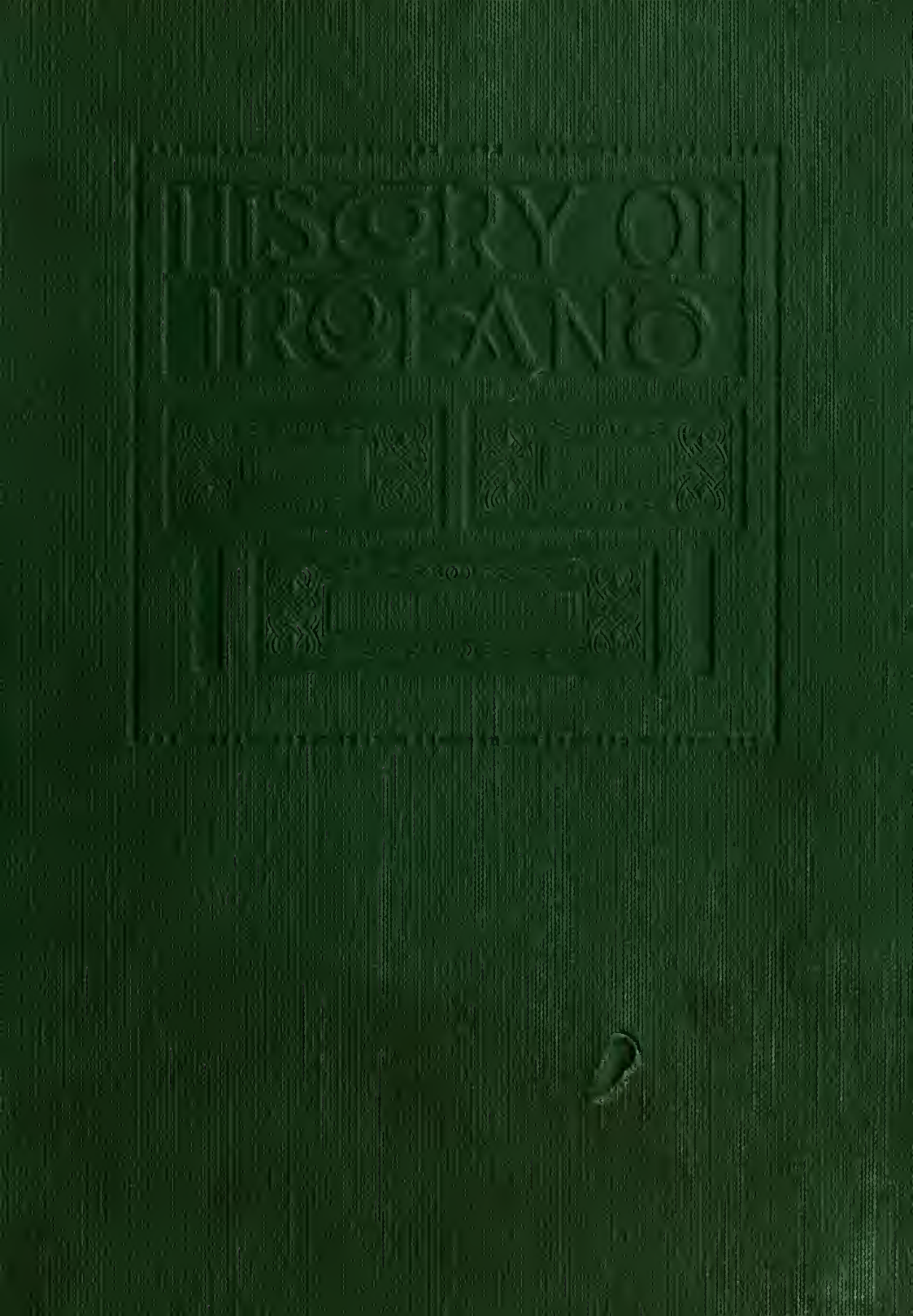
HISTORY OF
IRELAND

History of Ireland

HALF-VOLUME II

11 SHIPS BRINGING FOOD TO THE ARMY OF RICHARD II

FROM THE HARLEIAN MS. IN THE BRITISH MUSEUM

HISTORY OF IRELAND

FROM THE EARLIEST TIMES
TO THE PRESENT DAY

BY

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LL.D. M.R.I.A.

HALF-VOLUME II
1210 TO 1547

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CHAPTER XVII

King John in Ireland

KING JOHN was the youngest son of Henry II., and the best beloved by his father. Cold, calculating, suspicious, hating many, loving few, distrusting all, to John alone Henry was ever kind and indulgent, trusted him without reserve, and lavished on him his tenderest care. In Ireland (1185) John had brought the power of England to the verge of destruction ; it was his folly and that of his courtiers that was to blame, yet he was readily forgiven ; the blame was cast on De Lacy and others, and, blinded by partiality, the father would believe every one was guilty but his favourite son. The disobedience of his children cost Henry many a pang ; and it was his consolation to think that, in these revolts, John had no share ; but in this he was destined to discover his error. In the last struggle of his life with the French king (1187) his son Richard was on the enemy's side, and so also were some of the Anglo-Norman barons. Unable to make headway against this combination, he had to agree to the terms of his adversary, and among the conditions of peace was one granting immunity for their acts to the rebellious barons. But Henry had the curiosity to know their names, and having procured a list, he was horrified to find that the first name was that of John. It was his crowning sorrow. He protested he did not wish to live longer, cursed the day on which he was born, and above all cursed his surviving sons.[1] The unnatural son was also the unnatural brother, and while Richard was absent at the Crusades, John intrigued with the French king to have him

[1] Lingard's *History of England*, vol. ii. p. 118 ; Thierry, *Norman Conquest*, vol. ii. pp. 184-5.

deposed ; and when Richard fell into the hands of the German Emperor and was cast into prison, John sought to bribe the Emperor, so that Richard should never be set free.[1] When John became king (1199) he was but thirty-two years old, but he was old in vice of every kind. To remove a possible rival, he murdered his nephew ; to gratify his lust, he divorced his wife and took Isabella of Angoulême, a younger and fairer bride ;[2] his licentiousness was as great as that of an Eastern Sultan, and he had to count as an enemy many a powerful baron whose daughter or sister or wife he had dishonoured. In one short but inglorious campaign (1206) he lost those French possessions which, since the days of Rollo, had belonged to his ancestors ; and not content with all this, he had provoked a quarrel with the Pope and for three years had all England under interdict. Such was John and such his record when he came to Ireland in 1210.

He landed at Crook near Waterford,[3] and so numerous was the army that accompanied him, that it was conveyed in seven hundred vessels. A quarter of a century had passed since he was last in Ireland ; there had been many changes in the interval, but it could not be said that the affairs of Ireland, either from an English or an Irish point of view, were even yet in a satisfactory condition. Heedless of the dangers with which they were menaced, the Irish chiefs still continued to quarrel. The death of De Burgo, and the establishment on the throne of Connaught, without a rival, of Cathal Crovderg, had not brought continued peace to the Western province, for two powerful chiefs, MacDermot and O'Mulrooney, went to war (1206) ; and the same year O'Donnell of Tirconnell plundered two Northern chiefs, and was carrying off their cattle when he was attacked, and in the struggle that ensued many were killed and drowned. The very next year that same O'Donnell ravaged Fermanagh, but was attacked and slain ; and in a contest in Connaught, in which the MacDermots and O'Connors and O'Mulrooneys

[1] Lingard's *History of England*, vol. ii. pp. 122-3, 134-9.
[2] *Ibid.* pp. 151-2.
[3] *Four Masters*, at 1209 (O'Donovan's Note).

took part, when O'Mulrooney was taken prisoner by his opponents his eyes were put out. The O'Donnells and the O'Neills were at war (1208), the MacCarthys of Desmond and the O'Rorkes were in each case quarrelling among themselves, and so also were the O'Briens of Thomond, and the next year the O'Rorkes of Brefny and the O'Mellaghlins of Meath were at war.[1] In these contests among the Irish, the English were always ready to take sides, their object being to weaken and ultimately to destroy both the combatants; nor had they any scruple about changing sides, nor much regard for the binding force of treaties. Yet, though they made some progress, their progress was slow. The Irish had already acquired skill in archery; they avoided big battles and fighting much in the open, resorted more to stratagems and surprises, and this desultory and harassing warfare they found most effective for defence.[2] But while it was true that English and Irish sometimes acted together in their wars, and that in individual cases friendship had sprung up between them, yet the relations between the two races were not cordial, and as time passed did not improve. The Irish regarded the new-comers as plunderers of their property; the English looked upon the Irish as of an inferior race, despised them for their weakness and their divisions; and though they professed the same faith, they had little reverence for the churches which the natives had built, and plundered and profaned them so often, that the Archbishop of Armagh went specially to England (1206) to complain of their conduct to King John.[3]

In Dublin and its neighbourhood the same antagonism between the races existed, even in a more intense form than elsewhere, and on one occasion at least it had tragic results. Peopled from Bristol, the inhabitants of Dublin had got a charter of privileges from Henry II.; these privileges were

[1] *Four Masters*; *Annals of Loch Cé.*

[2] Cambrensis, p. 312: "Although they might at first have been easily subjugated, they became, in process of time, able to make a stout resistance." Evidently they were learning from experience—and from the enemy, though they did not adopt the use of armour.

[3] *Four Masters.*

confirmed and even enlarged and multiplied by John, both before he became king and afterwards; and all the privileges and rights that had ever been conceded to the inhabitants of Bristol were conceded to those of Dublin and enjoyed by them.[1] From all imposts, from tolls and customs, from payment for right of way over road or bridge or carriage way, they were free, and this throughout the whole extent of John's dominions; they could distrain the property of their debtors in Dublin, but, except in a few cases, were not liable to have their own property distrained; they were to have their city guilds such as existed at Bristol; in corn and wool and hides they were given a monopoly, and traders coming to their city could purchase these articles from none but citizens; and they were to have liberty to hold an annual fair at Donnybrook, which was to last for eight days, and to which the merchants of the city were bidden to repair.[2] Surrounded by a strong wall, which King John ordered to be strengthened still more, in possession of many privileges, enjoying to the full the favour of their sovereign,[3] having in their midst his Viceroy, and sustained and defended by royal troops, the city prospered and the citizens grew rich. But all this only excited the more the envy of the dispossessed natives and whetted their appetite for revenge. Deprived of their properties, they had been driven from the city in which they were born, and going to their countrymen throughout Dublin and Wicklow, they told their mournful tale. The O'Byrnes and the O'Tooles were warlike, they sympathized with the wrongs of their own countrymen, they meant to be even with the fat burghers hidden behind the strong walls of the city, and all they wanted was an opportunity for vengeance. The opportunity came on Easter Monday 1209, when the citizens joyously went forth to enjoy a holiday, a little to the south of the city at Cullenswood. In the midst

[1] Gilbert's *Historic and Municipal Documents*, pp. 49-62.

[2] It is impossible to say whether, at this early period, these fairs were characterized by those disturbances for which they afterwards became so famous.

[3] The citizens showed their gratitude by supplying John's "man" with an official residence (p. 56).

of their festivities, the O'Byrnes and the O'Tooles swooped down upon them; the holiday-makers were unable to offer much resistance to this unforeseen and unexpected attack, and 300 of them were killed. The survivors made their way back to the city and told their terrible tale, and the day which commenced in joy was ended in sorrow and gloom. In the city annals Easter Monday got the name of Black Monday; and the bitterest animosity was felt and long continued towards those terrible natives, some of whom dwelt near Dublin itself, and some out upon the Wicklow hills.[1]

The quarrels between the Irish chiefs John regarded with equanimity, but his mood was different when it was the colonists themselves who quarrelled, and in the years that immediately preceded his visit their conduct was as bad as that of the Irish at their worst. A certain Meyler De Bermingham attacked the English of Limerick (1206) and took the place by force; the next year Walter De Lacy and Meyler FitzHenry were at war; FitzHenry was besieged in his castle at Ardnocker in Westmeath for five weeks, and at last had to purchase peace by the sacrifice of part of his lands.[2] The insolence of the De Lacys both in Leinster and Munster was such that a confederacy of the English of Munster had been formed against them, headed by Jeffrey De Marais, or De Marisco, and a battle was fought at Thurles (1208), in which the losses of Hugh De Lacy, who was then Viceroy, were heavy.[3] In these contests "all Leinster and Munster were brought to utter destruction."[4] Such was the state of the English colony when John arrived. The De Lacys he judged to be guilty, and therefore he pardoned Jeffrey De Marisco for his recent rebellion. Then he turned his attention to William De Braose, a powerful noble, whose possessions were extensive both in England and Normandy, and who for the sum of 5000 marks had been granted some lands in Munster. But this money was not paid; when his children were demanded as

[1] Cox, *Hibernia Anglicana*, p. 49; Ware's *Annals*.
[2] *Annals of Clonmacnoise*. [3] Gilbert's *Viceroys*, p. 66.
[4] *Annals of Clonmacnoise*.

hostages, this also was refused; and the wife of De Braose declared that her children would not be safe in the hands of King John. Her husband, on John's arrival in Ireland, escaped to England, and from England he escaped to France, where he died; his wife endeavoured to make terms with the King and offered him 50,000 marks for a free pardon for herself and her relatives. The offer was accepted, but she was unable to carry out its terms; she found she had only twenty-four marks of silver in her possession, and as this would not be accepted, De Braose, who then lived, was proclaimed an outlaw, and his wife and children flung into a prison at Windsor, where they were starved to death.[1] Against the De Lacys, John's irritation was little less than against De Braose. On his arrival in Ireland, or shortly after, Cathal Crovderg of Connaught and O'Brien of Thomond had tendered him their submission and offered their services if required; their aid was accepted against the De Lacys, and the unusual spectacle was presented of two Irish princes marching with an English king to suppress the revolt of two powerful English lords. From Dublin they marched through Trim and Kells and Dundalk and Carlingford, until they arrived at Downpatrick.[2] Both the De Lacys fled before them; the only stand their followers made was at Carrickfergus, but they were quickly overpowered and the place captured by King John. The De Lacys escaped to France, and in the monastery of St. Tarin, near Evreux,[3] they worked as brick-makers and gardeners, until finally the abbot of the monastery interceded with King John, and Walter De Lacy (in 1215) was restored to his Irish estates on payment of a fine; and a little later—in the reign of Henry III.—Hugh De Lacy also was pardoned, and returned to Ulster.

The submission of the Irish chiefs left John no enemy to conquer except O'Neill and the Northern princes, and he made no attempt to conquer them; the flight of De Lacy and De Braose left him no rebels to chastise; and, freed from the

[1] Gilbert's *Viceroys*, pp. 67-76, 506. [2] *Ibid.* p. 72

[3] *Ibid.* p. 78; *Book of Howth* (Carew MSS.), p. 122; Cox, *Hibernia Anglicana*, p. 50.

necessity of making war, he turned his attention to works of peace, and took measures to establish English institutions in those parts of Ireland which had been subdued by English arms. Almost all Leinster and Munster and the greater part of Meath, John believed could safely be brought within the pale of English law, and this wide extent of territory he divided into twelve counties—Louth, Dublin, Kildare, Meath, Carlow, Kilkenny, Wexford, Waterford, Cork, Kerry, Limerick, and Tipperary.[1] In these counties he decreed that English laws and customs should prevail, English courts should be set up, English justices appointed, and that there should be sheriffs and the other necessary executive officers to carry out their decrees. The distinction of being the first to introduce English laws into Ireland is often claimed for King John, but this statement requires qualification, for it is quite certain that English laws and customs were introduced by his father. In the grants made to De Cogan and De Lacy, for instance, Henry II. reserves for himself certain knights' fees, a term entirely foreign to the Irish or Brehon law, and equally peculiar to Feudalism as it existed in England. To these reservations of knights' fees were incident wardships, marriages, reliefs, aids for making the King's son a knight, and for the marriage of his daughter, and "how could the King receive these incidents if the laws had not given him means to come by them, which of necessity must be by sheriffs, officers of justice and other ministers, according to the course appointed"; from all of which Ware concludes that Henry II. granted the laws of England to Ireland, erected courts for the execution of them and for bringing in the profits of his grants—otherwise his reservations would be idle and fruitless.[2] What confirms these conclusions is that there is still on record a statute of the time of Richard III. (1485) which has reference to the election of a Viceroy, and which expressly professes to be nothing more than a re-enactment of a statute of the time of Henry II., or of Henry FitzEmpress, as he is called. This statute[3] enacts that when

[1] Gilbert's *Viceroys*, p. 74. [2] Harris's *Ware*, vol. ii. p. 80.
[3] *Ibid.* p. 79

presumably through some sudden cause, Ireland should be void of a Viceroy, the great officers of State—the Lord Chancellor, Lord Treasurer, and Chief Justice—shall, with the assent and in council with the lords spiritual and temporal of Ireland, proceed to elect some noble to be governor, who can hold Parliaments and Great Councils;[1] and that all this is to be done "according to the tenor, usage and execution of the statute of Henry FitzEmpress, and as is specified in the same statute."

It is further claimed for Henry II. that he ordered an Irish Parliament to be convoked, and that, on his return to England (1172), he transmitted to Ireland a document ("modus tenendi Parliamenta") in which he lays down that an Irish Parliament is to be called from time to time, how it was to be summoned, who were to be its members, on what it was to deliberate, and what was to be the extent of its powers.[2] In the order of dignity it was to consist of six degrees: the first, the King, or, in his absence, the Viceroy; the second, archbishops, bishops, abbots, priors and clergy, provided they held land equal to twenty knights' fees;[3] the third were the proctors of the clergy, two chosen as the representatives of each diocese;[4] the fourth degree, earls, barons and their peers, such as had land to the extent of twenty knights' fees; the fifth were the knights of counties selected by the county, and paid by the county which selected them, at the rate of a half mark a day for every day they were

[1] Besides the Parliament there were the *Great Councils*, made up of the great men of the country, and which were called together in some sudden emergency; the *Privy Council*, which was executive and advisory, but had no legislative authority; *County Assemblies*—resembling a modern Grand Jury or County Council; and lastly, *Parleys*, which were to discuss terms with native chiefs. The Parliaments in the beginning were seldom held—only one in the reign of Henry II. and one by King John (Monk Mason's *Irish Parliaments*, pp. 14-18).

[2] Harris's *Ware*, vol. ii. pp. 80 *et seq.*

[3] Equal to £400 a year.

[4] It was pretended in the sixteenth century that the *Proctors* had only advisory but not legislative powers; but this was only after they had stubbornly refused to acknowledge Henry VIII.'s Spiritual Supremacy, then it was discovered that they had usurped *legislative* functions (Monk Mason, pp. 16-22).

in attendance in Parliament, but who were to exercise the franchise in their selection is not made clear; the sixth degree were those selected by the burgesses and citizens of the towns. The King, if present, was to sit in the middle of the first bench, having at his right hand the Archbishops of Armagh and Cashel, and on his left the Archbishops of Dublin and Tuam, and in close proximity to them the other bishops, abbots, priors, earls, barons and their peers. Lower down, at the King's "right foot," were the Lord Chancellor and the Chief Justice; and at his "left foot" the Treasurer and Barons of the Exchequer; and in the last place were the Proctors. Where the Knights of the counties and boroughs were to sit is not made clear, and it does not appear that they were to hold their sessions separately, that is, unless a doubtful or difficult matter were to arise, when it was advised that each order should consider it separately.[1]

It is matter of doubt and controversy whether such a document ever came from Henry, but so great a man as Lord Coke declared that it was genuine, though Prynne and Selden are on the opposite side; neither of these will allow it any greater antiquity than the reign of Edward III. Their arguments against it are not convincing, and Ware would seem to incline to the opinion that Lord Coke was right.[2] But whether this document was ever written or not, whether any such Parliament was ever held in Ireland in Henry's reign, and if so what laws it passed, are matters impossible to determine now. What is much more certain is, that among the English in Ireland at that time there was more of lawlessness than of law. These adventurers had come to Ireland to acquire wealth and possessions, and they plundered the natives without scruple, and often with impunity. They were warriors only, and had

[1] Harris's *Ware*, vol. ii. pp. 82-83.

[2] *Ibid.* vol. ii. pp. 83-84. This also is the opinion of Molyneux (Case Stated, pp. 31 *et seq.*); he is quite satisfied if there was no Parliament in Ireland in Henry II.'s time, there was shortly after (p. 36); Matt. Paris states positively that Henry held one at Lismore (1171), and that the English laws were *gratefully* accepted there. This can hardly be true of the Irish, who did not know these laws or understand them; but of course it would be true of the English settlers.

the warrior's contempt for the delays and debates and arguments incidental to courts of law; the law they respected and feared was the law of the stronger, and when they quarrelled among themselves they settled their quarrels by the short and stern arbitrament of the sword.

It was said that King John brought over from England some experienced lawyers, and that under their direction the whole machinery of government was established. In the counties recently formed, courts were set up, judges appointed, and sheriffs and the other officers necessary to carry out the Court's decrees. Over all was the Viceroy, sometimes called Justiciary, sometimes Lord Deputy, sometimes Lord Lieutenant; and with him, as a Council, but subordinate to him, were the Lord Chancellor and the Lord Treasurer. The Lord Chancellor had the custody of the great seal,[1] and in power and dignity was first and greatest of the judges. The Lord Treasurer was at the head of the Court of Exchequer, and had charge of the King's revenues, and fines and debts accruing to the King passed through his hands. The Parliaments held and the enactments passed from 1172 to 1310 we do not know, as the records have been lost; but English statutes were of no avail in Ireland until they had been confirmed by the Irish Parliament, nor had these enactments—even of an Irish Parliament — any effect except in those parts of Ireland where English power prevailed.

The rule of Solon or Justinian is not what might be expected from a man with the base character of King John. He may be getting credit from historians for having done more in Ireland than he actually did, but at least this can be said, that his conduct in Ireland during his last visit favourably contrasts with his record on the other side of St. George's Channel.

[1] Harris's *Ware*, vol. ii. pp. 98-99. The Lord Chancellor was appointed sometimes for life, sometimes during good behaviour, but more frequently during the King's pleasure.


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IRELAND
COLOURED PARTS REPRESENT THE
ANGLO-NORMAN SETTLEMENTS
IN THE 13TH CENTURY.

CHAPTER XVIII

Long-continued Turmoil

ALTHOUGH no great event occurred for a few years after the departure of King John, yet these years were not years of unbroken calm, and the first sound of battle came from the English themselves. The Viceroy was John De Grey, Bishop of Norwich, a man whom John had endeavoured to have appointed Archbishop of Canterbury, and for whose sake he had defied the Pope, and in punishment had his dominions placed under interdict.[1] De Grey had little taste for the spiritual duties of the episcopal office; he was more at home in dealing with affairs of State, or on the battlefield, and wishing to do something agreeable to his royal master, and to signalize his tenure of office as Viceroy by some notable achievement, he marched north at the head of an army (1211), erected a strong castle at Clones, and from this entered the land of the O'Neills, hoping to conquer that land, which as yet refused to submit to England. His success was not in keeping with his expectations; he was defeated by O'Neill with heavy loss, and the next year O'Neill marched south and destroyed the English castle at Clones, and following up this success, he defeated the English at Carlingford.[2] The same year, O'Mellaghlin of Meath defeated them, but in the next year his good fortune deserted him. He was defeated, and the English were free to build, or rather rebuild, the castles of Kinnitty, Birr, and Durrow,[3] as well as a castle at Athlone. The events which fill up the next few years are unimportant, but in 1220 wars and battles again began, and on that occasion

[1] Lingard's *History of England*, vol. ii. pp. 156-7.
[2] *Four Masters.* [3] *Annals of Clonmacnoise.*

it was the English themselves who quarrelled. When the De Lacys fled from Ireland, part of Walter De Lacy's lands of Meath had been given to William Marshall, Earl of Pembroke,[1] and after De Lacy's return to Ireland (1213) some of these lands were still retained. De Lacy considered himself an injured man, and only waited for a favourable opportunity to attack his rival and recover those lands which he still deemed his own; and as his lands adjoined those of Marshall, a dispute about boundaries might easily arise and might be as easily converted into a cause of war. Marshall was able to enlist the support of the Viceroy, but Walter De Lacy had the assistance of his brother Hugh; they made in addition an alliance with O'Neill of Tirowen, and the strength of this combination was formidable. They first attacked the English at Coleraine and destroyed the castle erected there; then they marched south, and in Meath and Leinster committed great havoc, and finally they met the combined forces of Marshall and the Viceroy at Dundalk. The latter had no less than twenty-four battalions under his command, yet they dreaded their opponents' strength, and without giving them battle agreed to terms, in which De Lacy and O'Neill suffered no punishment and no diminution of their power; on the contrary, O'Neill got his own demands.[2]

Many as were the evils caused by these quarrels, they were light compared to what ills came upon the province of Connaught. While Crovderg lived there was peace, for no rival, either native or English, cared to question his supremacy. But when he died (1224) the era of peace was over, and a long and melancholy era of war and misery supervened. The dead prince had attained his position only after many and desperate struggles, and after his death these struggles were renewed, and in a more aggravated form. His son Hugh claimed the position held by his father; his cousins—Hugh

[1] William Marshall was son of William Marshall and Isabel, daughter of Strongbow and Eva MacMurrogh; as the heir of Strongbow he was Earl of Pembroke, as the heir of Eva he was heir to Leinster, and therefore had enormous possessions (Leland, vol. i. p. 206).

[2] *Four Masters*, 1221.

and Turlogh, sons of Roderick—contested his claim, and were able to obtain the assistance of O'Neill of Tirowen, as well as two of the ablest of the Connaught chieftains, MacGeraghty of Roscommon and Hugh O'Flaherty of West Connaught. Entering Connaught, O'Neill marched by Athlone until he arrived near Tulsk, in Roscommon, and on the old cairn of stones and earth in that neighbourhood,[1] where for ages the Connaught kings had been inaugurated, Turlogh O'Connor was proclaimed king. His cousin Hugh could make no effective resistance, for all the Connaught chieftains had abandoned him except MacDermot, and his help was insufficient where so many enemies had to be overcome. In the belief that Turlogh was safe in his new position, O'Neill returned to Tirowen, leaving but a few of his soldiers in Connaught to aid the newly-crowned king. But Hugh O'Connor had inherited his father's stubborn will, and had no intention of quietly acquiescing in his dethronement, nor did he care from what quarter he procured assistance, provided only he could humiliate his rival and attain pre-eminence himself. With that object in view, he repaired to the English headquarters and begged their assistance, and this was just what the English desired. Some years before this date (1219) Richard De Burgo had undertaken, if the whole of Connaught were granted to him, that he would pay into the English Exchequer 3000 marks at once and an annual rent of 200 marks in addition; or that the King of Connaught should be left part of the province during his life, and that at his death the whole province should be given to De Burgo, —and for this he offered the sum of one thousand pounds. Neither of these offers had been accepted at that date, for in the next year Cathal Crovderg was granted the King of England's protection in all his lands and possessions for the space of five years. But when Cathal died, De Burgo's offer, or perhaps

[1] It was situated at Carnfree, and the ceremony of installation was elaborate. It was attended by many bishops and by the principal chiefs or sub-kings of Connaught. O'Mulconry gave the new king his wand, Mageraghty received gifts of cattle and sheep from him, O'Flanagan was his High Steward, O'Flaherty and O'Malley had command of the fleet, O'Kelly was Chief Treasurer, etc. (*The O'Conors*, pp. 83-84).

a larger one, was renewed and accepted, and by letter (1226) Henry III. had directed his Viceroy—De Marisco—to take possession of Connaught for Richard De Burgo.[1] In this document it is easy to trace the hand of Hubert De Burgo, who was then Justiciary of England, and who had therefore enormous power and was using it in favour of his relative in Ireland.

Hugh O'Connor found the Viceroy, De Marisco, at Athlone. He had been an interested spectator of the quarrels in Connaught, believing it better to let the O'Connors fight it out, and then was the time for the English to intervene, when both parties were exhausted in the struggle. But he was reluctant that any side should triumph, at least without his aid; and after hearing Hugh O'Connor's story he determined to aid him, and with his own forces and those of O'Mellaghlin of Meath he crossed the Shannon. Simultaneously with this, Hugh O'Connor had got the assistance of his uncle, Donogh Carbry O'Brien of Thomond, who had entered Connaught from the south, and the unfortunate province was at the same time wasted and spoiled by two different armies converging upon Roscommon. Against such forces Turlogh O'Connor and his allies were powerless, and, retreating westwards from Roscommon, they arrived at Kilkelly in Mayo. The most inexperienced of their soldiers had been placed in front to guard the non-combatants and to drive the cattle before them, while MacGeraghty and Turlogh and the more seasoned veterans of Tirowen had been left to guard the rear, for the English were in pursuit and were near at hand. The pursuers hoped to surround the retreating army; but the retreat was conducted with ability, and Turlogh and his men escaped by Swinford to the county of Sligo without any serious loss. Some of the Roscommon clans, who sided with Turlogh, had fled on the approach of the English, and arrived at Attymas, on the borders of Sligo, and instead of pursuing Turlogh's army, Hugh O'Connor proposed that these helpless fugitives be attacked. His allies agreed, and the miserable people in their haste to

[1] *The O'Conors of Connaught*, pp. 88, 95.

escape endeavoured to cross the river Bellacong, a tributary of the Moy. The current was swift and strong, numbers were drowned, and the fishermen who had their nets set in the river found them on the following day filled with the bodies of infants, who had lost their lives in that fatal passage.[1] Little less miserable was the fate of the remaining portion of the fugitives, who escaped northwards to Tirawley, where they were set upon by O'Dowda,[2] the chief of that territory, robbed of their cattle, and left utterly destitute.

Hugh O'Connor and his allies, retracing their steps, set up their headquarters at Kilmaine in Mayo, and thither O'Flaherty and Manus O'Connor were despatched on behalf of Turlogh, with the object of arriving at some agreement, knowing well it was useless to continue the struggle. O'Flaherty was pardoned, but only on condition that he deserted his present allies and even opposed them, and, besides, he was compelled to surrender the islands of Lough Corrib to the English, as well as the vessels he had on the lake. Necessity had compelled him to accept these hard conditions, which struck so fatal a blow at his power ; but it appears he had no intention of carrying out what he had stipulated, and the English had only left the province when he revolted to the son of Roderick, and again the English forces were recalled by Hugh O'Connor. A party of them who had encamped at Ardrahan in Galway were set upon by O'Flaherty and suffered severely; but again the English prevailed, Hugh O'Connor was recognized king, and O'Flaherty had to renew his submission and to give hostages for his future good behaviour. Champion of a losing cause, Turlogh O'Connor was abandoned by the Connaught chiefs, who had hitherto fought on his side, and again both himself and his brother sought for refuge in Tirowen. The English, who had placed Hugh on the throne, insisted on being paid by their ally, and compelled him to give them hostages until he was in

[1] *Annals of Loch Cé*, at 1225.

[2] O'Dowda was one of the chiefs of the Hy-Fiachrach clan, and dwelt in the modern barony of Tirawley, west of Killala Bay and the river Moy, in Mayo (*Book of Rights*, pp. 108-9).

possession of sufficient money to gratify their demands. After this period of slaughter and desolation peace was restored. The English in their march through Roscommon and Mayo had plundered everything, and left ruin and misery in their track; the steps of Donogh O'Brien in Galway, on his march from Thomond, were similarly marked, and there was hardly a church or territory in Connaught that had not been plundered and laid waste. So many of the men had fallen in the war that the gathering in of the harvest could not be attended to, and the winter passed and the corn was still uncut, nor was it cut until St. Bridget's Day (1st February) of the next year (1226), when the crops were being put down for the succeeding harvest. Without corn or cattle, the people were in the last extremity of distress and large numbers perished of hunger; in the wake of famine, the horrid spectre of famine fever appeared, and Connaught seemed as a land accursed, a land of mourning and lamentation and woe.[1]

It was about this date that Richard De Burgo assumed the title of Lord of Connaught. That he should be what his title indicated seemed to be a matter of concern to Henry III., or rather to his minister; it would be an extension of English power, and such an extension seemed imminent. The English had already acquired settlements in Connaught, they had built strong castles on Lough Corrib, they were thus enabled to exercise an influence on its local affairs, and, best of all, the King of Connaught was their creature; it was they who had placed him on the throne, and, as they had put him up, they could as easily pull him down. And with this object in view he was invited to a conference at Dublin (1227), which was attended by the Viceroy (De Marisco), William Marshall, and other English lords. In the preceding year Hugh O'Connor had been directed, by royal mandate to the Viceroy, to deliver up the land of Connaught which he and his father had forfeited; he was directed, later on, to deliver it to Richard De Burgo; failing this, he was invited to a conference at Athlone and promised safe-conduct; and as he refused this invitation also, he was

[1] *Annals of Loch Cé*; *Four Masters.*

again invited in the next year to Dublin and was promised safe-conduct. This last invitation he accepted, but he soon found that treachery was intended; the Viceroy attempted to make him prisoner, but William Marshall would be no party to such treachery, and rescued Hugh O'Connor and brought him back safely to Connaught.[1] In revenge for his treatment at Dublin, the Connaught king attacked the English at Athlone, burned their settlements there, and took young De Marisco, son of the Viceroy, prisoner. His own son and daughter were already in the Viceroy's hands as hostages, or rather as prisoners, and, in exchange for the Viceroy's son, they were allowed to go free. Dissatisfied with Hugh O'Connor, the English took the sons of Roderick into favour. Richard De Burgo overran one part of Connaught, De Marisco marched to Roscommon from Athlone and built a strong castle at Rindown, on the shores of Lough Ree, and Hugh O'Connor, unable to maintain his position, fled from Connaught to Tirconnell. The next year (1228) he returned to claim his throne, but at De Marisco's castle, whither he had gone for a friendly conference, he was treacherously assassinated,[2] and the sons of Roderick possessed the throne of Connaught without a rival. But there were two of these princes: in the manner of their family, no two of them could agree; neither would yield to the other, and Connaught was harassed and plundered between them. In the end, Hugh succeeded, as he had the support of the greater number of the native chiefs, and also of the English. In the hands of these latter he was but a puppet; and two years later, when he showed some symptoms of independence, his territories were overrun by Richard De Burgo, he was expelled from Connaught, and his cousin Felim, son of Cathal Crovderg, was adopted by the English and placed on the vacant throne. Either the affection of De Burgo was fitful and capricious or the new king was not sufficiently servile; but, whatever the cause, Felim was seized upon by De Burgo (1231) and imprisoned, and his

[1] *The O'Conors*, pp. 95-96; *Four Masters* and *Annals of Loch Cé* (1227).

[2] *Annals of Clonmacnoise.* That De Marisco did not approve of the act is shown by the fact that he executed the murderer, an Englishman.

rival and cousin again became king. But the next year Felim was liberated, the struggle for supremacy was renewed, the native chiefs rallied to Felim's side in great strength, and though his rival had the aid of some English, yet he was defeated and slain (1233), and Felim was once more king.[1] That same year the son of Hugh De Lacy—William—invaded Brefny, but was defeated and slain by Cathal O'Reilly; and Felim O'Connor, flushed with his recent triumph, attacked and destroyed the English castles recently erected in Connaught, viz. Galway, Donamon, Hen's Castle in Lough Corrib, and Hag's Castle in Lough Mask.

For a year or two the O'Connors ceased to quarrel, but apparently Richard De Burgo determined that Connaught should not be at peace. He had already overcome the O'Flahertys, dispossessed them of their territory east of Lough Corrib, and driven them across to Iar-Connaught, to that bleak and desolate region which extends westward of Lough Corrib and Lough Mask and takes in the whole coast-line from Galway to Clifden;[2] he had taken possession of the town of Galway,[3] where he erected and fortified a strong castle, and from this as his headquarters he plundered Felim O'Connor's territory in 1235, and again in the following year. The first of these years he was aided by the Viceroy,

[1] *Four Masters*; *Loch Cé*. The defeated prince was the last descendant of Roderick O'Connor who could claim to be King of Connaught (*The O'Conors*, p. 100).

[2] From the fifth century to the thirteenth, the inheritance of the O'Flahertys was the present barony of Clare in the County Galway. Dispossessed of this by De Burgo, they in turn seized the district west of Lough Corrib and dispossessed the ancient inhabitants of those regions (O'Flaherty's *Iar-Connaught*, p. 3).

[3] Hardiman's *History of Galway*, pp. 47-48. Galway was fortified (1170) and held by the O'Flahertys. It was vigorously besieged by Richard De Burgo (1230), but the attack was unsuccessful. Two years later, the attack was renewed and the place captured from the O'Flahertys by De Burgo, who enlarged and strengthened the castle. The place was again attacked and captured by Felim O'Connor (1233), and the fortifications erected by De Burgo destroyed; but that persevering noble soon after recaptured it and refortified it, and from that date it was his headquarters and his greatest stronghold in Connaught.

Maurice FitzGerald, and De Lacy, Earl of Meath, and with these forces he crossed the Shannon at Athlone, burned Roscommon and the churches of Elphin and Boyle, and in that part of the province spread ruin and desolation. They next proceeded to Munster, at the instigation of O'Heyne, a Galway chief, who had a grudge against Donogh O'Brien of Thomond and wished to be revenged on him. O'Brien was taken unprepared, but Felim O'Connor, hearing of his plight, went to his assistance and gave battle to the English, in which, however, the Irish were defeated with heavy loss. This action of Felim brought the vengeance of the English on his unhappy kingdom; they turned back to lay it waste, and, feeling unable to resist them, he gathered together his cattle and provisions and with his immediate friends fled from Connaught to Tirconnell, leaving the whole province undefended and large part of it waste. Baulked in his purpose of plundering Felim O'Connor, De Burgo turned westward along the shores of Lough Corrib to attack Felim's relative, Manus O'Connor. He was joined by O'Heyne[1] and O'Flaherty, and to facilitate his attack on their countrymen these two chiefs carried his boats by land from Lough Corrib to Killery Harbour, a distance of seven miles. O'Connor's people took shelter in the islands of Clew Bay, but De Burgo attacked them there, took away their cattle, killed the people or took them prisoners, and the islands along the coast, from Clew Bay to Achil, were, with scarce an exception, the scenes of robbery and murder. Loaded with plunder, De Burgo turned back to Ballintubber, thence north-east to Ballysodare in Sligo, which he also plundered; and finally, by the aid of some machines he had constructed for casting stones, he was able to capture the strong fortress of Loch Cé, near Boyle. When he returned to Galway he left the people of Connaught "without food, raiment or cattle"; and, to complete the misery of the province, the Irish themselves were plundering and destroying each other. After this, peace was made with

[1] O'Flaherty's *Iar-Connaught*, pp. 50-51. O'Heyne's territory corresponded with the present barony of Kiltartan in Galway.

Felim O'Connor; but the next year, at a conference with the Viceroy at Athlone, treachery was planned against him; he was forewarned by some friend and succeeded in making his escape to Tirconnell.[1] The English set up one Brian O'Connor as king; but Felim returned from the North, the Connaught chiefs rallied to his side, and he defeated and deposed the English-made king. The same year (1236) De Burgo again swept through Connaught, passing through Tuam, Mayo, and Balla, and leaving Connaught "without peace or tranquility, or without food in any territory."[2] Nor were the ills of the province yet over, for Felim's right to the throne was again challenged by the sons of Roderick O'Connor.

During these years the position of Felim O'Connor had been one of enormous difficulty. Over the rivals of his own name and family he had asserted his superiority by force of arms, but the English were not so easily dealt with. They had already effected many settlements in the province, and in extent of territory and power De Burgo far exceeded even the chief of the O'Connors. To Felim little was left but a few baronies round Roscommon, and a nominal sovereignty over the native chiefs, and for this shrunken territory and diminished power he had done homage to the English king, or rather to his representative, and he was paying an annual tribute. There was no suggestion that he did not pay this tribute regularly, or that he had been unfaithful to any of his engagements. Yet the Viceroy had more than once favoured his rivals and employed English troops against him, acting under the King of England's authority and in his name; and De Burgo kept his territory in perpetual unrest, had robbed and plundered his friends, desolated his lands, pillaged his churches, and chased himself, an exile and an outlaw, from the land and from the throne of his fathers. To appeal to the Viceroy, Maurice FitzGerald, was useless, for he had taken sides with De Burgo; the only resource left was to appeal in person to the English king, and Felim for this purpose went to England.

[1] *Four Masters*; *Annals of Loch Cé.*
[2] *Annals of Loch Cé* (1236); *Four Masters.*

CLEW BAY FROM WEST POINT

AFTER W. H. BARTLETT

He was favourably received by Henry III. (1240), to whom he detailed all that he had suffered, laying all the blame on De Burgo—a safe thing to do then, for De Burgo's great relative (Hubert, Earl of Kent) had lost the King's favour. Impressed by what he had heard, Henry sent peremptory orders to his Viceroy, FitzGerald, "to pluck up by the root that fruitless sycamore, De Burgo, whom the Earl of Kent in the insolence of his power had planted in these parts, nor suffer it to bud forth any longer."[1] After that date De Burgo gave Felim no more trouble, and two years later (1243) he died. But Maurice FitzGerald still kept Connaught disturbed. He plundered two Connaught chiefs, MacDermot and O'Flynn (1241); the next year, with Felim O'Connor as his ally, he invaded Tirconnell, and two years later he erected a strong fortress at Sligo. Both Felim and FitzGerald went to England with some troops (1245) and aided Henry III. in his Welsh wars. On their return, FitzGerald was dismissed from the viceroyalty and De Marisco appointed in his place,[2] but the change did not bring peace to Connaught. There were contests between the O'Connors and O'Reillys of Brefny (1243-44), and between a minor branch of the O'Connor family and the English (1247), during which Galway was burned.[3] Again, under Bermingham, the English were defeated at Sligo (1249) by Felim O'Connor's son, and in the same year, perhaps in revenge, the Viceroy and FitzGerald deposed Felim and set up his nephew Turlogh in his place. The new king soon quarrelled with his patrons and went to war with them, but at Athenry he was defeated with heavy loss by Jordan De Exeter, the English Sheriff of Connaught.[4] The next year (1250) Felim returned from Tirowen, defeated his nephew Turlogh, and, making peace with the English, was again recognized as king. A little later (1253) he was at war with the O'Reillys of Brefny; and again, two years later, on this latter occasion in alliance with Walter De Burgo, the son and heir of his old enemy, Richard. To the dismay of

[1] Matt. Paris, vol. i. p. 297.
[2] Gilbert's *Viceroys*, p. 102.
[3] *Annals of Loch Cé.*
[4] *Ibid.*

Felim, who had been so long his faithful subject, Henry III. granted "500 librates" of land in Connaught to one Godfrey De Lusignac; but the Irish prince remonstrated, the grant was withdrawn, and an agreement was entered into (1256) by which Felim undertook on his part not to molest any of the English in their possessions, while on the other side the integrity of his own dominions was guaranteed by the Viceroy, De la Zouch.[1]

Compared with Connaught, alternately desolated by English noble and Irish chief, and in which the tumult of war was seldom hushed, the state of Munster during these years was one of peace. Yet there were many elements of discord and turmoil within its bounds. In accordance with the terms of submission made by Donogh O'Brien to King John,[2] there was an English castle built at Killaloe (1215) by Jeffrey De Marisco, which, like other castles of its kind, was to serve for the invaders as a retreat in danger and a rallying-point for attack. The grandson of that Maurice FitzGerald who had come over with Fitzstephen had granted to him by mandatory letter of Henry III. (1216), besides the castle and lands of Maynooth, the castle and lands of Croom, in Limerick, but lately the paternal inheritance of the O'Donovans;[3] early in the thirteenth century the FitzGeralds had gained a strong foothold in Desmond, and the position of De Burgo at Limerick was near and his forces strong. The ancient jealousy between the O'Briens of Thomond and the MacCarthys of Desmond still survived, and the strength of each of these families was often dissipated by faction and discord and petty ambition; and to carry their point these princes, like the O'Connors of Connaught, were always ready to call the English to their aid. In 1225 Donogh O'Brien and De Burgo fought side by side in Connaught, but ten years later they were opposed and De Burgo had many native soldiers in his ranks.[4] Some years later (1249) MacCarthy of

[1] *The O'Conors of Connaught*, p. 107.

[2] White's *History of Clare*, p. 124.

[3] *Four Masters*, at 1224 (O'Donovan's Note).

[4] *Ibid.* 1235. One of these was O'Heyne, "who wished to be revenged on the Mononians and on Donogh Carbry O'Brien."

