung up too; they are the worst enemies the loyalists of this country have ever had." I met a resident magistrate—a Unionist of course. I asked him what he thought of the Local Government Act. "A most mischievous measure," said he. "The administration of local affairs has been taken out of the hands of the cultured classes and put into the hands of the mob." "This English Parliament," said I, "is clearly playing the devil with the country."

I discussed the situation with the clever editor of a provincial Tory newspaper. He said, "In England they know nothing about us. It does not matter whether it is a Tory

or Liberal Government. It is all the same. The English are always looking for results which never happen. Gladstone thought he could settle the Irish question by Church Acts and Land Acts. Of course he did not. The Unionist Government of to-day are simply carrying out the old Gladstonian policy, the old Liberal policy of concessions. They are prepared to give the Nationalists everything but Home Rule, and they think that by these means they will kill Home Rule. The thing is grotesque. In England they do not realise what a revolution has taken place in this country in recent years. Look at this town. I came here thirty years ago. The proportion of Protestants to Catholics in the population was the same then as it is now. The Catholics were in an overwhelming majority. The Protestants were a mere handful. But every position of local authority was in the hands of the Protestants. The magistrates, the Poor Law Guardians, the Inspector of Police, Chief Constable, the dispensary doctor, the infirmary doctor—all were Protestants. That state of things is changed completely. Almost all these positions are held by Catholics to-day. Protestants were the masters then; Catholics are the masters now. I do not say that is wrong, looking at the matter from any abstract point of view. It is natural that Catholics

should rule in a Catholic country. I understand all that. But I am looking at the matter from an English point of view. I am putting English statesmanship to the test ; and I say it is grotesque to suppose that Ireland is to be pacified, that the Union is to be upheld—for that is the point—by taking all power out of the hands of the loyal classes and putting it into the hands of the rebels. Remember that the Protestants of this country are bound to England by historical associations, the Catholics are not ; quite the reverse. Of course you may bind a number of Catholics to England by their salaries ; but there can be no other bond. And is the whole Catholic population of Ireland to be bound to England because a handful of the population are made judges, and magistrates, and gaugers? Why, the very Catholic office-seekers won't be satisfied, for every Catholic, every qualified Catholic, cannot be made a judge, a magistrate, or a gauger. There will be a horrible amount of malcontents. Why, when Morley was here, it was constantly said by the Catholics that he did not make Catholic appointments, as Protestants and Unionists say now that the Unionist Government does not make Protestant and Unionist appointments. Morley, to show his 'impartiality,' sometimes appointed Protestants, as Gerald Balfour, to show his 'impartiality,'

sometimes appoints Catholics and Nationalists. But it is not impartiality that the office-seeker wants, but jobs. Ireland will not be jobbed into loyalty. Nobody cares for jobs, unless—the man who is jobbed into something; and you can't job a whole nation out of its convictions, passions, and prejudices. In the Irish Protestant, England had a friend apart from the question of jobbery—though the Irish Protestant likes a job as well as anybody else; but he was bound to England by religious and historical ties. In the Irish Catholic, England has not a friend apart from the question of jobbery, for the Irish Catholic is not bound to England by any tie but the tie of corruption—a loose tie in every sense. The Irish Catholics represent the old Celtic population of the country—there is no mistake about that,—and they want to have the country in their own hands—to govern it in accordance with Irish ideas, Irish sentiments, and Irish prejudices. That is quite natural, but it is not what England wants. Yet England is taking the means which must bring this state of things about—that's my point. I say the only way to govern Ireland in English interests is by and through the loyal Protestant population of the country, but that way England has utterly abandoned. The English policy of the future will be to govern Ireland directly from Eng-

land. Of course Dublin Castle will be reformed—swept away; the Unionists are as much bent on this as the Liberals. . . . Irish administration will, I suppose, be directed by the Home Office; and English Unionist statesmen, having established County Councils and District Councils and Parish Councils and all the rest of it in Ireland, imagine that these bodies will be delighted with the direct domination of a minister or more properly a clerk sitting in a room at Whitehall. The thing is ludicrous. The Unionist policy of the day must lead to one of two things in the long run—either to Home Rule or to the reversal of everything which has been done in recent years, and the government of Ireland as a Crown Colony. Were I to say this to an English Unionist Minister he would laugh at me. But faith, these English Ministers, Unionist and Liberal, have often had to laugh at the wrong side of their mouths as far as Ireland is concerned."

The whirligig of politics is extraordinary. Mr. Gladstone tried to carry Home Rule by a *coup de main*, and failed owing to the opposition of Tories and Liberal Unionists. And to-day Tories and Liberal Unionists are carrying Home Rule inch by inch, though they know it not.

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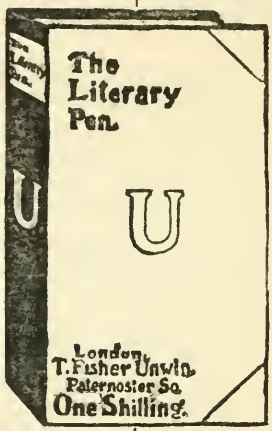

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