Desmond made war on the English and inflicted heavy loss on them ; but the next year that energetic prince was murdered, it was thought by an Irish hand.[1] Again (in 1257) Connor O'Brien of Thomond attacked FitzGerald and the English, and defeated them at Feakle in Clare ; but in the same year, in some factionist contest, he was defeated and slain, being succeeded by Brian Roe O'Brien. In the meantime FitzGerald had made progress in Desmond, for he was able to found and endow with lands (1253) a monastery at Ardfert, near Tralee.[2]

Tirconnell and Tirowen had long been rivals and enemies, and it is noticeable that while the sons of Roderick O'Connor in their distress found an asylum with O'Donnell, their rivals sought for shelter in Tirowen. Such a state of things would furnish the English with an opportunity to interfere and conquer ; but they had already tried conclusions with Hugh O'Neill and had been badly worsted in the contest, and while he lived neither the jealousy of Tirconnell nor the cupidity of the English disturbed the tranquillity of his province. But after his death (1230) the sceptre passed into less capable hands, and his successor, Domhnall O'Loughlin, aided by the English, entered Tirconnell (1232), which he wasted and plundered, only, however, to have his own province overrun by O'Donnell in the same year. Four years later, O'Donnell again marched eastward, and got at least temporary submission from most of the Northern chiefs.[3] The English believed the opportune time to interfere (in 1238) had come, and the Viceroy, Maurice FitzGerald, aided by De Lacy, entered Tirowen and Tirconnell, deposed Domhnall O'Loughlin and put in his place a nominee of their own—Brian O'Neill—got hostages from Tirconnell and the other lesser provinces, and at last the English might boast that they had planted themselves firmly in these provinces, which had withstood their arms so long.[4] Quarrels soon arose between O'Loughlin and O'Neill for the supreme position in Tirowen, and were continued with

[1] *Annals of Innisfallen*, quoted by O'Donovan, note to *Four Masters* at 1250.

[2] *Four Masters.* [3] *Ibid.* [4] *Ibid.*

varying success until O'Neill invoked and obtained the aid of O'Donnell and fought, near Maghera in Derry, an obstinate and bloody battle in which O'Loughlin was defeated and slain; and Brian O'Neill (in 1241) became ruler of Tirowen. Maurice FitzGerald, having vastly increased in power, had built a strong castle at Sligo, and from its shelter made frequent incursions into Tirconnell, until finally, by the aid of some of the O'Connors of Connaught, he fought with O'Donnell the battle of Ballyshannon (1247), where O'Donnell was outmanœuvred and defeated and himself and many of his followers killed. FitzGerald was then enabled to play the part of king-maker, and one Rory O'Cannannan was made chief of Tirconnell. But the allegiance of his nominee was short-lived, or perhaps his own favour was not continued; Godfrey O'Donnell solicited FitzGerald's aid, and O'Cannannan was defeated and slain. Tirowen was then entered by the Viceroy, De Marisco, and its submission was obtained, the Irish deeming it wiser to peacefully submit than to have recourse to arms, as they felt that "the English had at that time the ascendancy over the Irish."[1] FitzGerald again invaded and wasted both Tirowen and Tirconnell (1250); O'Neill and O'Donnell were at war (1252), and FitzGerald and O'Neill (1253), in which O'Neill was victorious, inflicted much loss on FitzGerald and demolished many of the English strongholds in the north.[2] A few years later (1257) a determined effort was made by the English to finally crush the power of Godfrey O'Donnell, and for this purpose the Viceroy and FitzGerald united their forces. Such a combination must have been formidable in its strength, yet O'Donnell put forth his best efforts, and, unaided except by the enthusiastic clansmen of Tirconnell, he met the English at Drumcliff (in Sligo), fought a desperate and long-contested battle, and finally prevailed, though he himself was severely wounded, as was also his enemy FitzGerald, whom it is said he met in single combat.[3]

[1] *Four Masters.* [2] *Ibid.*

[3] *Ibid.* The men of Tirconnell pursued the English to Sligo and burned and plundered that town.

This heroic conduct of Godfrey O'Donnell entitled him to the best thanks of every Irish chief, for, in defeating the English, he was defeating their enemies as well as his own, and in his illness he deserved the sympathy of his neighbour, O'Neill. But these Irish chiefs had no country but their clan, and instead of rejoicing, O'Neill was displeased at the success of O'Donnell, thinking, no doubt, that so great a victory cast the greatness of Tirowen into the shade. Believing that Tirconnell was at his mercy, its forces weakened, its chief ill and unable to lead them, he despatched messengers to O'Donnell demanding hostages. O'Donnell was seriously ill, but he disdainfully refused to yield, told these messengers of an ungenerous chief that Tirconnell was still able to defend herself, bade his clansmen assemble from all quarters, and, borne upon his bed, which he felt would soon contain his corpse, he went with his clansmen to battle. On the banks of Lough Swilly the two armies met. The battle was fierce, and soon decided in favour of O'Donnell; but on the return to Tirconnell, at a place near Letterkenny, the litter on which O'Donnell was carried was laid down and the heroic chieftain expired.[1]

Had the various English chiefs—De Burgo, FitzGerald and the rest—united under a single leader, with their superior forces and superior arms they would quickly have overborne the Irish, and the native chiefs, lacking unity and cohesion and fighting only for themselves, would have fallen one by one. This would probably have happened if Ireland and England had been far apart. But the two islands were near, so near that it was dangerous for an English subject to revolt against his king, as De Courcy in his day had found; yet so far apart that successive English kings had paid but little attention to Irish concerns, had never effectually conquered it, and had left their Viceroys at Dublin insufficiently supported, while a number of powerful barons, impatient of control, despising the feeble authority of the central Government,

[1] *Four Masters*, at 1258. He was succeeded by Domhnall Oge O'Donnell.

had gradually and imperceptibly risen to the position of independent rulers. Intent on the acquisition of wealth and lands, they made peace and war as they pleased; if they united, it was not for the English king's interests but for their own; even their own countrymen they did not spare; and in their treatment of Richard Marshall, such was their unbounded rapacity that they shamefully combined for the purpose of spoliation and murder. This young man was the son of William, Earl Marshall, who in the early part of Henry's reign held the position of guardian of the kingdom, and whose ability and energy, more than anything else, had driven the French out of England and placed Henry without a rival on the throne.[1] Through his mother, Isabel, daughter and heiress of Eva and Strongbow, Richard had vast estates in Ireland — almost all Leinster was his. Sharing the dissatisfaction and even disgust of the English barons at the number of Henry's French favourites, he rose in revolt in Wales (1230); but as Henry made some promises of amendment, hostilities were suspended, and during this interval of peace, Richard went to Ireland. It was against the ruling English Minister, the Bishop of Winchester, more than against the King himself that Richard Marshall had risen in arms,[2] and this Minister resolved to have his revenge. Letters under the King's seal and bearing the signature of the Minister himself were addressed to Hugh and Walter De Lacy, Richard De Burgo, Geoffrey De Marisco, and Maurice FitzGerald, warning them that Marshall had been banished from the realm and his estates forfeited, and that, on his landing in Ireland, they should capture him alive or dead, and in return for this service they were to obtain possession of all his lands.[3] These English lords were quite ready to compass the young man's

[1] Lingard, vol. ii. pp. 189 *et seq.*

[2] Leland's *History of Ireland*, vol. i. p. 212. So much was this so, that whenever Henry led the army in person Marshall would not oppose him; his opposition and enmity were for the foreigners.

[3] Gilbert's *Viceroys*, p. 95. It appears the King's seal was stolen from the Chancellor and used without the King's knowledge, and to that extent he was innocent.

ruin on such favourable terms, and when he landed in Ireland De Marisco pretended to be his friend, applauded him for his rebellious conduct in England, and assured him, such was his popularity and influence in Ireland, that if he raised the standard of revolt he would easily defeat the King's forces, recover his own castles, some of which had been already seized by the King's officers, and might one day extend his power not only over Leinster, but over Ireland. Hastily mustering some troops, he overran much of Leinster and even captured Limerick, while FitzGerald, De Burgo and his fellow-conspirators offered but a feeble resistance, for their object was to lure the young man to his ruin. Desiring, they said, to stay the effusion of blood, they proposed a friendly conference, which was held on the plain of Kildare. On one side was Marshall and De Marisco, on the other FitzGerald, De Burgo, and De Lacy. Marshall had only fifteen followers (from Wales), his ally and friend De Marisco had eighty, while on the other side were one hundred and forty armed men. During the conference De Marisco advised Marshall not to make terms but to fight it out, not to agree even to a suspension of hostilities; and when this advice was adopted, he coolly told him that he could not fight against his relatives, the De Lacys, and marched away with his followers, leaving Richard but 15 men to meet the attack of 140 men.[1] Even then he disdained to yield, and telling his younger brother, Walter, to make his escape—as he did—he prepared to meet the enemy's attack. His followers were soon cut down and himself severely wounded and carried off a prisoner to one of FitzGerald's castles, where a treacherous surgeon was called to attend him, and poison finished the work which the sword had left unfinished. Yet the conspirators benefited little by their treachery, for an outcry was raised both in Ireland and in England; the King was forced to disown his share in the plot, and to swear that his signature had been forged; and

[1] Matthew Paris, who has narrated these events in detail, is specially severe on De Marisco, whom he names Ahithophel (*vide* Ware's *Annals*).

the brother of the dead Earl was invested with all his honours and estates.[1]

When the second half of the thirteenth century opened, the position of the native Irish was critical, and the indications were that their final subjugation was near. In Desmond the MacCarthys were making a gallant stand, but the frowning castles of the Geraldines were placed firmly in their midst, and were a standing and perpetual menace to their freedom. The English castles of Killaloe and Bunratty and the occupation of Limerick warned the O'Briens that in Thomond their power and territories were curtailed. Connaught trembled and suffered under the affliction of De Burgo, and its native chiefs were alternately his enemies or his slaves. The Northern province, so long secure against the invader, at last had tasted defeat at his hands, and the waves of invasion and even of conquest had swept over Tirconnell and Tirowen. The various chiefs, disunited and alone, fought their own battles and had not yet advanced beyond the condition of the Britons in the time of Tacitus, of whom he complacently observed, that while they fought separately all were overwhelmed.[2] Feeling that unity of action was essential, if their freedom was to be maintained, O'Brien of Thomond, Felim O'Connor, and O'Neill had a conference (1258), at which O'Neill was proclaimed supreme king, and the others professed their willingness to aid him. But the conference was incomplete, for it was not attended by MacCarthy of Desmond, and O'Donnell of Tirconnell held sullenly aloof. The injury done to his province by O'Neill was recent, his recollection of it was bitter, and he had neither the magnanimity nor the patriotism to forgive. Nor is it quite certain that O'Brien submitted himself to O'Neill. His family historian denies that he did,[3] that it would be a shame for the descendant of the great Brian to hold a subordinate place, and what supports this statement

[1] Leland, vol. i. pp. 213-18; Gilbert's *Viceroys*, p. 97; *Four Masters*, at the year 1234, the date at which these events happened.

[2] Agricola, cap. 12: "Singuli pugnant universi vincuntur."

[3] White's *History of Clare*, p. 127.

is that in the war which followed, the forces of Thomond were not arrayed under the banners of O'Neill. The new alliance was short-lived and barren of useful result. It perished on the fatal field of Downpatrick (1260), where the English defeated the Irish under O'Neill and Felim O'Connor, and in which O'Neill himself and many of the chiefs of Ulster and Connaught fell.[1] The usual result followed. De Burgo ravaged Connaught and O'Donnell revenged himself on Tirowen. Two years later, the Viceroy and De Burgo plundered the Roscommon portion of Connaught, while O'Connor retaliated by attacking the English settlements in South Connaught and killed all the English who were able to bear arms, from Tuam to Athlone, and when this slaughter and pillage were effected on both sides, he and De Burgo made peace, and, in the quaint language of the *Four Masters*, slept in the same bed, cheerfully and contentedly ;[2] but such was the instability of their friendship that they were again at war next year. Felim O'Connor died (1265) and was succeeded by his son Hugh, who made his "royal depredation in Offaly,"[3] so that it appears one of those chiefs commenced his reign by robbery, and that such was considered honourable and expected. This Hugh was a man of energy, and for the few years that he reigned he fought many battles and destroyed many English castles, nor was his right to rule seriously questioned by any member of his own family.[4] But when he died (1274) the O'Connors again commenced to quarrel ; the position of chief was sought for by a crowd of claimants among whom a man of eminence is sought for in vain. For forty years these feuds continued, and raids and robberies and faction fights and murders make up the history of Connaught. In 1278 a bastard, Hugh O'Connor, was king ; two years later he was killed and Cathal took his place ; in 1288, after another series of quarrels, Manus became king, and in 1293-96, and again in 1306, the

[1] *Four Masters.* Of one family, the O'Kanes, fifteen chiefs fell.

[2] *Ibid.*, 1262. Both O'Connor and De Burgo were nearly related (*vide* O'Donovan's Note).

[3] *Annals of Loch Cé.*

[4] *Annals of Clonmacnoise*, 1274.

Annals have little to say of Connaught except that the O'Connors were at war; and the years that followed, up to the battle of Athenry (1318), were but a repetition of the previous years.[1] To these wars may be added, that the O'Rorkes and O'Connors were at war (1266); the Welshmen of Tirawley —the Barrets and Cusacks (1281); the MacRannell of Leitrim (1302); the O'Kellys of Hy-Many and MacDermot (1308); and the O'Connors and MacDermot in the following year.[2] If we add, further, that Connaught was plundered by FitzGerald (1269), by De Burgo (1270-86 and 1291), and that De Burgo (in 1310) quartered his soldiers on the natives, levying *bonaght*, in the manner of the ancient Irish chiefs,[3] we can form some idea of what Connaught endured, wasted by domestic factionist and foreign plunderer, whose people were strangers to peace or law, and whose property and lives were so wantonly sacrificed to cupidity and ambition.

The history of Desmond during these years is soon told. Fineen MacCarthy long held his own against his powerful neighbours, the Geraldines, but a determined effort was made to crush him, and FitzGerald in his attack was aided by the Viceroy and De Burgo. The battle was fought (1260) at Greencastle in Kerry.[4] The chiefs of Desmond gathered round MacCarthy, and the English were defeated with great slaughter, several of the FitzGeralds being killed; and so many castles were destroyed, and common soldiers slain, that for the space of twelve years FitzGerald lived merely on sufferance, and was unable to put a plough in the ground.[5] De Burgo again attacked Desmond (1262), but was defeated; Fineen MacCarthy soon died, or was killed; FitzGerald recovered his position; and the MacCarthys must have sunk into impotence and obscurity, as they disappear almost completely from the

[1] *The O'Conors of Connaught*, pp. 117-37.

[2] *Four Masters*; *Loch Cé*; *Annals of Clonmacnoise.*

[3] *Annals of Clonmacnoise.* The De Burgo in question was William, a cousin to Richard, Earl of Ulster.

[4] *Four Masters.* The battle was fought five miles east of Kenmare.

[5] Hanmer, p. 400, who declares that the "Carties played the devils in Desmond."

native Annals. Not content with attacking Desmond, FitzGerald also attacked Thomond (1273), and obtained submission from the ruling prince, Brian, and about the same time there came to the district an English nobleman—De Clare—who had got from Edward I. large grants of land in Thomond. A quarrel was then raging between two of the O'Briens, and one of them—Brian—to obtain the support of De Clare, surrendered to him Tradree, a strip of land along the Shannon. They became sworn friends, and, to add to the solemnity of their oaths, some of the blood of each was taken and mixed together in a vessel, a peculiarly solemn form of sanction to their engagements.[1] Yet no sooner did De Clare feel his position secure than he treacherously seized Brian (1277), had him tied to the tail of an untrained horse, and thus cruelly tortured him to death. Vengeance speedily overtook the assassin. The O'Briens suspended their quarrels, and fiercely turning on De Clare, defeated him at Quinn (1278), pursued the retreating soldiers even into a neighbouring church, burned the church over their heads, pursued the remainder across the Shannon to Sliabh Bloom, wrung from FitzGerald, who had aided De Clare, possession of his castle at Roscommon, captured all De Clare's possessions except the castle of Bunratty, and left him nothing else that he could call his own within the wide domain of Thomond.[2] For many years after that date the province enjoyed peace, but when the ruling prince, Turlogh, died (1306), quarrels arose as to the succession, the English took sides, and, what seems strange, while De Burgo fought on one side, De Clare was on the other. These wars continued for more than ten years, and Thomond presented a spectacle of turmoil and strife which recalls and equals the quarrels of the O'Connors.

The ancient enmity was continued and even seemed to increase between Tirconnell and Tirowen. The O'Neills invaded Tirconnell (1275), and desolated much of it, but at or near Newtownstewart they were encountered by Domhnall Oge O'Donnell and were defeated, losing "men, horses,

[1] *Annals of Clonmacnoise.* [2] White's *History of Clare*, pp. 132-3.

accoutrements, arms and armour."[1] As if waiting to consolidate their strength, both sides remained at peace for six years, and again their quarrels were renewed. Tirowen was aided by the Ulster English, and at Desertereight (in the barony of Dungannon) Tirconnell was overthrown with great loss, Domhnall Oge O'Donnell being among the slain. These wars weakened the capacity of both provinces for resistance, and Richard De Burgo, Earl of Ulster, marched north (1286) and compelled O'Donnell to submit, and was able to depose the chief of Tirowen, Brian O'Neill, and put a creature of his own, Niall O'Neill, in his place.[2] As if to complete the ruin of their territories, quarrels arose as to the succession (1290) both in Tirconnell and Tirowen ; the weakened provinces, no longer able to resist, were next year invaded by De Burgo, who pulled down one O'Neill and put up another, and who was enabled to plunder Tirconnell with impunity, and he "plundered the entire country, both church and territory," and he did not leave a cloth upon an altar, nor a mass-book, nor a chalice in the churches of Cineal-Connell."[3] There were fresh quarrels between the O'Donnell princes (1295), and again, eight years later, these quarrels were renewed. The result was easy to foresee. De Burgo swept through Tirconnell (1305), and far north, in the ancient territory of Innishowen, he planted an English colony and built a strong castle at Moville.

By this time the fairest portion of the ancient kingdom of Leinster was exclusively in English hands, but there was still a MacMurrogh, who claimed to be the lawful representative of its ancient kings. His possessions, compared to those of his ancestors, were small, but his spirit was unbroken, and in his territory at Wicklow, so great were his resources that he was able (1276) to inflict a crushing defeat on the English Viceroy, De Geneville, in the passes of Glenmalure.[4] Surrounded by powerful English lords—the FitzGeralds and Berminghams

[1] *Four Masters.* [2] *Ibid.* [3] *Annals of Loch Cé.*

[4] *Annals of Clonmacnoise.* The English were reduced to such straits that they had to eat their horses.

—O'Connor still maintained his independence in Offaly; but its ruling chief, in an evil hour for himself, trusted the honour of Bermingham, who in the guise of friendship invited him and his chiefs to a banquet at his castle in Kildare (1305) and then had them all foully murdered, and in consequence ever afterwards bore the name of "the treacherous baron."[1] The ancient family of O'Mellaghlins still ruled in Meath, and though its chiefs had not inherited all the lands, they had inherited the vigour of their ancestors. Art O'Mellaghlin could boast at his death (1283) that he had destroyed twenty-seven English castles in Meath,[2] and his successor, Carbry, was not less vigorous and energetic; and when Butler of Ormond, Bermingham, FitzGerald, and De Geneville—the heir of Walter De Lacy—united in one powerful confederacy for his destruction, he met them with undaunted front and hurled back their forces in defeat.[3] And when the assassin's hand of his countryman, MacCoghlan, struck him down (1290),[4] there was no one, either native or foreigner, to question the right of another O'Mellaghlin to succeed.

The numerous wars and battles between the Irish and English and between the Irish themselves had inflicted many miseries on the inhabitants, both of Irish and English descent. To these wars must be added the wars and battles and contentions between the great Anglo-Irish lords, from which miseries as great, and often greater, arose. The De Burgos and FitzGeralds and Berminghams and Butlers were now the owners of vast estates, knew no law except their own wills, and were never restrained by the Viceroy, whom they either despised or ignored. De Burgo and FitzGerald quarrelled and fought (1264), so that the greater part of Ireland was destroyed between them;[5] De Burgo seized all FitzGerald's castles in Connaught and plundered his people, and the same year FitzGerald quarrelled with the Viceroy and took him and

[1] *Annals of Clonmacnoise.* His castle was at Castle Carbry, County Kildare.

[2] *Ibid.* [3] The battle was fought near Croghan in King's County.

[4] *Annals of Clonmacnoise.* [5] *Four Masters.*

Theobald Butler prisoners in the consecrated church of Castledermot, in Kildare.[1] In the wars of Desmond, De Burgo and De Clare were on opposite sides; Richard De Burgo and FitzGerald were again at war (1294). FitzGerald had his enemy taken and thrown into prison, in consequence of which "all Ireland was thrown into a state of disturbance"[2] —a statement easy to believe, as these two were the most powerful men in Ireland. In right of his mother, the daughter and heiress of Hugh De Lacy, De Burgo was Earl of Ulster, and to his enormous possessions in Connaught he had added the estates of De Lacy; while FitzGerald had estates in Connaught and could call most of Desmond his own, and, besides, was allied in marriage with De Clare and Geoffrey De Marisco. Nor did these two nobles desist from their quarrels except through the personal intervention of Edward I. Two years later, both De Burgo and FitzGerald aided Edward in his war in Scotland, as they did at a later date (1303) his son and successor, Edward II.[3] In their absence there was peace in Ireland; but a few years later (1311) De Burgo and De Clare were at war, in which De Burgo was victorious, though himself was taken prisoner.[4] From all this it will be seen that the translator of the *Annals of Clonmacnoise* does not exaggerate when he says "that there reigned more dissensions, strifes, wars and debates between the Englishmen themselves than between the Irishmen." The dissensions among the Irish were the cause of most of their miseries; the dissensions among the Anglo-Irish were the cause why the conquest of Ireland was indefinitely delayed and the agony of the country indefinitely prolonged.

[1] Grace's *Annals*: Hanmer.

[2] *Four Masters.*

[3] *Ibid.*, 1296-1303.

[4] *Annals of Clonmacnoise.* It was William De Burgo, or Burke, not the Red Earl (Richard De Burgo).

CHAPTER XIX

The Anglo-Normans and the Church

If the Bull of Adrian be taken as an authentic document, and if its words truly represent the actual condition of Ireland at the time it was issued, then assuredly the Irish Church had fallen low. Henry was encouraged to proceed to Ireland, to extend the limits of the Church, to check the torrent of wickedness, to reform evil manners, to sow the seeds of virtue and to increase the Christian religion. The Pope's language assumes that the Christian religion had, at least from part of the country, disappeared, for otherwise it would not be necessary to speak of extending the limits of the Church ; and a land where wickedness progressed unchecked with the strength and force of a mountain torrent, where the people's manners were evil, and where the seeds of virtue had perished amid the surrounding wilderness of crime and sin, was a land in which religion had lost its power to influence the people's conduct for good. Such did Ireland and the Irish appear in the mind of the Pope, such was it represented to be by the agents of Henry II. —a land without religion and without morals. To carry out his promise to the Pope to establish religion where none existed, to pluck up the weeds of vice and have the Church in Ireland as a cultivated garden—this was what the King undertook to do, and he made a beginning by calling the Synod of Cashel.[1] And the enactments made at that gathering give a more accurate view of the disorders that prevailed than we can gather from the exaggerated words of Adrian IV.

With the concurrence of Henry's representatives, the Papal

[1] Lanigan, vol. iv. pp. 204-8. None of the Northern bishops were present except perhaps the Bishop of Clogher.

Legate, the Archbishops of Cashel, Dublin, and Tuam, and their suffragans and many other ecclesiastics—abbots, archdeacons, priors, and deans—it was decreed that marriages between cousins and kinsfolk should cease, that children should be catechized outside the church door and infants baptized at the consecrated fonts in the baptistries of the church, that tithes should be paid and that ecclesiastical possessions should be free from the exactions of secular men, that petty kings or other such should no longer quarter themselves and their retainers on ecclesiastical territories,[1] that the clergy should no longer be liable for fines due as the result of a murder perpetrated by one of their kindred, that every good Christian should make his will at death, that those who died after a good confession should be buried with masses and vigils, and that the divine offices should be celebrated in conformity with the practice in England.[2] The justice and equity of these decrees is apparent. Those who die a good death, in the eyes of the Church, have a right to the Church's prayers ; those who made their wills before death were but providing against the litigation and ill-feeling that so often is the consequence of intestacy ; and it was surely a grave injustice that a clergyman who had no connexion and no sympathy with murder yet should be liable to a fine,[3] because the murderer happened to be of his blood, for the equitable connexion is that punishment should follow culpability and not innocence. Nor was it inequitable that Church possessions should be exempt from the exactions of rapacious laymen. These possessions were the offerings of piety, given to the Church and its ministers, so that they might be able to discharge their spiritual functions with all the decencies required, and the donors never intended that they should be harassed and impoverished by every turbulent chief, usually accompanied as he was by a crowd

[1] This was the practice of *Coshery*, whereby the chief and his retainers quartered themselves at the people's houses, eating and drinking at their expense (Harris's *Ware*, vol. ii. p. 75).

[2] Cambrensis, pp. 232-4.

[3] This was the money compensation called *Eric*, which almost in every case was the punishment for murder prescribed in the Brehon law.

of hungry and dissolute retainers. The regulations as to catechizing children in the Church and as to baptisms regarded what was appropriate rather than what was necessary; and all we can deduce from the other decrees is—that tithes in some instances were not paid, that the offices in the Church differed in some respects from those in England, as in the time of Gillebert they differed in the Irish churches themselves, and that marriages were still contracted within the prohibited degrees of kindred. But for doctrinal errors, for anything which could make the creed of the Irish Church different from that of Rome or of England, for peculiarities even of discipline in serious matters—for such as these we seek in vain in the Synod's decrees.[1] Even the old worn-out charge of Pelagianism is not revived, and the disputes about the tonsure and Easter belonged to the distant past. Malachy was dead, but it was evident that he had not laboured in vain, that the impress of his zeal remained, and that he had left successors who were earnest in continuing his work.

At the Synod of Cashel the Papal Legate was Christian, Bishop of Lismore, a man of piety and zeal; but the most remarkable figure among the bishops was Laurence O'Toole, Archbishop of Dublin. Born in Kildare and baptized at the shrine of St. Bridget,[2] his father was hereditary chief of the Hy-Murray, a clan which, driven from Kildare[3] to the mountain district of Imaal in Wicklow, were for centuries yet to maintain their independence; his mother was of the race of the O'Byrnes, similarly driven from Kildare to Wicklow, and equally warlike as the O'Tooles. His father had been at war with MacMurrogh, King of Leinster, and had been defeated by him, and the King, as a pledge of O'Toole's submission, insisted that young Laurence should be given him as a

[1] Lanigan, vol. iv. p. 210. Lanigan notes that there is no mention made of Peter's pence, which was specially mentioned in Adrian's Bull.

[2] Healy's *Ancient Schools and Scholars*, pp. 433-46.

[3] They occupied the south-eastern portion of the present county of Kildare, and were driven from this fertile district shortly after St. Laurence's death (1280) by Walter (Baron) De Riddlesford, who had his castle at Tristledermot or Castledermot (*Book of Rights*, p. 210).

hostage. But the lad was treated with the greatest severity; the manner of his treatment became known to his father, who retaliated by making war on MacMurrogh, defeated a detachment of his troops and captured twelve of them. Negotiations followed: the captured soldiers were exchanged for Laurence, who, selecting the Church as his calling, was sent by his father to the school of Glendalough to be trained. It was the school of St. Kevin, founded by him centuries before, and which still inherited his virtues as it hallowed his memory; and in that school young Laurence O'Toole spent thirteen years, until, at the early age of twenty-five years, he was appointed Abbot of Glendalough. His talents and piety attracted widespread notice, and in 1162 he was called to the See of Dublin, being consecrated by Gelasius Archbishop of Armagh. His zeal, his charity, his humility, his contempt for wealth, his capacity for administration, his popularity with all classes were as conspicuous at Dublin as at Glendalough. He introduced into Christ Church the rule of the Regular Canons of Aroasia, he adopted the same rule for himself and wore the dress of the Order under his episcopal robes, and such was his charity that sixty persons were daily fed from his bounty.[1] His efforts to bring the Irish chiefs together in resistance to the invaders were those of a patriot; but he soon became convinced that success was impossible under the lead of such an imbecile as Roderick O'Connor, and after the Ardri was defeated near Dublin the Archbishop quietly accepted the inevitable and acquiesced in the Anglo-Norman conquest of Dublin and of Leinster. But he refused to accept the invaders' estimate of themselves—rapacity and cruelty and immorality he knew well to be their characteristics; he had no faith in Henry II. as a Church reformer, and although he attended the Synod of Cashel and accepted the supremacy of the English king, he had no enthusiasm for the rule of the stranger, and in the interest both of the country and of the Church he looked to the future with dread. So much did Henry fear his high character, his disinterestedness, his clear vision of the

[1] D'Alton's *Archbishops of Dublin*, p. 54.

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future, his independence of speech, that when Laurence was passing through England, on his way to the second Council of Lateran (1179), Henry compelled him to take an oath that he would say or do nothing at Rome prejudicial to the King's interests in Ireland.[1] He feared that Laurence would speak the truth, and, if so, the Pope would learn that Ireland was not so black as it had been painted by Henry's agents, nor had Henry himself changed much from those days when he persecuted à Beckett. The next year Laurence died. He had gone to Normandy with the son of Roderick O'Connor to be left as a hostage with Henry II. On his way he was taken ill and sought refuge at the monastery of Eu, and there he died, on the 14th of November, bewailing the misfortunes that had come upon his country and sighing over the senseless divisions among her sons, from which he saw, as in a vision, so many misfortunes would arise.[2] A church which could boast of such a man, a saint in life, a saint at death, and canonized by the Church but forty years after his death, was not altogether past redemption.

By the side of St. Laurence, the Anglo-Norman clergy who came to Ireland in the wake of Strongbow stand in no favourable contrast. In their day the Normans of all lands were conspicuous for prowess in war. No weapon was more fatal than the Norman lance, no enemy more feared than the Norman knight. Bold, daring, adventurous, brave even to rashness, independent in spirit, yet ready to submit to the harshest discipline, when imposed by their chosen chiefs, using their arms with unequalled dexterity, appalled neither by dangers nor numbers, they wandered far in search of conquest and renown ; and the extent of their dominions in Sicily and Italy and England attests the magnificence of their success. Little scrupulous as to means, they readily used treachery and deceit to attain their ends ; their march

[1] It was on this occasion the Pope appointed Laurence Papal Legate in place of Christian, who was old and feeble (Lanigan, vol. iv. p. 238 ; Healy, p. 443).

[2] Even Giraldus calls him "a worthy and just man" (p. 292).

was often but organized plunder, their castles but robbers' dens whence they issued to despoil the surrounding inhabitants. But these harsher features of the Norman character were redeemed by some great virtues. The noble who had no learning himself aspired to be its patron and supporter; religion seemed powerless to restrain him from violence and injustice, but he respected religion in others, loved to pose as the champion of the Church, spilt his blood freely in its defence, and generously gave to its ministers part, and often large part, of the lands which his good sword had won. On the field of Senlac the Conqueror built Battle Abbey for the monks of the Holy Trinity;[1] the Norman knight, Giroie, had six churches built on his estates;[2] out of the plunder of the enemy the successful warrior built churches and liberally endowed them, and the most powerful nobles held themselves cheap if they had not on their domains some establishments of monks or clergy, provided by them with whatever was necessary for the service of God.[3]

The superior culture of the clergy, apart from their religious character, gave them influence and authority, and they were often called upon to fill the highest civil offices in the State. The virtuous and religious took Holy Orders because they felt it was their vocation, and in the midst of the world they maintained their purity and innocence. But the ranks of the clergy were often recruited from a less desirable class, men of worldly ambition, greedy of honours and riches, of the influence which learning conferred, of the position to which it might lead. Such men had little of the clerical spirit. They were statesmen, diplomatists, judges; and sometimes the episcopal robes were exchanged for the sword and lance; and the case of the Bishop of Coutances does not stand alone, who, at the head of his army, fell on the West Saxons (1069) and slew some of them, mutilated a number of the prisoners and put the rest to flight.[4]

[1] Ordericus Vitalis, *History of England and Normandy* (4 vols., Bohn), vol. ii. p. 2.
[2] *Ibid.* vol. i. p. 390.
[3] *Ibid.* vol. i. p. 382.
[4] *Ibid.* vol. ii. p. 26.

Such men thought little of the obligations of their calling. Looking to the Court for preferment, they became abject flatterers and were repaid by their princes "by gifts of bishoprics and abbeys and other offices of power and dignity which ought to be conferred for the merits of holiness and learning."[1] And there were other vices with which their characters were stained. The son of the Bishop of Bayeux was at the Court of Henry I.,[2] a son of the Bishop of Salisbury was Chancellor of the kingdom (1139),[3] and at the Synod of Rouen (1119) a law had to be enacted prohibiting the secular clergy from having concubines, an abuse which was widespread and not at all of recent date.[4] The Anglo-Norman clergy who came to Ireland were not unworthy to be associated with these, for St. Laurence O'Toole deprived 140 of them of power to officiate in his diocese because of their incontinence, and directed them to go to Rome for absolution.[5] If such men were to reform the Irish Church, it was only just to ask that they should begin by reforming themselves.

After the death of Laurence O'Toole the See of Dublin was left vacant for nearly a year. The Chapter could not proceed to elect a successor without the King's *congé d'élire*, and the King saw no special urgency for filling the vacant See. Its revenues were not so large as some of the English bishoprics, yet they were not inconsiderable, and they were appropriated by Henry as long as the See was vacant. But in September 1181 the King's licence was issued to the Dublin Chapter, but he took good care to have his own nominee selected; the Chapter were summoned to meet at the Benedictine Abbey of Evesham in Worcestershire, and under royal pressure which they were powerless to resist they selected a monk of that abbey, an Englishman named John

[1] Ordericus Vitalis, vol. ii. p. 52.
[2] *Ibid.* vol. ii. p. 429.
[3] *Ibid.* vol. iv. p. 210.
[4] *Ibid.* vol. iv. pp. 29-30.
[5] Lanigan, vol. iv. pp. 241-2. They must have been all, or nearly all, Anglo-Normans, as this occurred in 1179, and neither at the Synod of Cashel nor at any other Synod up to that date was there any evidence that the Irish priests were incontinent; one of the decrees of Comyn's Synod—the 13th—shows the contrary (*vide* D'Alton's *Archbishops of Dublin*, p. 74)

Comyn. Henry wanted no Irish Archbishop, no man whose sympathies would be with the natives, who, like Laurence, would resent their being treated with injustice, who would stand forth as their champion and boldly challenge their oppressors. The new Archbishop was after the King's own heart. He was not even a priest—only a deacon [1]—he was Henry's supporter in the struggle with à Beckett, he had gone to Rome more than once to negotiate on the King's behalf, he held high civil employment, he had even gone on circuit as judge. He was a courtier and a diplomatist rather than an ecclesiastic desirous only of discharging his spiritual duties; and such little regard had he for his obligations that he continued to reside in England after his election had been ratified by the Pope; nor was it until the autumn of 1184, three years after his election, that he set foot in his diocese of Dublin. Nor did he, after coming to Ireland, remain there, but, on the contrary, spent much of his time in England. He was there in 1186; two years later he was in Normandy as an intermediary between Henry II. and his son Richard; he was at the coronation of Richard (1189), and later on (1199) at the coronation of John; and while he was thus engaged and absent from his diocese, the episcopal duties were discharged at Dublin by some neighbouring bishop, perhaps by some native bishop who had episcopal orders but no diocese. One Synod he held (1186) at which many salutary decrees were passed in relation to the celebration of Mass and the administration of the Sacraments, and also prohibitions against simony and incontinence, and this is the only evidence we have that he troubled himself about the spiritual administration of his diocese.[2] But if he neglected the spiritual duties he enlarged the temporal possessions of his See. He got large grants of lands, he was the recipient of many privileges from the kings, he had the See

[1] Stokes' *Ireland and the Anglo-Norman Church*, pp. 206-9. He was ordained *priest*, March 13, 1182; consecrated bishop, March 21. Giraldus says he was made Cardinal, but this is a mistake (Harris's *Ware*, vol. i. pp. 314-15).

[2] Harris's *Ware*, vol. i. pp. 316-17.

of Glendalough annexed to Dublin, and he also grasped the Abbey of Glendalough and all its lands.[1] He was created a baron of Parliament, he had the powers of a lord palatine and set up Courts and had his sheriffs and seneschals and even his gallows for the execution of criminals;[2] and he resented with vigour and energy any encroachment on his powers, either by the Mayor of Dublin or the King's Viceroy.[3]

Comyn's successors were of the same character as himself. Their names indicate their origin—De Londres, De Sandford, De Derlington, De Hotham, De Ferrings, De Bicknor; there is nothing Irish in the sound of these names. Of the twenty-three Archbishops from St. Laurence to the Reformation, not one was Irish.[4] Previous to his appointment as Archbishop of Dublin, De Londres was Archdeacon of Stafford,[5] his successor was Dean of St. Martins le Grand at London, De Sandford was Archdeacon of Middlesex,[6] and it was the same story with the rest of them—all were English. If perchance they were born in Ireland, they were none the less English—English in descent, in speech, in manners, in prejudices, not understanding the Irish, nor caring to understand them, having no sympathy with them, and regarding their language and manners as that of a rude people and an inferior race. Successive English kings took care to have an Archbishop at Dublin who was in sympathy with their views, and even agents in carrying out their policy. And whenever possible it was the same elsewhere. In Armagh English power was of slower growth, English influence could not make itself so much felt, but the intrigues of English kings were incessant, their influence was great, nor were their efforts always unsuccessful; and if among the list of Primates we find the distinctively Irish names of O'Scanlan (1261-70) and MacMolissa (1272-1303), we find also the names of Taaffe

[1] Stokes, pp. 216-17. [2] *Ibid.* pp. 219-20.

[3] His quarrels with Hamon De Valoynes, the Viceroy, were so serious that Comyn excommunicated his opponent, and at length the Pope, Innocent III., had to intervene (Gilbert's *Viceroys*, p. 57).

[4] Stokes, p. 205. [5] D'Alton's *Archbishops of Dublin*, p. 79.

[6] *Ibid.* p. 95.

(1305-6) and De Jorse (1306-11) and FitzRalph (1347-60), which are as distinctively English.[1] Even in Tuam, which was so much farther removed from Dublin, English influence was felt, and when the other archbishopric became vacant in 1235, the Dean and Chapter reported the vacancy to Henry III., and prayed for the issue of a *congé d'élire*; and when granting it Henry directs them to choose a man able to rule the Church, *faithful to the King* and useful to the kingdom.[2] Edward I. gave a licence to the Dean and Chapter of Achonry (1286) to elect a successor to Denis, late Bishop of Achonry,[3] and similar licences were given about the same time for electing a bishop at Ardfert, an archbishop at Cashel, and bishops at Killaloe, Elphin, Ross, and Clonmacnoise.[4] As lord paramount of the Irish chiefs the King claimed the right to interfere in all these episcopal elections; and for the same reason, when Henry II. was making his grants of lands to the Anglo-Norman lords, he specially reserved for himself and his successors the appointment of bishops, or at least the right to interfere when such appointments were being made.[5] His expectation was that they would be of assistance in carrying out his policy.

In some cases, notwithstanding the manner in which they had been appointed, these bishops displayed a sturdiness of spirit little to the taste of English kings. They protested against the practice of the King taking possession of the temporalities of a See while the See was vacant. They protested against their tenants suing in the secular courts, at least without the Pope's consent. The Archbishop of Armagh and his suffragans entered into a compact to protect each other against encroachments from any lay power or jurisdiction.[6] And when the

[1] Ware's *Bishops* (Archbishops of Armagh). [2] Stokes, p. 314.

[3] Sweetman's *Calendar of State Papers* (1285-92), pp. 107-8. The King's request was that the Chapter should elect a *devout* man, fit to rule the Church and be faithful to the King. The piety of these kings, as shown in the State Papers, is remarkable.

[4] *Ibid.* Preface.

[5] Mant, *History of the Church of Ireland*, vol. i. p. 9.

[6] *Ibid.* vol. i. pp. 15-16.

Parliament of Kilkenny (1346) granted a subsidy to Edward III. for State purposes, the Archbishop of Cashel opposed its being levied within his province, and with his suffragan bishops decreed that any of their clergy who should contribute were *ipso facto* deprived of their benefices, and the laity who were their tenants and who subscribed should be *ipso facto* excommunicated. They even went beyond this and excommunicated all those who had granted the subsidy itself.[1] Such boldness was displayed chiefly, if not solely, by those of Irish birth, whose sympathies were Irish and who viewed with disfavour and distrust the arrogance of a foreign king. And so displeasing was their conduct that it was declared expedient by the King that Irishmen should never be archbishops or bishops, because they always preach against the King and provide their churches with Irishmen to maintain their language.[2] With those of English birth or descent there was rarely any such trouble. It is not the dress that makes the monk: the courtier raised to the episcopate remained a courtier still. His worldly spirit, his ambition, his servility to his royal master remained, and under the bishop's mitre and the episcopal robes the time-server and the place-hunter could be discerned. And their pliancy was rewarded. They were trusted and favoured by successive English kings; they filled great civil offices; and more than one bishop filled the highest office in the land, the office of Viceroy.

What manner of men these were we can learn from the life and acts of Henry De Londres. Where he was born, or when, or where he was educated, we do not know. But he was certainly English; his abilities were of a high order; he was educated for the Church, and took at least some Orders, so as to be qualified for Church preferment. Like many others so educated, he was but little employed in ecclesiastical offices; his abilities attracted the notice of King John, who had little talent himself but appreciated it in others and was

[1] Mant, p. 18. The names of these bishops, MacMolissa in Armagh and Kelly in Cashel, indicate their nationality (Ware's *Bishops*).

[2] Sweetman's *Calendar*, pp. 9-10.

ready to make use of it; and De Londres from time to time was called to fill many civil offices by his sovereign. He went through Berkshire as judge of Assize (1199),[1] and some years later was one of the judges of the King's Bench at Westminster. He was ambassador to the King of Navarre (1201), and later on to Otho of Germany and his nobles; and he was sent to Ireland (1204) to negotiate on the King's part with Cathal Crovderg O'Connor. In the dispute between the King and the Pope he acted as the King's envoy and did his best to reconcile them. John had much patronage in his hands, and it was by this means he rewarded De Londres. He gave him a church living in London (1202), two years later he got another at Norwich, and yet another at Coventry, and these were added to, in the next year, by the addition of two more church livings. Nor was he yet satisfied, for in 1207 he got a prebend at Exeter and another at Leicester, and in the next year he was made Archdeacon of Stafford and also Dean of Shrewsbury, and finally, on the death of John Comyn (1212), he became Archbishop of Dublin. Even while in Dublin he kept all his church livings in England, and even got an addition—the Deanery of Penkridge in Staffordshire—the ecclesiastical duties attached to these offices being performed by deputy. The revenues of the See of Dublin had been greatly augmented by Comyn, and besides there were the revenues of the See and Abbey of Glendalough, yet such was the rapacious avarice of De Londres that he wished for more, and resorted to at least one dishonest trick for which history has justly affixed a stigma on his memory. He summoned all his ecclesiastical tenants in Dublin before him, directing them to bring all papers, leases, titles and such-like with them, which demonstrated the nature of their rights to the lands they held, and when he had got possession of all such papers, in the very presence of these outraged and disgusted tenants he threw the documents into the fire.[2] His evident object was to have these tenants at his mercy, so that he could impose on them what terms he pleased. For this act he was nick

[1] Stokes, p. 254; Ware's *Bishops*. [2] Ware's *Bishops*.

named "scorch-villein," and earned the just execration of all. That such a man should claim exemption from taxes, and that through his bailiffs he should even seize wines, cloths, and victuals belonging to the citizens and not pay for them,[1] will excite no surprise, for the passion of avarice carries men far. But for a courtier and a favourite who had so long studied the caprices of kings we are a little surprised that he should encroach on the royal prerogatives, in having lay cases tried in the ecclesiastical courts, in having a pillory erected on the public highway, and having gone so far in this direction that Henry III. declared his proceedings were strange and even incredible.[2] From 1213 to 1215, and again from 1219 to 1224, he was Viceroy of Ireland. A man who filled so many offices and was much concerned with civil affairs had but little time for purely spiritual duties, yet he sometimes remembered he was a bishop. He attended the Council of Lateran (1215), and he held a Synod at Dublin (1217), at which stringent regulations were made as to the celibacy of the clergy, their attendance at Synods, the visitation of the sick, and the ceremonies to be employed by priests when so engaged.[3] Like Antiochus perhaps in his old age he remembered the evils he had done, rightly thinking that, while he could not altogether neglect temporal concerns, yet that in attending to his spiritual duties he was more profitably employed.

While the Anglo-Norman lords were precluded from interfering in episcopal elections, still their influence on the destinies of the Church was great. Like their countrymen in England and Normandy, each of these adventurers was ambitious to build churches and found monasteries, and they began by destroying the churches already in existence. After the Synod in Dublin at which Vivian presided (1177), it may be assumed that the practice of storing provisions in the churches became less common, but with the obstinacy which was one of their peculiarities the people sometimes did so, hoping that the

[1] Gilbert's *Historic and Municipal Documents*, p. 74.
[2] *Ibid.* pp. 75-78.
[3] D'Alton's *Archbishops of Dublin*, p. 85; Stokes, p. 267, note.

churches would be respected. But the Anglo-Normans were bent on plunder as well as conquest, and were not willing that even the churches should be spared. They were counselled to pay a fair price for whatever they took—the wolf was allowed into the sheepfold, but was told to treat the sheep with tenderness, and the counsel was hearkened to as might have been expected. De Courcy plundered the churches of Ulster on his march and took the Bishop of Down prisoner (1177);[1] FitzAdelm De Burgo burned Armagh (1179), including all the houses of the Canons Regular and all the churches, except the house of the Canons Regular of St. Bridget and the church of the relics.[2] His descendant William De Burgo imitated his violence in Connaught (in 1202), preyed and spoiled the Abbey of Knockmoy of all things whatsoever, both great and small, and then marched through Connaught plundering all the churches on his march.[3] And Philip of Worcester wasted Armagh (1184) for six days in succession, exacted heavy fines from the clergy, and to such an extent was everything portable or of any value interfered with, that even a large cauldron[4] or brewing-pan was carried away. Lest the provisions which the churches contained should fall into the hands of their enemies, the Irish destroyed the churches themselves; and thus attacked both by native and foreigner, of all buildings the churches fared worst, and, roofless, empty and desolate, they marked the track of the invader. It is seldom and with reluctance that Giraldus has anything harsh to say of his own countrymen, but he has to confess that they not only neglected to make any offering to the Church of Christ, not only are the honours and thanks due to God unacknowledged by any gift of the prince and his followers, but the Church was robbed of its land and possessions, and its ancient rights and privileges were annulled.[5] The poor clergy

[1] Lanigan, vol. iv. pp. 232-3.

[2] Stuart's *Historical Memoirs of Armagh* (ed. Coleman), p. 85.

[3] *Annals of Clonmacnoise.*

[4] Stuart's *Armagh*, p. 87. Tirell, who took away the cauldron, was struck with horror and restored it, "but afterwards perished in a miserable manner."

[5] Cambrensis, p. 318. The prince in question is John.

are reduced to beggary. The cathedral churches, which were richly endowed with broad lands by the piety of the faithful in old times, now echo with lamentations for that of which they have been robbed by these men and others who came over with them or after them, "so that to uphold the Church is turned into spoiling and robbing it." [1] Over large tracts of the country all that remained of these churches, founded by the piety of past ages, were some blackened and sightless ruins.

After sin comes repentance, and after these deeds of violence and sacrilege the Anglo-Normans began to consider that it was time to repair the ravages they had done. They set about the task in characteristic Norman fashion. The Irish they heartily despised—their soldiers, their arms, their tactics, or rather want of tactics, in war, their language and manners, the style of their buildings, even their saints did not escape criticism, and Giraldus declares that these Irish saints were of a vindictive temper.[2] St. Patrick indeed they revered, and not even the most enthusiastic, or the most credulous, among the Irish have multiplied his miracles to such an extent as Jocelin, the monk of Furness;[3] and his master, De Courcy, whatever he may have thought of St. Columba, made good use of his name in his invasion of Ulster, and appealed to the reverence and fears of the natives, as the knight foretold in the Saint's prophecy. But of that large number of pious men who were reverenced by the people as saints, and whose lives had made sacred so many hills and glens, and wells and streams—all such as these the Anglo-Normans either ignored or despised. Out of the stones of the ruined churches they wished to build new churches and monasteries, but they would build under the patronage of their own Norman Saints, it was their names the churches would bear, it was Norman Orders of monks that would inhabit the monasteries, and the buildings themselves would be modelled on the well-known principles of Norman architecture.[4]

[1] Cambrensis, p. 176. [2] *Ibid.* p. 111.

[3] He wróte the *Life and Acts of St. Patrick* in Latin; it has been translated into English by Swift (1809).

[4] The same might be said of *England*, where Norman influence was predominant, and nowhere more so than in the Church.

When De Courcy took possession of Down, he drove the secular Canons from the place and established in their stead a Benedictine monastery with monks from St. Werburg's in Chester. The Benedictine abbey of Corrig he filled with monks from Furness in Lancashire, and the priory of Neddrum in the same county he made subject to St. Bega's Abbey in Cumberland.[1] De Lacy established a monastery at Duleek of the Canons Regular of St. Augustine, but made them subject to that of Llanthony in Monmouthshire ; and when Geoffrey FitzRobert established a house of the same Order at Kells in Kilkenny, he brought the monks from Bodmin in Cornwall.[2] During the twelfth and thirteenth centuries these Anglo-Normans founded in Ireland seven monasteries filled with the Regular Canons of St. Victor, seven more filled with the Premonstre Canons ; and of the Cruciferii or Crutched Friars—an Order evolved out of the Regular Canons of St. Augustine but of a stricter discipline—there were thirteen houses founded. Of the Benedictine Order there were founded thirteen monasteries and convents, and of the military order of St. John of Jerusalem there were seventeen houses.[3] These orders were all of foreign origin ; they were unfamiliar to the Irish, and they were in every case filled with English, or at least ruled by those of English sympathies and English extraction.

At the Anglo-Norman invasion there were nearly 200 monasteries and convents in Ireland living under the rule of St. Augustine. To say that they were all Augustinian monks and nuns would be indefinite and misleading, for St. Augustine drew up no Rule, in the same sense that St. Benedict did, but he recommended some women under his direction to live in community and to renounce private property, and in time the idea was borrowed and put in practice by priests. They were originally Canons of Cathedrals, who lived in community, but did not renounce private property, nor constantly follow any rule. For such there were many decrees of Popes and Councils directing them to live under a rule and to renounce private

[1] Lanigan, vol. iv. pp. 253-4. [2] *Ibid.* vol. iv. p. 321.
[3] Harris's *Ware*, vol. ii. pp. 270-3.

property, which many, but not all, did. Those who did were called Regular Canons of St. Augustine. The vast majority of the monasteries in Ireland, founded by the old Irish saints as far back as the sixth century, gradually adopted this rule, and before the twelfth century these inmates were known as Canons Regular of St. Augustine. They were not secular priests, as they lived in community and had no private property, yet they were charged with the duties of the mission, and so far resembled the secular priests. As they were already popular in England, they were countenanced and patronized, and in many cases richly endowed, by the Anglo-Normans; and no fewer than nine priors of these monasteries had seats in the Irish Parliament.[1]

But of all the Irish monasteries there was no Order so favoured by the foreigners, and none which acquired such influence and power, as the Cistercians. An offshoot of the Benedictine Order, the Cistercian was founded in the eleventh century by those of the Benedictines who saw with regret its former strictness and fervour degenerate into laxness, and who wished to be members of an Order with a stricter discipline. The new Order, with its headquarters at Citeaux, rapidly increased, but at no time was its fame greater than when it numbered St. Bernard among its members. He joined the Order at Citeaux (1113), and such was the ardour with which he mortified himself, such the rapidity with which he increased in virtue, such the administrative ability he showed, that though only twenty-five years old, and but two years in the Community, he was permitted by his superiors to leave Citeaux with twelve companions and to found a new house of the Order at Clairvaux. He loved to commune with Nature, with the trees and rocks and hills, believing that they could teach him more than any masters could;[2] and in his new home his love was gratified. Situated in the diocese of Langres, between two

[1] *Catholic Dictionary.* These nine were the priors of Christ Church and All Hallows (Dublin), of Connell, Kells, Louth, Athassel, Killagh, Newtown, and Raphoe.

[2] *St. Bernard's Works*, translated by Eales, vol. i. p. 353 (Letter to Henry Murdoch).

mountains and in a valley wild, gloomy, and thick-wooded, the monks had to undergo many hardships. They dug and ploughed, they pulled up the useless shrubs, and planted in their stead the oak, the lime tree, the ash and the beech. The stream which ran through the valley they divided into channels—to irrigate their garden, to supply the necessities of their various workshops, to turn their mill-wheel. The monks built their own cells, as they did the abbey itself; they fished in the stream; they ground their corn; they baked their bread; they brewed their own beer; they cultivated their orchard and their garden; and under their skilful and patient toil the trees grew fast and bore fruit in abundance, and one side of the mountain, hitherto barren, became fertile with vineyards and the other fertile with corn.[1] When St. Malachy of Armagh visited the place, more than twenty years after its foundation, his pious soul was charmed with everything he saw—the quietness and peace of the valley, the serenity of the monks, their life of austerity and labour and prayer, their contentment with the coarse food they ate and the coarse garments they wore, their thankfulness to God for what they possessed—for the water that rushed through the valley, for the shade afforded by the trees, for the colours and scent of the flowers that bloomed. His wish was to remain there himself, but as this could not be done, he sent two monks from Ireland to be trained under St. Bernard, and after an interval they, with others from Clairvaux, returned to Ireland and founded (1141) the first Cistercian monastery at Mellifont.[2] In sending them St. Bernard said he was sending a little seed,[3] and the seed quickly developed and produced fruit. The Benedictines loved to build their monasteries on the tops of the mountains; the Cistercians by contrast loved the valleys, and Mellifont, like Clairvaux, was built in a valley, its situation being on the river Mattock, some three or four miles west of Drogheda, just bordering on the county of Meath,

[1] *St. Bernard's Works*, vol. ii. pp. 460-67.

[2] Mellifont is described and its history given in a little book of 45 pages, *Mellifont Abbey: its Rise and Downfall*, by an unknown author.

[3] *St. Bernard's Works*, vol. ii. p. 897 (Letter to St. Malachy).

being itself in Louth. To the Irish, who had seen their own monasteries decay, and the spirit of self-sacrifice grow feeble among their monks, the new Order was hailed with welcome. Their poverty, their labour, their abstemious diet, their coarse white garment—emblem of their purity—their deep spirit of prayer, their entire detachment from the world, their devotion to the Mother of God—always so popular in Ireland—attracted the admiration and esteem of all. The native chiefs became eager to found and endow one of these monasteries on their own territories; the Anglo-Norman lords were equally zealous; and in little more than half a century forty Cistercian monasteries were spread throughout the land.[1]

Wealth and worldly power will always corrupt the morals and weaken the fervour of religious communities, and these baneful influences were soon at work within the walls of the Cistercian monasteries. The generous donation of lands soon placed them beyond the necessity of labouring for their support; they no longer dug and ploughed as of old, but employed labourers instead, and the priors of their monasteries, raised to the dignity of spiritual peers, became statesmen and politicians. St. Bernard saw with disfavour, and even with horror, an abbot going forth with a retinue of 60 horsemen:[2] he could not understand how the same person could be clothed in armour and march at the head of armed soldiers, and then, having laid aside his armour and vested in alb and stole, read the Gospel in the midst of the church; at one time give the signal for battle with the trumpet, and at another convey the orders of the bishop to the people; and he thought it was no part of clerical duty to bear arms at the pay of the King, nor any part of the royal duties to administer lay affairs by means of clerics.[3] Yet, a century after his death, these things were seen and noted among the abbots of his own and of other monasteries in Ireland. To the penal enactments against the Irish and the proscription attached to their language and dress

[1] Harris's *Ware*, vol. ii. pp. 274-6.
[2] *Works*, vol. i. p. 278, note (Letter to the Abbot of St. Denis).
[3] *Ibid.* vol. i. pp. 285-6.

and manners, the abbots of Mellifont and their brethren of Baltinglass and Dunbrody and Jerpoint and Bective were consenting parties.[1] The Prior of the Augustinian monastery at Conal held high military command, and was as ready and as quick to slaughter the Irish as Strongbow or Raymond Le Gros ; and the warlike proclivities of this prior were not unusual. English king and Irish viceroy displayed the keenest anxiety to have these abbots and priors English, at least in sympathy, if not by birth ; the abbots in turn looked askance at native monks in their monasteries and often denied admittance to native born. A statute was passed at Kilkenny (1310) prohibiting religious houses in the English parts of Ireland from admitting as a member of their community any one except of English blood. A few years later (1322) it was again ordered that no one should be admitted into the Abbey of Mellifont unless he could swear that he was of English descent. The Kilkenny Statute was repealed by Edward II., and at a general chapter of the Cistercian Order the decree regarding Mellifont was described as damnable, and abbots were warned to admit worthy members, no matter what their nation.[2] In the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries it was necessary to call in the aid of the mendicant Orders—the Dominicans and Franciscans and Carmelites—for in too many cases the Cistercian and Augustine Canons appeared to have neither the leisure nor the inclination to confine themselves to spiritual concerns.

In his Letter or Remonstrance to the Pope (1315), Domhnall O'Neill had much complaint to make against these Anglo-Irish ecclesiastics—bishops, abbots, and monks. He complains of the statute just referred to which was passed at Kilkenny, and reminds the Pope that "the monasteries for

[1] They were members of the Parliaments which enacted such laws.

[2] Cox, *Hibernia Anglicana*, p. 100 ; Stuart's *Armagh*, pp. 115-16 (Coleman's Supplementary Notes). It seems quite evident that the Irish and English monks did not agree ; and it is only fair to remark that if the English excluded the Irish, the Irish in turn excluded the English from their own monasteries (Letter of Edward II. to the Pope). Stuart, p. 116.

monks and Canons from which in modern times the Irish are thus repulsed were founded for the most part by themselves."[1] Not merely the lay or secular English, but even their religious asserted the doctrine that it was no more sin to kill an Irishman than a dog or any other animal. And some of these monks affirm if it were to happen to them, as it often does, that they should kill an Irishman, they would not for this refrain from the celebration of Mass for a single day. And he instances the case of monks of the Cistercian Order at Granard and Inch, who publicly appeared in arms and slaughtered the Irish, and yet celebrated their Masses notwithstanding. A century and a half after the Invasion, the Irish Church might be described as in an unhealthy condition, and not even the strongest partisans of the Anglo-Normans could declare that the cause of religion or morality had advanced. The weeds which Henry II. was to have destroyed still remained, and in the meantime even a more plentiful crop had grown.

[1] King's *Church History of Ireland*, vol. iii. pp. 1119-35.

CHAPTER XX

The Invasion of Bruce

In the early part of the fourteenth century the relations between the native Irish and the Scots were those of sympathy and friendship, nor was this friendship recent either in origin or growth. The Dalriadan Scots, who had left Ireland in the early part of the sixth century, soon obtained a firm foothold in Scotland, and after their independence had been recognized at the Convention of Druim Ceat, they increased in influence and power, until about the middle of the ninth century Kenneth MacAlpine having conquered the Picts,[1] the seat of government was transferred to Dunkeld, thence to Abernethy, and finally to Scone. The two races—the Scots and Picts—coalesced and united under a single chief, and Scotland was able to fight long and successfully against her powerful antagonist in the South. Similar in manners and habits, speaking languages one of which was but a dialect of the other, drawn together by the recollection of their common origin, both Irish and Scotch, as the ages passed, regarded each other as relatives and friends, and in the wars between England and Scotland the sympathy of Ireland had always been on the Scottish side. This sympathy grew in intensity after the Anglo-Norman invasion of Ireland. Both nations were then fighting the same enemy, battling against the same threatened subjugation, suffering the same manner of ills from the same hands. The attractive power of common suffering and common sorrow is strong; and the Irish followed with interest the heroic struggle of their kindred across the water, and heard with unbounded delight that, under an able Scottish leader, opposed by an incapable English one,

[1] In the year 838, according to Robertson (*History of Scotland*).

victory had declared at Bannockburn for the Scots and the standard of the English had gone down.

But it was in Ulster especially that the triumph of Bruce was heard of with the greatest exultation. It was from Ulster the Scots had gone in the sixth century to Caledonia.[1] The distance across from Antrim to Cantire was small, the intercourse between the two countries was frequent ; there is reason to believe that some of the Ulster Irish aided Bruce in his wars ; and when Robert Bruce met with temporary defeat, he was sheltered in Ulster, and for a time lived at Rathlin Island, off the coast of Antrim.[2] The Ulster chiefs, with Domhnall O'Neill at their head, asked themselves—Could not Ireland follow where Scotland led, could not she also assert her freedom, and in doing so could she not appeal for aid, and with confidence, to Bruce, who had already struck off the fetters from Scotland's limbs? If the Irish chiefs could even then have suspended their quarrels and have cordially united for the purpose of destroying English power in Ireland, they might perhaps have succeeded, but it was useless to expect such unity. Three centuries had passed since Clontarf, but never once during that period had *all* the Irish princes united for any common object, and they were still as disunited as ever. In every province some of the best of the lands had already passed under English sway. The old Irish in the conquered districts had been reduced to a state worse even than that of slaves, their property gone, their lives and liberty insecure. The natives who dwelt near the English settlers were for ever harassed by military expeditions, not knowing the day nor the hour when their lands would be seized, their houses destroyed, their lives sacrificed. The territories over which the native chiefs ruled were gradually shrinking in extent ; much of their possessions had already become the prey of rapacious English lords, who were yet unsatisfied and coveted what remained in Irish hands. The only hope of the Irish lay in combination, yet, with an infatuation without parallel, they would not combine. Each chief was mindful only of his own clan and of preserving what

[1] From Dalriada in Antrim. [2] Gilbert's *Viceroys*, p. 133.

remained of his diminished power; he still regarded a neighbouring chief with envy, regretted his success, and willingly obtained English aid for his overthrow. To explain the interminable dissensions among the Irish chiefs, it is not sufficient to say that these dissensions were bred by the clan system under which these chiefs lived. Political systems are created by the people; the people are not necessarily wedded to any one system for ever; these institutions ought to be changed and mended to suit the changing of the times; and a people less quick-witted than the Irish could not but know, whatever the clan system was in the early ages of their nation, that in the fourteenth century it was as much out of place in Ireland as the government of the Patriarchs would be in the highly civilized states of modern Europe. Nor was it the common people, nor even the lesser chiefs, who set their faces against change. They respected, as the Irish always do, what was ancient and venerable, but they must have ceased to respect a system which kept them for ever at war and under which peace and security were unknown, and if they did not desire a change so many of them would not have petitioned from time to time to be placed under English law. The initiative was left to the greater chiefs, and they showed no anxiety for a change. Each of these chiefs was willing to be supreme, but he would be content with no secondary position. Their pride and vanity forbade it. Blind to the future, they refused to learn from the past, sacrificed without shame or scruple the lives of their clansmen, and transmitted to their descendants the inheritance of discord which they had received.

Hopeless of bettering their condition through the unity of the native chiefs, the Irish had sometimes appealed to the English king for the protection of English law, but they had usually appealed in vain. Henry III., when appealed to by those who lived in the midst of the English settlers, and who had neither the protection of Irish nor of English law, commanded his Viceroy to see that they were governed by the laws of England, but the Anglo-Irish lords frustrated this design. They knew that if the Irish were under English law they

would have a subject's redress against injustice and could not be robbed or murdered with impunity. There is a feeble letter from Henry III. to these lords (1246), praying them to *permit* the enforcement of English law[1]—so powerful were these lords, so little subject to any authority, that they were thus supplicated by an English king. A similar letter was addressed to the Viceroy, Ufford (1280);[2] but the Anglo-Irish lords again defeated its purpose, and the Irish who lived within the shadow of English power were still left without the protection of English law. Nor does it appear that the English king was always anxious to protect the Irish from injustice, or to establish peace among them. In the reign of Edward I. there were contentions between the MacDermots and O'Connors of Connaught, and Ufford, the Viceroy, was summoned to England by the King to answer why these disturbances were not repressed (1278), and the answer given was that in policy he thought it expedient to wink at one knave cutting off another—that would save the King's coffers and purchase peace to the land; whereat the King smiled and bade him return to Ireland.[3]

With native chiefs warlike, restless and turbulent, seldom at peace, and seldom allowing those within the range of their influence to be at peace; with an alien aristocracy grasping, greedy and insatiable; with English kings not always friendly, but always careless or impotent to protect them, the lot of the native Irish was pitiable. The peasant who tilled his fields knew not how soon his crops would be wasted and destroyed, nor how soon the cattle which he tended with care would become the prey of some rapacious freebooter; and if he lay down peacefully to rest, he might be awakened by the light of his blazing home. His property and his life were at the mercy of every English plunderer, and against the evil-doer there was no redress, for the Englishman could not be made

[1] Leland's *History of Ireland*, vol. i. pp. 224-7.

[2] *Ibid.* pp. 244-5. But the Irish would have to pay for getting the English law extended to them. They had offered 8000 marks for the privilege (*The O'Conors of Connaught*, pp. 118-19).

[3] Hardiman's *Statute of Kilkenny*, Introduction, p. 24.

amenable to Irish or Brehon law, nor had the Irishman the right to appeal to an English judge. Men will not bear silently and without protest the infliction of wrong. When a government will not restrain the wrong-doer, nor protect the peaceful from injustice, the most timid and hesitating will have recourse to violence; and if the native Irish of the period suffered at the hands of the English settlers, they sometimes retaliated and inflicted on their persecutors some of the injuries they had received. Along the coast and inland, in the province of Leinster, were a few towns tenanted principally by English, where trade flourished and where the merchant and the artisan pursued their avocations in peace, within the shelter of the town walls, while outside violence and disorder raged. But those towns which had not a surrounding wall were as defenceless as the open country, and an event which occurred at New Ross (1260) is specially mentioned, where a horseman entered the streets, bargained with a merchant for a piece of cloth, and then, seizing the cloth, rode away without paying—an event which caused all the citizens, even the women, to join in building a wall round their town.[1]

In the Remonstrance of Domhnall O'Neill to Pope John XXII. there is a detailed account given of the state of Ireland and the ills under which the Irish groaned. They had been already driven from the most fertile of their lands, from the plains to the bogs and mountains, and even here they were insecure—their property was taken, their lives sacrificed with impunity; for if an Irishman committed a crime he was dragged before an English tribunal, where he was fined or imprisoned, or perhaps put to death, but an Englishman who committed the same crime against an Irishman was allowed to go free. The English had repeatedly declared that it was no crime to kill an Irishman; and the calculation is made that by the sword alone, since the Invasion, at least 50,000 of both nations had been killed.[2] Treaties with the Irish these English settlers readily made, and broke with equal readiness, and

[1] D'Arcy Magee's *Art MacMurrogh*, p. 129, Appendix.

[2] King's *Church History*, vol. iii. p. 1123.

special mention is made of the treachery of De Clare, who broke faith with O'Brien and had him cruelly tortured to death (1278); and of Bermingham, "the treacherous baron" who slaughtered O'Connor of Offaly and his chiefs while they were guests at his table. Nor do these cases stand alone. Bishops and priests were treated with every indignity, and were so cowed that they were afraid even to complain,[1] and monks of Irish birth were excluded from those establishments which their own countrymen had built and endowed. So anxious were the Irish for peace and security, that they had—at least several of them had—appealed to the English king through Lord John Hotham, offering to hold their lands by English tenure, but their appeal had not met with the courtesy of a reply.[2] Domhnall O'Neill reminded the Pope that one of his predecessors, Adrian IV., by false representations and by his partiality for England had granted Henry II. dominion over Ireland, but that he had done so for the good of Ireland itself, and in the hope that it would prosper under English rule. He now instanced the evils his country had suffered and was suffering still; his countrymen and himself had no hope of getting justice from England, and had, in consequence, invited Edward Bruce, brother of King Robert of Scotland, to come and reign over them, and they hoped he would receive the Pope's blessing and support. John XXII. did not grant the prayer of the Remonstrance. He had no love for the Bruces; King Robert was already excommunicated, and far from approving of Edward Bruce's invasion, he even warned the Irish against supporting him, and threatened with excommunication those who did.[3] Yet the Remonstrance impressed him

[1] King, p. 1124: "They were strangely influenced by a slavish timidity."

[2] *Ibid.* p. 1132. They offered even that the English king should divide the land between them and the Anglo-Irish, whom they call the middle nation, "so widely different in their principles of morality from the English of England and from all other nations, that they may be denominated not of any middling, but the most extreme degree of perfidy."

[3] Leland, vol. i. p. 275. In his communication to Robert Bruce (1316) the Pope styled him noble lord and refused him the title of King, and when he heard of the expedition to Ireland he excommunicated him (Lingard, vol. iii. pp. 19-20).

strongly, and though he did not answer Domhnall O'Neill directly, he wrote to the English king, warning him and advising him that the Irish should be treated with greater justice.[1]

In the meantime, Edward Bruce had received the invitation to come to Ireland. His brother Robert did everything to aid him, nor was he displeased thus to get rid of an aspiring and ambitious brother, who had already shown himself disagreeably active, acquiesced with reluctance in the position of a mere subject, and had put forth a claim to share the dominion of Scotland with his brother.[2] All preparations being made, Edward Bruce sailed, and in May 1315 landed at Larne in the county of Antrim. He had with him 6000 men, well armed in the English fashion, experienced in war, inspired with the memory of recent victory ; and he had leaders already tried and proved, such as the Earl of Moray, Menteith, John Campbell, Bissett and others.[3] He was cordially welcomed by Domhnall O'Neill, who, in the hope of seeing a united Ireland, sacrificed his own hereditary rights, as the descendant of Niall, and swore allegiance to Edward Bruce ; the other leaders, Irish and Scotch, followed his example, and amid the acclamations of the whole army Bruce was proclaimed King of Ireland. In the north-east of Ireland the ancient inhabitants had been driven from the lands on which their ancestors had lived, and beheld with envious eyes these same lands in the hands of the English settlers, the descendants of the adventurers who had come to Ulster with De Courcy, or had been subsequently planted there by De Lacy or De Burgo. Against these was directed the first fury of Bruce's attack. Their lands were wasted, their crops destroyed, their castles and even their churches levelled to the earth. The Mandevilles, the Savages, the Bissetts, the Russells and the rest combined, but their united forces were quickly overthrown. They retired to

[1] King's *History*, pp. 1136-39.

[2] *The O'Conors of Connaught*, p. 131.

[3] Grace's and Clynn's *Annals* ; also *Four Masters*. *Loch Cé* and *Annals of Clonmacnoise*.

Carrickfergus, but the place was attacked and taken. A remnant shut themselves up in the strong fortress of the town and maintained their position against repeated attacks, and this garrison alone remained to the English colonists, while the town and country round had fallen into the invaders' hands.[1] In a rapid march Bruce proceeded southwards, destroying the property of the settlers as he passed, and by the end of June he had captured Dundalk and Ardee; the church of the latter town, in which some had taken refuge, he set on fire, and burned both the church and the people within its walls.[2]

From the English king the new Irish king had little to fear. Edward II. had fled, defeated and disgraced, from the field of Bannockburn;[3] such a king was unlikely to defend his Irish possessions with ability or vigour, and if the Anglo-Irish lords could not resist the invader, then English power in Ireland was doomed. But these Anglo-Irish lords were powerful and wealthy, and the lands which their own swords or the swords of their ancestors had won they were not likely to relinquish without a struggle. They had often fought among themselves, but the present was a time to suspend their quarrels; in unity alone was strength and salvation, and for the purpose of concreting measures of defence they met in Council at Kilkenny.[4] The Viceroy, Butler, was there; so also were FitzGerald of Offaly, and Bermingham, and De la Poer of Waterford and many others. The most powerful of all the Anglo-Irish was absent—Richard De Burgo, the Red Earl, as he was called. But he was not indifferent to the events that were taking place. As Earl of Ulster his possessions in the Northern province were enormous, the district devastated by Bruce was either his or his vassals', and from his castle at Galway he contemplated with rage his castles and lands in

[1] *Annals of Clonmacnoise*; Dowling's *Annals*, at 1314. If Bruce was opposed by the Bissetts, there was also a Bissett in his own ranks.

[2] Grace's *Annals*.

[3] He did not draw rein till he reached Dunbar (Lingard, vol. iii p. 12).

[4] Clynn's *Annals*; the date was the beginning of June 1315.

Ulster destroyed and pillaged, and the homes of his vassals laid waste. His power was so great that he could scarcely be called a subject, and in public documents his name was placed before that of the Viceroy. And his power was not greater than his pride. He despised the other Anglo-Irish, disdained to take counsel with them, and deemed himself alone able to cope with and to conquer this presumptuous Scotchman who had dared to invade his territory. His retainers throughout Connaught obeyed his summons, and a strong army was soon assembled at Athlone. With the O'Connors discord had done its work. They were little better than the vassals and dependents of De Burgo, they dared not disobey his mandate; and the ruling prince—Felim O'Connor—with his forces had also gone to Athlone.

The whole army thus composed marched eastwards through Westmeath and Meath, nor was their progress less destructive in these districts than that of Bruce in Ulster. Some little distance south of Ardee, De Burgo met the Viceroy, Butler, proceeding north to encounter Bruce; but the Red Earl bade him go back, haughtily told him that he and his vassals would overcome the Scots, and that Bruce's head should soon fall.[1] Butler returned south, and De Burgo and his army came up with Bruce near Ardee. The forces of the Red Earl were strong, probably superior in numbers to the Scottish and Northern Irish, and under the advice of Domhnall O'Neill Bruce fell back and took up a position on the river Bann, whither he was followed by De Burgo. The two armies were on the opposite banks of the river, De Burgo's on the east bank, Bruce's on the west; the opposing soldiers discharged arrows at each other across the river,[2] and in this irregular and desultory fashion the campaign was prolonged, De Burgo anxious to engage in a general battle, which Bruce was equally anxious to postpone. He had hopes of disengaging Felim O'Connor from his alliance with De Burgo, was secretly negotiating with him, and at length succeeded in his object.

[1] *The O'Conors of Connaught*, p. 133.
[2] *Ibid.*; *Annals of Clonmacnoise.*

He assured Felim that Connaught would be restored to him in full, freed from the hated English, and represented to him that in fighting with De Burgo he was fighting against his own and his country's best interests. Another reason also weighed with Felim, for a rival prince—Rory O'Connor—had already denounced him as the ally of the English, had met with much support from the native chiefs, and had even intrigued with Bruce, who told him to wage war against the English in Connaught or elsewhere, but to leave Felim unmolested.[1] With apparent though insincere regret Felim announced to his ally that he must return west; and when he had gone, De Burgo, feeling himself inferior to the enemy, commenced to retreat. He fled eastwards towards Ballymena, and at a little village named Connor[2] he was overtaken (September 10) and compelled to give battle. The contest was stubbornly fought, but the victory was decisive and crushing; De Burgo's army was swept off the field, his best soldiers were killed, his bravest knights were among the slain, his brother William was taken prisoner, a remnant of the army found refuge in the castle of Carrickfergus,[3] the remainder with their leader fled south, harassed by the pursuing enemy; and the Red Earl, who had gone forth from Connaught with such confidence, returned without an army, baffled, defeated, and disgraced.

Except the castle of Carrickfergus, no spot in Ulster now owed allegiance to the English; all had been conquered by the victorious Bruce, nor was his progress stayed as he marched south, through Louth and Meath, until he reached Kells.[4] His opponent at that place was Roger Mortimer,[5] who, by his marriage with the heiress of Geneville, had inherited the lands and castles of Walter De Lacy. Mortimer's army numbered 15,000, but their opposition was futile—the tide of Bruce's success still rolled on, his enemies were scattered, and Mortimer fled to Dublin and embarked for England. Bruce pursued his

[1] *Annals of Loch Cé.*

[2] The village lies four or five miles south-east of Ballymena.

[3] Grace's *Annals*, p. 67. [4] Marlborough's *Chronicle.*

[5] He was married to Maud de Geneville, granddaughter of Walter De Lacy.

journey through the north of Meath, Westmeath and Longford, then turning south again into Westmeath, he set up his headquarters at Loughseudy, rested and refreshed his army, and spent there the Christmas of 1315. He was joined by some of the De Lacy family—Hugh and Walter—who protested that they were the rightful heirs of Meath, and who rejoiced at Mortimer's overthrow.[1] Early in the new year Bruce was again active, and at Arscoll, a little east of Athy, he met a strong Anglo-Irish army under Butler. The number is said to have been up to 30,000, much more than could be with Bruce; but the Anglo-Irish leaders quarrelled among themselves, the result of divided counsels was weakness and confusion, and Bruce was again the victor. But provisions were wanting: these wars had swept the country bare, want of food prevented any further advance, and Bruce was compelled to retreat northwards. He set up his headquarters at Dundalk, and there, on the 1st of May 1316, in the presence of the Scotch and Irish, he was crowned King of Ireland under the title of Edward I.[2]

So far the career of Bruce in Ireland had been one of unbroken triumph; everywhere he appeared he had been victorious; but his friends had not been equally successful. The O'Tooles and O'Byrnes from the mountains of Wicklow had swooped down on the English, and Bray and Newcastle had been set in flames, and the O'Mores had risen in Leix. But these different clans had fought separately, without unity of purpose or plan, and they had fought in their saffron shirts, while the English were covered with coats of mail. The result was easy to foresee. The O'Mores were defeated by Butler (January 1316), leaving 800 dead on the field; the O'Tooles were defeated at Baltinglass, with the loss of 300; and about the same time a detachment of the Scots themselves was defeated in Ulster, with the loss of 300.[3] But these disasters were light compared to that which overtook the O'Connors of

[1] These De Lacys may have been descended from a younger brother of Walter De Lacy, or perhaps they were illegitimately descended (Grace's *Annals*, p. 68, note).

[2] Grace's *Annals*.

[3] *Ibid.*; Clynn's *Annals*.

Connaught. When Felim returned from Ulster he found a rival, Rory O'Connor, seated in his place. This Rory had got an army together, burned Sligo, destroyed the castles of Roscommon, Ballintubber, Kilcoleman, and Rindown; compelled the Connaught chiefs, except MacDermot, to give him hostages; and finally had himself crowned king with the usual ceremonies on the ancient mound of Carnfree.[1] Nor could Felim hope to overcome his rival, for his only ally was his foster-father, MacDermot; and MacDermot himself had to fight a rival, and for a time was a fugitive from Moylurg. Early in the next year, Felim and MacDermot obtained the assistance of some of the O'Connor chiefs, and also of Bermingham of Dunmore, whose castle had been destroyed by Rory O'Connor in the preceding year.[2] The united army encountered Rory at Ballymoe in the county of Galway; the mail-clad warriors of Bermingham gave Felim an advantage; Rory was defeated, and once more Felim became king of the native Irish of Connaught, and without a rival to dispute his claims. He first punished those chiefs who had supported his rival, then he turned against the Anglo-Irish lords, De Exeter, Cogan, Stanton and Lawless, and defeated them with great slaughter at Ballylahin[3] in Mayo; turned eastwards to Roscommon, of which he possessed himself; and finally, mindful of his promises to Bruce, he made alliances with O'Mellaghlin of Meath, O'Brien of Thomond, and O'Rorke of Brefny, and declared, with the enthusiastic assent of all the native chiefs, that he was determined to chase the English from his native province.

During all this time the Red Earl remained inactive; but his brother William, who had been taken prisoner by Bruce, had just been released, and having returned to Connaught, he concerted with Bermingham measures of defence against O'Connor's threatened attack. The opposing forces met at Athenry, on the 10th of August 1316. In numbers the Irish were probably superior, in bravery not inferior, but in arms

[1] *The O'Conors of Connaught*, p. 134. [2] *Annals of Loch Cé.*

[3] A few miles south of the village of Foxford.

and discipline they were heavily overmatched. Clad in coats of mail, mounted on heavy horses, and armed with long lances, the cavalry were protected by archers, armed with the powerful crossbow, and in this order the English awaited the attack. Against such tactics and armour the tumultuous and undisciplined valour of the Irish was unavailing. With an obstinate and stupid adherence to ancient custom, they were still clad in their linen tunics. They fought as their ancestors did, three centuries before, at Clontarf, with sword and spear and battle-axe, and although they had been repeatedly taught by defeat the superiority of mail-clad troops, they still refused to wear coats of mail and thought it unworthy of brave men to be clad in armour.[1] So obstinate a refusal to learn, so blind an adherence to what was ancient and what ought to have been obsolete, such reckless courting of inevitable disaster will not easily be paralleled. Time after time the ranks advanced, only to be mown down by the murderous volleys of the crossbowmen, and then, when the advancing ranks were broken and divided, they were trampled under foot by the cavalry. Before they could even reach the English ranks and use their battle-axes, on which they relied so much, they were literally swept away. No sooner were the front ranks cut down than others stepped into the vacant places, only to be cut down in turn ; and when evening came 8000 of the Irish lay dead or dying on the plains round Athenry.[2] It was the most disastrous overthrow the Irish had got since Strongbow first landed. Felim O'Connor, at the age of twenty-three, was dead ; Tadhg O'Kelly, chief of Hy-Many, and twenty-eight nobles of his name ; O'Hara, O'Dowda, O'Madden and many of the MacDermots. On that disastrous day every ancient family in Connaught had to mourn the loss of some of its members, and not a few families were entirely swept away. For this woeful news from Con-

[1] The Irish appear to have little used archery at any time.

[2] *Annals of Loch Cé* and *Annals of Clonmacnoise* ; *Four Masters* : Cox. Athenry seems to have been a place of some consequence in those days, as it got a murage charter (1310), empowering the bailiffs and good men of the town to take the tolls and customs and build a wall round the town (O'Flaherty's *Iar-Connaught*, p. 266).

naught it was some small compensation to Bruce that Carrickfergus Castle surrendered. The English garrison had made a most heroic defence. Though constantly besieged by a large detachment of the Scots, they had stubbornly held the place, and on more than one occasion had sallied forth, causing loss and damage to the besiegers. Reduced to the last extremity by hunger, they had eaten hides, and when these were consumed, they had killed and eaten eight Scotchmen, whom they had taken prisoners.[1] At last, conquered by starvation, they yielded, and Carrickfergus Castle was given up to Bruce, the last place in all Ulster from whose turrets the flag of England had waved. Their gallant conduct extorted the admiration of their foes, and although they surrendered unconditionally, the lives of all were spared. Such are the events that marked the campaign of 1316.

Towards the end of that year Robert Bruce arrived in Ireland with large reinforcements, and early in 1317 the two brothers, with 20,000 Scots and a large number of Irish were ready to take the field. They directed their march on Dublin, laying waste the country through which they passed, and about February they encamped before the capital, took possession of Castleknock, made its governor, Tyrell, a prisoner, and menaced the city itself; and the citizens beheld with dismay the gleam of their camp-fires along the river from Kilmainham.[2] Planted with natives from Bristol and modelled on that city, granted many royal charters, endowed with many privileges, protected alike from the tyranny of the Viceroys and the encroachments of the archbishops, Dublin had prospered and grown wealthy. Its mayor and burgesses and guilds rejoiced in their privileges, in the extent of their trade and commerce, and were ever loyal and attached to the English throne.[3] And the mayor of those days, Robert of Nottingham, besides being loyal to England, was a man of stout heart and iron will, prompt to decide, equally prompt to act, and ready to make any sacrifice rather than have

[1] Grace, p. 77 (Butler's note, quotation from Pembridge).
[2] *Ibid.* pp. 79-81.
[3] Gilbert's *Historic and Municipal Documents.*

the city fall into Scottish hands. The Red Earl of Ulster was then in the Abbey of St. Mary's within the city, old and dispirited, without any of the fire or energy of his former days. His daughter was married to Robert Bruce, and the Mayor of Dublin felt convinced that he was secretly partial to the Scots, and therefore disloyal to England, and that this best explained his defeat, and his subsequent inactivity ; and getting together a band of citizens as stout-hearted as himself, the Mayor entered St. Mary's Abbey, killed seven of the Earl's retainers who resented his entrance as an intrusion, and then seizing the Earl himself cast him into prison.[1] When he had in this vigorous fashion put down a possible enemy within the city gates, he proceeded to take measures against the enemy outside. He demolished the Abbey of St. Thomas, and with the stones repaired the city walls ; armed with torches, he and his companions set fire to the wooden buildings on the city outskirts, to the church of St. John and the chapel of Magdalen,[2] and some of the Scots who made an attempt to enter perished in the flames of the burning buildings. To capture a city so capably defended would be no easy task. Bruce shrank from the encounter and the sacrifices it would entail, and turning aside from Dublin he passed through Leixlip and Naas into Carlow and Kilkenny, then west from Callan, and finally halted before the city of Limerick.[3]

But famine was raging in the land, the country around was waste and bare, the cattle killed, the crops destroyed ; the cravings of hunger had so far silenced the voice of natural affection that women were known to have killed and eaten their own children.[4] The terrible pestilence, which visited Ireland in the fourteenth century, had already appeared and already had claimed thousands as its victims, and famished with hunger,

[1] The King sent special orders to his Viceroy that the Dublin citizens were not to be punished in any way for what they had done (*Historical and Municipal Documents*, p. 398). On the contrary, some of their taxes were remitted (pp. 405-12).

[2] Grace's *Annals*, p. 79.

[3] Gilbert's *Viceroys*, p. 140.

[4] Grace, p. 93. Even the corpses were taken out of the graves and cooked and eaten.

thinned by pestilence or weakened by disease, the Scots had but little chance of capturing a city so well fortified and defended as Limerick. And to remain before the walls as a besieging army was to court inevitable disaster. The example of the Dublin citizens had a salutary effect on the Anglo-Irish lords; the efforts of Lord John Hotham, who had been sent specially from England for the purpose, had brought them together, and Geraldine and Butler and De la Poer had agreed to suspend their quarrels and to unite for their common interests against their common enemy. As a result an army of 30,000 men was assembled at Kilkenny, ready to take the field;[1] and to darken still further the prospect before the Scots, Roger Mortimer, with full powers as Viceroy, had landed at Youghal with 15,000 men. In these circumstances the only safety for the Bruces was to retreat, which they did by way of Cashel, Kildare and Trim, until finally they reached Dundalk about the month of May. Why this army of fugitives, thinned and weakened by disease and famine, was not attacked by the Anglo-Irish may excite surprise. But the memory of Bannockburn was recent and vivid, Edward Bruce had been invariably victorious, and even with such an army the Bruces, though not formidable, were feared. Besides, between the new Viceroy and his allies harmony did not reign, for Mortimer was kindly disposed to the Irish and wished to extend to them the English laws, the last thing which the Anglo-Irish lords wished to do.[2]

Robert Bruce returned to Scotland, promising to come with reinforcements next year, and King Edward remained inactive for a whole year at Dundalk. He was compelled to remain idle, for an army cannot fight without food, and the famine still raged. A similar reason will explain the inactivity of his foes. But in 1318 there was abundance of food, both sides became active, and the English forces, under John De Birmingham, advanced north to attack Bruce. They were far superior in numbers, and Domhnall O'Neill advised Bruce to retire north and await the promised reinforcements from

[1] Grace's *Annals*. [2] *Ibid.* pp. 84-85 (Editor's note).

Scotland. The leaders, both Irish and Scotch, seconded O'Neill's efforts, foreseeing defeat against such an army as De Bermingham's. But Bruce was inexorable. Strong-willed, self-sufficient, vain of his victories, he was filled with that presumption which is often the herald of disaster, and declared that at all costs he would give battle. The two armies met at Faughart,[1] near Dundalk. While the battle raged, a powerful English knight, Sir John De Maupas, rushed into the Scottish ranks, sought out Edward Bruce with whom he engaged in single combat, and both fell mortally wounded.[2] Whatever doubt there might have been as to the result of the battle was now over ; this event was decisive, and the Scots and Irish retreated, leaving 2000 either dead or wounded on the field.[3] Domhnall O'Neill reached Tirowen, the Irish dispersed to their homes, and the body of Bruce was taken by De Bermingham, the head cut off, salted and sent as a present to the King of England. De Lacy and Sir John De Culwick, who had fought with Bruce, were taken prisoners and starved, each being allowed but three meals of the worst bread and three draughts of foul water on alternate days until life became extinct.[4] For his victory at Athenry, Richard De Bermingham was created Lord of Athenry, and John De Bermingham, for his victory over Bruce, was created Earl of Louth and Baron of Ardee. And thus terminated in disaster the invasion of Edward Bruce.

[1] Famous as the birthplace of St. Bridget.

[2] Gilbert's *Viceroys*, pp. 144-6. [3] Dowling's *Annals*.

[4] Gilbert's *Viceroys*, p. 147. It appears Hugh and Walter De Lacy escaped to Scotland ; it was *John De Lacy* who was starved.

CHAPTER XXI

The English Colonists turn Irish

WHATEVER were the ills from which Ireland suffered in the early part of the fourteenth century—and the Remonstrance of Domhnall O'Neill shows that they were neither few nor unimportant—these ills were increased and intensified by the unfortunate invasion of Edward Bruce. If he had succeeded, if he had established one stable government, if he had replaced disorder and anarchy by order and law, it may be that the recollection of his plunderings and depredations and the ills that followed in their train would have been forgotten in happier times. But he failed; with failure men often associate discredit, just as a certain glamour surrounds success, and it has been Bruce's misfortune that his memory and his deeds are regarded by Anglo-Irish and Irish historian with equal abhorrence. Both Clynn [1] and Grace,[2] who wrote from amidst the Anglo-Irish, and whose *Annals* reflect the views of those among whom they lived, and perhaps whose blood they shared, have dwelt on the frightful havoc wrought by the Scottish invasion; and they rejoice at the victory of Ardee, where the power of Bruce was overthrown. But the words of the native Annalists are equally strong, and the condemnation of the *Annals of Clonmacnoise*, of *Loch Ce*, and of the *Four*

[1] Clynn was first guardian of the Franciscan Monastery of Carrig in Kilkenny, founded by the Earl of Ormond (1336). A mere Irishman would hardly be placed in such a position (Harris's *Ware*, vol. ii., "Writers of Ireland," p. 83).

[2] Grace was probably a native of Kilkenny, where the Graces of Gracefield lived; the family were descended from Raymond Le Gros (Introd. to Grace's *Annals*).

Masters are in almost identical terms. "There was not," says the first of these Annalists, "a better deed, that redounded better or more for the good of the kingdom, since the creation of the world, and since the banishment of the Fomorians out of this land, done Ireland than the killing of Edward Bruce, for there reigned scarcity of victuals, breach of promises, ill performance of covenants, and the loss of men and women throughout the whole realm for the space of three years and a half that he bore sway. Insomuch that men did commonly eat one another for want of sustenance during his time."

Ulster and Leinster were especially harassed, for it was over their fields the opposing forces had marched and countermarched, but there was no district so wasted as Ulster, and no people suffered so much as the English colonists in the north-east of that province. These colonists were numerous; on both sides of the Bann they had driven the natives from their possessions and had appropriated the best of the lands. Planted and protected by the De Burgos, whose feudal castles studded the whole district and whose vassals had attained the position of powerful feudal lords, they were the first object of the invader's attack, and after the Red Earl had been defeated they were at the invader's mercy. Left to themselves, the Mandevilles, the Logans, and the Savages fought for the protection of their fields and fought bravely; but whatever success they met with was transient: they were fighting against overwhelming odds, and before the hurricane of Scottish invasion both castle and cottage went down. The churches were burned, the feudal castle was rifled, the farmhouse destroyed, the crops wasted and ruined, the cattle driven off, and lord and vassal, overwhelmed in the same disasters, were reduced to the same level of indigence.

It would be strange if the O'Neills of Tirowen did not cast longing eyes eastwards and take advantage of the weakness and confusion that prevailed among their foes. There were many circumstances in their favour. The English Viceroy at Dublin received no support from England and was, therefore,

weak. The Anglo-Irish lords quarrelled among themselves ; the most powerful of them all, the Red Earl, was old and feeble, his martial spirit and energy gone, his sword and lance laid aside. He lived in the monastery of Athassel in Tipperary, spent his time in penance and prayer, and in that retreat (1326) his stormy life was closed.[1] Three years later the dreaded Earl of Louth, the conqueror of Bruce, was murdered,[2] and the same fate befell (in 1333) the young Earl of Ulster.[3] Between the O'Neills and the dispirited and weakened colonists nothing intervened, and if the O'Neills and the O'Donnells could have united, or if the O'Neills would cease quarrelling among themselves, the English colonists would have quickly disappeared. But disunion still continued. Two factions of the O'Neills fought in 1319, and Domhnall O'Neill was driven from Tirowen, though he was able to return the same year. When he died (1325) there was the inevitable contest between two rival chiefs for the headship of Tirowen, as there was between the O'Donnells of Tirconnell a few years later (1333). A few years later still (1339) the old rivalry between the O'Neills and the O'Donnells, which had slumbered so long, was again revived, and war and battles were the result ; and twice in the years that followed (1343-1348) did the O'Donnells break out into war, though the quarrels were between themselves and not with the O'Neills.[4] But through all these years the Irish were making their way eastwards, and the English colony was gradually losing ground. An energetic and warlike branch of the O'Neills, the descendants of Hugh Boy O'Neill, and called from him the O'Neills of Clanaboy, passed from their homes in Tirowen across the Bann, expelled the English out of the "barony of Tuscard, now called the Route,"[5] in North Antrim, passed thence to Carrickfergus, crossed the Lagan and chased the Savages from the Lower Ards into a small district, the Upper Ards, eastward of Strangford Lough. To resist the wave of Irish attack one of the Savages proposed to

[1] Gilbert's *Viceroys*, p. 163.
[2] Ware's *Annals*.
[3] *Ibid.*
[4] *Four Masters*.
[5] Sir J. Davies' *Historical Tracts*, p. 157.

build plenty of strong castles, behind which they would be secure; but his son had already learned to imitate the Irish; he was recklessly brave, protested that he would fight, like the Irish, in the open, and bade his father remember that a castle of bones was far better than a castle of stones. But the Savages and their followers were overwhelmed, their castles were all thrown down, the Irish occupied these lands from which their ancestors had been driven, and before the second half of the fourteenth century opened the English settlements along the Bann had disappeared, and the extensive territory of the Savages had shrunk to the narrow limits of the Upper Ards, and even here their position was insecure.

In Connaught the march of events was somewhat similar. At the disastrous battle of Athenry, the family from whom the kings of Connaught had so long been taken—the descendants of Cathal Crovderg—were nearly extinguished, Connaught lay helpless at the feet of De Burgo and Bermingham, and in every house throughout the province there was mourning. Yet the surviving princes of the O'Connor clan would not compose their differences; no two could agree, and the miserable remnant of this family, who had so long afflicted Connaught with their broils, still quarrelled over the miserable remnant of their ancient possessions. If they hoped to hold even what was left them, still more if they hoped to win back what had been lost, if even they wished to avert the final ruin of their race and name, it was necessary that they should be of one mind, that by mutual arrangement, by the sacrifice of personal feeling and the extinction of personal jealousy, by patience, by perseverance in common action and under a single head, they should present a firm front to the foe. But such was not the tradition of their house; it was one of discord and turmoil, and the surviving members of the O'Connor family were resolved to maintain its evil traditions. A cousin of the dead king Felim, by name Rory, proclaimed himself king. He was attacked by William De Burgo and deposed; he then submitted and was acknowledged king by the same De Burgo,

who was strong enough to play the rôle of king-maker. But MacDermot of Moylurg refused to acknowledge this creature of De Burgo and set up Turlogh O'Connor (1317), who in his turn was defeated and deposed by another O'Connor—Cathal—ancestor of the O'Connors of Sligo. For years this prince had to fight many battles and many enemies; his precarious position was often threatened, and finally he was defeated (1324) by the deposed Turlogh O'Connor, who then assumed the title of king.[1] To accentuate the evils which afflicted Connaught there was, in addition to these contests, war between the O'Farrells of Leitrim (1323), in which they so weakened each other that Bermingham invaded their territories, causing great damage. And the O'Rorkes and O'Reillys were at war in 1324 and again three years later.[2]

To repress all these conflicts, to chastise all these warlike clans — the O'Rorkes and O'Reillys, MacRannells, MacDermots and MacCostellos — even to maintain his position among them, was no easy matter; yet Turlogh O'Connor was an able man, inheriting some of the best qualities of his ancestors, and, in the midst of wars and conflicts innumerable, he maintained his position for twenty years. He must have rejoiced when (in 1325) William De Burgo died.[3] He had dropped his Norman name of De Burgo and assumed the plainer one of Burke, he spoke the Irish language, adopted Irish customs, and was as warlike and quarrelsome as any Irish chief could be. But Turlogh's troubles were not ended from this source, for Burke had left a son Walter, who seems to have inherited all his father's qualities, good and bad, and who was so Irish and so powerful that he proposed to the native chiefs that Turlogh be deposed and that he himself be appointed king; and when this was not agreed to he made war on Turlogh.[4] The latter was aided by the Earl of Ulster, and Walter was defeated; but a little later, or perhaps in the same year (1330), they were again at war. Turlogh and

[1] *The O'Conors of Connaught*, pp. 137-40.
[2] *Annals of Loch Cé*; *Four Masters*. [3] *Four Masters*, at 1324.
[4] *The O'Conors of Connaught*, p. 142.

MacDermot were on one side, Burke and MacCostelloe on the other; success and defeat alternated, and then there was peace. The next year, perhaps in revenge, Burke ravaged Moylurg, which was then without a capable ruler, as Mulrony MacDermot had resigned the chieftaincy and become a monk.[1] A year later, Walter Burke's career ended in disaster. He was treacherously taken by his kinsman, the young Earl of Ulster, brought to the Earl's castle of Innishowen,[2] and flung into its prison, where he was starved to death. Revenge followed quick on the heels of assassination, and murder was followed by murder. A sister of Walter Burke's was married to Mandeville of Ulster, and with a woman's earnestness she pleaded for revenge, and as the young Earl was proceeding to Mass on June 6, 1333, he was set upon by Mandeville and his servants, and with one blow from behind his skull was cloven in. The murderers were taken and put to death; "some were hanged, others shot, and others torn asunder to avenge his death."[3]

The death of this young Earl was far-reaching in its consequences. Besides his possessions in Ulster, Tipperary and Kilkenny, he had vast estates in Connaught. He had left an infant daughter, and by the provisions of feudal tenure the King of England, as immediate lord of all these great vassals, had the right to possess and manage these lands during the minority of De Burgo's child. But this was an arrangement in which the two most powerful of the Connaught Burkes, Ulick and Edmond, did not intend to acquiesce, and boldly renouncing their allegiance to the English king, they renounced their name and nation, seized upon the Earl's castles and lands, adopted the Irish mode of tenure—tanistry and gavelkind—called themselves MacWilliam Oughter and MacWilliam Eighter, and in the sight of the English garrison at Athlone cast aside their distinctive Norman dress and arms

[1] *Annals of Loch Cé.*

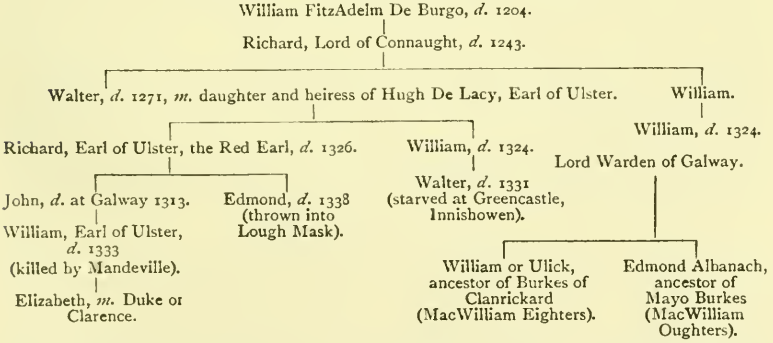
[2] *Ibid.* The castle was at Greencastle, near the mouth of Lough Foyle.

[3] *Four Masters*; Grace's *Annals*

and assumed the saffron robes of an Irish chief.[1] Their example was widely followed. Bermingham assumed the name of MacFerris, De Exeter became MacJordan, Nangle became MacCostelloe; the English colonists, who refused to act similarly, were everywhere overborne; and when Jordan d'Exeter was asked to furnish supplies from Connaught, he had to report to the English king that no money could be got as the whole province had fallen into Irish hands.[2]

But though the whole fabric of English power in Connaught was thus destroyed, the province was not destined to have peace. Among the native chiefs the spirit of faction was still strong, the rivalries and jealousies of the O'Connors seemed interminable, and perhaps even a more potent element of discord was the turbulence and rapacity of the MacWilliam Burkes. Edmond of that name was especially turbulent. He wasted all West Connaught (1335), and three years later he captured the only surviving son of the Red Earl, in the Friar's house at Ballinrobe, brought him to an island on Lough Mask, put him into a bag, tied a stone round it and flung him like a dog into the waters of the lake.[3] This act

[1] THE DE BURGOS' GENEALOGICAL TABLE



Vide Hardiman's *History of Galway*, pp. 54-56; O'Flaherty's *Iar-Connaught*, pp. 32, 46, 47, 250; Grace's *Annals*, p. 161; Richey's *Lectures on Irish History* (first series), pp. 177-8.

[2] *O'Conors of Connaught*, p. 143.

[3] O'Flaherty's *Iar-Connaught*, pp. 47-48. He had got a grant of the late Earl's lands in Connaught during the minority of his infant daughter for payment of £200 a year (O'Flaherty, p. 250).

of murder lost him the sympathy and support of many in Connaught; the next year he was attacked by Turlogh O'Connor and driven out of the province, after which he got together a few ships and led a wandering and reckless life of piracy along the coast, and during the years that followed went to Scotland and earned the nickname of Albanach or Scotch. The same year Turlogh O'Connor married the widow of the Earl's son who was drowned in Lough Mask, having divorced his own wife, and he too becoming unpopular, enemies arose against him, until (1342) there was general war in Connaught. Turlogh was deposed and Hugh O'Connor put in his place; but the next year Turlogh defeated and deposed his rival—though he was not long at peace, for in a quarrel between the MacRannells of Leitrim he took sides with one of the contestants and was killed, thus ending his troubled career, after having been for nearly twenty years the head of the native Irish of Connaught.[1] In the meantime there had been various quarrels between other chiefs. The O'Kellys were quarrelling among themselves (1340), so also were the O'Rorkes at war with the O'Connors and with the MacDermots of Moylurg; O'Kelly and Bermingham were at war (1343); in the two succeeding years the MacRannells, split up into contending factions, were at war; Edmond Burke, back again from his travels and piracies, was fighting Bermingham and the O'Connors combined (1348), while some of the O'Connors and MacDermot also were at war (1349); and to complete the misery of Moylurg, it was desolated by a pestilence as well as wasted by the horrors of war.[2]

In the succeeding years all is confusion and all is strife. There were several claimants of the O'Connors for the headship of their clans, in which we can with difficulty discover that Hugh, son of Turlogh, succeeded his father and held some shadowy authority from 1345 to 1356; Hugh after him for twelve years; and then Roderick, who is set down as king from 1368 to 1384.[3] We also discover that the

[1] *Annals of Loch Cé.* [2] *Ibid.*; *Four Masters.*
[3] *The O'Conors of Connaught*, pp. 146-8.

Burkes fought among themselves (1355), in which year Edmond Albanach died. A few years later Burke and Bermingham combined waged war against Cathal O'Connor, and (in 1362) the O'Connors, weary of fighting among themselves, suspended their quarrels for a brief period; and as if to show what they could do if united, they crossed the Shannon, desolated Meath, and then, turning south, defeated the English, and almost destroyed the city of Kilkenny. This monotonous and dreary prospect of discord and strife, of petty wars and petty ambitions, is relieved by one fact which the Annalists have rightly recorded, and which, like the oasis in the desert, is in such striking and agreeable contrast to the waste of desert which surrounds it. In 1351 William O'Kelly of Hy-Many invited all the Irish poets, brehons, bards, harpers, players, and jesters and others of this kind to his house at Christmas, where every one of them was well received and extolled their host for his bounty, and one of them composed certain Irish verses in his praise. In a province wasted by eternal war such assemblies, where the contests were only those of wisdom and wit and learning, were all too rare; and well for the province it would have been if it was such contests, and such only, that the historian had to record.[1]

The skill of a Munster chief, Conor O'Dea, and the bravery of the Dalcassians had destroyed English power in West Thomond (1318) at the battle of Dysert O'Dea.[2] De Clare was killed, his lands and castles taken possession of; his widow left the province, taking with her all she could, and Thomond, west of the Shannon, was once more the land of the O'Briens. But the O'Briens themselves could not agree, and in the battle which proved so fatal to De Clare, Murtagh O'Brien and Brian fought on opposite sides, the latter being on De Clare's side. He was able and ambitious, and Murtagh, who had triumphed, wisely directed his opponent's thoughts

[1] *Annals of Loch Cé*; *Annals of Clonmacnoise*.

[2] Grace's *Annals*; Gilbert's *Viceroys*, p. 149; White's *History of Clare*, p. 138.

across the Shannon, and helped him to conquer East Thomond, that stretch of territory taking in the modern baronies of Arra and the Ormonds, and with his headquarters somewhere near Nenagh, Brian lived for years in peace. His first contest was with the De Burgos, and those he defeated (1322), but a little later (1328) they again attacked him and with increased strength, for they were assisted by some of the O'Briens, by the MacNamaras and by the O'Connors of Connaught. Brian wisely sought and obtained the aid of the Earl of Desmond, and again he defeated his foes, after which the De Burgos left him unmolested. His ability and success won for him the respect of the Dalcassian chiefs, and when Murtagh, his old rival, died, Brian became chief of all Thomond, which he ruled without opposition until 1350, when, in some obscure contest east of the Shannon, he was killed. Once only during these years was the peace of Thomond broken—in 1334—when a combination of Connaught chiefs entered the district, attacked MacNamara, one of its chiefs, and in their rage and cruelty set fire to a church in which eighty persons, including two priests, had sought refuge, and church and people and priests perished in the flames.[1]

In Leinster and part of Munster the destruction of English power was not so rapid or complete as in the other provinces, but it was growing weaker, and the native chiefs were able to hold the lands they had, and were even recovering some of those they had lost. The O'Carrolls in Ely O'Carroll were able to defy Ormond and all his power;[2] the O'Mores were as firm in Leix as their own rock-built castle of Dunamaise;[3] the O'Nolans held their own in Carlow,[4] and were able to inflict a serious defeat (1322) on Bermingham and his allies; the O'Tooles and O'Byrnes, in their mountain fortresses at Wicklow,

[1] *Four Masters.*

[2] They gained an important victory over the English in 1318 (*Annals of Clonmacnoise*; *Four Masters*; Clynn (1317)).

[3] Three miles east of Maryborough; the O'Mores' territory of Leix was situated in the south-east of Queen's County.

[4] Their territory corresponded to the present barony of Forth (*Book of Rights*, p. 211).

defied all attack, and a chief of the MacMurrogh family was acquiring such power that in the not distant future that family would overshadow all Leinster. In this portion of Ireland all was confusion. The native chief and the English lord lived side by side, the brehon and the English judge each administering his own law. There was the English king's sheriff and the Anglo-Irish lord's sheriff; under the same English noble there was English and Irish law, for he ruled English and Irish, was an English lord and an Irish chief at the same time, and not infrequently, in the arrogance of his power, recognized no law but his own will. The natives who lived under the native chiefs had the same law as their ancestors had, and wanted none other; but those who lived on the borders of the English possessions, or under the rule of an Anglo-Irish lord, had much to endure. If *they* killed or robbed an Englishman they could be punished, even put to death; but an Englishman might kill or rob one of them with impunity, and the cases were many where the English culprit had but to plead that the complainant was Irish and he himself was allowed to go free.[1] Some natives had purchased charters of denization[2] by virtue of which they became English subjects, and entitled to the protection of English law; others had repeatedly petitioned that this privilege and protection should be extended to them, but in vain—for though both of the first Edwards were willing, the opposition of the Anglo-Irish lords was effectively interposed.[3] Nor did they fare better under Edward III.; for though he transmitted to his Viceroy, Darcy, an ordinance (March 3, 1331) declaring that there should be one law for Irish and English, it was similarly obstructed and might as well never have been issued.[4] The Anglo-Irish

[1] Davies' *Historical Tracts*, pp. 83-85. For instance, when Thomas Butler brought an action for certain goods against Robert De Almain, the defendant pleaded he was bound to nothing, as the plaintiff was not of English descent, and it was this question which was *first submitted to the jury*.

[2] For such charters there was usually a money payment exacted.

[3] Leland, vol. i. pp. 244-6, 289-90.

[4] Grace's *Annals*, p. 119, note.

lords coveted the lands of the Irish and wished to appropriate them ; they could not do so with impunity if the Irish as well as themselves could appeal to an English court, and they were able to convince the English king that it was the best policy to regard the Irish as aliens and enemies, and to harass them with continual war. Such was the position of the natives—outcasts and outlaws in their own land. But even the English settlers had much reason to complain, and in a petition sent to England (1316) they complain that if one Englishman killed another or robbed him, even of twelve-pence halfpenny, his life was forfeited by English law, but that an Irishman for such offences was often allowed to go free on payment of a fine, and that in some cases a fine of twenty shillings was imposed. And they deduced from this that an Irishman might kill an Englishman almost with impunity, and that the life of an Englishman living in their midst was insecure.[1] They add that the Anglo-Irish lords preferred fining an Irishman to killing him, for his dead body was no use to them, but by fining him they could grow rich.

Constantly engaged in war with Scotland, meditating a war with France, weak, irresolute, incapable, a slave to a succession of favourites, deserted by his wife, harassed by his nobles, Edward II., during his whole reign, bestowed little attention on Ireland. He was unable to place at the disposal of the Viceroy a force strong enough to make him respected. He was forced even to withdraw troops from Ireland for his wars, to tolerate and even to flatter the Anglo-Irish lords, for if they revolted English power in Ireland was at an end ; and the wars and conquests of Edward III. compelled *him* to act similarly. Instead of curtailing the power of these lords and restricting their privileges, greater power and privileges were given them, and new honours heaped upon them. Butler was made Earl of Ormond;[2] FitzJohn FitzGerald, Earl of Kildare;[3] FitzThomas FitzGerald, Earl of Desmond ;[4] and over the

[1] Grace's *Annals*, p. 85.

[2] In 1322 (Carte's *Ormond*, Introduction). His father had been created Earl of Carrick. [3] About 1315. [4] In 1329.

districts from which they drew their titles they were palatine lords. Each had the power to punish his own subjects; they created knights, appointed sheriffs and seneschals, erected their scaffolds, set up their independent courts, made peace and war, and their sheriff and his officers regarded the King's sheriff—the Sheriff of the Cross, as he was called—with disdain, even as their master despised the King's Viceroy at Dublin.[1] These palatine lords, of whom there were nine, had soon outgrown the position of subjects and had attained to the power of kings. Bloated with privilege, intoxicated with power, they knew no restriction but their own caprice, and obeyed no mandate but their passions. They made war on the natives as they pleased, but more frequently on each other, and from Desmond to Dublin the whole country was shaken by their conflicts. These lords could no longer fling the retort at the Irish that it was the Irish only who quarrelled, for they themselves were as turbulent as the Irish in their worst days.

It was necessary (in June 1325) to issue a King's writ prohibiting Arnold Power and the Earl of Kildare from making war on one another, for they were already levying men for the purpose. Another writ of the same character had to be issued in the following December, but two years later war broke out. At one of their assemblies Arnold Power had called the Earl of Desmond a rhymer. Desmond determined to be avenged, and got the aid of the Berminghams and of Ormond, while Power was aided by the De Burgos.[2] The De Burgos were defeated by Desmond, many of them killed and the rest driven into Connaught, while Power's possessions in Tipperary and Ossory were wasted and plundered by the combined forces of Butler and Bermingham, and himself escaped to Waterford, a fugitive. Two years later (1329) De Geneville wasted Bermingham's territory of Carbury.[3] Nor did these Anglo-Irish lords stop even at murder; and when the Earl of Louth was murdered (1329) and the Earl of Ulster (1333), it was not the work of the natives, but in each case it was one

[1] Davies' *Historical Tracts*, pp. 114-16.
[2] Grace's *Annals*, pp. 103-4-5. [3] *Ibid.* p. 113.

of their own race that struck the assassin's blow. Taking advantage of these dissensions, the native chiefs took courage, though they were not always successful in their attacks. The victory of the O'Carrolls (1318) and of the O'Nolans (1322) was followed a few years later (1331) by the O'Tooles capturing Ferns, Cullagh and Arklow,[1] and in the meantime (1327) Domhnall MacMurrogh had been proclaimed King of Leinster, and had sworn he would go through all Ireland and subdue it.[2] As a counterpoise to these successes, the O'Connors of Offaly were severely defeated (1321) by the English of Louth and Meath,[3] and Domhnall MacMurrogh was taken prisoner (1327) and lodged in the government prison at Dublin, though, aided by one Adam Nangle, he soon effected his escape, for which negligence Nangle was hanged.[4] Two years later Butler wasted the country of the O'Nolans, and the Viceroy, Darcy, attacked and defeated the O'Byrnes of Wicklow.[5] Such was the disturbed state of the country that one Hamund Archdeacon, on being fined £40 for not attending the Parliament at Dublin, got the fine remitted because he was able to show that he could not attend on account of the wars.[6]

The outlook in Ireland was so stormy and the prospects of English power so gloomy, that Edward III. talked of coming to Ireland himself,[7] and in the meantime (1331) sent a new Viceroy, Sir Anthony Lucy, who was to use strong measures both against native and Anglo-Irish; and he was but a short time in office until he proceeded to act with rigour. He summoned a Parliament at Dublin and issued the usual writs. Desmond and others refused to attend. He adjourned the Parliament to Kilkenny, but they still remained away; and then, making his way rapidly to Limerick, he seized the Earl of Desmond, Mandeville, Walter De Burgo, and William and Walter Bermingham, and flung them all into prison. William Bermingham was tried and executed; his brother, being an

[1] Grace's and Dowling's *Annals*. [2] Grace, p. 107.
[3] *Annals of Clonmacnoise*.
[4] Grace's *Annals*; D'Arcy Magee, *Art MacMurrogh*, p. 4.
[5] Grace's *Annals*. [6] *Ibid.* p. 120.
[7] Gilbert's *Viceroys*, p. 178.

ecclesiastic, pleaded its privileges with success and was allowed to go free ; and Desmond, after a period of confinement, was sent to England. But these vigorous measures were not long continued. Edward III. had no serious intention of coming to Ireland, and sought for other fields for his ambition ; Lucy was recalled, and a Viceroy of a milder type, Sir John Darcy, was appointed his successor (1332) ; the De Burgos and Mandeville were liberated, and Desmond came back to Ireland ; and so far from English power having gained, the reverse happened, for the Earl of Ulster was killed (1333) and his relatives cast off their allegiance to England.[1]

During his first viceroyalty (1330) Sir John Darcy, not having sufficient forces to fight the Irish, called to his aid the Earl of Desmond, then the most potent of the Anglo-Irish lords. Desmond was an Irish chief as well as an English lord, and it was in the former capacity his aid was sought, more as an ally than as a subject. With an army many of whom must have been Irish, and amounting, it was said, to 10,000, he assisted the Viceroy ; but the treasury at Dublin was empty, the Viceroy was unable to pay Desmond and his soldiers, and the Earl had recourse to the Irish system of coyne and livery. His soldiers had fought for the English colonists. On these they were now quartered—men and horses—eating and drinking at their expense, wasting their crops, consuming the food and forage required for themselves and their own cattle and horses, dissipating their wealth, and guilty, as mercenary soldiers will, of murders, robberies and rapes. Their exactions, while they ruined the English settlers, enriched Desmond and increased his power, for many of the settlers gave up their lands, which were immediately handed over to Irishmen, who held them under the Irish system of tenure and willingly recognized Desmond as their chief. And in a short time his rule was thus recognized over Kerry, Limerick, and most part of Cork and Waterford. Such rapid advancement excited the jealousy and roused the cupidity of the Earl of Ormond, who quickly followed in Desmond's footsteps, exacted coyne and livery in

[1] Gilbert's *Viceroys*, pp. 179-82; Grace's *Annals*; Leland, vol. i. p. 293.

his turn, and rooted out the English settlers; and over Tipperary and part of Kilkenny Irish customs and Irish laws reigned. The Earl of Kildare was not slow to copy these examples, and established the same exactions and the same customs with the same results over Kildare and part of Meath.[1] To complete the ruin of the English colonists, they were harassed and taxed by rapacious government officials to such an extent that Edward III. himself sent a letter (1336) to his Viceroy, Chancellor and Treasurer, in which he states that it had been shown to him by trustworthy men "that they and his other ministers, regarding the persons of men and yielding to men and not to right, had made one law for the rich and another for the poor, and had allowed the strong to oppress the weak, to usurp the royal authority, to detain the King's debts, and to perpetrate various crimes; and that instead of protecting the poor, who were willing to be obedient subjects, they harassed and aggrieved them against all justice, to their great loss, and thereby gave a pernicious example to others."[2] Burdened with these accumulated evils, some of the English settlers left the country altogether, and others joined the Irish, intermarried with them, adopted their customs and their laws, but all were lost to the English government in Ireland.

The policy of Edward III. towards Ireland was a mixture of caresses and coercion, of fitful periods of severity and kindness. The appointment of Ormond as Viceroy[3] was followed by the appointment of Lucy; the execution of William Bermingham and the imprisonment of Desmond only to be again followed by the release of Desmond and the recall of the stern Viceroy. After a few years, harsh measures were again used. In 1339 there was universal war in Ireland.[4] Some of the Geraldines, joined with the Irish, fought the Earl of Desmond; the O'Dempseys and the people of Kildare were at war; and the next year the MacMurroghs and the O'Nolans continued[5] to

[1] Davies' *Historical Tracts*, pp. 152-6.

[2] Grace's *Annals*, p. 129, note.

[3] He was only deputy for Sir John Darcy (1329). [4] Grace's *Annals*.

[5] Clynn's *Annals*, 1340-42. The O'Mores also recovered all Leix and expelled the settlers.


EDWARD
III
KING OF
ENGLAND & FRANCE
DIEU ET MON DROIT
HONI SOIT QUI MAL Y PENSE

EDWARD III

war upon the English. These constant wars, this perpetual unrest, the shrinkage of his territories in Ireland, drained the resources, as well as tried the patience, of the English king. He blamed, and not without justice, the Anglo-Irish lords for much of the trouble; because some of them had adopted Irish ways, he thought all were disloyal to England, and he issued a decree to his Viceroy, Sir John Darcy (July 27, 1341), directing him to remove from their offices in Ireland "all Irishmen and all Englishmen who had married in Ireland, and had lands and possessions in that country but had nothing in England, and to appoint in their places Englishmen who had lands and possessions in England, and that no future alienation of the royal demesnes or other possessions in the King's hands should be made without a proper writ of inquiry." He also revoked all grants made by his father or himself, "by which measure almost the whole of Ireland was moved to immediate insurrection against the King."[1] To set up a barrier between the English by birth and the English by descent was not to promote peace but discord; to brand with indignity and disqualification the descendants of those whose swords had first won dominion in Ireland for the English Crown was to rouse the hatred and extinguish the loyalty of those powerful Anglo-Irish lords; and at a parliament held in Dublin by the Viceroy, in October of that year, Desmond and his friends refused to attend.[2] Instead of doing so, they called a parliament of their own at Kilkenny, protested their loyalty to England, and by a petition to the King they acknowledged the disorders of Ireland, and pointed out that it was the King's officers—the English by birth in whom he trusted so much—who were to blame. In this petition they ask the King how a land full of war can be governed by a man ignorant of war, as many of the Viceroys were; how a King's officer can in a short time acquire great wealth, and why the King is not made richer by Ireland; and they give instances of the persecutions and peculations of these officials of English birth, adding that the settlers of English descent were so impoverished that they

[1] Grace's *Annals*, pp. 133-4. [2] Gilbert's *Viceroys*, p. 192.

could scarcely live, "par grevance de ditz enemys (the Irish) dune part et excesse doffice de ministres dautre part." Impressed either by justice or expediency—probably the latter—Edward III. favourably received the Prior of Kilmainham and Thomas De Wogan, who were the bearers of this petition, revoked his letter of the previous July, and even dismissed some of the officials, amongst them two judges of the Common Pleas.[1]

The good relations established between Edward and the Anglo-Irish did not last long. In preparation for his wars in France he had summoned Desmond, Kildare, and many others to meet him at Portsmouth (1344) with some men-at-arms and hoblers, who were to receive the King's pay while at war; the Anglo-Irish neglected the summons,[2] and, irritated by their refusal, Edward appointed Sir Ralph Ufford his Irish Viceroy, and bade him deal sternly with these Anglo-Irish lords. Ufford was well fitted for such work—a man unjust and greedy of gain, doing everything by force, giving justice to none, robbing rich and poor; and the chronicles of the time mention that all the time he was in Ireland it rained, that when he died (1346) it was a cause of joy to all men, and that immediately the weather became fine.[3] It was said that his harsh measures were prompted by his wife, the widow of the murdered Earl of Ulster,[4] who no doubt did not love the Irish, whether of Irish or English descent; but whatever the cause or whoever the instigator, his measures were harsh and stern, and the memory of them was bitter. He called a parliament at Dublin, which Desmond did not attend, and taking this as sufficient excuse he marched south (1345), ravaged the Earl's lands, seized his castles in Kerry hanged his seneschal (Sir John Cotterell) and the warders of his castles (Power and Grant),[5] deprived of their possessions all those who had previously gone bail for him; and

[1] Grace's *Annals*, pp. 134-5.

[2] *Ibid.* p. 136. They must not have *altogether* refused, for there were 6000 Irish footmen in Edward's army at Crecy, but evidently they did not do *all* that was expected of them.

[3] *Ibid.* pp. 137-41.

[4] Gilbert's *Viceroys*, pp. 198-202.

[5] Clynn's *Annals*.

by treachery he captured the Earl of Kildare and cast him into prison in Dublin. When Ufford died, his widow had to carry away his remains secretly to England, fearing that the rage of the populace might be directed against his dead body. A milder type of Viceroy—Sir John Morris—was appointed, the Earl of Kildare's aid was sought and obtained by Edward III., and he distinguished himself so much at the siege of Calais that he was knighted by the King.[1]

These harsh measures of various viceroys and the harsh decrees of English kings irritated the Anglo-Irish lords and alienated their sympathies from England; the milder measures which followed they took as a proof of English weakness and of their own power; the petty exactions and oppressions of English-born officials disgusted them; and, turning from England, they abandoned English ways and became more Irish than the Irish themselves. They spoke the language of the Irish, adopted their manners and habits, practised their law, fostered their children and stood gossips or sponsors; and when they went into battle it was Irish war-cries that were on their lips.[2] Sir John Davies attributes this transformation to the desire of these lords to acquire wealth and power, which, especially by coyne and livery, they could do under Irish but not under English law, and this was no doubt a powerful operating cause, and quite in accordance with the traditional cupidity of their ancestors. But he ignores another cause which cannot be lost sight of and was potent in its effects—it is the attractive and absorbing power of the Irish themselves. The Irishman has been often sketched and often with no friendly hand. Rash in word, generous in deed, impulsive, warm-hearted, sympathetic, his scanty purse open to the needy, his cottage to the wanderer and the outcast, coveting no man's goods, recklessly prodigal of his own, brave in battle, chivalrous to a foe, faithful to a friend—such a character could not but win the esteem of

[1] Gilbert's *Viceroys*, pp. 202-3.

[2] Kildare's war-cry was "Crom aboo," from his castle at Croom; Desmond's was "Shannet aboo"; Butler's was "Butler aboo" (Harris's *Ware*, vol. ii. p. 163).

the mail-clad warrior, who fought so often, both with and against him, and who had seen his qualities so often displayed. But when the hush of peace had succeeded to the clash of arms, when the lord had laid his battle harness aside and sat in the hall of his feudal castle, surrounded by his Irish friends —vassals and chiefs—the attractive influence of the Irish character was more potent still. He was charmed with the song and story in the Irish tongue; the ready wit, the harmless repartee made the hours pass by upon rapid wings. And when the harper struck the chords of his harp with that skill for which the Irish harper was so famed, when he sang of war and battles and love, of soldier's bravery and chieftain's skill, when the notes that swelled loud with victory again sank into a plaintive moan, as he sang a dirge for those who had fallen, and the eyes that brightened and flashed became dimmed with tears, then that alien lord, touched, softened, fascinated, even in spite of himself, was glad to call these people his countrymen, and proud if he could be called their chief. The conversion of many a stern warrior from English to Irish ways was due to such subtle influences as these.

The years that succeeded the death of Ufford were not particularly eventful, though there were disturbances and wars. O'Carroll was able to defeat the English (1346), and drove them all, or nearly all, out of Ely O'Carroll;[1] the same year the Viceroy, Bermingham, and the Earl of Kildare joined in making war on the O'Mores; the following year Nenagh was plundered by the Irish who in Leinster rose everywhere against the English; O'Mellaghlin was defeated by the English (1349); a few years later the English of Dublin were defeated (1358) by the O'Mores, with the loss of 240 men; and so weak had the English colony become that Black Rent, which already had been paid to MacMurrogh, was now paid to one of the O'Tooles to defend the English possessions round Tallaght.[2] The evils caused by these wars must have been great; nor must we

[1] Clynn's *Annals*.

[2] Grace's and Clynn's *Annals*; Gilbert's *Viceroys*, pp. 204-6.

forget the exactions of the officials,[1] who, to carry on the war, took the people's cattle, sheep, and provisions without even paying for them, all except the Viceroy, Rokeby, who declared that he would eat off wood and pay in gold.[2] To add to all these evils there was bad weather, a mortality among animals, and, worst of all, a terrible pestilence, which swept away so many persons that the land was left untilled.[3] The pestilence reached its height in 1348, and in that year a monk at Kilkenny, seeing the dead around him on every side, and the living struck down so fast, in the midst of death and sickness and lamentation, breathing an atmosphere tainted with pestilence, and wondering if even one of the human race would survive, sat down in his convent to tell and write what he saw. "That plague deprived villages and towns of every human inhabitant, so that scarcely one was left alive in them; those who touched the dead or dying immediately sickened, and the penitent and the confessor were carried together to the grave. Through fear and horror men hardly dared to perform the works of piety and mercy, to visit the sick and bury the dead. Many died from boils and abscesses and pustules in their shins or under their armpits, others died from spitting of blood, and others from pain in the head were turned into madmen."[4]

In 1355 the Earl of Desmond had grown to be such a favourite with Edward III. that he appointed him Viceroy for life; but this was not for long, for he died in the early

[1] Gilbert's *Viceroys*, p. 212. [2] Grace's *Annals*, p. 149.

[3] *Ibid.* p. 143; Clynn's *Annals*.

[4] Friar Clynn seems to have had a presentiment that he too would fall a victim to the plague ("inter mortuos mortem expectans"), and if perchance any one was left alive who might continue these *Annals*, he left some parchment for the purpose. It was not continued past the end of 1348, and the scribe adds that it appears the author died, as he expected. Clynn's words are worth giving: "Videns haec multa mala et mundum, totum quasi in maligno positum, inter mortuos mortem expectans donec veniat, sicut veraciter audivi et examinavi sic in scripturam redegi, et ne scriptura cum scriptore pereat et opus simul cum operario deficiat, dimitto pergamenam pro opere continuando, si forte in futuro homo superstes remaneat, an aliquis de genere Adae hanc pestilenciam possit evadere et opus continuare inceptam."

part of the next year. His successors were Rokeby and St. Amand, then the Earl of Ormond (1359), and in the next year the Earl of Kildare. But the English colony was shrinking in extent day by day; the power of England in Ireland was small, and, extinguished in the other three provinces, in Leinster also it seemed doomed to speedy extinction.

CHAPTER XXII

The Statute of Kilkenny

THERE is a tide in the affairs of nations as of men which it is wisdom to take at the flood. These favourable moments occur but seldom, and, if allowed to pass, so much the worse for the nation concerned, for they pass never to return. And in 1360 a favourable moment had arrived to bring the Irish of all classes together, to abolish strife and establish peace, with one government and one system of law. A king sat on the English throne the lustre of whose achievements far outshone those of any king since the Conqueror. With Scotland he was at peace; the Treaty of Bretigny (1359)[1] had enlarged his continental possessions as it had ended his war with France; and at home none of his nobles, nor any combination of them, would dare to measure swords with the hero who had humbled the chivalry of France and had led into his capital a captive French king. Peace was everywhere except in Ireland, and if Edward had turned his steps to that country at the head of those veterans whom he had so often led to victory, he would have found it easy to establish peace in Ireland; not that peace which would come from empty forms of submission, such as was tendered to Henry II. and John, given with reluctance and extorted by fear, but a peace founded on the recognition of ancient rights, and which, established with just and equal laws, would be destined to endure. He had sometimes wished that the Irish would be admitted to the ranks of his subjects, and be entitled, as such, to the protection of English law, but each time the Anglo-Irish lords stood in the way. But he could have now

[1] Hume's *History of England.*

done what hitherto had not been done, for these lords were powerless to resist him. Their hatred and jealousy of one another was notorious; they were not likely to combine for any purpose in rebellion against an English king, least of all against the hero of Crecy and Poictiers. Secured in the possession of the lands they held, admitted to the rights of English subjects, the native Irish would have hailed him as a deliverer, and not only in Leinster, but in the other provinces as well, they would have hastened to take advantage of his offer. A few chiefs here and there would, perhaps, have held aloof and talked much of their national independence, which their own folly and factious spirit had made it impossible to defend, but the greater number would have quietly, perhaps even gratefully, submitted. If Edward III. had done this, if he had deprived the Anglo-Irish lords of powers which they never should have got, and reduced them to the level of subjects, if he had suppressed tumults and established peace, if he had curbed the oppressor and thrown the shield of law and justice over the oppressed, his memory would be held in honour in Ireland, and he would have earned a glory before which that of Crecy and Poictiers would have grown dim. But he did not realize the advantage of a contented Ireland—his ambition was for military glory; Ireland, it was said, was a bad country to make war in, and instead of going there himself he sent his third son, Lionel, Duke of Clarence, appointed him Viceroy, and gave him unlimited powers.

This young man was married to Elizabeth De Burgo, and it is thought that this fact explains much of his conduct in Ireland. His wife was a daughter of that Earl of Ulster who had been murdered in 1333. She was then but a year old and was taken to England, where she had since lived. Of her father's tragic death she had often been reminded by her mother,[1] who hated the Irish; the mother's feelings had been communicated to the daughter, who in turn inspired her husband with

[1] It will be remembered she was married to Sir Ralph Ufford, one of the most unpopular of the Viceroys.

the same antipathy and hate.[1] Lionel landed at Dublin (1361) with an army of 1500 men—knights, esquires, and archers on horseback, drawn from Lancashire, Staffordshire, Worcestershire, and Shropshire, in which commands were held by Lord Stafford, Sir John Carew, Sir William Windsor, and the Earl of Ormond, Lionel himself being in supreme command.[2] Edward III. had declared that Ireland was almost lost, and placed much of the blame on the absentees who lived in England and took no measures to defend their lands in Ireland, and he demanded subsidies from them, which they gave to the extent of two years' revenue out of their Irish lands.[3] Lionel first marched against the O'Byrnes of Wicklow, and such was his distrust and even hatred of the Irish that he issued a proclamation prohibiting any one of Irish birth, whether of English descent or not, from coming near his army.[4] But the O'Byrnes came without asking his leave, and, perhaps under cover of night, attacked and killed one hundred of the English.[5] Returning to Dublin, Lionel soon changed his quarters to Carlow, transferred the exchequer there, and granted £500 to build a wall round the town. But though his army was large and well equipped, and the whole revenue of the country had been placed at his disposal, he was able to effect but little, and captured but a few places along the east coast of Ulster.[6] The O'Byrnes remained unpunished for the slaughter of one hundred English soldiers; the O'Connors of Connaught wasted the English possessions in Meath and King's County, and burned the churches of Kilkenny (1362);[7] and MacMurrogh was so powerful that he drove the English baron, Carew, out of the district of Idrone (1366).[8] One of the objects Lionel had in coming to Ireland was to recover his wife's estates in Ulster and Connaught, but this object he was

[1] The Duchess of Clarence died in Ireland.

[2] Davies' *Historical Tracts*, pp. 24-25; Grace's *Annals*, p. 153.

[3] Grace's *Annals*, pp. 152-3.

[4] *Ibid.*

[5] Campion's *History of Ireland*. Campion says no man "wisted" how it was done.

[6] Gilbert's *Viceroys*, p. 220.

[7] *Annals of Clonmacnoise.*

[8] Dowling's *Annals.*

unable to attain. The Burkes fought often among themselves, and, especially in 1366, there were great dissensions among them,[1] and perhaps Lionel hoped much from these quarrels; but if so he hoped in vain, for the Burkes were quite ready to fight among themselves and equally ready to unite against him; and, piqued and crestfallen, he was unable to recover those lands which by right belonged to his wife, and which had been usurped by her rebellious kindred. In this frame of mind he summoned a parliament at Kilkenny, and had enacted that well-known Statute about which so much has been written.

The Statute of Kilkenny has been praised by Davies, who declares that it, coupled with the "*presence* of the Lord Lionel," restored the English government among the English colonists, made a notable alteration in the state and manners of the people, and that this improvement lasted till the Wars of the Roses.[2] But he gives no facts in support of this statement, nor could he, for the English colony did not get strong but weak, and the Statute of Kilkenny was not observed even by those for whom it was specially intended—the Irish of English descent. A truer description of the Statute is "that it was no more than a peevish and revengeful expression of the resentment Duke Lionel felt for the opposition he had met with and the loss of those lands he had come over to claim."[3] Clarence was disappointed and angry: he had not recovered his lands as he thought he would, he had met with more opposition from the native Irish than he expected, he was not enthusiastically supported by the Anglo-Irish, he was equally displeased with both, and he had this Statute passed, the object of which could be none other than to keep them in perpetual antagonism.

The Irish who lived in the provinces outside Leinster were not affected by this enactment; they did not feel its provisions

[1] *Four Masters*; *Statute of Kilkenny* (Hardiman's Introduction).

[2] *Historical Tracts*, pp. 172-9. Davies was a good deal of a courtier, and seems to have thought that a prince, because he was a prince, was armed with a magician's wand.

[3] Hardiman's *Statute of Kilkenny* (Introduction), quotation from De Lolme.

nor recognize them; but the natives who lived in Leinster, in the districts where the English king's writ could be enforced —the Pale,[1] as it began soon to be called—and amid the English and Anglo-Irish who were subjects of England,—on these the law was specially severe. They were not English subjects, they were not recognized as such in the Statute; and the spirit in which it regarded them is shown in the Preamble, where they were spoken of as Irish *enemies*, and a lament is uttered that these Irish enemies are raised up and exalted "contrary to reason." Parliamentary and royal sanction was thus given to the language and acts of the Anglo-Irish lords, who regarded the native Irish as enemies—mere Irish, whom it was no crime to kill, even in times of peace.[2] These natives lived among the English settlers: they had business and social relations with them: with some they were allied by ties of kindred, and when the English subject was prohibited from having any business transactions with them, and punished if he had, both English colonist and Irish native were aggrieved. The practice had grown for the settlers to stand sponsors or gossips for the Irish children, to have their own children fostered or nursed among them, and intermarriages between the two races were common; but all these were specifically prohibited as crimes of the greatest magnitude, and the perpetrators of them pronounced to be traitors to "our lord the King." It was prohibited to allow the Irish to graze[3] the lands of the settlers; it was prohibited to sell them either horses or armour in time of peace or victuals in time of war—a prohibition intelligible enough, for if the Irish adopted the use of armour they would be a better match for their opponents,

[1] The term Pale was not used till late in the fourteenth century, the name used in English Acts of Parliament being March or Border (*Statute of Kilkenny*, Hardiman's Introduction).

[2] Davies' *Historical Tracts*, pp. 83 *et seq.*

[3] The term used by Davies for this grazing was *Creaght*, which had formerly been applied to those who were shepherds in time of peace and who drove away the prey in time of war. In Donegal they were armed with clubs and meadogs (knives) (Hardiman's notes, *Statute of Kilkenny*, pp. 41-43).

and would suffer fewer defeats. The distinctive Irish dress[1] —the mantle, the *bared* or cap, and the trowse—was also interdicted under pain of forfeiting lands and tenements, if the party had such; and liberty, if he had not. The same prohibition, with the same penalty attached, was directed against having an Irish name, riding without a saddle, as the Irish did, and speaking the Irish tongue. And the inhabitants of the Pale were prohibited from using "the plays which men call hurlings with great sticks and a ball upon the ground," but were told instead to accustom themselves to draw the bow and throw the lance and such "gentlemanlike games."[2] The bards and minstrels and story-tellers the English government held in special abhorrence. They seemed to regard them as spies who, in the interest of their own countrymen, came among the English and Anglo-Irish to discover their intentions and their plans. The capacity of the Irish bards to lampoon was well known, so also was the skill of the harper; and the English feared the influence of these on their Anglo-Irish fellow-subjects, and dreaded that their stories and their songs would seduce them from English and attract them to Irish ways. And to prevent this it was enacted that pipers, story-tellers, rhymers and other such should not come among the English, nor should the English receive them or make them gifts, and whoever did so should be attainted and imprisoned. Of all these enactments none was more vexatious than that prohibiting the Irish language, and this not only to the Irish living within the Pale, but to many of English descent as well, who had lived so long in Ireland, and mixed so much with the natives, that they knew the Irish language and knew no other tongue.

These legislators at Kilkenny had enlarged conceptions as to the limits of their powers, and not content with legislating on purely temporal matters they passed into the regions of the

[1] In the case of the poor the *mantle* was of frieze, in the upper classes it was of fine cloth, bordered with a woollen or silken fringe; the *bared* was probably of similar material—it was not a *hat* but a *cap*; the trowse was *breeches and stockings joined together* in one piece and was tight-fitting (Harris's *Ware*, vol. ii. pp. 174-8).

[2] Chap. 6.

spiritual and stepped between the Creator and His creature. The proper ministers of the Gospel in the Pale were those who understood the people and whom the people could understand, and it ought to have been a matter for the Church authority alone to say who these ministers were to be, and what their qualifications, and not for the Parliament, whose domain of activity belonged to the State and to affairs of State. Yet this Parliament decreed that it was not allowable to confer a benefice on any one who did not use the English tongue, nor could a native, unless he was of English descent, be admitted to any collegiate or cathedral church in the Pale by provision, collation or presentation of any person, nor to any benefice; and if so admitted, the appointment was cancelled and the place held void. Neither could any religious Order receive any "mere Irishman" into its community.[1] To deprive the Irish-speaking people of ministers of the Gospel of their own race and tongue, whom alone they could understand, was to starve their souls and put obstacles before them on their road to heaven; and the strangest thing is that such legislation should be acquiesced in by three archbishops and five bishops, and that they should even issue a sentence of excommunication against all those who should violate these penal decrees. How they reconciled this action with their duty it is difficult to see. Perhaps as churchmen they were of the character of that English cardinal who had to lament in his old age that he had been more faithful to his prince than to his God.[2]

But all the provisions of the Statute of Kilkenny were not of this penal character. They were restrictions of individual liberty, as all laws are, but some of them were obviously framed for the common good, and if enforced and obeyed, the com-

[1] Hardiman (*Statute of Kilkenny*, p. 46) has justly stigmatized this enactment as the most severe of all. It could not, however, be carried out, for there was soon a scarcity of clergy within the Pale and Irish priests had to be admitted.

[2] Their names indicate that, for the most part, they were English—Minot, John of Oxford, Young, Le Reve, De Swafham; but better might be expected from O'Carroll (Cashel), O'Connor (Killaloe), and O'Grady (Tuam)—these are Irish names (Ware's *Bishops*).

munity would gain instead of suffer. In the very first chapter of the Statute it was laid down that the rights and privileges and immunities of the Church were to be faithfully maintained, tithes were to be paid, and with their levying or collection no layman was to interfere. Whoever it excommunicated was to be shunned by all, and the civil power was to co-operate in enforcing its decrees. Treaties and agreements between English subjects were to be faithfully observed, and if broken, the offender was liable to forfeiture of liberty and lands. Nor were malefactors to be harboured under a similar penalty; and if any one were to enfeoff another with his lands, so that he might escape his legal obligations, or, perhaps, commit a crime with impunity, the enfeoffment in such cases was not to stand and the law was to be enforced, and the lands attempted to be thus rendered free from liability were to be seized and, if necessary, confiscated. Against grasping and corrupt officials there was a special enactment, and neither a magistrate could receive bribes from a litigant nor could a warden or constable extort money from his prisoner. Nor were there any more salutary enactments than those which had reference to the great lords and tended to put limits to their turbulence and rapacity. They were not to keep kerns or hoblers[1] for the purpose of preying upon the King's subjects, though they might have some within their own territory, and for the purpose of guarding and defending it. But if any of these kerns or hoblers took from the King's subjects victuals or any other goods, the hue and cry was to be raised after them, and they were to be treated by all as common robbers, to be attacked and resisted by all, and, if they effected their escape, their lord was to be held accountable and might be put in judgment of life and members and his lands forfeited.

One of the most fruitful sources of strife was the power exercised by these nobles to make peace or war as they pleased —a power which never seems to have been founded on any legal right and was now taken away. Henceforth there was to be one peace and one war, nor was war ever to be declared except

[1] The hoblers were light-armed cavalry; kerns were infantry.

after consultation between the King and Parliament, and then the war was to be continued against the Irish until they were "finally destroyed."[1] To obtain supplies for such wars there were to be four "wardens of the peace" appointed in each county, who were to assess the amount of subsidy each individual subject was to give, and to review the men-at-arms, hoblers and footmen who were to be enrolled. Finally, these nobles were to be answerable for their own retainers to this extent that if they were notified of any crimes committed by them, they were bound to have them arrested and lodged in the next jail, and, failing to do this after due notice being given them, the lord was to be assessed himself and made amenable for whatever crime or crimes his retainer had committed.

Such was the Statute of Kilkenny, made up of some useful but of many mischievous provisions. Conceived in hatred, the outcome of failure and disappointment, it sought to bring together English and Anglo-Irish, to the exclusion of the native Irish, and to have the Anglo-Irish and the native Irish in perpetual conflict. But it was barren of useful results, and its provisions were not, indeed could not be, fully enforced. Within a short time it was necessary to allow priests who spoke Irish into the Pale, to minister to the Irish-speaking people there; there were still intermarriages between the Irish and Anglo-Irish; and within twenty years it was necessary to dispense the Earl of Desmond from one of its provisions, for he had sent his son to be fostered at the palace of O'Brien of Thomond.[2]

[1] Chap. 10.

[2] This dispensation was given by Richard II., and bears date 8th December 1388.

CHAPTER XXIII

A Heroic Leinster Chief

SINCE the days of Strongbow the scourge of the native Irish was the rapacity and insolence of the Anglo-Irish lords. They seized their lands, they hunted them into bogs and mountains, they harassed them with continued war, they denied them justice or law, and in every case frustrated the designs of the English Government to admit them to the status of English subjects. These lords acted ostensibly in the interests of England, but in reality in their own interest; much of what they did was unknown in England, and much of what they did when it was known was condemned.[1] And the Irish, or at least some of them, entertained the belief that if the English king knew the exact state of things in Ireland, he would restrain these lords from perpetrating so much injustice and would protect the native Irish from their rapacity. To such as these the Statute of Kilkenny, and the circumstances in which it was passed into law, must have come as a painful surprise. For the Parliament of Kilkenny was called together by the son of Edward III., acting in his father's name and armed with his father's power, and its enactments were stamped with his approval. And even the blindest could not but see that towards the native Irish the spirit of that famous Statute was one of hatred and contempt. When they were described by an Act of Parliament as aliens and enemies, outcasts in their own land, with whom it was high treason even to associate, it was time for the Irish chiefs to take alarm and to lay aside their mutual rivalries and jealousies—that is, if they wished to

[1] This was so in the case of De Burgo, condemned by Henry III. (1241).

save themselves and their people from extermination. And it was no doubt the recognition of mutual and impending danger that brought O'Connor of Connaught and O'Brien of Thomond together. Against their united forces the Earl of Desmond marched (1370), but on the banks of the river Mague, in Limerick, he was defeated with heavy loss, many of his followers were slain, and he himself was taken prisoner.[1] The conquerors marched on Limerick, and that city, so long the stronghold of English power in that quarter, fell into their hands. MacNamara was appointed Warden of the city, but some one acting in the English interest treacherously murdered him,[2] and the city soon reverted to the English.

Such rapid and decisive success should have urged the Irish to continue united, and they might have defeated Ormond as easily as they had defeated Desmond. But these alliances were as quickly dissolved as they were formed; they were ever lacking in permanence or cohesion; O'Connor went back to Connaught, nor do we find these two chiefs again acting in concert. And one of the MacNamaras deserted the O'Briens, became the King's liege subject, and was paid to make war on his countrymen.[3] The power of Thomond was further weakened by quarrels among the O'Briens themselves, for there were two rivals for the headship of the province, and their strife was long and bitter. The cause of one of them—Turlogh—was espoused by the Burkes of Connaught, who marched with an army into Thomond and compelled Brian O'Brien, who had attained to temporary pre-eminence, to fly from the province. But these same Burkes were soon defeated by the MacNamaras, whose territory they had invaded, and who, almost unaided, were strong enough to drive them back. This victory caused Burke's nominee to lose the headship of Thomond. His rival, Brian, who was married to MacNamara's daughter, made peace

[1] Grace's *Annals*; Leland, vol. i. pp. 323-4. Leland erroneously places the battlefield in Mayo (at the Monastery).

[2] *Annals of the Four Masters.*

[3] Grace's *Annals*, pp. 155-6. He had an order for 50 marks, May 7, 1374.

with Burke and gave him his daughter in marriage, and, strengthened by these alliances, assumed the reins of power. And a few years later (1380), with Burke as his ally, he compelled some of the Munster English to pay him tribute.[1] For years there was peace in Thomond. The O'Briens ceased quarrelling; the Burkes were their allies; and Desmond was on such friendly terms that one of his sons was fostered at O'Brien's palace. Once (in 1409) there was a quarrel between two rivals for the chieftaincy;[2] Connor O'Brien was dethroned and had to fly to Connaught, but next year he returned and was strong enough to recover his inheritance, and for the remainder of his reign of nearly twenty years there was peace in Thomond.

During these years the state of Connaught was deplorable. Of the royal race of O'Connor there were still many members, and this is the same as to say there was still constant strife. No two members of the family could agree, or, if they did for the moment agree, it was probably to make war upon another of their race and name. Active, energetic, sometimes with military capacity, always brave, they wasted their energies and squandered their talents in fratricidal contests. The patrimony of their house was diminished in extent, its substance was in alien hands, only the shadow of what it was remained, but over the shadow the quarrels and contests were without number and without end. The lessons of history, the memory of what they once were and of what they had lost, the happiness of their own people, the miseries they had so often endured by war—these things appealed to them in vain. They would establish no law, they would recognize no rule which could regulate a peaceful and orderly succession to the headship of their clan; and if such a law was ever established it was quickly broken through. Each prince felt that he and none other was qualified to be chief, and he would submit to another only as long as he was powerless to resist. The claims of age, the binding force of family compacts he despised, acknowledged no supremacy except that of superior force; and as soon as he could get

[1] White's *History of Clare*, pp. 143-6. [2] *Four Masters.*

together sufficient followers to assert himself, he was prepared to attack the ruling chief and hurl him from the seat of power; and he was prepared to accept any aid and to enter into any arrangement, however base. The hardships endured by his own clansmen gave him no trouble; he wasted their lives and destroyed their property without compunction, for he knew nothing of that patriotism which involves the effacement of self and is more concerned for the advancement of the common good. It is, indeed, true that other provinces of Ireland suffered much from the rivalries and jealousies of their chiefs, but in none of them, filled with tumults as they were, can a parallel be found for Connaught, cursed for centuries by these contests of the O'Connors.

Into these contests the other chiefs of Connaught—the MacDermots, the Burkes and others—were drawn, and the chronicles of the period can repeat, year after year, with monotonous iteration, that there were wars in Connaught. On the death of Hugh O'Connor (1368) there was the usual turmoil, and instead of the new chief Roderick continuing to support and follow up the advantage gained by the defeat of the Earl of Desmond, he was more concerned to wreak vengeance on a member of his own family. By treachery he captured Tadhg O'Connor and gave him over to Domhnall O'Connor of Sligo, and the unfortunate prisoner was instantly put to death.[1] A little later (1375) Roderick O'Connor was at war with O'Kelly of Hy-Many, but this time he was blameless, for O'Kelly was aided by the Burkes, and O'Connor was acting in his own defence. Two years later the same coalition attacked him, but again Roderick was successful, and at Roscommon his assailants were overthrown, both the O'Kellys and the Burkes losing many of their chiefs.[2] That same year some quarrel arose between O'Connor and MacDermot; O'Connor entered Moylurg, wasted and spoiled it, killed some of the inhabitants, burned their buildings,

[1] *O'Conors of Connaught*, p. 149. It is not said what crime he had committed—perhaps that of aspiring to be chief.

[2] *Ibid.*

destroyed their corn and carried off their cattle, and when he had thus satisfied his appetite for war, he made peace with MacDermot, and even compensated him for the injuries done him.[1] Perhaps it was easy to satisfy the demands of the chief, but it could not be easy to compensate the unfortunate people whose breadwinners had been slaughtered and whose homes and fields had been laid waste.

At the death of Roderick (1384), another war of succession arose between two members of the O'Connor family, each named Turlogh. Each was powerful and persistent, each had allies;[2] and the prospect seemed to be a war, long, bitter and indecisive, in which the unfortunate province would be still further wasted and destroyed. A conference was arranged, and, after much deliberation, it was agreed by the contending parties, and by their allies on each side, that the inheritance of the O'Connors was to be divided. Turlogh Roe, or the Red, was to be head of the O'Connors of Sligo, while his rival, Turlogh Don, or the Brown, was to be head of the O'Connors of Roscommon. This arrangement abolished for ever the old system of one King of Connaught as head and chief of all the O'Connors of the province; but in the circumstances it seemed the best to be done, and it was hoped that each, satisfied with the possessions he had got, would keep the peace. The hope was vain. Both were dissatisfied; each thought he should be supreme, and to sustain his pretensions had recourse to arms, with the result that it is written in the Annals for 1384 that there was universal war in Connaught.[3] The same entry could be made in many succeeding years, for the wars between O'Connor Don and O'Connor Roe were of yearly occurrence. They ceased from war when their strength was exhausted, they resumed hostilities when their strength had been renewed, and in 1392-6-7-8[4] there was war between them, until finally (1406) O'Connor Don was treacherously inveigled

[1] *Annals of Clonmacnoise.*

[2] *O'Conors*, p. 150. On one side were the O'Kellys, Burkes, and MacDonoghs; on the other, the MacDermots.

[3] *Annals of Loch Cé*; *Four Masters.* [4] *Four Masters.*

into the house of one of the Burkes, the ally and confederate of O'Connor Roe, and there he was put to death by his rival.[1] In the meantime that same O'Connor Don, in the hope of humiliating his rival and obtaining English aid for that purpose, had gone to Waterford (1395) and made his submission to Richard II. In the church of the Friars Minors in that city, Turlogh, Burke, and Bermingham went through the form of submission ; and Turlogh, "removing his mantle, hood, girdle and dagger, on bended knees at the feet of the King promised to be faithful to the English king, to attend his Parliament, to do what a good and faithful liegeman ought and is bound to do to his natural liege lord." Then he kissed the Gospels and took the oath, and he and Burke and Bermingham were soon created knights on board the ship *Trinity*, in the port of Waterford, where golden spurs were put on their heels and a sword given them by Richard to be honestly used.[2]

The murder of O'Connor Don did not end the war between the two branches of the O'Connor family. His successor, Cathal, sought and obtained the aid of MacWilliam Burke, O'Connor Roe had the aid of MacDermot, and for years a desultory war, ruinous to the people but indecisive in its results, was carried on, and this at a time when unity and combination among the O'Connors would have effected much, not only for Connaught but for Ireland. Concurrently with these wars between the O'Connors there were other quarrels and wars between the other Connaught chiefs. The O'Rorkes and O'Reillys were at war (1390), so also were the MacRannells and O'Rorkes in the same year ; the MacDermots were quarrelling among themselves (1393),[3] and in these contests the other chiefs were generally engaged, on one side or the other—the O'Kellys of Hy-Many, the MacDonoghs of Tirerill, and the Burkes—all of whom made war with little justification and insufficient cause,

[1] *O'Conors of Connaught*, p. 156.

[2] *Ibid.* pp. 154-6. O'Connor Don on this occasion claimed to have power to act for a great many of the Connaught chiefs—MacDonogh, O'Dowd, O'Hara, O'Gara, MacDermot, O'Rorke and others.

[3] *Annals of Loch Cé.*

made treaties and broke them, and changed sides according as they were swayed by passion or caprice. What the province suffered during these years we can judge from an entry in the *Annals of Loch Cé* (1398), where it is stated that Burke and O'Connor Roe entered Tirerill with their forces and that "the entire country was destroyed by them, both grass and corn, lake (the islands and buildings of the lakes) and church, forts, fastnesses and strongholds."

While Connaught was thus desolated every year by the contests of factious chiefs, the state of Ulster was one of comparative calm, for though Tirconnell and Tirowen sometimes quarrelled, yet there were sometimes intervals, and long intervals, of peace. In neither province was the succession fixed, and this sometimes led to quarrels; but when a chief had asserted his right to rule, he was left undisturbed within his own territory by his own people, except in rare cases, and only at his death was there a renewal of the combat. There was a war of succession among the O'Donnells (1380); the same year O'Donnell was defeated by O'Neill, and, taking advantage of their quarrels, the Viceroy, Mortimer, entered Ulster, penetrated into Tirowen and Tirconnell, and destroyed the fortress of Castlefin in Donegal and another fortress in Tirowen.[1] But the effect of his raid was not permanent, nor did it teach a lesson either to O'Neill or O'Donnell, for at intervals the combat was renewed between them. In 1395 O'Donnell made war on O'Neill and defeated him; two years later that same vigorous chief ransacked and plundered the buildings on the islands of Lough Erne and wasted the district of Carbury in Sligo; the next year (1398) he was again at war with O'Neill; two years subsequently O'Neill invaded Tirconnell and destroyed much of the corn there, and, perhaps in retaliation, the war was resumed in the following year.[2] But during these years the power of O'Neill had grown, and instead of directing his whole energies to the subjugation of O'Donnell, which, with a prince of so much energy, was no easy matter,

[1] *Four Masters*; *Annals of Clonmacnoise*; Gilbert's *Viceroys*, p. 245.
[2] *Four Masters*, at these dates.

THE FORTRESS OF CARRICKFERGUS

AFTER W. H. BARTLETT

he turned his attention to the remaining English settlers in Ulster, defeated those of Down, crushed the Savages and their allies in the south of Antrim [1] (1383), and burned the fortress of Carrickfergus, defeated the English of Dundalk (1392), and wrung submission and tribute from that city. He had meanwhile asserted his superiority over the Irish chiefs of the province, and in 1398, with the exception of Tirconnell, all Ulster, both Irish and English, were compelled to acknowledge him as their chief.[2]

At the opening of the fifteenth century, English power, outside of Leinster and Meath, had almost ceased to exist. After his submission to Richard II. at Waterford, Burke had been appointed Lord Deputy of Connaught,[3] but it would be hard to recognize an English subject in the new official, for he spoke Irish and no other tongue; and when he made his submission to Richard an interpreter had to be employed.[4] In defiance of the Statute of Kilkenny he had intermarried with the Irish, joined in their quarrels, and made war on them and on members of his own family, without any authority from England. Nor did he, after his appointment as Lord Deputy (1403), re-establish English influence in Connaught, for it is probable that had he tried he would have been unable, and there is no evidence that he even tried. In the south the Earl of Desmond, after his defeat in 1370, remained in salutary dread of the O'Briens, and did not again measure swords with them. Neither did he take advantage of the occasional quarrels between his neighbours—the MacCarthys in the east or the Sullivans in the south—and when he died (1399) it was with the reputation of being a scholar and a poet, rather than a warrior or statesman.[5] And his successor, far from quarrelling

[1] Hugh O'Neill and *Ravelin* Savage met in a charge of cavalry and killed each other (*Four Masters*).

[2] *Four Masters.*

[3] Hardiman's *History of Galway*, p. 63. He was appointed on the 5th December 1403, at the fee of 80 marks.

[4] *O'Conors of Connaught*, pp. 155-6. The interpreter was the Earl of Ormond, who knew both Irish and English, or rather Norman-French.

[5] *Annals of Clonmacnoise*; *Four Masters.*

with the Irish chiefs, quarrelled only with the Earl of Ormond ; and it was after making a raid into his territory that he was drowned (1400) while crossing the river Suir.[1] It was Leinster that became the centre of historical interest during these years. Even there English power was on the wane ; the district where the King's writ held good, the Pale, with its shifting boundaries and varying extent, was gradually being contracted in its limits ; and in the very midst of the province an Iri. chieftain had arisen whose patience and perseverance and military skill recall the memory of Brian Boru, a chieftain against whom the whole forces of England had been repeatedly hurled, and as often flung backward in defeat. This chieftain's name was Art MacMurrogh.

When Diarmuid MacMurrogh died (1171) he left no legitimate male descendant, and his castles and lands, and, as far as he could, his authority over Leinster he bequeathed to his daughter Eva and her husband, Strongbow. But a female ruler was unknown among the Irish chiefs ; the Leinster clans were not disposed to acknowledge the supremacy of Diarmuid's daughter, still less that of her husband, a foreign noble, who had made war upon them and robbed many of them of their possessions, and instead, they set up as King of Leinster an illegitimate son of the late king. This prince was named Domhnall, and from being fostered at Kilcavan, near Gorey, in Wexford, he was called Domhnall Kavanagh. His talents were considerable, and his physical endowments were such that he was called Domhnall the Handsome. Attracted by these qualities of mind and body, his illegitimacy was forgotten, and he was raised by the native chiefs to the position of King of Leinster. He was amongst those who submitted to Henry II., and (in 1175) he was killed in battle with the O'Nolans. In his family the dignity of King of Leinster was maintained, but those kings for over a century disappear from history, and it is not until 1283 that we hear of a Murtagh MacMurrogh and his son Art, who lost their heads at Arklow. A little later, another of these princes displayed his standard within

[1] Meehan's *History of the Geraldines*, p. 41.

sight of Dublin, but was defeated by Butler (1316), and a few years subsequent to this date (1327) Domhnall Mac Art MacMurrogh was taken prisoner by the English and confined in Dublin Castle, from which, by the aid of Adam Nangle, he soon escaped. Embittered by his imprisonment, he made ceaseless and not unsuccessful war upon the English colonists, and in a few years he had conquered almost all Carlow and Wexford ; and so dreaded was his successor Maurice, and so powerful, that the English Government paid him 80 marks a year (1335) not to molest their possessions,[1] and willingly recognized him as The MacMurrogh, that is, as the lawful chief of the Leinster Irish. The rightful successor of Maurice was Diarmuid MacMurrogh, but he was taken prisoner by the English and kept in confinement till his death (1369), and in consequence Art MacMurrogh became King of Leinster, and in time became recognized by the English as The MacMurrogh, and like his predecessor was paid the usual stipend of 80 marks a year. But the good relations between Art and the English did not last ; some cause of quarrel arose between them, and he was proclaimed a traitor (1358) at an English parliament held at Castledermot, and great preparations were made to crush him.[2] In the war that followed it was not the Irish chief who was defeated but his opponents, nor did the Duke of Clarence fare any better a few years later. Art defeated the Viceroy, De Windsor (1369), and about the same time seized upon the lands and castles of Carew in Idrone, and continued to hold them in spite of the English. So feeble had the colonists become, that the barrier of the Pale was removed from Carlow to Dublin[3] (1373); the Government, unable to communicate with Wicklow by land, had to send

[1] *Memoir of Art MacMurrogh*, by Thomas D'Arcy Magee, pp. 1-6. This is one of the earliest, if not quite the earliest, instances of these payments, which afterwards became so common as *Black Rent*—given to keep the Irish chiefs *quiet*, not by way of *pension*, as has been sometimes contended.

[2] Magee's *Art MacMurrogh*, pp. 6-7 ; Grace's *Annals*, pp. 149-51, notes.

[3] Magee's *Art MacMurrogh*, p. 10.

supplies by sea; the O'Briens had risen in Limerick, the Clan Gibbon and Roches assailed Youghal, Kildare's town of Adare was sacked and burned, the Treasury was exhausted,[1] the Viceroy was unable to pay his troops and levied forced subsidies on the colonists; and when De Windsor returned to England after his second term of the Viceroyalty (1376), and after many years spent in Ireland and many wars with the natives, he had to declare that he could never pass beyond the borders sufficiently far to learn the nature of the interior of the country or the condition of the natives.[2] When Art died (1377) it was with the reputation of being the greatest of his race; but his son, also named Art, who succeeded, was destined to be greater still. He was then but twenty years old, active, hardy, vigorous, a daring rider, dexterous in the use of the lance, and already of proved military capacity, for he had won fame in his father's wars. From the Government at Dublin he received his yearly stipend of 80 marks; but he had married an Anglo-Irish wife, Eliza le Veele, Baroness of the Norragh, her lands in Kildare were sought to be confiscated by the Crown, because as an English subject she had violated the Statute of Kilkenny, and this led Art to retaliate by making war on the English.[3] The O'Byrnes, O'Tooles, O'Nolans and O'Dempseys enthusiastically supported him; the colonists were everywhere overborne, and by the year 1389 the limits of the Pale did not reach on the south beyond Bray, nor on the north beyond Drogheda.[4] Whether in war or diplomacy, Art had shown himself the superior of every English Viceroy with whom, in one capacity or other, he had to deal.

Richard II. was then King of England, and great was his

[1] When Murrogh O'Brien of Thomond attacked the Leinster colonists (1377) he was bought off with the payment of 100 marks; but only 9 marks remained in the Treasury, the remainder had to be got by borrowing —from the Prior of the Hospitallers, 16 marks; from Fitzwilliam a horse, value 20 marks; from FitzGerald a horse, 20 marks; from Lord de Burgh a horse, 20 marks; from John More a bed, value 30 shillings (Gilbert's *Viceroys*, p. 243).

[2] Gilbert's *Viceroys*, pp. 240-41.

[3] *Ibid.* p. 266.

[4] Magee's *Art MacMurrogh*, pp. 14-15.

annoyance at the continued success of Art MacMurrogh ; and when he laid claim to the imperial crown of Germany, by virtue of his marriage with Anne of Bohemia, he was derisively told by his rivals to go back and conquer Ireland before he could wear an imperial crown.[1] Mortified at these taunts, he determined to go to Ireland himself and crush this audacious Leinster chief ; and in October 1394, with 4000 men-at-arms and 30,000 archers, he cast anchor at Waterford. He was accompanied by his uncle the Earl of Gloucester, by Roger Mortimer, Earl of March, Mowbray, Earl of Nottingham, and by many other English nobles and ecclesiastics. With such an army he concluded he would have little trouble in vanquishing the King of Leinster, and after a few days' rest at Waterford he marched north, intending probably to make his first stay at New Ross, and from this as his headquarters to waste MacMurrogh's territory and bring that chieftain as a suppliant to his feet. But he overrated his own strength, as he underrated the resource and skill of his opponent and the difficulties of the country through which he had to pass. Art received early intelligence of his designs, and with his army swooped down on New Ross, burst open its gates, plundered its inhabitants, carried off everything which was useful for himself and his army ; and when Richard reached the town, he found it a mass of ruins, without food to supply his army or houses to shelter them, or fortified walls behind which they might repose in peace. Nor was this all. On their march to Kilkenny, whither the English bent their steps, they were ceaselessly harassed by MacMurrogh. His army was much inferior to the enemy in numbers, but they knew the country well—its rivers and valleys and woods : they led the English into ambuscades, they cut down straggling parties, they harassed them by night attacks ; and when Richard arrived at Kilkenny, his army was thinned in numbers and depressed in spirits, and had lost much of the vigour and confidence with

[1] Leland's *History*, vol. i. pp. 339-40. Lingard assigns the reason as a wish to divert his melancholy, because of the death of Anne (vol. iii. p. 174). Perhaps both reasons were combined.

which they had been animated when they landed at Waterford from their ships.[1] But the King was still confident of success, and, in the arrogance of superior numbers, he haughtily announced to Art MacMurrogh and the other Leinster chiefs, if they would surrender all the castles and lands which they then held, he would graciously allow them to hold in peace all the lands which they could conquer from the other Irish enemies of England. Those terms were necessarily rejected.[2] Deeply mortified, Richard pursued his journey northwards; the Leinstermen continued their guerilla tactics, cut off isolated parties of the English, lowered their numbers and their spirits, until at length even Richard's pride was humbled, and he was compelled to send a further message to Art requesting an interview at Dublin. This proposal was accepted,[3] and Richard, continuing his journey, arrived at Dublin, where a palace was set up for his accommodation at Hoggin Green, and where, amid revelry and feasting and pageantry, he spent the Christmas of that year. On the 16th of February following, a further conference took place at Ballygory, between Leighlinbridge and Carlow, between Art MacMurrogh and Mowbray, Earl of Nottingham, acting on the part of King Richard. Art, mounted on a black steed, was accompanied by O'Byrne, O'Nolan, Malachy O'Murrogh, and Rory O'More, who came, like himself, to make their submission. And Art, taking off his girdle, sword and cap, and placing his hands between those of Nottingham, who gave him the kiss of peace on behalf of Richard II., vowed allegiance; but only on condition that his wife's lands were restored to him, that his annuity was regularly

[1] *Four Masters*; Magee, pp. 20-25; *Chronicles of Froissart* (Globe Ed.), p. 430.

[2] Cox (*Hibernia Anglicana*, pp. 138-9) says these terms were accepted by Art and five other Leinster chiefs; but this is inherently improbable, for Art had behind him twenty years of successful war, the other chiefs supported him, and in the Wicklow mountains he could defy all attack. In these circumstances he was not likely to surrender everything he had and get what amounted to nothing in exchange.

[3] *Four Masters*. "He went into the King's house at the solicitation of the Irish and English of Leinster."

paid, and that for the lands he surrendered in Carlow other lands would be given in exchange.[1]

Perhaps Richard II. expected that the various chiefs would flock to Dublin to tender their submission, as in former days their ancestors had done to Henry II. They made no sign in this direction, but a message came from the Northern chiefs that they would meet him at Drogheda; and so anxious was Richard to facilitate them that he proceeded there, and received the submission of O'Neill, O'Donnell, O'Reilly, O'Hanlon, and MacMahon. Those chiefs were received well, and accompanied the King back to Dublin, where O'Brien, O'Connor, and MacMurrogh awaited them, where the feastings were renewed, and where these Irish chiefs, not without reluctance, consented to receive knighthood according to the English fashion. Unlike the courtiers of King John on a former occasion, the ministers and courtiers of King Richard showed every attention to the Irish chiefs, and were careful not to ridicule their appearance or habits. The four principal chiefs—O'Neill, O'Brien of Thomond, MacMurrogh, and O'Connor, "King of Connor and Erpe"—were lodged in "a fair house" in Dublin, and a certain Henry Cristede, an Englishman, was appointed their attendant and interpreter.[2] He had been taken prisoner by the Irish thirty years before, he had lived among them for seven years, had married an Irish wife, and one of his daughters had married an Irishman, and he could speak the Irish language well, and had it taught to his children.[3] He was more than usually garrulous, and had much to tell his friend, Sir John Froissart, of these Irish chiefs, and of his own troubles with

[1] Gilbert's *Viceroys*, pp. 270-1. These terms, it will be seen, are very different from those given by Cox.

[2] *Froissart*, pp. 432-3.

[3] Cristede was a soldier with the Earl of Ormond, and rode one of his horses, which bolted into the Irish ranks. An Irishman jumped up behind the rider and brought horse and man to a town called Herpelipin, and this Irishman—by name Brin Costeret—was taken prisoner, seven years later, by the English, and riding the same horse which Cristede formerly rode. In the meantime, the Englishman had married Brin's daughter, and when he was exchanged for his father-in-law and went to live at Bristol, he left one of his daughters in Ireland, who in time married an Irishman.

them. They would sit at the same table with their minstrels and servants, eat out of the same dish and drink out of the same cup ; they would ride without saddles ; and they preferred their mantles to wearing a silk gown. And Cristede told his friend how much he prevailed with them. He put the four kings at one table, the minstrels at a lower table, and the servants at a lower table still ; he induced them to ride with saddles in the English fashion, and to exchange their mantles for gowns of silk, lined with minever and grey, and he got breeches of linen cloth for them instead of their tight-fitting trowse.[1] In the midst of the fêtes and pageantry at Dublin, news came from England that the Lollards were growing troublesome, that the country was already in a ferment ; and Richard II., leaving Roger Mortimer as Viceroy, in July 1395 returned to England.

The new Viceroy was, as the grandson of the Duke of Clarence, the next heir to the throne of England, and if he was merely an Irish chief, he might also claim the throne of Ireland, for he was descended from her ancient kings. By his descent from the Earl of Ulster and the De Genevilles of Meath, one of his ancestors was Roderick O'Connor, the last Ardri, whose daughter had married Hugh De Lacy ; while on the other side he claimed direct descent from Eva, wife of Strongbow and daughter of Diarmuid MacMurrogh. Attachment to an ancient name has always been a strong feature of the Irish character, but Mortimer was England's Viceroy, acting in England's name and for the extension of her power, and as such could not, and did not, receive the allegiance of the Irish chiefs. Young and inexperienced, either in diplomacy or war, he had to rely on his advisers at Dublin ; and the advice they gave him was to get Art MacMurrogh by treachery into his power.[2] He was invited to a banquet, the design being to detain him, but he was in some way forewarned and managed

[1] Cristede's opinion of the Irish was not high. He seems to have wondered that the four kings believed in God and the Trinity and acknowledged the supremacy of the Pope (p. 433).

[2] Magee, pp. 38-43.

to escape.[1] Such treachery as this roused the anger of Art and his chiefs, and a desultory war was carried on for some time, in which the Irish seem to have fared better than their foes, for the O'Tooles defeated the English (1396)[2] with the loss of 120, and Art himself captured the castle of Carton in the following year. To avenge these disasters, as well as to signalize his viceroyalty by some notable achievement, Mortimer collected all his forces (1398) and marched south to encounter Art and to chastise him. The opposing forces met at Kenlis, or Kells, in Kilkenny, and Mortimer was defeated and slain.[3] Concurrently with these events other disasters befell the English. MacGeoghegan of Westmeath killed the English chief, Maurice D'Alton; the Earl of Kildare was taken prisoner by O'Connor of Offaly; and the Earl of Desmond died.[4] The Irish were everywhere triumphant and elated, the English dispirited; English power seemed tottering to its fall, and the danger seemed imminent that, outside of Dublin and Waterford, the flag of England would cease to float.

When news of these disasters arrived from Ireland, Richard II. was involved in many difficulties. Harassed by turbulent nobles and ambitious relatives, he had for the moment triumphed over both, and in revenge had embarked on a policy of persecution and proscription which roused the ire of his subjects and finally lost him his crown.[5] Surrounded by so many difficulties, menaced by so many enemies, he could ill afford to leave England and proceed to Ireland; but, unmindful of former failures, he was still ambitious of military renown, and desired to avenge the death of Mortimer and humble that proud Leinster chief whose skill and daring had so often triumphed over English arms. With an army of at least 20,000 men, he sailed from Milford Haven, and arrived

[1] *Four Masters*, 1395. [2] *Ibid.*

[3] Ware's *Annals*. Magee (pp. 47-48) puts Art in this battle—the Annalists do not, it was only the O'Byrnes and O'Tooles; but Magee's reasons are strong.

[4] Magee, p. 50. [5] Lingard, vol. iii. p. 189.

at Waterford on the 1st of June 1399.[1] As on a former occasion, he marched from Waterford to Kilkenny. He could easily have crushed Art MacMurrogh, if that chief had met him in the open field and risked all on a single battle, for the weight of numbers was on the English side. But Art was too experienced to risk defeat, and fell back, first to Carlow and then eastwards to Wicklow. He had but 3000 men, though they were stout men, such as the Englishmen marvelled to behold. His usual guerilla tactics were pursued. The women and children he sent to a place of safety in the hills or woods, while his army harassed the advancing English, cut off their scouts and foragers, made night attacks on their camp, carried off all provisions, leaving the enemy to march through a district, broken, boggy and wooded, where they could get nothing for their horses but a little green oats, and where their horses sank to their saddle-girths in the marshes. Their provisions ran short; the horses died of hunger and exposure to rain and wind; a biscuit in one day was thought a good allowance for five men—many were for days without any food at all; and the Frenchman who wrote the narrative of the expedition and accompanied the army heartily wished he was back again in Paris, even without one penny in his pocket. Many died from sickness, many more from hunger; mourning, depression, and gloom replaced the gaiety of their first march from Waterford to Kilkenny; the minstrels ceased to amuse, and if they played, their notes were those of woe; and instead of a conquering army, the Englishmen were a feeble, famine-stricken multitude, hastening to Dublin to get food.

At Kilkenny news was brought that a French knight, D'Artois, had defeated a body of Irish at Kildare and killed 200 of them; and, elated by this victory, Richard sent a message to Art MacMurrogh calling on him to submit; but the answer came back that he (Art) "would not submit, that

[1] Harris's *Hibernica*, pp. 49-58. The narrative of the expedition was written (in French) by a Frenchman (Creton) who accompanied the expedition. It was translated by Lord Totnes into English, and is the second of the Tracts included in the *Hibernica*.

he was the rightful King of Leinster, and would never cease from war and the defence of his country until his death, and that the wish to deprive him of it by conquest was unlawful."[1] But an uncle of Art—Malachy MacMurrogh—came to the English camp, barefooted and bareheaded, and with a halter round his neck, and in this humble fashion made submission. He was pardoned all he had done against the English, and was required only to be faithful for the time to come.[2] Still hoping that Art would yield, Richard II. sent him a second messenger, promising that if he would come and submit, as his uncle had done, he would receive mercy and pardon and be endowed with castles and lands. But Art's answer was that he would do no such thing, that for all the gold in the world he would not submit, but would continue to war upon the King of England.[3] Decimated by disease and hunger, word had been sent to Dublin for food; that city sent supplies by sea; and the army hastened eastwards to Arklow, where the ships put in, laden with food. And the starving soldiers rushed into the waves, forcibly seized on the provisions, even fought amid the waves for a morsel of bread, drank all the wine they could seize, and the French chronicler declared that he saw fully a thousand drunk on the wine of Ossy and Spain.[4]

On his march along the sea-coast to Dublin, Richard received a message from Art MacMurrogh, asking for a conference with himself or some one on his behalf. The Earl of Gloucester was chosen, and met Art near, or in, the Vale of Ovoca. Each was accompanied by a large retinue, but they held their conference apart in front of the opposing forces. Art, dressed in a pink robe, was mounted on a splendid horse, without housing or saddle, and his horse galloped so fast to the place of meeting that the French historian declares

[1] Gilbert's *Viceroys*, p. 281. [2] *Hibernica*, p. 51.

[3] *Ibid.* p. 52. "That for all the goold in the world he would not submit himself, but would continue to warr and endamage the King in all that he mought."

[4] The names of the places passed through have not been given by Creton, but the route has been traced, I think accurately, by Magee (pp. 56-59).

that he never saw hare, deer, or any other animal run so fast. There was much talk between Gloucester and Art, but the conference ended in nothing, for Art would make no terms except on condition that his person and possessions were to be unmolested, while Richard would grant no such terms, and swore that he would never leave Ireland until he had Art in his power. His army swelled to 30,000 by additions from the Anglo-Irish lords. Richard soon arrived in Dublin; the provost and sheriffs feasted the soldiers sumptuously, and their late ills were quickly forgotten. His cousin, the Duke of Albemarle, also arrived from England with large supplies of men and money; and Richard, still bent on capturing Art MacMurrogh, divided his army into three divisions, bade them proceed in different directions in quest of the troublesome chief, and offered 100 marks for whoever should bring him alive or dead into his power. But the quest was fruitless, and the army returned without effecting anything. In the meantime Richard indulged in feasts and revels in Dublin; but in the midst of all this gaiety news came from England that the Duke of Lancaster had raised a formidable insurrection, and Richard returned to England by way of Waterford, only to find himself deprived of his crown, as he was soon afterwards of his life.[1]

The change of dynasty in England did not affect Ireland much. Unlike his predecessor, Henry IV. did not try conclusions with Art MacMurrogh; nor could he, for he had more than sufficient to occupy him at home. Glendower had risen in rebellion in Wales; the Scotch declared war; the attitude of the French king was one of irritation and menace; some French nobles, led by the Duke of Orleans, fitted out several vessels and made descents on the south coast of England; the religious controversies of the Lollards were a source of constant ferment; and the formidable revolt of the Percies in the north all but succeeded in the defeat of Henry at the stubbornly fought battle of Shrewsbury.[2] Surrounded by so many

[1] *Hibernica*, pp. 53-54; Gilbert's *Viceroys*, pp. 283-7.
[2] Lingard, vol. iii. pp. 201-14.

dangers—all his efforts required to maintain himself on the throne which he had usurped—the King concerned himself little with Irish affairs. He appointed his son Thomas Viceroy (1401); but that prince was but a boy,[1] and the duties of his office were discharged by deputies; and Scrope and Ormond succeeded each other in that office without anything of note occurring, except that the citizens of Dublin attacked the O'Byrnes of Wicklow (1405) and killed 500 of them, and the Prior of Conal fell upon a party of Irish in Kildare and killed 200 of them.[2]

Victorious over his enemies, holding in security his ancient possessions and recent conquests, supported and obeyed by the other Leinster chiefs, Art MacMurrogh during these years remained for the most part quiescent, and was only roused to activity when the English colonists at Wexford became restive. When they did, he quickly reduced them to obedience, and seized or burned many English castles in Wexford, Carlow, and Kildare (1406).[3] In a quarrel between the Earls of Ormond and Desmond (1404) he fought on Desmond's side, though it was strange that he was never able to crush Ormond, or capture his stronghold at Kilkenny; and it is an evidence of Ormond's great ability that he was enabled to hold his own among hostile and powerful chiefs, and preserved his capital from falling into their hands. The old Earl died (1404); the Deputy, Scrope, tried to reconcile the new Earl and the Earl of Desmond, and at length succeeded, and with these two a strong confederacy was formed against MacMurrogh, of which Scrope himself was the leader; other allies were the Prior of Kilmainham and also a contingent from the citizens of Dublin. With such an army Scrope hoped to succeed where Richard II. had failed, and with Desmond and Ormond he marched south (1407) towards Carlow. On the way he encountered Tadhg O'Carroll, who was proceeding to MacMurrogh's aid, and whom he defeated with heavy loss, O'Carroll himself falling in the battle.[4] Six miles from Callan, he came face to

[1] He was only in his twelfth year (Gilbert's *Viceroys*, p. 294).
[2] Magee, pp. 69-70. [3] *Four Masters.* [4] *Annals of Clonmacnoise.*

face with MacMurrogh and an obstinate battle was fought. The advantage was with the Irish in the early part of the day, but the tide turned, and, after a hard-fought battle, Art was defeated and O'Nolan, one of the Leinster chiefs, was killed. And the English chronicler asserts, and seems to believe, that for the space of three hours the sun stood still in the heavens, so that the English might have light to finish the destruction of their foes.[1] But MacMurrogh was not much weakened or dispirited by this defeat. Scrope fell back to Kilkenny, and the next year died of the plague at Castledermot; Art at once became active, attacked and overran the English possessions, and did not cease until, at the head of a large army, he encamped under the walls of Dublin.[2]

The Viceroy, Thomas of Lancaster, had been three times in Ireland previous to his coming over in 1408. On each occasion he was friendly with the Butlers, but for some reason he had conceived an antipathy for the Earl of Kildare, and when that noble was elected Deputy (1405) in place of Ormond, who had died, Prince Thomas instantly cancelled his appointment and appointed Scrope in his place.[3] On his fourth coming over (1408), Kildare went to meet him at Carlingford and pay him his respects as Viceroy and prince of the blood; but his reward was to be arrested and cast into prison, out of which he had to be ransomed by the payment of 300 marks. Besides this, the Viceroy plundered Kildare's castles and carried away his plate and money.[4] Enriched by this plunder and by the 2000 marks which he had given him when leaving England,[5] he meditated great things in Ireland, and called a Council at Dublin to concert measures against the Irish chiefs; and by the aid of the Anglo-Irish nobles and the citizens of Dublin he had soon a large army under his command. Nor had he to go far in search of the Irish enemies, for it was just

[1] Marlborough's *Chronicle*.
[2] *Four Masters*; Magee, p. 77.
[3] Magee, pp. 71-72.
[4] Gilbert's *Viceroys*, p. 300. His crime was that "with Adam O'Nolan he interfered with the right of the Crown to appoint a prebend at Maynooth."
[5] Cox, pp. 146-7.

then that Art MacMurrogh with all his forces lay encamped near Dublin, and it may be assumed that he had with him the other Leinster chiefs—the O'Byrnes, O'Nolans, and O'Tooles. To these may be added O'Connor of Offaly, who had often fought the English, and whose son and heir had been killed (1406) while fighting against Bermingham.[1] It was his interest as well as Art's to see the English beaten, nor was there any reason for jealousy between these two chiefs. The Viceroy had mustered all the Crown tenants of Ireland,[2] so that the fighting forces of the Pale were ranged under his command—Jenico d'Artois, Butler, Prior of Kilmainham and the rest. The English marched out from the city, and the battle took place at Kilmainham, the result being that they were defeated, one of their chiefs, Hitsun Tuite, killed, and the Duke of Lancaster himself dangerously wounded. The whole of the ancient kingdom of Leinster, up to the very walls of Dublin, was now in Art MacMurrogh's hands, and the condition to which the Viceroy was reduced is described by one of his courtiers, who wrote on his behalf to Henry IV.: "His soldiers have deserted him, the people of his household are on the point of leaving him ; he is so destitute of money that he hath not a penny, nor a penny can he get credit for." As soon as he was better of his wound, Prince Thomas returned to England, appointed the Prior of Kilmainham as his Deputy, and did not again come to Ireland.[3]

Nor was this the only disaster that overtook the English at this period, and that threatened the final extinction of their power. Allied with MacGeoghegan of Westmeath, O'Connor of Offaly captured castles and towns from the neighbouring English (1408), took the Sheriff of Meath prisoner (1411), and gained the victory of Killechin (1414), where the Baron of Skreen and many English nobles were slain, and the Baron's son and many others taken prisoners, for whose release a sum of 1200 marks was paid.[4]

The Irish soldiers of that day fought well in the open, but

[1] *Four Masters.*
[2] Gilbert's *Viceroys.*
[3] Magee, pp. 77-80.
[4] *Four Masters.*

they had not learned to capture fortified towns, and after the battle of Kilmainham Art MacMurrogh made no attempt to capture Dublin. It was well fortified, perhaps impossible to take from the land side; nor could the inhabitants be starved out, for the sea was open to them, and the Irish had no vessels to blockade it; and when Art MacMurrogh had buried his dead and attended to the wounded, he retired to his head-quarters at New Ross. Two years later the O'Farrells were defeated by the Deputy, and the O'Byrnes defeated the Prior of Kilmainham and the citizens of Dublin in 1413.[1] In this latter year the Prior of Kilmainham and 1600 men went to France to assist Henry V. in his wars, and the new Lord Deputy—Stanley—while making no war on MacMurrogh and O'Connor, persecuted and plundered clergy and laity, and subjected many of them to "cold, hardship and famine." For all his cruelties, especially towards the poets, he was satirized by the poet O'Higgins, and it is gravely recorded that he lived after this but five weeks, "for he died (1414) of the virulence of the lampoons."[2] After Stanley came Cranley, Archbishop of Dublin, and then a really able man was appointed Viceroy —Sir John Talbot, Lord Furnival.[3] But, perhaps for want of men and money, he formed no great plans and embarked on no great war, nor was his term of office remarkable for anything except that he robbed and plundered indiscriminately English[4] and Irish alike, and every year he made a circuit through Meath and Louth and took all he could lay hands on; and when he returned to England he carried with him "the curses of many, because he, being run in debt for victuals and divers other things, would pay little or nothing at all."[5]

Except for some quarrel with the English of Wexford, whom he quickly reduced to submission, the closing years of Art MacMurrogh were spent in peace. In one of these battles

[1] *Four Masters.* [2] *Ibid.*

[3] Gilbert's *Viceroys*, p. 304. He came over in 1414, being appointed Viceroy for six years at an annual allowance of £2666 : 13 : 4.

[4] Only the "degenerate" English.

[5] Marlborough's *Chronicle*, at 1419.

his son defeated the Wexfordmen (1416), with the loss of 340 killed or wounded or prisoners. The next year, after having been forty-two years the head of the Leinster clans, Art himself died,[1] the ablest, the most skilful, the most successful chief whom Ireland had sent to combat the English since Strongbow first landed on her soil.

[1] *Four Masters.* There was a suspicion that he was poisoned.

CHAPTER XXIV

Decay of English Power

THE years that followed the death of Art MacMurrogh, it might be said the whole fifteenth century, were years of strife and discord rivalling the most disturbed period of Irish history. There was war everywhere, north and south and west, on the borders of the Pale and within it—wars between rival candidates for the chieftaincy of their clans, wars between neighbouring chiefs and combinations of these, wars between the Anglo-Irish lords themselves, wars of aggression and of spoliation, wars of retaliation and revenge. But in all these wars we would seek in vain for any national or patriotic object, any unity of purpose or design. Nor among the various leaders, whose mischievous activity caused so much blood to flow, was there even one whose talents lifted him above his contemporaries, who was capable of rising superior to his surroundings, of looking beyond the narrow limits of his clan, and of making an effort to rescue, not only his clan but his country, from the ruin into which she was being hurried by the short-sightedness and folly of her sons. Peace and order and settled government were unknown ; law was known, but only to be despised, for it was the law of the stronger, and that only, which prevailed.

During the closing years of his life Art MacMurrogh showed no eagerness for war, and never once did he measure swords with the Viceroy, Talbot, not even when that renowned soldier defeated O'More of Leix (1415), burned and destroyed the corn of the district, wounded and killed numbers of the people, and broke down two strong castles.[1] Perhaps the Leinster

[1] Gilbert's *Viceroys*, pp. 304-5.

king waited for a more favourable opportunity to attack the Pale, when its resources would be more exhausted, or at least be controlled by some one less capable than Talbot was. But his son and successor, Donogh, was not equally prudent, and, with O'Connor of Offaly, he was at war with the English (1419), and advanced as far as Dublin, where he was defeated and taken prisoner. His ally, O'Connor, was taken prisoner at the same time, but managed to escape, while Donogh was taken to England and lodged in the Tower of London, where he was kept a prisoner for nine years.[1] Nor was he then liberated but for a heavy ransom, which was cheerfully paid by his own clansmen.[2] During these years a kinsman, Gerald Kavanagh, was acknowledged head of the MacMurroghs, but when Donogh was set free his kinsman made way for him, and he stepped into the place his father had filled with so much honour. The recollection of his imprisonment embittered him against the English, and only a short time passed until he was again at war with them, though his success was not remarkable; for while he won one battle against them (1431), he lost a second, both battles being fought near Dublin. In the last battle his ally, O'Toole, was taken prisoner.[3] But Donogh was persevering, and the next year he again attacked the English, and defeated them with the loss of their leader, Tobin. At a later date (1443) he chastised the English of Wexford, who had defeated and killed his relative, Murtagh Kavanagh, and he compelled them to pay a fine of 800 marks as compensation for Murtagh's death.[4] The next year some of his kinsmen rose in rebellion against him, and were aided by the O'Byrnes and O'Tooles. In the war that followed, Donogh was able to hold his own by the aid of O'Connor of Offaly; but a little later the quarrel was renewed, and Donogh was defeated and slain.[5] His successor was his cousin, Domhnall Reveagh, who occupied the position until 1476. He must have been a man of vigour

[1] Gilbert's *Viceroys*, p. 311; Magee's *Art MacMurrogh*, p. 104.
[2] *Four Masters*, 1428. [3] *Ibid.* [4] *Ibid.*
[5] *Annals of MacFirbis* (quoted by O'Donovan); Magee, 105. It is Magee who adds that Donogh was slain, I know not on what authority.

and capacity to maintain his position so long ; but his resources were employed in keeping his neighbours—English and Irish —in subjection, and while the rulers of the Pale made no attempt to conquer him, neither did he make any attempt to gather together the strength of Leinster and inflict upon them a crushing blow, as in similar circumstances Art MacMurrogh might have done.

The defeat and imprisonment of Domhnall Kavanagh MacMurrogh, the troubles of a disputed succession and the weakness which these troubles caused, were all favourable circumstances for the subjugation of Leinster to English rule. And if the Pale had been prosperous and its forces united, such a leader as Talbot might probably have interfered in the MacMurrogh quarrels, and with disastrous effect on them. But the Pale was weak—its people were poor, harassed by inroads from the neighbouring chiefs, taxed beyond their strength, subjected to coyne and livery, even by the Viceroys ; no help came from England, for all its resources were required in the wars with France ; Talbot was sent to these same French wars, and his successors had not his ability ; and to make matters worse, there was discord among the English of the Pale. Sir John Talbot's brother was Archbishop of Dublin,[1] and he was no friend of Ormond, the strongest supporter in Ireland of the House of Lancaster. Between these two men there was never any cordiality ; they seldom or never co-operated in any public object, more usually they disagreed and thwarted and obstructed one another, and there were charges and countercharges between them, and appeals to England. Each had influence with the King, and according as that influence failed or was successful, their power in Ireland rose or fell. Sometimes the Archbishop was Lord Deputy or Viceroy, sometimes it was Ormond ; but each during his period of office used the powers of which he was master not so much to advance English interests as to elevate his own faction and to humiliate his rival. Within twenty-five years (1422-47) Ormond was the head of the Irish Government, either as Viceroy or Deputy, no less than five times, and

[1] He was Archbishop of Dublin from 1417 to 1449 (Ware's *Bishops*).

the Archbishop was six times,[1] as well as being for a time (1423-6) Lord Chancellor. During that time the quarrels between these two powerful men continued, and twice these quarrels assumed such dangerous proportions that King Henry VI. had to personally intervene and command them to live at peace.[2] It was divided counsels and chieftains' jealousies which made the Irish always so weak, so incapable either to resist or attack their foes. Similar causes produced similar effects among the English; the Pale was undefended, its inhabitants were at the mercy of the Irish chiefs, and nothing could purchase their security except to buy off the hostility of these chiefs. The English officials were grasping and mercenary, little troubled about advancing the King's interests and eager to enrich themselves; they levied heavy burdens on the English colonists, and seldom paid for anything they got.[3] Reduced to poverty and impotence, the chief men of the Pale had already addressed a memorial to Henry V., begging that he would come to their relief as they were surrounded by Irish enemies and English rebels; and as this petition was unheeded, they addressed a further one to the same quarter, a few years later (1420), begging Henry to place their condition before the Pope, so that he might preach a new crusade against the Irish; for apparently they believed, or at least wished the Pope to believe, that the Irish were no better than the heathens, and might be regarded as the enemies of God and His Church.[4]

The war during these years between the English and the Irish was desultory and unimportant, and led to no result except this that the English still further lost, as the Irish still further gained, ground. During his first Viceroyalty (1418) Sir John Talbot marched against an Irish chief, Magennis of Iveagh, in Down, and having defeated him in battle, carried off a great part of his people's cattle; but Magennis obtained reinforcements, pursued the Viceroy laden with his spoil, defeated him with the

[1] Ormond's terms of office were, 1422-24-26-40-43. Talbot's terms of office were, 1423-27-30-36-45-47 (Harris's *Ware*, vol. ii. p. 107).

[2] Gilbert's *Viceroys*, pp. 316-17, 328, 337-42.

[3] *Ibid.* pp. 313-14.

[4] *Ibid.* pp. 314-15.

loss of many English, and recovered the greater part of his cattle.[1] Two years later the Earl of Ormond joined with O'Neill of Tirowen, and both attacked and defeated Magennis, though the victory brought no advantage to the English interest, for its purpose and effect were to compel Magennis to submit to O'Neill.[2] The unusual spectacle of O'Neill and O'Donnell combining their strength was witnessed in 1423, for in that year, aided by the other Ulster chiefs, they marched against Dundalk, compelled the English colony there to pay tribute, encountered the English forces near that town under the command of the Lord Deputy, defeated them with the loss of 100 men, and, besides obtaining great spoils from them, compelled the English in Louth and Meath to pay Black Rent, and only on this condition would they make peace.[3] With large reinforcements from England, Ormond marched north in the following year, and to some extent retrieved Mortimer's defeat, for he did much damage to the Irish, and attacked and drove from his territory Magennis of Iveagh. These triumphs of the English were not destined to be lasting in their results, as O'Neill attacked Dundalk (1430), and again compelled that town as well as the whole of Meath to pay him tribute.[4] A little later, in some obscure expedition, the English captured O'Donnell of Tirconnell and kept him imprisoned; in revenge for which they were attacked by his relative, O'Connor of Offaly (1436), during which war he did them much damage "by burning, plundering and slaying";[5] while later still (1442) the English made their way into Wicklow and defeated the O'Byrnes and O'Tooles, only in turn to be attacked by these warlike clans and defeated, with the loss of eighty men and the capturing of all the booty they were carrying away. Amid these little wars, where success and failure constantly fluctuated, the Pale was becoming less and less in extent, until scarce any part was left except the county

[1] *Four Masters.*

[2] *Ibid.* This Earl of Ormond and O'Neill were married to two sisters, daughters of Domhnall MacMurrogh, King of Leinster (Magee, p. 105).

[3] *Ibid.* [4] *Ibid.* [5] *Ibid.*

of Dublin, where the King's power was unquestioned and supreme. English there were elsewhere, but they had to purchase peace by the payment of Black Rent; and to such poverty was the Irish Government reduced that when the hall and windows of Dublin Castle required to be repaired, it was necessary to break up and sell an old unused royal seal [1] (1427); nor was the public revenue sufficient to carry on the government, for the expenses of the Viceroy and his officers exceeded the yearly revenue by the amount of £1456.[2]

In the disputes between the Talbots and Butlers neither the Earl of Desmond nor the Earl of Kildare had hitherto mixed. The Geraldines and the Butlers had rarely been on the friendliest terms, but to further his own ends Desmond united with Butler (1443) in some quarrel against the Talbot faction. Ormond was then Viceroy, with all the power and influence that office gave. He was grateful for the timely assistance of Desmond, and to express his gratitude he obtained for him a royal licence to purchase whatever lands he pleased, no matter by what service they were held from the King, and at the same time he was constituted by Letters Patent Governor of the counties of Waterford, Cork, Limerick, and Kerry, and in addition was excused from attendance in Parliament.[3] Such privileges increased Desmond's power enormously, but neither his loyalty to the Lancastrian dynasty nor his affection for the Butlers grew, and forgetful of the favours he had received, and confident in his own resources and strength, on some pretext he actually went to war with Ormond in the next year; nor was Ormond, with all the forces which a Viceroy could command, able to conquer the haughty Geraldine.[4] His enemies at Dublin were not slow to make the most of his failure, and the shower of accusations against him fell thick and fast. The King was told that he was inactive and infirm from age, that he wanted the capacity to enlarge the Pale or even to defend it against attack, that he was grasping, avaricious and corrupt, and had used his high office of Viceroy for the advancement of

[1] Leland, vol. ii. p. 22.
[2] Gilbert's *Viceroys*, p. 342.
[3] Leland, vol. ii. p. 25.
[4] *Annals of MacFirbis.*

his friends and the enrichment of himself. Strong in his attachment to Ormond, the King refused to listen to these accusations, or at least to believe them, but Ormond's enemies were numerous and persistent; the charges were often repeated and in various forms; and at length he was removed from his position (1446), and Sir John Talbot, now Earl of Shrewsbury, was sent over as Viceroy and given a force of 700 men to assist in subduing rebellion, and reasserting the weakened authority of England, both within and without the Pale.[1] Yet he accomplished little, and except that he reduced the refractory subjects of the King within the Pale and inflicted defeat on O'Connor of Offaly,[2] he could not be credited with having done anything else during this, his last viceroyalty. But from so famous a man, who had earned so great a name in the French wars,[3] the Palesmen expected much, and during his tenure of office they assumed their old airs of superiority over the native Irish, looked down upon them with contempt as an inferior and subject race, loudly demanded the enactment of repressive laws against them, and at a parliament in Trim (1447) it was enacted that Irish customs were illegal and penal, and that whoever did not shave his upper lip[4] was to be regarded as an Irish enemy.

Talbot's successor was Richard, Duke of York. Descended from the third son of Edward III.,[5] his title to the English throne was superior to that of the princes of the Lancastrian line. But it was not the superior claims of descent that placed Henry IV. on the throne; by force he won it, and by

[1] Cox, *Hibernia Anglicana*, p. 159; Leland, vol. ii. p. 27.

[2] *Four Masters.*

[3] Gilbert's *Viceroys*, p. 350. Such was the terror he inspired in France that French mothers quietened their children by telling them that Talbot was coming. He was killed at Chatillon in 1453.

[4] Cox, pp. 159-60. "Every man must keep his upper lip shaved or else may be used as an Irish enemy"; which meant that he might even be put to death, for the law did not recognize the existence of a "mere Irishman," except to exterminate him. This enactment made it criminal even to *look like an Irishman*, as the Irish did *not* shave their upper lips.

[5] The Duke of Clarence and Elizabeth De Burgo, daughter of the Earl of Ulster (Hume's *History of England*, Genealogical Table H).

force he retained it; and in the case of his son, Henry V., the defective title by which his father or himself held the throne was forgotten amid the splendours of Agincourt. With his death there came a change. The disasters of the next reign, the loss of France, the incapacity of the King himself revived the memory of his defective claims of descent; and there were many who turned from Henry VI. to the Duke of York, and recollected that his House had superior claims as coming from an elder branch, and contrasted what England might be under an able and energetic prince, such as York was, to what she was under the discredited rule of an imbecile king. York had been regent of France, but the Lancastrian party grew jealous of his power, and relegated him to the lesser position of Viceroy of Ireland. To lessen the humiliation of his change from a greater to a more obscure office, he was armed with the full powers of royalty, was granted the whole revenue of Ireland for ten years, got in addition from the English Treasury 4000 marks for the first year and £2000 for each succeeding year of his office; he could also farm the King's private lands, displace all officers, levy what troops he wanted, appoint his own Deputy, and return to England as often as he pleased.[1] His policy in Ireland was to win over by kindness the native chiefs, and at the same time to reconcile the Anglo-Irish lords. An Ireland peaceful and contented, no longer harassed by war or weakened by contention, would redound to his credit in England, and in the struggle which he foresaw to be impending might attract the support of many, for it would be said that he who had established peace and unity in Ireland was well worthy to be king. Nor would kindness shown to the Irish be wasted. They responded quickly to such treatment—what they rarely experienced they appreciated all the more when they received it; and so rapid and striking was the effect of the new policy, that within a month of his coming to Ireland he had obtained the support of Magennis of Iveagh with 600 horse and foot, of MacMahon with 800, of MacCarten with a similar number, and of the O'Reillys with

[1] Cox, pp. 160-61. He landed in Ireland, July 1449.

700 men. The O'Byrnes of Wicklow, who refused to be reconciled, he marched against and defeated, and compelled them to pay tribute, to accept English law in their territory, to wear English dress, and to learn the English tongue. The Anglo-Irish chiefs did him homage—Ormond and Desmond and Roche and Barret and Cogan—and from the Irish chiefs, O'Neill, O'Farrell, MacGeoghegan and others, as many beeves were sent to his kitchen as he required; and it began to be said in England that before twelve months the wildest Irishman in Ireland would be sworn English.[1]

In pursuance of his peacemaking policy he had the Earls of Desmond and Ormond stand sponsors for his infant son, George, afterwards the ill-fated Duke of Clarence, and thus he purchased the goodwill of the native Irish by reviving the old institution of gossipred, while he brought Desmond and Ormond together, and succeeded, as he hoped, in having them lay aside their ancient enmity, and shaking hands in friendship and reconciliation at the baptismal font. Within the Pale he found that the chiefs though English subjects were constantly violating the Statute of Kilkenny by coyne and livery, that they were in the habit of keeping more horsemen and footmen than they wanted for their personal defence, and that, accompanied by these, they went with their wives and families to the houses of their tenants, where they feasted at the tenants' expense, destroyed the corn and meadows, took what they pleased, paid for nothing, and sometimes killed the tenant who objected to these exactions. Summoning a Parliament at Dublin (October 1450), these abuses were declared illegal by statute, and such enactment was good; but it was otherwise with another, made by the same Parliament, which declared it lawful, and even meritorious, to kill the robbers with whom the Pale was infested, for one who was a robber and evil-doer himself could murder even the well-disposed, and plead that it was an Irish robber whom he had killed.[2] But though York

[1] Gilbert's *Viceroys*, pp. 353-4.

[2] Cox, p. 161. That the murdered man was a peaceably disposed Irishman made no difference: the murderer could plead he was Irish, and

accomplished much in a short time, there was much still to be done. A petition from the English subjects of Cork, Youghal, and Kinsale to the Duke declared that the Anglo-Irish chiefs in these districts were fighting among themselves, and by the aid of the Irish, and that they had so weakened one another that the Irish had got back much of the English lands. The state of Waterford and Wexford was found to be similar;[1] and MacGeoghegan of Westmeath entered the Duke of York's own lands in Meath and ravaged them; and such was the strength of his followers that York, who marched to Mullingar, was unable to make headway against him, and from necessity had to make terms with him and forgive him any injuries he had done.[2] The result of his own weakness was attributed to want of money, and in sending a messenger to England, complaining that his stipulated allowance was not paid by the English Treasurer, he declared he could not hold the country for the King without money from England, and that if such money were not soon sent him he would be compelled to leave Ireland and to live in England upon his poor livelihood; "for I had lever (he said) be dead than any inconvenience should fall thereunto in my default, for it shall never be chronicled nor remain in scripture, by the grace of God, that Ireland was lost by my negligence."[3] The Duke did return to England (1451), leaving as his deputy Sir James Butler, a son of the Earl of Ormond, and recently created Earl of Wiltshire. The old Earl of Ormond still lived, and the native Annals go to show that though he was old he was not inactive. He took O'Dempsey's castle at Leix, liberated Bermingham, who had been detained in prison, marched as a conqueror through Offaly and Annally, compelled the O'Reillys of Cavan and the MacMahons of Louth to tender him submission, and advanced into Tirowen and compelled O'Neill to take back his wife, whom he had put away, and when he had done all this he

he was held blameless, and he could add that he mistook him for a robber, though he knew well he was not.

[1] Gilbert's *Viceroys*, pp. 357-8.

[2] *Four Masters*.

[3] Gilbert's *Viceroys*, p. 362.

went back to Ardee, where in that same year (1452) he died.[1]

The son and successor of Ormond, already Lord Deputy, was appointed (1453) Viceroy for ten years, but he concerned himself little about Ireland, and acted only for a short time, and then through his deputy, May, Archbishop of Armagh. As Earl of Wiltshire he was an English nobleman and became Lord High Treasurer of England, had vast estates in England, was allied by marriage with the Duke of Somerset, and had greater anxiety to support the claims and watch over the interests of the Lancastrians in England than to concern himself with the petty details of Irish government.[2] In the following year the Duke of York again became Viceroy, but he too ruled by deputy, the Earl of Kildare being appointed to that office.[3] Like Ormond, his interests were greatest in England, for the struggle between the White Rose of York and the Red Rose of Lancaster had begun. The Duke was the head and champion of the former, and at the battle of St. Albans (1455) he defeated his opponents and captured Henry VI., whom, however, he soon released and still recognized as King, but only on condition that he himself was declared Protector of England, while he still remained Viceroy of Ireland. Four years after the battle of St. Albans, war again broke out, but this time York was defeated at Ludlow (1459),[4] was declared a traitor by the Lancastrians, and fled with his son, the Earl of Rutland, to Ireland, where he was received with enthusiasm by the Anglo-Irish, especially by the Geraldines —both Kildare and Desmond. His popularity with the Irish stood him in good stead. Declared guilty of high treason by the Lancastrians, and therefore of a crime punishable by death, one of Ormond's retainers, Overy by name, was sent from England with writs to seize York. But that prince, in his capacity as Viceroy, had already summoned a Parliament at Dublin, at which, under his inspiration, it was decreed that the

[1] Gilbert's *Viceroys*, pp. 364-5 ; *Four Masters.*
[2] Gilbert's *Viceroys*, p. 366. [3] *Ibid.* p. 367.
[4] Hume's *History of England.*

Irish Parliament was independent of that of England; that no laws enacted in England could be enforced or were binding in Ireland, except such as had been freely accepted by the Irish Parliament; that no writs could be enforced in Ireland, except those under the Great Seal of Ireland; and finally, that whoever, directly or indirectly, sought to compass the Duke of York's destruction, or to provoke rebellion or disobedience towards him, should stand as attainted of high treason against the person of the King. This enactment was quickly put in force, and Overy, when he landed with his writs, was seized, tried, found guilty, and hanged, drawn and quartered.[1] It may have been that the Anglo-Irish in this legislation were prompted by a desire to assert the independence of the Irish Parliament and free it from a state of dependence on the Parliament of England, but it must have been considerations of personal safety and interest that moved the Duke of York, and in these proceedings he was much more concerned about himself than he was about the independence of the Irish Parliament. The activity and influence of York's son Edward, aided by Warwick, inflicted defeat on the Lancastrians, and York was enabled to go to England, where, however, he was defeated and slain in the following year.[2] But at the battle of Towton (1461) his death and defeat were soon avenged, his enemy, the Earl of Ormond, was taken prisoner and beheaded, and his son Edward, taking the title of Edward IV., ascended the English throne.

With the death of Ormond the Butlers had lost their leader, but their power was still considerable; they had many friends in Ireland, and they had an able chief in Sir John Butler, who claimed to be the heir to the earldom of Ormond. Hitherto, in the Wars of the Roses, he had fought in England, and he had fought often against the FitzGeralds.[3] The quarrel was now renewed in Ireland. The English Parliament had

[1] Gilbert's *Viceroys*, pp. 368-70.

[2] Hume; Leland, vol. ii. p. 44. Of the 5000 which made up his army at Wakefield, most were Irish.

[3] Davies' *Historical Tracts*, p. 74.

attainted him of high treason, the Irish Parliament had confirmed that act, but he eluded his enemies in England, landed at Waterford (1462), and with a force partly Irish and partly English he attacked that stronghold. Desmond advanced to its relief, and the opposing forces met at Piltown in Kilkenny, where an obstinate battle was fought. The Butlers were defeated, their best leader, MacRichard Butler, was taken prisoner, and as showing the value attached to some old manuscripts in Ireland, he was ransomed by giving two old manuscripts to Desmond which had long been in the possession of the Ormond family.[1] The Butlers were defeated but not crushed, for in the next year Sir John Butler was again in rebellion and at the head of a strong force ; but again he was attacked and defeated by Desmond, his lands overrun, and his castles taken or destroyed.[2] The House of York was triumphant in England, and the Geraldines in Ireland. Kildare was appointed Lord High Chancellor for life, and Desmond Lord Deputy, under the Duke of Clarence as Viceroy. The Deputy reduced to obedience some refractory English of Meath and made terms with some of the border Irish chiefs, but he was not successful in an expedition against the O'Byrnes,[3] and he was defeated by O'Brien of Thomond. His services to the House of York were held in grateful remembrance by Edward IV., and when the Bishop of Meath made personal complaint to the King against Desmond, his complaints produced no effect except to increase the esteem in which Desmond was held ; and he was (1464) sent back to Ireland with augmented powers.[4]

But the favour of King Edward did not continue. Desmond was deprived of his position (1467) and a new Viceroy was sent over—Tiptoft, Earl of Worcester.[5] Summoning a Parliament

[1] Gilbert's *Viceroys*, pp. 378-9.

[2] *Ibid.* p. 380. It was this Sir John Butler, afterwards Earl of Ormond, who was described by Edward IV. as "the finest gentleman in Christendom."

[3] *Annals of MacFirbis*, 1463. [4] Gilbert's *Viceroys*, pp. 381-2.

[5] Though a cruel man, Tiptoft was an accomplished scholar (Gilbert's *Viceroys*, p. 385).

at Drogheda, the Viceroy had Desmond and Kildare attainted for treason, for "alliances and fosterage with the King's enemies." Desmond boldly went to Drogheda to face his accusers, but he was seized by Tiptoft and put to death. The crime with which he was charged was one of which many others were guilty and were allowed to go unpunished, and should have been entirely insufficient in the case of one who had done such service to the House of York. It may be that the story is correct which attributes his tragic fate to the rage of an insulted queen. This lady was Elizabeth Woodville, first married to Sir John Grey, and secondly to Edward IV. When the monarch solicited her hand, she declared she was too proud to be his mistress and too low to be his queen, yet Edward married her and she became Queen of England. But the marriage was disapproved of by many of the King's friends, Desmond amongst them, who declared to the King that he had done wrong in marrying a person so much beneath him, and that he ought to have her divorced and make an alliance with some foreign princess. When the Queen heard what the Earl had said she determined to be revenged, plotted against him, got him dismissed from office and appointed her friend Tiptoft in his place, and got possession of the King's seal and affixed it to a document which she gave to the new Viceroy, and which authorized Desmond's execution. Whatever be the real reason for the act, Desmond was much lamented in Ireland. He was a man of many parts, a great scholar, hospitable, humane and charitable, munificent to poets and antiquarians, and deeply versed in Gaelic lore. His tragic end was bitterly resented by native and Anglo-Irish, by cleric and layman, and when Tiptoft was taken prisoner (1470) and put to death, his fate was regarded as retribution from Heaven for his treatment of Desmond.[1]

The English found it difficult enough to maintain authority within the Pale itself, even with the aid of the Geraldines, but their difficulties were enormously increased when Garret

[1] Gilbert's *Viceroys*, pp. 386-7 ; Meehan's *Geraldines*, pp. 42-44 ; *Four Masters*.

FitzGerald, a kinsman of the dead Earl, gathered together his English and Irish retainers and marched through Meath and Kildare, laying waste the English possessions as he passed. The Viceroy was unable to make headway against him, and thinking it the safest thing to do, he was withdrawn from his position ; Kildare was exonerated from the charges made against him[1] and was appointed to the vacant office. Either as Viceroy or Deputy, he was at the head of the Irish Government until his death (1477), and his son Gerald after him was, with a short interval, at the head of the Government until the accession of the Tudors. These years were years of disorder and weakness within the Pale. A line drawn from Tallaght to Saggart marked its limits in the county of Dublin ; it included but little of Kildare, no part of Meath west of Trim, and the most part of the county of Louth ;[2] and this district was so harassed by the border Irish, so wasted by their inroads, that neither life nor property was secure. The ancient example of the Roman walls in Britain was copied and a dyke was made from Tallaght to Saggart and then northwards, at the making of which it was enacted by Parliament all able-bodied men in the Pale should labour, from an hour and a half after sunrise until sunset. Whoever broke down this dyke was heavily fined ; and if he allowed his goats or hogs or cattle to injure it, these animals were seized and confiscated. Along this rampart, at certain strategetic points, castles were built, tenanted by "loyal Englishmen," and as far as possible these castles were in easy communication one with the other, so that they could combine their resources in case of attack.[3] With the object of keeping the inhabitants anglicised and saving them from Irish influences, they should wear the English dress and speak English and assume English manners. Irish rhymers were prohibited from coming among the English, and the English were prohibited from transacting business with the Irish.[4]

These enactments the executive was impotent to enforce.

[1] Gilbert's *Viceroys*, pp. 390-91.
[2] Stuart's *Historical Memoirs of Armagh* (Coleman's Ed.), p. 145, map.
[3] Gilbert's *Viceroys*, p. 395. [4] *Ibid.* pp. 401-2.

For a time the Viceroy's army numbered but 80 archers, and when this was felt to be miserably insufficient, it was increased to 160 archers and 63 spearmen, and though ultimately volunteers were enrolled, under the name of the "Brotherhood of St. George," the English forces remained weak and entirely inadequate for the defence of the colony.[1] The Irish and their Anglo-Irish allies viewed the amount of these forces with contempt, broke through the recently constructed dyke, and had to be repeatedly bought off by the payment of Black Rent. The English traders were compelled to trade with the Irish, for in many cases there was no one else with whom they could deal, and in defiance of so many penal enactments Irish influences were on the increase even within the Pale. There were fosterings and alliances with the natives, and gossips and rhymers; the Irish language was spoken; coyne and livery were exacted by the English themselves; and such was the lawless condition of the colony, that the Archbishop of Dublin was unable to visit the churches in the more remote portions of his diocese. Those who had been given the privilege of coining money issued base money from the Mint;[2] hungry officials were little concerned to advance the interests of England, but were busy, by every species of exaction, in enriching themselves; and in addition these officials—the very highest placed of them—were unable to agree. Cornwalshe, the Chief Baron, abused Kildare, the Lord Deputy, at the Council table, charged Lord Ratoath with forgery, and even attempted his life;[3] and Dowdall, a judge of the King's Bench, while going on a pilgrimage, was set upon by the Prior of Kilmainham with a drawn sword and put in fear and danger of his life. When Gerald, Earl of Kildare, was elected by the Irish Council to succeed his father as Lord Deputy (1477), he was soon superseded by order of the English king and Lord Grey was sent over to take his place. But Kildare refused to recognize him or his credentials; he was backed up by the Irish Council; the new Lord Deputy was refused the Great Seal of Ireland; and when he attempted to enter Dublin Castle, its constable,

[1] Gilbert's *Viceroys*, p. 396. [2] *Ibid.* pp. 398 9. [3] *Ibid.* p. 397.

the Prior of Kilmainham, broke down the drawbridge, garrisoned the castle, and set Grey and his authority at defiance. And the friends of England were scandalized at the spectacle of Grey holding a parliament and enacting laws at Trim (1478), while his rival, Kildare, at the same time was holding a parliament and enacting laws at Naas.[1] The persistence of Kildare conquered. Grey was withdrawn, Kildare's disobedience was condoned; in the weakened condition of the colony to attack such a man would be to destroy the feeble remnant of English authority, and instead of being punished he was reappointed with largely augmented powers, such powers as made him almost an independent sovereign.[2] Perhaps it was hoped that with these increased powers, with his large family connexions, Anglo-Irish and native,[3] he would at least be able to preserve, perhaps even to extend, the limits of the Pale, and to re-establish order and security within its bounds. But his success was not great, and in a parliament held (1485) Sir Alexander Plunkett was authorized to *levy by distress from the English of Meath* the wages due to O'Connor of Offaly—a fact which shows that the English colony was so weak as to be unable to defend itself, and had to purchase the forbearance of this Irish chief.[4]

While the colony was thus weakened and disorganized, and the strength of England at home exhausted in disastrous civil wars, it would have been easy for the Irish to have broken through the rampart which encircled the Pale, and to have overwhelmed in ruin the feeble remnant of English power. A little unity, a small combination among chiefs, a capable and vigorous leader was all that was required: the work of Strongbow would have been reversed, and three centuries of spoliation and plunder would have been avenged. But there was no such combination, no such unity, and no such leader. If we look to Connaught,

[1] Gilbert's *Viceroys*, pp. 404-7.

[2] *Ibid.* pp. 407-10. Also notes, pp. 600-601. Kildare got these powers in 1481. His office was that of Deputy to Prince Richard, Duke of York, who was nominally Viceroy.

[3] One of Kildare's sisters was married to Henry O'Neill of Tirowen.

[4] Gilbert's *Viceroys*, p. 420.

we behold a province in which discord reigns supreme. Time has but aggravated its ills; even the semblance of a central authority has ceased to exist, for no prince receives the undivided allegiance of the natives, and the prospect of any one doing so in the future may be set down as remote and almost impossible. With only the memory of their ancient power, the O'Connors still quarrelled among themselves, and the arrangement by which they were divided into two branches, instead of composing their differences, only aggravated them. O'Connor Roe sometimes sought to assert a superiority over his kinsman O'Connor Don, and sometimes had to defend himself against his attack. In these disputes they obtained the aid of the other Connaught chiefs, and sometimes the aid of O'Neill or O'Donnell from the Northern province. And there were a few cases when an O'Connor chief, abler and stronger than others of his name, even challenged O'Neill or O'Donnell, and once even measured swords with O'Neill and O'Donnell, acting together.[1] The example of the O'Connors was followed by the other Connaught chiefs, who, like them, would recognize no law but their own wills. A subordinate position in the clan was despised by every aspiring member of the ruling family, and the squalid splendours of these petty chieftaincies were coveted with as much eagerness, and fought for with as much energy, and even ferocity, as if they contended for the throne of some mighty empire. When Turlogh O'Connor Roe died (1426), a desultory war was carried on by his sons on the one side and O'Connor Don on the other; partial success followed by temporary pre-eminence was attained by Cathal O'Connor Roe, but when *he* died these family quarrels were renewed, for Tadhg O'Connor Roe and Turlogh O'Connor Don each claimed to be the chief of the O'Connors, their rivalries were continued and transmitted to their descendants, nor did the struggle cease for the whole fifteenth century.[2] With other clans it was similar, and the record of the *Four Masters* is, that there were two rival O'Connors quarrelling (1445), two O'Farrells fighting for the

[1] *Four Masters*, 1422.

[2] *The O'Conors of Connaught*, pp. 159 *et seq.*

chieftaincy of Annally,[1] and two MacDonaghs fighting for the chieftaincy of Tirerill (1446). In this latter case the district was divided between the two rivals, but it was no more effective in establishing peace than in the case of the O'Connors. A war of succession raged in Hy-Many (1464) between the MacRannells (1473); and the Burkes, forgetting their Norman descent, abandoned the feudal system, had voluntarily submitted to the paralyzing influence of the clan system instead, and fought among themselves with as much bitterness and passion as the O'Connors or the O'Kellys.[2]

In the south, Desmond and the MacCarthys were at war (1430),[3] and such was the blindness of the MacCarthys to their own safety that they were (1449) quarrelling among themselves. Yet Munster was not so harassed by war as Connaught was. In Thomond there were disputes as to the chieftaincy, but at least the power of the O'Briens was still great, and under the rule of Tadhg O'Brien an attempt was made to place Thomond in the proud position she occupied in the days of the great Brian. At the head of the Dalcassian chiefs he marched across the Shannon, met and defeated the Earl of Desmond, attacked and captured the city of Limerick, compelled that city to pay him a tribute of 60 marks a year, and compelled Desmond to cede to him the county of Limerick and the barony of Clanwilliam in Tipperary. He might, and probably would, have followed up these successes by attacking the Northern princes and the Pale, but he died in a few months (1466);[4] after his death fresh disputes broke out in Thomond, unity was at an end, and the hope of a Dalcassian prince becoming Ardri was extinguished finally and for ever.

In Ulster, O'Neill was first in power among its chiefs. In his palace at Aileach he lived where his ancestors had lived and ruled for a thousand years, and by the other Northern chiefs was treated with a respect similar to that given by the ancient kings to the Ardri who ruled at Tara. But though his power was considerable, and sufficient to extract some form of

[1] *Four Masters*, 1445.
[2] *Ibid.*
[3] *Ibid.*
[4] *Annals of MacFirbis.*

homage and tribute from the neighbouring clans, he was either careless or powerless to establish any real authority over them. These clans were still independent, ruled by their own chiefs, and while they sometimes helped, they also sometimes went to war with the O'Neills. This was especially the case with the O'Donnells, whose power was always little inferior to O'Neill, sometimes was even superior, and who consistently refused to recognize the supremacy of Tirowen. They were seldom on the same side in battle, and more frequently were on opposite sides. They did unite against O'Connor Roe (1422); and in the following year, with the other Ulster chiefs, they defeated the English Viceroy; and a little later (1424), apparently fighting on the same side, they were defeated by Sir John Talbot, and an O'Neill and an O'Donnell were taken prisoners and had to be ransomed by their friends.[1] But when O'Neill attacked Dundalk (1430), and compelled the English there to pay him tribute, as he did the English of Meath, O'Donnell was not fighting by his side; neither did he assist him to defeat the Savages of Down (1433). And when there were wars of succession in Tirconnell (1434), in Tirowen (1435), and again in Tirconnell (1461), the O'Neills and O'Donnells were ranged on opposite sides.[2]

This want of union between the Northern chiefs rendered combination against the English impossible. But there is no evidence to show that any of these native chiefs wished the destruction of English power; they were just as eager to defeat and humiliate their own countrymen, and for that purpose were quite willing to purchase English assistance, as in fact they often did. With his own forces of Tirowen, and such forces as MacMahon and Magennis and the other chiefs of the east of Ulster would have readily given him, O'Neill could, without difficulty, during the civil wars in England, have destroyed the English colony in Ireland. To such forces as he could command an army of 200 men could offer no effective resistance, and this was as large a force as the Pale could have supplied. Like an old crumbling ruin, the whole structure of English authority

[1] *Four Masters.* [2] *Ibid.*

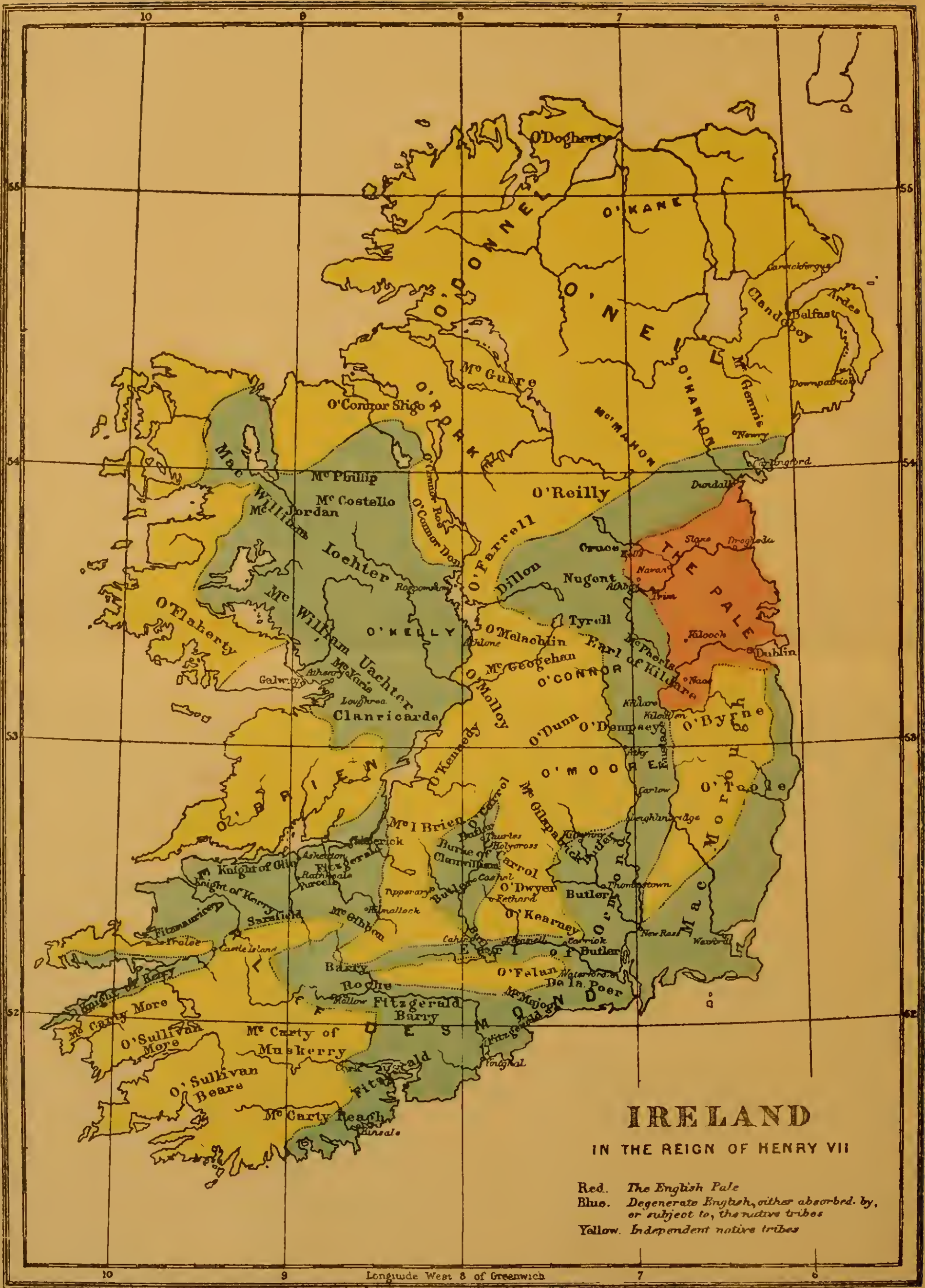
was tottering to its fall, and one vigorous blow would have laid it level with the dust. But the blow was not given. O'Neill was satisfied to get his Black Rent, and the heir and successor of the high Kings of Erin was not ashamed, for hire, and for paltry hire, to act as the policeman of the Pale. The action, or rather inaction, of the Leinster chiefs was still harder to explain. Their territories, being nearest to the English colonists, had suffered most from their attacks. Their lands had been repeatedly laid waste and their clansmen robbed, and they knew that it was impotence alone that restrained the English from doing in the present what they had so often done in the past. The spirit of these English was still manifested in their laws, and they still judged the Irish unworthy of being English subjects, fit only to be plundered and even murdered, and they declared it treason for an English subject to associate with them, still more to copy their customs or speak their tongue.[1] Yet O'Connor of Offaly remained quiet, because he was paid Black Rent from Meath and Kildare ; O'Carroll of Ely granted peace to the English of Kilkenny and Tipperary for an annual payment of £40 ; O'Brien of Thomond to Limerick for a like amount ; MacCarthy to Cork and MacMurrogh to Wexford.[2] Experience had taught nothing to these chiefs. Unmindful of the future, they contrasted the present with the past, congratulated themselves on the security which they enjoyed, and with childish vanity plumed themselves on having humbled the once dreaded English ; and in each clan some venal bard was prepared to sing the praises of his chief, of his prowess in war and his triumphs over the hated foe.

[1] Cox, p. 169. Enactment of the Parliament at Trim (1465).

[2] These payments are given by Cox (*Hibernia Anglicana*, p. 166).

Louth paid to O'Neill of Clanaboy £20.
Oriel paid to O'Neill of Tirowen £40.
Meath paid to O'Connor £60.
Kildare paid to O'Connor £20.
Kilkenny and Tipperary paid to O'Carroll £40.
Limerick paid to O'Brien £40.
Cork paid to MacCarthy £40.
Wexford paid to MacMurrogh £40.

The Exchequer at Dublin paid to MacMurrogh 80 marks.


IRELAND
IN THE REIGN OF HENRY VII
Red. The English Pale
Blue. Degenerate English, either absorbed by, or subject to, the native tribes
Yellow. Independent native tribes
Longitude West 8 of Greenwich
O'Dogherty
O'KANE
O'DONNEL
O'NEIL
Clandeboy
Belfast
Ardes
Carrickfergus
Downpatrick
Mc Gennis
O'HANLON
Newry
Carlingford
Mc MAHON
Mc Guire
O'RORK
O'Connor Sligo
Mac William
Mc Phillip
Mc Costello
Mc Jordan
Iochter
O'Connor Roe
O'Connor Don
O'Reilly
O'Farrell
Dundalk
Drogheda
Slane
Cruce
Navan
Trim
THE PALE
Dublin
Nugent
Dillon
Tyrell
O'Melachlin
Athlone
O'KELLY
Mc William Uachter
Mc Yoris
Athenry
Galway
Loughrea
Clanricarde
O'Flaherty
Mc Geogehan
O'CONNOR
Earl of Kildare
O'Molloy
O'Dunn
O'Dempsey
O'Byrne
Kildare
O'MOORE
Carlow
O'Toole
Mac Morough
O'BRIEN
O'Kennedy
Mc I Brien
O'Carrol
Mc Gilpatrick
Limerick
Knight of Glin
Knight of Kerry
Fitzgerald
Purcell
Burke of Clanwilliam
Thurles
Holycross
Cashel
Tipperary
O'Dwyer
Fethard
Butler
Thomastown
Ormond
O'Kearney
Kilmallock
Mc Gibbon
Sarsfield
Fitzmaurice
Tralee
Castle Island
New Ross
Wexford
Carrick
Cahir
Earl of Butler
O'Felan
Waterford
De la Poer
Mc Magon
Barry
Roche
Mallow
Fitzgerald
Barry
DESMOND
Knight of Kerry
Mc Carty More
O'Sullivan More
Mc Carty of Muskerry
O'Sullivan Beare
Fitzgerald
Youghal
Mc Carty Reagh
Kinsale

CHAPTER XXV

In the Reign of Henry VII.

In the long line of English kings there is not one whose memory is more execrated than Richard III. To call a man a hypocrite, a liar, and an assassin is to call him hard names, but in Richard's case these epithets are not undeserved. No one could trust him, no one was in his power with safety; he sacrificed his friends as readily as his enemies, and spilt the blood of his brother and his nephews for no reason except that they stood nearer by birth to the throne which he wished to seize. In him a misshapen body was the outward and appropriate expression of a mind distorted and diseased. His character has been sketched by Shakespeare with the merciless severity of genius, yet the picture of the dramatist is hardly more repulsive than that of the historian; and it is the historian who relates that, after the battle of Bosworth, the body of the dead king was stripped naked, flung contemptuously on a horse's back, and thus carried into Leicester amid the jeers and execrations of the people.[1] And such was the rage of the populace, hardly was it allowed the rite of Christian burial.[2] But if the life and acts of Richard were viewed with abhorrence in England and his fall welcomed with delight, in Ireland it was different. The dead king was of the House of York, son to that Viceroy whose memory in Ireland was held in such grateful remembrance.[3] Of his acts of cruelty in England the Irish knew little; what they did not see or feel,

[1] Lingard, vol. iv. p. 127.

[2] Bacon's *Life of Henry VII.* (*Essays and Historical Works*, Bohn, p. 308).

[3] Hume's *History of England*, Genealogical Tables.

they did not wish to believe; and those vices which excited abhorrence at home, and were seen by the English in all their naked deformity, in Ireland either were not seen or known at all, or, if they were known, were rendered less repulsive by distance and partiality. Among the Anglo-Irish the Geraldines were then the most powerful, as they had been always the staunchest, supporters of the House of York, and during his short reign Richard was careful to cultivate their goodwill. He had continued Kildare in his office of Lord Deputy, he had augmented his privileges and powers; and he had sent the most flattering letters to the Earl of Desmond, made him many presents,[1] and called him his cousin, as he did also to Kildare. And thus it happened that the fall of the tyrant was regretted by the Anglo-Irish, and the triumph of Henry VII. was viewed with disgust. They still clung to the Yorkists as the rightful heirs to the throne, regarded Henry Tudor as a usurper, and were ready to champion the claims of those pretenders whose object was to re-establish the fallen fortunes of the House of York and to hurl the usurping Tudor from his throne.

The first of these pretenders was Lambert Simnel. He was the son of a joiner at Oxford, one Thomas Simnel by name. He was handsome in person, attractive in manner, with an intelligence beyond his years and a dignity of bearing beyond the position in which he was born. These qualities attracted the notice of one Richard Simons, a priest at Oxford, a man doubtless who bore no goodwill to the reigning King, and he considered that young Simnel could be got to successfully personate the young Earl of Warwick, then a prisoner in the Tower of London. He took the boy under his care, informed him of the principal events in the life of the prince, carefully taught him what he was to say and do, and when his

[1] Gilbert's *Viceroys*, pp. 415-19. He sent him through his Councillor, the Bishop of Annadown, "a long gown of cloth of gold lined with satin or damask, two doublets—one velvet, one crimson satin—three shirts, three stomachers, three pairs of hose, three bonnets, two hats, two tippets of velvet."

pupil was fifteen years of age took him with him to Dublin (1487), and proclaimed him there as the Earl of Warwick, son to the Duke of Clarence, who, he said, had escaped from his prison in London.[1] The Lord Deputy had long been suspected by Henry VII. of disloyalty. To declare for Simnel would be to confirm the worst suspicions of the King, and for a time Kildare held aloof from Simons and his pupil, though his brother, Lord Thomas FitzGerald, resigned his position as Lord Chancellor to follow the fortunes of the pretender. And the Archbishop of Dublin, the Bishop of Meath, the Prior of Kilmainham and other ecclesiastics and high-placed officials, as well as the citizens of Dublin, followed the Chancellor's example. To prevent the English from becoming his adherents, Henry VII. had the real Earl of Warwick taken from the Tower and marched through London, where he conversed with many, and this prevented some at least from swelling the ranks of Simnel's followers. But others would not be warned. They professed to believe, as did the Anglo-Irish, that Simnel was the real Warwick, and the youth who was marched through London only a counterfeit. Among these in England were Sir Thomas Broughton and Lord Lovell and the Earl of Lincoln;[2] but most important of all was the aid given by the Duchess of Burgundy, sister to Richard III. She had, according to Bacon, the spirit of a man and the malice of a woman.[3] She was a widow and rich, active, scheming, ambitious, mourning over the downfall of the House of York, and ready to help in any movement that would give trouble to the reigning King.[4] She pretended to believe that young Simnel was indeed her nephew, who had but lately escaped from the hands of the royal tyrant. She willingly and eagerly espoused his cause, and fitted up an army of 2000

[1] Lingard, vol. iv. pp. 135-7; Gilbert's *Viceroys*, p. 425.

[2] Lingard, vol. iv. p. 137. Lincoln had frequently conversed with the real Warwick, and therefore knew Simnel to be an impostor.

[3] *Henry VII.*, p. 328.

[4] *Ibid.* p. 329: "All the counsels of his succeeding troubles came chiefly out of that quiver." Bacon thinks too that the widow of Edward IV. had a share in these plots, as "she was a busy negotiating woman."

under an able leader, Martin Schwartz; and this force landed in Dublin in the early part of the year. At last Kildare threw off the mask he had worn, boldly pronounced in Simnel's favour, and with the chief citizens of Dublin and the higher officials assembled at Christ Church on the 24th of May, and the pretender was crowned King by the Bishop of Meath, with the title of Edward VI.[1] On his head was placed a crown, taken from the statue of the Blessed Virgin Mary in St. Mary's Abbey; he was clothed in splendid and costly robes, and after the ceremony a sermon was preached by the Bishop of Meath. On the shoulders of a gigantic Irishman—Darcy of Platten—he was then carried through the city; the people enthusiastically applauded him as he passed, and such was the dignity with which the boy comported himself that even his enemies declared he did no dishonour to the royal robes which he wore.[2] The Archbishops of Armagh, Cashel and Tuam, and the Bishop of Clogher, the Butlers, and the city of Waterford alone of all the Anglo-Irish remained faithful to the House of Tudor;[3] the remainder supported the pretender. A month after his coronation, he made a descent on the coast of England, at the head of his army of English, Anglo-Irish and Germans, and at Stoke they were encountered (June 11) by Henry VII. himself, with a far more numerous army. The Irish fought bravely, but they fought without armour;[4] the contest was long maintained, but the result was decisive, and for the pretender disastrous. Most of the Irish were slain, so was Schwartz, and greater part of his Germans. The priest, Simons, was taken prisoner and imprisoned in a dark dungeon for life, and Simnel himself was captured and degraded to the menial occupation of turnspit in the King's kitchen.

The English nobles and gentlemen who had fought with

[1] Gilbert's *Viceroys*, pp. 428-9.

[2] Cox, *Hibernia Anglicana*, p. 179; Ware's *Annals*.

[3] Gilbert's *Viceroys*, p. 427.

[4] Lingard, vol. iv. p. 138. The Irish had "darts and skeans." I suspect they had battle-axes also, which shows, says Lingard, that the English settlers had adopted the arms of the natives.

Simnel at Stoke were attainted. The Anglo-Irish nobles—Kildare[1] and the rest—were equally guilty, and Henry had got letters from the Pope excommunicating them. But he went no further than this. They had tried to make to him the best excuses they could and he had accepted these excuses, though he told them he was much displeased, and expected that they would give new and binding pledges of their allegiance, and atone by their loyal conduct of the future for their disloyalty of the past. Patents of pardon were made out, and a special Commissioner, Sir Richard Edgecombe, was sent to Ireland to absolve Kildare and his confederates of their treason, and to receive them into favour with the King.[2] Leaving Cornwall, with four ships and 500 men, he arrived at Kinsale on the 27th of June 1488, and landed on the following day. He was met by the Lords Barry and Courcy, the keys of the town were delivered to him, and these noblemen and the citizens took the oath of allegiance to Henry VII., and received in return the King's pardon for their share in the late rebellion. From Kinsale he made his way to Waterford, where he landed on the first day of July, and where he was enthusiastically received. The Mayor showed him round the city, pointed out the fortifications, and brought him into the "Guildhall of the said city," where the city Council was assembled. Against the Earl of Kildare the citizens were specially incensed, and the Mayor asked the Commissioner if the Earl was to be pardoned and continued as Lord Deputy, that the city be specially exempt from his jurisdiction. Its effusive loyalty to England was at all times remarkable. The regret of the citizens seemed to be that they were on the wrong side of St. George's Channel; they wished to be part of England; and they made a special request that if they were to be subject to any Viceroy at all,

[1] Bacon (p. 333) is entirely in error in stating that Kildare was at Stoke and was killed there; it was his brother, Lord Thomas FitzGerald.

[2] *The Voyage of Sir Richard Edgecombe*, apparently written by Edgecombe himself, in the form of a journal, and included as the *third* of the tracts in Harris's *Hibernica*, pp. 59-77.

and were not to be exempt from his jurisdiction, at least he should be an English lord; for in their eyes that they should be subject to a mere Irishman's rule was not to be borne. Edgecombe was prodigal of promises, and set sail for Dublin, where he was not so enthusiastically received. He lodged at the Dominican Abbey of the Blackfriars, but, although the Archbishop of Dublin and others visited him, Kildare did not until a full week had passed. The Commissioner was displeased, and when he met the Deputy was disposed to be stern and haughty and to lecture him on his conduct. Kildare was in no humour to submit to such rebukes. He was slow to receive Edgecombe at all, he was slow to come to any satisfactory arrangement with him, and although he treated him hospitably at his castle of Maynooth, he was above all slow to give those binding pledges of good behaviour which the Englishman wished to obtain, and declared, himself and the Council, that if these terms were insisted on "they would become Irish every one of them."[1] The pride of the Commissioner gave way to his prudence, a compromise was arrived at; he was satisfied, or pretended to be satisfied, with Kildare's promises, and that nobleman swore on the Consecrated Host to be henceforth a faithful subject of Henry VII., and never again to countenance any rebellion against his throne. In token of reconciliation Edgecombe hung a gold chain round the Earl's neck. He was continued in the office of Lord Deputy, the sentences of excommunication against ecclesiastics and others were removed, and all those who had aided the pretender and who now submitted were granted the King's pardon, all except the Prior of Kilmainham.[2]

This treatment of the Anglo-Irish is in marked contrast with that meted out to the English, but it was not that Henry believed them less guilty, or that he loved them more, but that he feared them more. He was cool, calculating, marching

[1] Edgecombe's *Narrative*, p. 65. Harris thinks that the condition sought to be imposed was that they bound themselves to a *forfeiture* of *their estates*, unless they continued faithful to the King.

[2] *Ibid.* pp. 67-69.

in all his acts with measured tread. His title to the throne was weak, he was not personally popular, the Yorkist party still existed; the fires of discontent smouldered, and if a suitable opportunity were offered would again burst into flame. And just such an opportunity would be offered if matters were pushed to extremes against the Earl of Kildare and his partners in the late rebellion. He had enormous influence with the Anglo-Irish; as the champion of the House of York he would have still more, for the whole forces of the Anglo-Irish would be with him, except the faction of the Butlers. Nor was it unlikely that the native chiefs also would range themselves on his side. They took little interest and no share in the struggle between York and Lancaster, but their good wishes would be with the Yorkists, and, besides, many of them were allied by marriage with the Geraldines. A sister of Kildare's was married to Henry O'Neill of Tirowen, his daughter Alice was married to Conn O'Neill of the same princely line, his daughter Eleanor was married to MacCarthy of Carbery, his daughter Eustacia to Burke of Clanrickard, and his son was married to Maeve, daughter of O'Connor of Offaly, while his relative, Desmond, was married to a daughter of O'Brien of Thomond.[1] To drive to desperation a man having so many powerful friends would be in the highest degree unwise, and would ill accord with the well-known prudence of King Henry, and so it happened that for the English lords and gentlemen who fought at Stoke there was punishment, but for Kildare and his Irish allies there was pardon and even royal favours.

Peace was thus established in Ireland, and Edgecombe returned to England, but Kildare did not retain the King's favour long. A little later (1490) he was guilty of some acts (what they were is not clear), and again he had to ask and obtain the King's pardon. He received it on condition that he at once repaired to England, so that the King might personally consult with him on Irish affairs. But Kildare was distrustful, perhaps he feared that his past conduct might be

[1] Gilbert's *Viceroys*, pp. 418-24.

remembered and punished, and thinking himself safer in Ireland than in London, he got the Irish Parliament to petition the King that Irish affairs urgently demanded his presence and would suffer by his absence; and the most profuse protestations were sent on his behalf of his loyalty to the throne.[1] Excused from going to England, and still continued as Lord Deputy, he was soon mixed up in a quarrel between two members of the Butler family. One of these —Sir Piers—had married Kildare's sister, the other was Sir James. The head of the family—the Earl of Ormond—lived in England, and to manage his Irish estates had appointed Sir James as his deputy, but Sir Piers claimed the position as the nearest male heir to the earldom. Kildare espoused the cause of Sir Piers. Sir James was aided by O'Brien of Thomond; the quarrel was long and bitter, and ultimately Sir James prevailed, and taking his rival captive, threw him into prison, from which he was liberated through the friendly interference of the Earl of Desmond.[2] Kildare's connexion with these disputes excited the King's displeasure, but his displeasure was intensified when he learned that the Lord Deputy was holding treasonable correspondence with the Scotch and French kings,[3] that he was in secret league with some of the native chiefs, and that, in violation of all his protestations of loyalty, he was favourable to the latest pretender who had appeared. The Lord Deputy was dismissed from office, and Fitzsimons, Archbishop of Dublin, appointed in his place (1492). The new Deputy, assisted by Sir James Ormond,[4] treated Kildare's friends with harshness; Kildare sent messengers to England to explain his conduct and to defend him, but their pleadings were vain, and two royal Commissioners—Wyatt and Garth —were sent over. These Commissioners, aided by Ormond, were guilty of violence against the friends of the fallen Deputy, and even murdered his ally, O'Connor of Offaly. But the Earl was not a safe man to provoke, and seizing

[1] Gilbert's *Viceroys*, pp. 440-42. [2] *Ibid.* p. 462.
[3] *Ibid.* pp. 445-8.
[4] I find him so called by Gilbert, though of course his name was Butler.

Garth (1493), he flung him into prison and sent his son to the scaffold.[1]

Tired of ruling Ireland by native Viceroys or Deputies, who used their power only to oppress some rival, Henry at length sent over an Englishman—Sir Edward Poyning—as Lord Deputy.[2] He landed at Dublin in October 1494, and was accompanied by 1000 soldiers. He was a man of energetic character, and summoning to his aid both Kildare and Sir James Ormond, they proceeded north to chastise O'Donnell of Tirconnell, who, it was said, was in league with the Scotch king. But while proceeding through the territories of O'Hanlon and Magennis, Ormond privately informed him that Kildare was in secret league with O'Hanlon, that the Deputy's life was endangered and plotted against, and that Kildare's brother was already in open revolt and had seized the strongly fortified castle of Carlow.[3] The Deputy hastily retraced his steps, abandoned his intended expedition against O'Donnell, and, after recovering with difficulty the castle of Carlow, he summoned a Parliament to meet at Drogheda. It met on the 1st of December 1494, and under the Deputy's influence and awed by his presence, the Earl of Kildare was attainted, all royal grants of land back for 168 years were revoked, thus reducing the vast majority of the Anglo-Irish to a state of entire dependence on the Crown; no ordnance or great guns were to be kept in any fortress without viceregal licence; Irish war-crys, such as "Crom aboo," the war-cry of the FitzGeralds, or "Butler aboo," the war-cry of the Ormonds, were prohibited; against coyne and livery specially severe penalties were decreed; and the Statute of Kilkenny was confirmed in its entirety, except that the Irish mode of riding (without saddles) and the use of the Irish language were no longer proscribed.[4] From this latter it appears that, instead of the

[1] Gilbert's *Viceroys*, p. 448.

[2] Prince Henry, afterwards Henry VIII., was nominally Viceroy or Lord Lieutenant (*vide* Ware's List).

[3] *Viceroys*, pp. 450-51; Cox, p. 186.

[4] Ware's *Annals*; Cox, pp. 187-9.

Irish having become anglicised, it was the English who had fallen under Irish influences, so much so that the Irish mode of riding without saddles and the use of the Irish tongue were general within the Pale, and it was useless to pass enactments against them.

But the most important enactment of this Parliament was that which became afterwards known as Poyning's Law. By this Act the Parliament of Ireland was made entirely dependent on that of England. It could not even meet without a licence under the Great Seal of England, nor could it initiate any legislation, for its statutes should be previously approved by the Viceroy and Irish Privy Council, and then sanctioned by the King and Privy Council of England.[1] Thus did this Parliament, under the influence and terror of an English-born Viceroy, proclaim and enact its own impotence, voluntarily renounce its independence, and in a spirit of subserviency and cowardice accept the humiliating position of a legislature without the power to legislate. It was a slavish enactment made by a Parliament of slaves. At the time its injurious effects were not felt, for the Parliament of that day was only the Parliament of the Pale, nor was it fully representative even of that limited area. It often fell under the influence of some powerful Anglo-Irishman, whose power held it in awe, who filled it with his adherents and had its enactments passed and enforced, not so much for the good of the State as to advance his own personal interests. But when the limits of the Pale had been enlarged, and when the Parliament became, not that of a limited area round Dublin, but the Parliament of the whole country and representative of its interests, it was then that the clogging and paralyzing influence of Poyning's Law was felt, and that its injurious effects became the theme of eloquent orators and political pamphleteers.

Yet these enactments effected little. The natives became troublesome and had to be bought off and sometimes placated with presents from the Deputy. Sir James Ormond and his

[1] Ware's *Annals*. The Earls of Kildare, Desmond, and Ormond were all absent from this Parliament (Gilbert's *Viceroys*, p. 451).

PERKIN WARBECK

FROM AN OLD ENGRAVING

soldiers were employed by the Government, and as there was no money to pay them, coyne and livery were exacted; but, worst of all, the second of the English pretenders had appeared in Ireland and had drawn many to his side. By his own friends he was known as Richard of York, son to Edward IV., who had been imprisoned in the Tower of London, and, it was thought, murdered there by Richard III. The pretender in reality was one Perkin Warbeck, a native of Tournai. The Duchess of Burgundy aided him and called him the "White Rose Prince of England," and when he landed in Munster (1495) he received the active assistance of the Earl of Desmond, and of Water, the Mayor of Cork. But though the pretender and his allies laid siege to Waterford, they failed to capture that city, and lost many of their soldiers, and Warbeck had to fly to Scotland. To these disorders was added the rebellion of Kildare's son. In revenge for the treatment of his father, he assembled an army and attacked the English (1496),[1] nor was Poyning able to cope with him, or to adequately protect the loyal English from his assaults.

Disappointed at his Deputy's want of success, Henry had him recalled (1496), and, seeing the difficulty of governing Ireland in spite of the Geraldines, he resolved to call in the assistance of the Earl of Kildare and try if he could not be weaned from his attachment to the Yorkists. After being attainted at Drogheda, he had been pursued and harassed by the forces of the Government, and ultimately was made prisoner (1495) and sent to England and lodged in the Tower of London. Brought to trial (1496) before the King and his Council, the Bishop of Meath acted as his accuser.[2] The charges against him were that he had aided the King's enemies, that he had been in league with O'Hanlon against the Deputy, that he had instigated his brother to take the King's castle at Carlow, and that he had acted in collusion

[1] Gilbert's *Viceroys*, pp. 457-9; Ware's *Annals*.

[2] His name was John Payne, and he it was who had crowned Simnel (1487) in Christ Church. Kildare and he were then close personal friends, but ten years later they were bitter enemies (Ware's *Bishops*).

with the King of Scotland and the Earl of Desmond, both of whom were declared enemies of the King.[1] These charges were not substantiated, for O'Hanlon swore that he had no connexion with him when the Deputy entered his territory, and as to the charges of being in league with the Scotch king and with Desmond, these might furnish matter for suspicion but were incapable of proof.[2] The impression he made on Henry VII. was favourable, and when the Bishop of Meath declared that all Ireland could not rule the Earl, then, said Henry, "the Earl shall rule all Ireland."[3]

While in England, Kildare had married for his second wife Elizabeth St. John, a cousin to Henry VII., and perhaps this smoothed the way for pardon and power. Whatever was the determining cause, he was appointed Lord Deputy and sent back to Ireland, higher than ever in the royal favour, though the King, with his usual prudence, had kept the Earl's son Gerald in London as a hostage for his father's good conduct. The friends of the new Deputy were rejoiced; his enemies, and above all Sir James Ormond, were confounded; Desmond was pardoned for his connexion with Perkin Warbeck, and when that pretender again came to Ireland (1497) he got but few to assist him. Desmond kept aloof, and the only prominent Irishman to identify himself with his fortunes was Sir James Ormond, no doubt piqued at the favour shown to Kildare. He was declared an outlaw and soon after was murdered by his kinsman, Sir Piers Butler.[4] If Henry

[1] Gilbert's *Viceroys*, p. 454. [2] *Ibid.* p. 460.

[3] *Book of Howth* (Carew MSS.), 179-80; Cox, p. 191; Gilbert's *Viceroys*, pp. 460-61. The author of the *Book of Howth* declares that Kildare was but an innocent, half-witted man, and that to this he owed his acquittal. When, for instance, he was charged with burning the church at Cashel, he said yes, but would never have done it, but he thought the Archbishop, his enemy, was inside; when he was told to select a counsellor, he selected the King, and rudely took him by the hand, and instead of attending to his defence he commenced telling stories of the Bishop of Meath, which set the whole Council laughing. This story is adopted and evidently believed by Cox, yet it is very unlikely that Henry VII. would appoint a fool as Lord Deputy, nor did Kildare in that office acquit himself as a fool would. [4] Ware's *Annals*.

had any lingering doubts as to Kildare's loyalty, or as to the wisdom of arming him with such powers, these doubts must have been soon dispelled. The Deputy was not a man of half-measures, and became as enthusiastic in supporting the house of Tudor as he was formerly in opposing it; and such was the vigour of his government that he soon repressed disorder and outrage within the Pale. He had enactments passed and enforced that Irish usages were to be discontinued, that the King's subjects within the Pale were to arm and dress in the English fashion, and that whoever rode a horse without a saddle was to forfeit the horse so ridden, and that absentees were to be fined half the income of their estates for the defence of the Pale.[1] So pleased was Henry with the loyalty of his Deputy and the energy and success of his government, that he summoned him to London (1503), personally thanked him for all he had done, and appointed his son Gerald Lord Treasurer of Ireland, had him married to an English nobleman's daughter, Elizabeth, daughter of Lord Zouch, and, loading him with presents, sent him back to Ireland with his father, "the King's cousin, the Earl of Kildare."[2]

While within the Pale a period of turbulence and weakness was followed by a period of comparative calm, during which something like settled order was maintained under Kildare's vigorous rule, outside of the Pale the old order of discord and turmoil still prevailed. It could not be said that the native chiefs fought more, or quarrelled more, than did their ancestors, but neither could it be said that they quarrelled less. Compared to the north and west, the condition of Thomond during these years was one of peace, but the peace was not continuous. The MacNamaras had some wretched squabble (1486), and "Cumara MacNamara was exultingly slain by the sons of Donogh MacNamara." In the quarrels between the Butlers, the O'Briens had taken part; two MacMahons wrestled with each other for the chieftaincy of their clan (1497); and to increase the miseries that accompanied these disputes a famine decimated the land, and so dreadful in its effects that the dead

[1] Gilbert's *Viceroys*, pp. 465-6. [2] *Ibid.* p. 467.

were left unburied.[1] In Connaught and Ulster the wars were more persistent and more general, it might be said war was their normal condition. Sometimes the war was between two neighbouring chiefs, each perhaps anxious to humiliate the other, or perhaps to avenge some fancied wrong; but the more common form of strife, and the most disastrous for the people, were those which arose from the strivings of ambitious chiefs, contending for the headship of their clan. The number of these clans was large, they seemed to increase rather than diminish with time; there was no settled order of succession, force alone was the determining factor; the ambition to rule was rarely wanting in more than one member of a chieftain's family, and whenever the chieftain died, his place was contended for by angry, and often ferocious, disputants. So fruitful a source of strife was this that the *Four Masters* records, at 1488, that in Oriel two MacMahons were fighting, two MacDonoghs in Tirerill, two O'Connors and two O'Neills,[2] and in the next year two O'Farrells were contending for the petty chieftaincy of Annally. Both Tirconnell and Tirowen were ruled by able and restless chiefs who often fought, for the old rivalry still continued in all its bitterness. In 1490 the O'Neills and O'Donnells were at war; in the next year the quarrel was renewed; they were again at war in 1497, and the last year of the dying century saw the quarrel resumed.[3] During these years that same O'Donnell was at war with Maguire (1490), with O'Connor Roe (1495), and two years later he sought to chastise MacDermot of Moylurg. It is unnecessary to add that the O'Connors quarrelled, as they never agreed. The Burkes had now become as quarrelsome and were far more powerful, and such were the miseries they caused that the Annals record that Burke invaded the territory of O'Connor

[1] *Four Masters*; White's *History of Clare*, p. 151.

[2] And two O'Rourkes, two MacDermots, and two O'Haras (*Four Masters*, at 1488).

[3] *Four Masters*. It was during these years that O'Neill claimed rent from O'Donnell, being, as he thought, his superior, and the demand and the reply are equally laconic. "Send me my rent (said O'Neill) or else——" "I owe none (said O'Donnell), and if I did——" (Leland, vol. ii. p. 91).

Roe (1495), and that he destroyed everything that O'Donnell in that year had not destroyed. The jackal had followed in the lion's path. Famine and pestilence followed in the track of war, and the people ate "such food as was not fit to be mentioned or was never served on dishes for human food."[1] So disgusted was one of the O'Donnell chiefs at the quarrels of his sons that he resigned the headship of the clan (1497); but the rebuke was forgotten, and four years later they were again at war. In the next year (1502) there was war between Burke of Clanrickard and O'Kelly of Hy-Many.

In many of these quarrels Kildare interfered. Since 1496, when he was last appointed Deputy, he was enthusiastically loyal to Henry VII., but he was loyal on his own terms and in his own peculiar way, for while he strove to anglicize the Pale, and prohibited Irish habits and customs, he was more than half Irish himself. He spoke Irish, levied coyne and livery, practised fosterage, and his alliances by marriage with the Irish chiefs were many. Like many others of the Anglo-Irish, if he had something in common with the English, he had much more in common with the Irish; and if he interfered in the disputes that arose it was because he felt as an Irish chief himself, with the same quickness to take offence and the same talent for war, because sometimes his personal interests were concerned, and because, perhaps, in his zeal for his royal master, he desired to use these disputes for the weakening of Irish and for the extension of English power. Acting on behalf, and probably at the instigation of O'Connor Don, he marched into Connaught (1499), defeated O'Kelly of Hy-Many, from whom he took the castle of Athleague, then turned against O'Connor Roe, from whom he took the castles of Tulsk, Roscommon, and Castlerea, took hostages from these chiefs, and then, handing over hostages and castles to O'Connor Don, he marched back to Dublin.[2] A little before this he had unsuccessfully attacked the O'Briens of Thomond, and a few years later (1503) he led an army into Antrim and destroyed the castle of Belfast.[3]

[1] *Four Masters*, 1497; *O'Conors of Connaught*, p. 170.
[2] *O'Conors of Connaught*, p. 170. [3] Ware's *Annals*.

In the following year he led an expedition into Connaught and fought one of the most remarkable battles in Irish history. Burke of Clanrickard had quarrelled with his neighbour, O'Kelly of Hy-Many, had entered his territory and taken possession of his castles of Monivea, Garbally, and Castleblakeny, and O'Kelly, unable to resist him, appealed for assistance to Kildare. About the same time Burke had attacked and captured the town of Galway, a violation of the charter given to that town by which the Burkes were specifically prohibited from entering there without the leave of the municipality.[1] This latter act afforded a good pretext to the Deputy to listen to O'Kelly's appeal, and he was the more willing to attack Burke as his daughter was married to that nobleman and had been treated ill.[2] But Burke was a formidable foe, with great resources at his command, and his strength was augmented by the aid of O'Brien of Thomond, MacNamara, and O'Carroll of Ely. To beat down this combination Kildare mustered the whole strength of the Pale, and, besides, procured the assistance of O'Connor Roe, MacDermot and the Burkes of Mayo from Connaught, of Magennis, MacMahon, O'Hanlon and O'Reilly from the north, of O'Farrell of Annally, O'Reilly of Cavan and O'Connor of Offaly, but, most important of all, of O'Donnell of Tirconnell.[3] With this latter chief he had been sometimes at war, but recently he had sent one of his sons to be fostered in Tirconnell, and to this, perhaps, may be due their present alliance. It may also explain the absence of Kildare's kinsman, O'Neill, who would be reluctant to fight side by side with his old antagonist of Tirconnell, and, it may be, felt piqued at the friendship shown him by Kildare. The numbers who fought on each side have not been ascertained, but the advantage of arms and armour was on the side of the Deputy,[4]

[1] Hardiman's *History of Galway*, p. 69. The charter granted by Richard III. bears date 15th December 1484.

[2] Leland's *History*, vol. ii. p. 116.

[3] *Four Masters.*

[4] They had firearms, and probably cannon, as some musket-balls and a cannon-ball were found in later times on the battlefield (*Four Masters*, O'Donovan's Note).

for the main reliance of the other side was in the battle-axe. Kildare and his allies marched towards Galway, but Burke had retired north-west, and at a place but three or four miles from one of his castles at Clare-Galway, he took up a position on the low hill of Knockdoe. The *Book of Howth*[2] gives, with tedious minuteness, the debates and discourses in Kildare's camp previous to the battle, in which the ecclesiastics and learned men who accompanied the army are spoken of with contempt. O'Connor of Offaly declared that he never saw those who were learned give good counsel in matters of war, and that what would be decided in the coming fight was to be decided by valiant and stout stomachs of prudent and wise men of war practised in the same faculty, and not by men practised in matters of law or matters of religion. And if he spoke these words, he spoke the truth, for in most wars both justice and religion are ignored, and those who fight think little of either. After a hard-fought struggle, which lasted the entire day, the Deputy was the victor. His loss was considerable,[3] but the loss of his opponents was greater, being at least 2000 men. The victors encamped for the night on the field which they had won, then marched to Galway, captured the town, also captured Athenry, took two sons and a daughter of Burke prisoners, and then Kildare regaled his troops with 30 tuns of wine.[4]

To make alliances with Irish chiefs, and, above all, to make war in a private quarrel without the express leave of the King, was contrary to many enactments, and ought therefore to be condemned by Henry VII., and doubtless it would if Kildare had failed. But he had succeeded, and, flushed with victory, he

[1] Gilbert's *Viceroys*, p. 469. The name of the battlefield signifies "the hill of the axes." [2] Pp. 181-5.

[3] Ware's *Annals*. The *Book of Howth* gives Burke's loss at 9000; Ware's estimate is 2000. Cox (p. 197), quoting from the *White Book of the Exchequer*, says not one Englishman was killed. The veracity of that *White Book* is on a par with that of the *Book of Howth*.

[4] Cox, p. 197. The *Book of Howth* says that Lord Gormanstown after the battle suggested that, having killed most of the *Irish* opposed to them, they should now cut the throats of the Irish on their own side.

sent a glowing account to London that His Majesty's enemies were destroyed. Nothing suited Henry's plans better than to see the Irish fighting among themselves. It meant a weakening of their strength, and would make the task of subduing the whole country all the easier. And instead of being displeased with Kildare he highly extolled him, invested him with the Order of the Garter, and continued him in the office of Deputy for the remainder of his reign.[1] For similar reasons he must have been well pleased that the O'Neills and O'Donnells renewed their quarrels (1507), that MacMahon and Maguire were at war (1508), and that in the same year the MacCarthys in the south were similarly engaged.[2]

[1] Gilbert's *Viceroys*, p. 472. [2] *Four Masters.*

Photo. Mansell.

HENRY VIII

FROM THE PAINTING BY HOLBEIN

CHAPTER XXVI

The Geraldines

In the early years of his reign Henry VIII. paid little attention to Ireland. Young, handsome, accomplished, skilled in martial exercises, he passed much of his time in the midst of balls and revels and Court pageants,[1] and in such amusements spent with a prodigal hand a large part of those treasures which had been laboriously and patiently collected by his father's avarice. His grandmother, the Countess of Richmond, still lived, and the sensible advice she gave him was to retain in his service those Ministers who had been tried and trusted in the preceding reign. Henry had the good sense to accept the advice and act upon it, and in the same spirit and acting under these Ministers' directions, he continued Kildare in his office of Lord Deputy, and he invited him to London so that he might consult with him on Irish affairs. But Kildare was reluctant to go, and at his suggestion the Irish Council requested of the King that he be excused from going. The Earls of Desmond and Ormond sent a joint letter to England urging the same, declaring that they were themselves at enmity with the Lord Burke of Connaught, and that their hope was that the Deputy would make peace between them.[2] These two noblemen, perhaps, wrote what they believed, but Kildare's talents and dispositions were not for peace, and, relieved from the necessity of going to England, he soon proceeded to make war. With all the forces of the Pale he marched into South Munster, captured the castles of Duhallow and Kanturk (in Cork) and two other castles (in Kerry), then marching north to Limerick he was joined by

[1] Lingard, vol. iv. p. 170.

[2] *Calendar of State Papers* (1509-73) (Hamilton), p. 1.

MacCarthy and the Earl of Desmond, and with him also was O'Donnell of Tirconnell. The Deputy, it seems, expected that he would finish the work begun at Knockdoe, that O'Brien of Thomond would be crushed, and then the subjugation of Burke of Clanrickard would be an easy matter. Marching on Limerick, that city was soon captured,[1] and from this as his headquarters he advanced as far as Castleconnell, where a bridge across the Shannon connected East and West Thomond. He broke down the bridge so as to prevent the whole forces of Thomond from acting together. O'Brien meanwhile was not idle. He had got together the Dalcassian clans; Burke of Clanrickard was also with him with all his forces, and these chiefs were eager to avenge the disaster at Knockdoe. Their army was encamped on the Clare side of the Shannon, not far from Castleconnell, and when the bridge had been broken down they advanced farther down the river, which they forded, and made preparations for attacking the enemy. Miscalculating the strength and vigour of his foes, Kildare instead of fighting commenced to retreat towards Limerick, but was followed up by O'Brien, and at Monabrahir, near Limerick, the battle was fought. It lasted throughout the day, and Kildare and his allies were defeated with great loss; they were hotly pursued on their retreat, and were saved from extinction only by the skill with which O'Donnell and his troops defended the rear of the army. The Deputy made his way back to Dublin as best he could, and did not again attempt the conquest of Thomond or the subjugation of O'Brien's allies.[2] Two years later Kildare was again active, and entering Connaught he captured the castle of Roscommon, which he garrisoned in the name of the King. That same year he went north, devastated the lands of the MacDonnells of Antrim and captured the castle of Belfast,[3] and in the following year he again went south, laying waste much of South Munster. The territory of O'Carroll of Ely he treated similarly, though O'Carroll's strong castle of

[1] Ware's *Annals*; *Four Masters*, 1510.
[2] White's *History of Clare*, pp. 164-5.
[3] *Four Masters*; Ware's *Annals*.

Leap defied all his efforts, and mortified at his failure to capture it, he was returning to Dublin (1513), when he fell ill on the march and died at Athy.[1]

The Irish Privy Council selected the young Earl of Kildare, son to the deceased Earl, as Deputy, and the appointment was in a short time sanctioned by Letters Patent from the King. Like his father, the new Deputy was a man of energetic and warlike character, and the year after his appointment he marched into Brefny, laid that territory waste, and killed its chief O'Reilly;[2] then he turned his arms against O'Toole of Wicklow, whom he defeated. Finally, marching into Ely O'Carroll, and in alliance with Sir Piers Butler, he attacked O'Carroll, laid his country waste, and with heavy guns which he had brought from Dublin he captured the castle of Leap, which his father had formerly besieged in vain.[3] These energetic proceedings indicated that Kildare was zealous in the cause of the English king, for in crushing the Irish chiefs he was interpreting accurately the royal will. Yet the condition of English power was feeble, and the Archbishop of Armagh, writing to his friend Wolsey, the Bishop of Lincoln, described the perilous position of the Pale. And to increase the Deputy's embarrassment, and lessen, if not destroy, his influence with the King, his stepmother, the Dowager Countess of Kildare, complained[4] that Kildare was partial to the great O'Neill and had voted him a tribute out of her lands, that he had allowed some of the lands of her sons to fall into the hands of the wild Irish, and that the lands of Kilbride, belonging to her ward, one Rochefort, were made waste by oppression of coyne and livery.

To answer these and perhaps other charges made against him, Kildare proceeded to England (1515), and seems to have triumphed over his accusers, as he came back confirmed in his office of Lord Deputy. His enemies were discomfited, but

[1] Ware's *Annals*; *Four Masters*, at 1514—it should be 1513.

[2] Ware's *Annals*, 1514. [3] *Ibid.* 1516; *Four Masters*.

[4] Hamilton's *Calendar*, p. 2. The Archbishop's letter was written in 1514, that of the Countess early in 1516.

their discomfiture was not final or complete. The place-hunter whose expectations had not been fulfilled, the adventurer whose greed had been restrained, the lawless whose turbulence had been repressed and whose offences had been punished, the arrogant whose pride had been humbled and whose vanity had been hurt—all these regarded Kildare's power with jealousy, and, convinced that they had a grievance against himself or his father, watched for an opportunity to do him harm. Their ranks were increased by an important and powerful recruit in the person of Sir Piers Butler, now Earl of Ormond. He was married to Kildare's sister; hitherto they had been on friendly terms, and in the war against O'Carroll they had fought side by side. But that was in the days when he was Sir Piers Butler; the seventh Earl of Ormond had died in London (1515); Sir Piers, as the next male heir, was entitled to the earldom and its vast estates, and in possession of such honours and wealth he was lifted to an equality with his brother-in-law and resented his assumption of superiority. Perhaps also in the settlement of the Ormond estates, which had been referred by the King to his Deputy and carried out by him, the new Earl of Ormond[1] felt aggrieved, and in his consequent enmity to Kildare he was incited by his ambitious wife. Clever, restless, overbearing, with the strong will of the Geraldines, she was zealous in her own impetuous fashion for the advancement of Ormond's influence and power, ready to spare no effort and use every means to attain her ends, and had no objection, if it were necessary, that Ormond should rise even on the ruins of Kildare. Her husband she found a suitable medium for her purpose. His character was in striking contrast to that of the Lord Deputy; for while Kildare was open, blunt, outspoken, with the warrior's plainness of speech, Ormond, on the contrary, was underhand, subtle and intriguing, not destitute of courage,

[1] He was not recognized formally as Earl by the King until 1522, when he was appointed Deputy, and as late as 1520 is called Sir Piers Butler by Henry VIII.; but he was the heir to the vacant earldom, and must, at least by courtesy, have received the title (*State Papers* (Henry VIII.), vol. ii. pp. 34-39).

but with talents rather for diplomacy than for war. He had been able to ingratiate himself with Wolsey, the all-powerful Minister of Henry VIII., and to poison his mind against Kildare. The ground being thus prepared, the Deputy was charged that he was in secret league with the Irish, that he was enriching himself with the revenues of the Crown, and that he was guilty of "seditious practices, conspiracies and subtle drifts."[1] A new Viceroy was sent to Ireland (1520) in the person of the Earl of Surrey; Kildare was dismissed from office, and had to hasten to England to defend himself against the offences laid to his charge.

The new Viceroy was son to that Earl of Surrey who had fought and won the battle of Flodden; he himself had been with his father in the battle and had contributed his share to the victory gained;[2] and he was not long in Ireland until he exhibited that energy and skill which he had displayed on the field of Flodden. The northern boundary of the Pale lay near the lands of O'Neill and MacMahon, and was harassed by their incessant attacks, and these two chiefs were the first whom he assailed. MacMahon's district of Oriel he soon laid waste and compelled its chief to submit, but Conn O'Neill, thinking it more prudent not to meet him in the open and stake all on a single battle, retired into the mountains and woods of his province, whither the Viceroy was unable to follow, and disappointed at his failure he returned to Dublin. Before the year had expired, and while he was meditating an attack on O'Neill, that chieftain came to Dublin voluntarily and formally submitted to him and to the English king. He made the most ample professions of good behaviour for the future, and when Henry was informed of this he was so pleased that he sent O'Neill a collar of gold.[3] O'Donnell also had in the meantime come to Dublin, was even more profuse in his

[1] *State Papers* (Henry VIII.), vol. ii. pp. 32-33.

[2] Lingard, vol. iv. pp. 181-2. He was then Lord Thomas Howard; his father was created Duke of Norfolk, and he received the father's former title of Earl of Surrey.

[3] *State Papers*, vol. ii. p. 56.

professions of loyalty to England, and in the true spirit of an Irish chief, anxious above all to injure a rival, he secretly informed the Viceroy that O'Neill had urged him to make war on the English, and that he had given that advice, acting under the influence and at the suggestion of the Earl of Kildare.[1] Satisfied with the turn affairs had taken in Ulster, Surrey then turned his attention south and entered and laid waste the districts of O'More of Leix, O'Carroll of Ely, and O'Connor of Offaly. Combined, these chieftains might have offered a stout resistance ; but they did not combine, and, fighting separately, their resistance was futile and they had no alternative but to submit.[2] The last of these chiefs to submit was MacCarthy of Carbery, who made a favourable impression on the Viceroy, and whose good sense and intelligence and evident sincerity he highly extolled in his letter to Wolsey.[3] But Surrey was not deceived by these submissions, and had little faith in their permanence. He knew they were extorted by necessity, and that these chiefs, tenacious of their independence, would continue to be submissive only as long as they were awed by superior force. He knew that these submissions were very different from conquest ; he was convinced that the conquest of the country was necessary if England wished to establish her power effectively, but he knew that to crush all these chiefs would be no easy matter, and he proposed that 6000 men be sent from England and that the various chiefs be simultaneously attacked.[4] His proposals were sent to England but were not adopted ; the money he had asked for the expenses of the Irish government was not even sent ;[5] the native chiefs became again restive ; Ormond and Desmond, who had often quarrelled and whom he had with difficulty reconciled, were again quarrelling ; and MacCarthy and Desmond had gone to war

[1] *State Papers*, vol. ii. p. 37. [2] *Ibid.* vol. ii. p. 36.

[3] *Ibid.* vol. ii. p. 57.

[4] *Ibid.* vol. ii. pp. 72-75 (Letter from Surrey to Henry VIII.). When so attacked he thinks the Irish would suspend their own quarrels, and, besides, would be aided by three or four thousand "Irish Scots."

[5] *Ibid.* vol. ii. p. 90. Henry VIII. thought that to send such moneys would be "frustration and consumption of treasure in vain."

and a battle had been fought between them at Mourne Abbey in Cork, where Desmond was defeated and 1000 of his army slain.[1] Discouraged and disappointed at these events, sick in body and in mind, Surrey begged to be recalled from Ireland, and at length (1521) his request was complied with, and he left for England, appointing the Earl of Ormond as Lord Deputy.

By this time Kildare had been more than two years in England. The charges against him were referred to Cardinal Wolsey; the Cardinal was prejudiced against him,[2] and this prejudice had been intensified by fresh charges and reports made both by Ormond and Surrey.[3] But it is easier to make charges than to prove them, and the charges against Kildare had not been proved true, and Wolsey was too great a man to be guided altogether by prejudice, or to confound certainty with mere suspicion. He did not—he could not, consistently with justice—condemn the late Deputy, nor did he commit him to prison; but he was prevented from going to Ireland, as it was thought that his influence there would not be in the direction of peace, nor would he be likely to assist a Viceroy who took so many of his inspirations from Ormond. But there was no other restraint imposed upon him. He mixed in society, he attended at Court, and was among the King's retinue at that famous meeting with the French king on the Field of the Cloth of Gold.[4] About that date Kildare married his second wife, Lady Elizabeth Grey, a relative of the King. This alliance gave him powerful friends. He became a man of power and influence at Court, a man whom it would be unsafe to attack. His accusers ceased to accuse, slander and malignity held their tongues, there were no more charges, or even insinuations, against him, and he was allowed without let or hindrance to go back to Ireland (1523).

He soon commenced to quarrel with Ormond, and he had

[1] Meehan's *Geraldines*, pp. 48-49; Ware's *Annals*.

[2] Campion's *History*, p. 162; Cox, p. 209.

[3] *State Papers*, vol. ii. p. 45. He went to great lengths to get O'Carroll to give evidence against Kildare.

[4] Cox, p. 210.

many reasons to complain of his conduct. Ormond had used his power as Deputy with harshness and severity, and had especially harassed all those who were known to be friendly to Kildare. Contrary to so many enactments, he had exacted coyne and livery within the Pale itself and from the King's subjects. He had so irritated the neighbouring chiefs that his oppressions could hardly be borne, and Magillapatrick of Ossory had sent a special envoy to Henry VIII. to solemnly warn him that, if he did not chastise his Deputy, he himself would declare war against the King. The solemn manner and lofty tone assumed by the envoy of a petty chief has excited the ridicule of historians, but such an embassy shows that under Ormond's vexatious rule the limits of endurance had been passed.[1] Kildare was not slow to send all the charges he could make against his rival to England; his rival retorted; there were charges and counter-charges; and at length a Royal Commission was appointed by the English Privy Council to proceed to Ireland and examine into these charges on the spot.[2] They did so, and either the justice of Kildare's cause or the influence of his friends prevailed. Ormond was dismissed from office (1524), and, to deepen his humiliation, Kildare was appointed in his place.[3]

On resuming the office of Lord Deputy, after an interval of more than four years, the outlook before him was not promising. Ormond, humiliated, degraded and embittered, was not disposed to make the way of government easy for his successful rival, but instead was much more likely to throw every obstacle in his path and to use any mistakes he might make for his ultimate ruin. The chiefs bordering on the Pale—O'More, O'Connor, and O'Carroll—who had submitted to Surrey through necessity and with reluctance, were

[1] Leland, vol. ii. p. 133. The envoy met the King as he was going to his devotions. "Sta pedibus (he said). Domine Rex, Dominus meus me misit ad te et jussit dicere quod si non vis castigare Petrum Rufum (Piers Butler), ipse faciet bellum contra te."

[2] *State Papers*, vol. ii. p. 105. The Commissioners arrived in Ireland about midsummer 1524.

[3] *Ibid.* vol. ii. p. 115. Kildare was appointed in August 1524.

not disposed to be equally compliant with Kildare; and as he was related by blood to the two latter, they might hope with some reason that any violation of their promise to Surrey might be easily condoned. The Earl of Desmond was master of great resources. He was little more than nominally a subject of England, considered himself an independent prince, and in the manner of such corresponded with continental monarchs. But from nobody did the Deputy experience more trouble than from the rulers of Tirconnell and Tirowen.

O'Donnell had gone to Rome (1512) on a pilgrimage, but no sooner had he returned than he discarded the pilgrim's staff for the sword, and that same year he was at war with his neighbour O'Neill, and also with Burke of Connaught. The next year he was in correspondence with the King of Scotland, who purposed making a descent on Ireland, but the fate of Bruce must have warned O'Donnell, and he dissuaded James IV. from his designs.[1] Three years later he attacked O'Connor Roe. He had previously tried in vain to take O'Connor's fortified castle of Sligo, but a French knight, who had been on a pilgrimage to Lough Derg and was hospitably treated by O'Donnell, sent him a ship armed with heavy guns, and with this Sligo Castle was attacked from the sea and captured.[2] The same year O'Donnell and O'Neill were at war. In these wars with Tirowen it has been said that O'Donnell was generally the aggressor,[3] but in 1522, in the war between them of that year, the aggressor was O'Neill. He made his preparations with secrecy and care, strengthened himself by an alliance with all the Connaught chiefs—Clanrickard, the O'Connors, Burke of Mayo, and MacDermot—got the aid even of O'Brien of Thomond, sought and obtained the help of his own Ulster chiefs—Magennis, MacMahon, and O'Reilly—and had a contingent of English mercenaries from Leinster, who came to help "the son of the Earl's daughter";[4] for Conn O'Neill was a grandson of an Earl of Kildare. Against such forces it seemed vain for O'Donnell to contend,

[1] *Four Masters.*
[2] *Ibid.* 1516.
[3] Haverty's *History of Ireland*, p. 347.
[4] *Four Masters.*

but he was not dismayed. He called together his own chieftains of Tirconnell—O'Boyle, O'Doherty, the MacSweenys, and O'Gallagher—told them he would rather die fighting than surrender his freedom to O'Neill, and to that chieftain's peremptory summons to submit he sent him back defiance and bade him do his worst. Without waiting for his allies of Munster and Connaught, O'Neill despatched a contingent into Tirconnell and captured the castle of Ballyshannon, which was bravely defended by MacSweeny, and then he laid waste the surrounding country. O'Donnell, on his side, was not idle, and despatched his son Manus to devastate Tirowen. This had the desired effect, for O'Neill's army was withdrawn from Tirconnell, and while awaiting his allies his whole army encamped on the Hill of Knockvoe, overlooking the town of Strabane. O'Donnell had marched south to intercept the enemy and, if possible, to save Ballyshannon; but he was late, and being now joined by his son Manus, returning from Tirowen, he marched north, through the gap of Barnsmore, and advancing along the banks of the river Finn, pitched his camp not far from O'Neill, a little north of the town of Lifford. In numbers he was far inferior to O'Neill, but he was his superior in skill and daring, and while yet the forces of Connaught and Munster had not reached Tirowen he resolved to make a night attack on O'Neill's camp. He did so, and with the most complete success. O'Neill was defeated, lost 900 men in the engagement, many of his best leaders, and great quantities of armour, provisions, and "strong liquors" fell into O'Donnell's hands.[1] Emboldened by his victory, O'Donnell marched south to measure swords with the forces of Munster and Connaught, but the news of his victory went before him and filled his enemies with dismay. They hastily raised the siege of Sligo, which they had been trying to capture, and without waiting to encounter the victorious Northern they returned home.[2] The next year O'Donnell entered Tirowen and desolated the whole country, "burned its edifices and corn, and left nothing worth notice in it

[1] *Four Masters.* [2] *Ibid.* and *Annals of Loch Ce.*

without burning."[1] Continuing these quarrels, O'Neill and O'Donnell were again at war in the next year, and on this occasion the Deputy with his forces marched to O'Neill's assistance, but he was desirous to establish peace between them, for he was friendly to both. He brought them together in conference and succeeded in reconciling them, becoming himself security for the terms of agreement. And Kildare formed gossipred with O'Donnell. In defiance of this agreement, the two Northerns were at war again next year. Again the Deputy strove to reconcile them, and had a conference in Dublin for the purpose ; but it proved abortive, and they went home and went to war, though they shortly afterwards made peace.[2]

These events tried the patience as they tested the prudence of Kildare, nor was it certain that his share in them would meet with approval in England. Both O'Neill and O'Donnell had submitted to Lord Surrey and promised to be loyal subjects of England, but their conduct since had been little in harmony with that of well-disposed subjects. And the enemies of Kildare noted that he continued to be friendly with both these chiefs, whose turbulence had set the country ablaze ; that he was prepared at one time to lend the forces of the Crown to enable one of them to triumph over his foe ; that, in defiance of many parliamentary enactments, he had formed with O'Donnell the tie of gossipred ; and that when he was inaugurated as Lord Deputy, the Sword of State was borne by O'Neill.[3] Nor was this all. During these years the relations between England and France were strained, and as part of the game of politics, Francis I. meditated a descent upon Ireland, and for that purpose entered into negotiations with the Earl of Desmond. The insular simplicity of the Irishman did not understand the motives of French policy, for Francis was not thinking of Irish freedom, and was concerned only to curb and restrain Henry's continental activity by furnishing him with some trouble nearer home. Desmond's vanity was flattered, and he showed a readiness

[1] *Four Masters*, 1523. [2] *Ibid.* [3] Cox, p. 214.

to second the efforts of the French king. His conduct did not escape the vigilance and the malignity of Ormond. His treason was quickly made known in London, and forthwith peremptory orders were sent to the Deputy to proceed to Munster and arrest as a traitor the offending Earl. Without delay Kildare proceeded south to execute the orders he had got; but Desmond, by retreating into the mountains, managed to elude arrest, and the Deputy was compelled to return to Dublin without being able to carry out his orders.[1] His enemies reported that he was lukewarm and insincere in the King's service, that he was in collusion with Desmond and had sent him friendly warning beforehand, and that to this Desmond's escape was due. To be guilty of being in collusion with a traitor was a crime of the gravest nature, to be suspected of it was serious and at least required investigation, and once again Kildare had to proceed to London (1526), and answer the following charges—that he had neglected to arrest Desmond, that he had contracted affinity with "Irish enemies," that he had hanged certain good subjects, and that he had conspired with O'Neill and O'Connor to make an inroad into Ormond's territory. On these charges he was lodged a prisoner in the Tower.[2]

The accused Deputy was not brought to trial at once, though many efforts were made against him by his enemies, and so many of the prominent men of the Pale went to England, that the English Council directed the Archbishop of Armagh to remain in Ireland, as otherwise all the great men of Ireland would be in England.[3] At length, when Ormond and his friends had completed their preparations and believed they were able to effect the late Deputy's ruin, he was brought before Wolsey and the English Council to be tried. Wolsey's prejudices against the accused had grown with time. He was placed in the position of judge, to act only on the evidence and to convict only when the charges made were satisfactorily proved; but his conduct at the trial was rather that of an

[1] Cox, p. 215. [2] Ware's *Annals*, 1526.
[3] Hamilton's *Calendar of State Papers*, p. 5.

embittered partisan than of an impartial judge. Instead of leaving to others the work of accusation, he became accuser himself, though he felt he owed an apology to the Council for doing so. He charged him that though his friend Desmond had been in treasonable correspondence with Francis I. of France, and afterwards with the Emperor Charles V., yet he would not arrest him as a traitor, but when sent to do so wilfully shunned his sight, altered his course, warned his friends. He taunted him that if he had but lost a cow or garron of his own, two hundred kerns would have come at his whistle to recover the prey from the uttermost edge of Ulster. He calls him not so much the Earl of Kildare as the King of Kildare, tells him that he reigns over the land rather than rules it, that where he is malicious the truest subjects stand for Irish enemies, and where he is pleased the Irish enemy stands for a dutiful subject. Kildare had not an angel's patience, the limits of his endurance had been passed, and with difficulty he restrained himself while the Cardinal spoke. Then he rose angrily to reply. As to Desmond, he protests he did his duty; and to the charge that he forewarned him he indignantly replies by asking who was the messenger by whom the warning was sent—if it was sent by letter, where was the letter? his servants and friends are ready to be examined—why not examine them? and where is the justice of relying solely on what his enemies say, on their base words, their heedless hearsays, their frantic oaths? His last words were for the Cardinal, and must have nettled him not a little. "As touching my kingdom, my Lord (he said), I would you and I had exchanged kingdoms but for one month; I would trust to gather up more crumbs in that space than twice the revenues of my poor earldom. I sleep in a cabin when you lie soft on your bed of down, I serve under the cope of heaven when you are served under a canopy, I drink water out of a shell when you drink out of golden cups, my courser is trained to the field when your jennet is taught to amble." These unpleasant truths, all the more unpleasant because they were true, Wolsey heard with anger, though there were many at the Council who were glad to hear them,

for Wolsey had many enemies and scarce any friends. But though Kildare was acquitted of conniving at Desmond's escape, the charge that he had urged O'Neill and O'Connor to attack the Earl of Ormond was not so easily disposed of; he was in fact found guilty of this and sent back a prisoner to the Tower. And Wolsey sent an order to the governor to have him executed; but appeal was made to King Henry in person, and Wolsey's order was not carried out.[1]

The state of Ireland in the meantime went from bad to worse. When leaving for England, Kildare had left as his Deputy his relative, Sir James FitzGerald; but, probably because he *was* his relative, he was soon dismissed and Lord Delvin appointed in his place (1526).[2] In collusion with O'Carroll of Ely, and, as it appeared, at the instigation of Kildare, O'Connor of Offaly made an attack on the Pale; and Delvin, who sought to chastise his insolence, attacked him with all the forces he could muster, but was defeated and taken prisoner. Nor was it until after protracted negotiations, much delay, and the payment of a ransom that O'Connor allowed him to go free. The Archbishop of Dublin and Birmingham, the Lord Chief Justice, had already warned Wolsey of Delvin's incapacity, and they suggested that Kildare be sent back;[3] other influences were at work to have Ormond appointed Deputy, while the Duke of Norfolk[4] attributed all the ills of the Pale to the quarrels between Kildare and Ormond, and remonstrated against the appointment of either. But his remonstrance was unheeded. Ormond was now in high favour with the King. His relative, Mary Boleyn, had been the King's mistress, and her sister Anne had succeeded her in the same degraded position and had unbounded influence over her royal paramour. At the King's suggestion and request, Ormond had resigned his earldom, which was conferred on Anne Boleyn's father, Sir

[1] Campion's *History of Ireland*, pp. 164-72; Cox, pp. 219-20.

[2] Ware's *Annals*.

[3] *State Papers* (Henry VIII.), pp. 126-7.

[4] This was the Earl of Surrey of former days. He had been Duke of Norfolk since 1524.

Thomas Boleyn, who thus became Earl of Ormond,[1] while the Sir Piers Butler of other days became Earl of Ossory and Lord Deputy (1528), and his son, Sir James Butler, was appointed Lord Treasurer of Ireland. Yet, though in such high favour with the King, and having large resources at his command, Ossory did not succeed. He was not personally popular in Ireland, either with native or English-born. Among the higher officials in the Pale Kildare had many friends, and his relatives among the Irish chiefs would take care to give trouble to the man who had so patiently and so perseveringly plotted Kildare's ruin. At length the wisdom and policy of Norfolk's[2] advice was recognized, Ossory was set aside (1529), and the government was placed in the hands of an Englishman, Sir William Skeffington. With him there came, though given no official position, the exiled Earl of Kildare. His old enemy Wolsey was now fallen and disgraced; it became the fashion to honour those whom he had sought to dishonour; the Earl of Desmond was dead and could no longer intrigue with either emperor or king; and there could be no object gained by keeping Kildare in England. And it was expected that in Ireland he would second the efforts of Skeffington and help to re-establish the authority of the Crown.

At first all went well. Conn O'Neill of Tirowen had harassed the Pale by his attacks; it was necessary to punish him; for that purpose an army was mustered, and the unusual spectacle was seen of Kildare and Ossory marching together under the Deputy's command to lay waste the lands of Tirowen. With them also on this expedition (1531) was O'Donnell of Tirconnell. Since the year in which he had won the victory of Knockvoe, and chased the Munstermen and Connaughtmen from Sligo, he laid claim to be the overlord of Connaught and obtained tribute from its chiefs. But either his exactions or his insolence became unbearable, and a con-

[1] Carte's *Ormond*, Introduction, p. 45.

[2] Norfolk had declared that the malice between the Earls of Kildare and Ossory was the only cause of the ruin of that poor land (*State Papers*, p. 134, Letter to Wolsey).

federacy had been formed for his overthrow (1526), in which O'Connor and MacDonogh and MacDermot joined, and afterwards Burke and Barrett of Mayo. Even this confederacy was not equal for O'Donnell, nor did it liberate Connaught from his yoke, and in that year he twice entered Connaught, ravaged Moylurg, destroyed the strong castle of Grange, defeated the united forces of O'Connor and MacDonogh, crossed the Moy and marched as far as Crossmolina, and compelled both Burke and Barret to give him obedience. Every year subsequently, for the next five years, Connaught was subject to his attacks; and if a chief murmured or became restive, or if his rent was not regularly paid, he entered the province and wasted it with fire and sword.[1] It was hardly zeal for the service of an English king that caused him to march under the banners of Skeffington, but O'Neill's territory was to be attacked, and the prospect of inflicting damage on his rival he found it impossible to resist. But such an alliance was not likely to endure. It was composed of too many discordant elements, and the evils of dissension would be likely soon to appear. Ancient enmities are not easily laid aside, neither Kildare nor Ossory had ever shown an apostolic spirit of forgiveness, and it would be difficult indeed to discover any object for which they could work harmoniously together. O'Donnell's only object was to injure, and, if possible, ruin O'Neill, and this done he would have no special enthusiasm for England or England's Viceroy. Nor did Kildare or Ossory wish to be placed in a subordinate position to such as Skeffington; for both were proud, both belonged to ancient families who for centuries had been possessed of almost regal power, and both considered it an indignity to be thus placed under the command of a simple English knight. Some damage was done to Tirowen by the allied forces, but it was not considerable.[2] Skeffington, not remarkable for military talents, and ill-supported, was able to do nothing more. He

[1] *Annals of Four Masters*; *Annals of Loch Cé.*

[2] Ware's *Annals*, 1531; *State Papers*, pp. 151-2 (O'Donnell's submission).

and Kildare quarrelled, intrigues were set on foot against him, and the influence of Kildare was such that Skeffington was recalled, and Kildare himself became once more Lord Deputy.[1] Apparently as a counterpoise, Lord James Butler, Ossory's son, was continued in the office of Lord Treasurer.

During his last term of office Kildare was as active as ever and as overbearing. All those who had acted as his friends during the years of stress and trial which had passed he favoured and exalted. But with those who had acted as his enemies he determined to be even, and amongst them Allen, Archbishop of Dublin, and the Earl of Ossory were selected as the special objects of his resentment. Allen was Lord Chancellor; he had been the creature and favourite of Wolsey, and this fact alone was enough to turn against him Kildare's wrath. He was asked to give an account of the public moneys that had passed through his hands as Chancellor; his explanation of many things was halting and insufficient, and Kildare summarily dismissed him from office,[2] and appointed in his place a staunch and faithful friend of his own—Cromer, Archbishop of Armagh. But his old enemy, Ossory, he harassed and persecuted still more, ravaged his lands, destroyed his castles and attacked his city of Kilkenny. Nor did he disdain alliances with the Irish chiefs, but, on the contrary, gave a daughter in marriage to O'Carroll of Ely and another to O'Connor of Offaly,[3] and it was at his suggestion that his brother John and O'Neill devastated Louth. In some family squabble between the O'Carrolls the Deputy had interfered on behalf of his son-in-law, and in some small engagement received a gunshot wound, which was serious, and often afterwards gave him such pain that it was said he had become mentally deranged. At least such was the view of many who could not otherwise explain the violence of his conduct.[4] Secret

[1] Ware's *Annals*, 1532.

[2] *State Papers*, p. 159. He was appointed Chancellor in 1528, and dismissed in July 1532. [3] *Ibid.* p. 161.

[4] Cox, p. 224. He received the wound besieging the castle of Birr. He regained, says Cox, his health but not his "intellectuals," and was ever after "a little crack-brained."

consultations were held by Allen and Ossory, in conjunction with the late Deputy, Skeffington. It was proposed to arraign Kildare before the King; a majority of the Irish Council were found to be in favour of this course, and Allen, Master of the Rolls, was deputed to proceed to England. He told Henry VIII. that English laws, manners, habits and language were circumscribed within a circuit of twenty miles, that the exactions and oppressions practised on the inhabitants loyal to England had driven many from the land, and that their lands were occupied by Irish enemies, from which it might be inferred that English power in Ireland was almost at an end. Impressed with the gravity of these accusations, the King was highly incensed against the Deputy, and sent him a peremptory mandate to at once proceed to England and answer for his conduct. Kildare was in a cruel difficulty. He could not disobey the King's summons, and he feared to obey it. He was conscious that he had made mistakes, that his conduct had been arbitrary and oppressive. He knew that his enemies were able, influential, and vindictive, and that whatever irregularities he had been guilty of their malignity would turn into crimes, and he sent his wife to England, hoping that through her influential friends the King would relent. In the meantime he furnished his castles with arms and ammunition from the Government stores, as if he intended in the last resort to rebel. In England his wife put forth her best efforts on his behalf, and her friends were powerful, but it was in vain. Henry would not be moved. His summons was urgent and would not be recalled; it was dangerous even to delay; and with a heavy heart and evident foreboding of ill, Kildare left Ireland (1534), never afterwards to return.[1]

[1] Cox, pp. 225-6.

CHAPTER XXVII

The Folly of Silken Thomas

WHEN Kildare was leaving for England he was directed by Henry VIII. to appoint some one as his Deputy on whom he could rely. It was necessary that the Irish Government should not be left without a head, and it was, moreover, necessary, in the troubled times then existing, that he should be a person of prudence and courage, a man capable of forming his own judgment, not acting on impulse or caprice, not likely to accept as certainties, at least without careful scrutiny, the interested reports of others, and not likely to act from personal rancour or become the tool of faction. Perhaps Kildare found it difficult to discover any such person to act for him. His conduct had recently been hard to understand. He had made many enemies ;[1] his Deputy would have to keep these enemies in check and to interpret his own recent acts in a favourable light ; and it may be that even his best friends shrank from undertaking such a burden. Either from necessity or choice, he appointed his son Thomas to the office, and the appointment was in every way unfortunate, and for the Geraldines had a tragic termination. Thomas was not yet twenty-one years old. He had neither the wisdom nor experience of age, but, on the contrary, had more than the usual share of the rashness and impetuosity of youth. Generous, brave, unsuspecting, he had not the penetration to see where danger lurked, did not realize the number of his enemies nor the extent of their malignity,

[1] These enemies were among the Privy Council, for Kildare in his speech at Drogheda declared that they would be willing to risk the loss of one of their eyes if they could be assured that he would lose both his (Cox, p. 227).

and readily fell into the snares which they skilfully laid for his destruction. His father, before taking ship from Drogheda, seems to have had some misgiving as to the choice he had made, some premonition of impending ill, and in the presence of the assembled Privy Council gave his son some sound advice, which that young man would have done well to have acted upon. "My son Thomas (he said), you know that my sovereign lord the King has sent for me into England, and what shall betide me God knows, for I do not. But, whatever happens, I am now well spent in years, and so I must soon die, because I am old.[1] Wherefore, as my winter is well-nigh ended, and the spring of your age now buds my will is that you behave so wisely in these your green years that with honour you may grow to that hoary winter through which your father is marching fast. And because it pleases His Majesty the King that upon my departure I should substitute in my place some one for whose government I could answer, although I know your years are tender and your judgment not matured, and, therefore, I might with good cause be reluctant to put a naked sword in a young man's hand, yet, because I am your father, I am satisfied to share with you the command of the ship of State, so that I may be able to command you as a father and correct you as my son, if you should wrongly handle the helm. And now my desire is rather to learn how to die in the fear of God than to live in the pomp of the world. But do you consider how easy it is to destroy, how hard to build up, and in all your affairs be ruled by this Council, whose wisdom will be able to restrain you with sound and sage advice, for though in authority you rule them, they in Council must rule you. My son, you know that my late wounds stifle my talk, or I would have grated longer on this matter, for a good tale may be twice told. . . . But though my fatherly affection requires my discourse to be longer, I trust your good inclination asks it to be shorter, and upon that assurance here,

[1] This cannot be reconciled with Gilbert's statement (*Viceroys*, p. 467) that Gerald, in 1502, was only fifteen years old, which would make his age at this time only forty-seven.

in the presence of this honourable assembly, I deliver you this sword." [1]

In an atmosphere of adulation and intrigue these salutary counsels were soon forgotten. Thomas was thoughtless and vain, so fond of dress that he was called Silken Thomas, proud of his family, its power and its ancient renown, and surrounded by those flatterers who flourish within the shadow of authority, his self-confidence was without bounds. His father's enemies resolved to take advantage of his innocence and credulity, and industriously spread abroad a report that when his father reached London he was put to death. The lie had the desired effect, for, though it was a lie, it was quickly believed. A wise man would have hesitated to believe such a story, a prudent man would at least have waited until full inquiry could have been made, so that its truth or falsity could be ascertained. But Silken Thomas was neither a wise nor a prudent man, and without stopping to consider its inherent improbability or the source from which it came, he accepted the whole story as true, and prepared to be revenged as best he could. With a retinue of 140 horsemen he entered the city of Dublin, then crossed the river to St. Mary's Abbey, where the Council was sitting, and with flushed face and quivering lips he flung the Sword of State on the Council table, and proclaimed that he was no longer Henry's Deputy but his foe. "I have (he said) more mind to conquer than to govern, to meet him in the field than to serve him in office, and if all the hearts of England and Ireland join in this quarrel, as I trust they will, then should he be a byword for his heresy, lechery and tyranny, wherein the age to come may skore him among the ancient princes of most abominable and hateful memory." And Campion adds that he used many other slanderous and foul terms, "which for regard of the King's posterity I have no mind to utter." [2] His own and his father's friend, Cromer, Archbishop of Armagh, sought to dissuade him from his folly, took him affectionately by the

[1] Cox, pp. 226-7. He left Drogheda for England about February 1534.

[2] Campion's *History*, p. 176.

hand, and with tears streaming down his face, used every form of entreaty. It was in vain. Among the Deputy's followers was an Irish minstrel, who just then striking upon his harp some wild notes of defiance begged of the great Geraldine to be revenged, and the thoughtless words of the harper were more potent than the appeals and entreaties of the Archbishop. And, breathing forth vengeance and war, Silken Thomas rushed from the Council Chamber to his doom.[1]

He had soon gathered around him his own retainers, his tenants and friends, and he was joined by large numbers of the Irish both within the Pale and on its borders, and at the head of this army—more formidable in numbers than in discipline—he appeared before Dublin and demanded the submission of the city. The citizens were then as always devotedly loyal to the English king, but they had no organized forces for defence, and the plague which had just wrought great havoc among them weakened their capacity for resistance. They reluctantly submitted; but the Government officials retired within the shelter of Dublin Castle, which was so strongly fortified that the ordnance of Silken Thomas was unable to make any impression on its defences. Leaving a portion of his forces to continue the siege of the castle, the rebellious Geraldine, at the head of the remainder, swept in anger through the district of Fingal,[2] laying waste the homes of the English residents in that district. Within the castle meanwhile was Allen, Archbishop of Dublin, and had he remained there his position would have been one of security. But he was by nature timorous, he had long been the bitter enemy of the Geraldines, he had striven with the Butler faction for the ruin of Kildare, and in the intrigues which drove Kildare's son to revolt it is easy to discern his hand. The prospect of Dublin Castle being captured by that young man he regarded with dismay, feeling that he would

[1] Cox, p. 231; Ware's *Annals*. These events occurred on the 11th of June.

[2] Fingal was that district, north of Dublin, extending eastwards to the sea by Clontarf and on to Howth (*Book of Rights* p. 187).

receive no mercy, and in the hope of getting beyond his rage he secretly and stealthily took shipping for England. Perhaps it was by stress of weather, perhaps it was by treachery, the vessel was driven on the beach at Clontarf, and the terrified Archbishop hastened to take refuge in a friend's house in the neighbouring village of Artane. His hiding-place was soon discovered, and the soldiers of Silken Thomas dragged the unfortunate Archbishop from his bed before their master. Allen was not a man to inspire much sympathy or respect. "He was an astute, hard man, and, like Cromwell, had been trained up in business to the detriment of his humanity or even honesty."[1] As Commissioner of Wolsey's legatine court, he was both hated and feared; he had been a sharer in the spoliation of many monasteries; his letters to Wolsey's successor, Cromwell, show how avaricious and grasping he was; and Kildare had been able to dismiss him from the Chancellorship because he had appropriated public funds to his own personal uses.[2] Yet even a worse man might have excited pity and might expect mercy, as he threw himself before FitzGerald, bareheaded and barefooted, dressed only in his shirt, his hands clasped piteously in supplication. It is true that Silken Thomas did not tell his followers to murder him, for the words he used were "Take away from me that clown"; but before his eyes the soldiers fell upon the hapless Allen and butchered him, and he did not interfere. And if Henry II. can be justly considered as at least partly guilty of the murder of Beckett, there is equal reason for holding FitzGerald guilty of the murder of Allen.[3]

A cause which has to rely for success on popular sympathy and support is not served by crime, least of all by the crime of murder, and Allen's tragic fate inspired horror and cast a dark shadow on the prospects of Silken Thomas. But for the time there was nothing to stay his progress, nor did he cease until he had plundered and wasted the whole territory from

[1] Gasquet, *Henry VIII. and the English Monasteries*, pp. 20-21.
[2] D'Alton's *History of the Archbishops of Dublin*, pp. 184-90.
[3] Ware's *Annals*. The murder was committed on the 28th of July.

Dublin to Drogheda. It was then that he appealed to his cousin, Lord James Butler, expressing his willingness to forget their ancient enmity, and begging him to join him, and promising that, in the event of success, they should share all Ireland between them. Nothing could be more discouraging than the reply to these overtures.[1] Butler, indeed, confesses a reluctance to call him cousin, as his treason and "lewdness" have shamed his kindred. "I had rather (he says) in this quarrel die thine enemy than live thy partner. For the kindness you proffer me and good love in the end of your letter, the best return I can make is to advise you, though you have gone far, to pause ere you go too far. Ignorance and error and a false notion of duty have carried you unaware to this folly, but not so far that you may not retrieve your error. The King is a vessel of bounty and mercy, and your words against him shall not be counted malicious, but rather the outcome of heat and thoughtlessness, except, by persevering in your present course, you prove yourself to be acting mischievously and wilfully." Such advice as this, it might be said such rebukes, were ill suited to the fiery temper of the Geraldine, and to make an effective and suitable retort he entered Butler's territory and wasted it with fire and sword, nor were the forces of Ossory able to offer an effective resistance.

From wasting the lands of his relative and enemy he directed his steps towards Dublin, where matters of urgent importance demanded his presence. Though powerful on land, he was powerless on sea, and the ocean highway being open, messengers had been despatched to England, begging for assistance, and painting in strong colours the danger which hung over the city. Henry received these messengers well, commended the inhabitants of Dublin for their loyalty, told them to resist the rebel and that succour would soon be sent them. Thus encouraged, the citizens rose against FitzGerald's soldiers, besieged in turn those who were besieging Dublin Castle, and when Silken Thomas and his army appeared

[1] Cox, pp. 232-3.

again before the walls, the gates were closed against them, their friends inside were already prisoners, and several sallies were made from the city, in which some damage had been inflicted on the besiegers, and in which one Mores [1] is specially commended for his courage. To capture the city Thomas found to be impossible. He had taken some of the citizens prisoners and offered to exchange them with his own soldiers, who were prisoners within the city, and when this offer was accepted he raised the siege.[2]

No sooner had the city been thus relieved than the ships with reinforcements from England were seen coming up the harbour. Silken Thomas was still near Dublin ; a portion of the English forces—180 in all—landed near Howth, and these he allowed to land without opposition, then, suddenly falling upon them, he cut them to pieces, killed many and took the remainder prisoners. And, in addition, one of his followers captured an English vessel freighted with choice English geldings. Yet this success was only partial and transient and could not affect the final issue of the campaign. Sir William Brereton and 500 men landed on the southern shore of Dublin Bay. He was followed by the new Lord Deputy, Sir William Skeffington, and the whole army soon entered the city, where they were effusively welcomed by the citizens.[3] Nor was this all that happened to dispirit Silken Thomas. It had long since been ascertained that the Earl of Kildare had not been executed, and many of FitzGerald's followers must have asked themselves what they were fighting for, and why should they continue to fight. For the murder of the Archbishop of Dublin, a sentence of excommunication in its most aggravated form had been published against all concerned in the crime, and Thomas was mentioned by name.[4] This must have driven

[1] Hamilton's *Calendar of State Papers*, p. 12. Skeffington tells his friend, Cromwell, that the "said Mores boldly went out of the gates of Dublin and with his own hand slew divers of the rebel's best footmen."

[2] Cox, pp. 235-7.

[3] *Ibid.* p. 238. He landed on the 11th of October, and was accompanied by Lord Leonard Gray (Ware's *Annals*).

[4] *State Papers* (Henry VIII.), vol. ii. pp. 217-19.

many from his side, as they did not care to be identified with a man, or a cause, visited with such ecclesiastical censures. His cousin, Butler, far from lending any assistance, was intriguing against him with O'Brien of Thomond. The efforts to give the rebellion the character of a religious war were futile, and when the Emperor, Charles V., and the Pope had been appealed to, so that they might aid in striking down a king who was the common enemy of both, they gave some vague promises of assistance, but they gave nothing more.[1]

When Skeffington arrived from England the year was advanced, and he determined to mature his plans in Dublin and make all needful preparations, and open the campaign in the following spring. But some of the more ardent spirits in his army were impatient of this delay, and complained to the Government of England of his inactivity. And they had good grounds of complaint, for Silken Thomas, aided by O'More and O'Connor of Offaly, was sweeping like a hurricane through Meath, destroying the property of those in sympathy with England. He had burned Trim, Dunboyne, and Kells, had recaptured Kildare and garrisoned his castle of Maynooth. Yet Skeffington would not be moved.[2] He was more capable in a civil than in a military office; he was old, his health was not good, and the fire and energy of youth were extinguished by infirmity and age. Neither entreaty nor menace could compel him to commence operations while the winter lasted, but when the spring came his sluggishness was laid aside. With his whole army he marched from Dublin, and after some desultory operations of minor importance in Meath, he advanced to attack the castle of Maynooth. The castle was the richest of all Kildare's castles; it was strongly built, its keep was considered impregnable, and Silken Thomas hoped that its garrison of 100 men would be able to keep Skeffington at bay until he himself would come to its relief. For nine days the siege lasted, and at length, on the 23rd of March 1535, the

[1] Leland, vol. ii. p. 144.

[2] *State Papers*, vol. ii. pp. 219-24, Allen's letter to Cromwell; also pp. 226 *et seq.*, further letter from Allen.

THE CASTLE OF THE GERALDINES

MAYNOOTH, CO. KILDARE

heavy ordnance of the besiegers had made so large a breach in the wall that an entry was effected. In the attack which followed more than 60 of the garrison were slain: the remainder, numbering 37, were taken prisoners. Two days later the prisoners were tried by a military court and condemned to death, and the heads of the principal men were put on the turrets of the castle.[1]

Silken Thomas was not far off when the castle of Maynooth fell into the enemy's hands. He was rapidly advancing to its relief at the head of an army of 7000 men, drawn principally from Connaught, but the news that Maynooth had fallen stayed his further advance, and so disheartened his followers that most of them abandoned him. He made his way to Thomond, secure of an asylum there from O'Brien, and perhaps also of assistance in prosecuting the war. And he would, perhaps, have got help but that his cousin, Butler, had stirred up strife in Thomond, and had urged Donogh O'Brien to claim the chieftaincy of the province;[2] and the ruling chief, compelled to defend his position at home, was unable to give any assistance to FitzGerald. In Desmond also Butler had been active, and had induced the Earl of Desmond to take no part in the war; and for Silken Thomas to look for aid in that quarter was vain. In addition to this his old friend and ally, O'More of Leix, had been induced or terrorised by the Earl of Ossory to desert him. But he had still some forces, and his resources were by no means exhausted. O'Connor of Offaly and O'Carroll were still ready to stand by

[1] Cox, p. 239; Ware's *Annals*; *State Papers*, vol. ii. p. 236. Both Cox and Ware have a story, taken, it seems, from the same source, that the captain of the garrison, Paresse—foster brother to Silken Thomas—surrendered the castle for a bribe and yet was executed. But this story is evidently untrue, for in the letter sent by the Deputy and Council *the very day after the execution of the prisoners* (dated Maynooth, March 26) there is no mention of this treachery, though the whole particulars of the siege and capture of the place are given, and Paresse is mentioned by name.

[2] This Donogh O'Brien was nephew to the chief of Thomond, and married to a daughter of the Earl of Ossory (*State Papers*, vol. ii. pp. 171-230).

him, and joined to these he was soon again at the head of a fresh army. In the meantime Skeffington was inactive. He had got ill after the capture of Maynooth, and rested there for some time, nor did he, even when he got well, follow up the advantages he had gained. While he remained idle, Silken Thomas was wasting the Pale. In addition, a report was circulated that both O'Neill and O'Donnell were on the point of coming to his assistance.[1] This darkening prospect alarmed the English of the Pale; they complained of Skeffington's inactivity, and messengers were sent to England demanding that he be superseded, and Lord Leonard Gray, whose abilities were recognized, be appointed in his place.[2] This prayer was in part granted, and in August 1535 Lord Leonard Gray was given supreme military command, though Skeffington was still continued as Deputy. But Gray's authority in military matters was unlimited, what he was to do was left entirely to his own discretion, and he pursued the campaign with such vigour and success that the allies of Silken Thomas were forced to abandon him. At length O'Connor of Offaly, who had stood by him longest, submitted, and finally Thomas himself, reduced to the last extremity, sent a message to Gray that he was willing to submit on terms. The terms he asked were his life to be spared and his lands left him, nor is it likely that he would have submitted without at least a promise of his life, yet Skeffington stated that he submitted "without condition."[3] This was the end of the rebellion. Lord Gray with the unfortunate prisoner proceeded to England, and soon after Silken Thomas found himself lodged in the Tower.

Henry VIII. was glad that the rebellion was suppressed, and that the audacious rebel was at last in his power, and he wrote a letter of thanks to the Deputy. Yet his satisfaction was not complete. What he wanted was unconditional surrender on the part of Silken Thomas; he did not approve of any conditions being attached, and told the Deputy that if

[1] *State Papers*, vol. ii. p. 247. [2] *Ibid.* vol. ii. pp. 266 *et seq.*

[3] *Ibid.* vol. ii. p. 274. Skeffington's letter bears date 24th August 1535. The rebellion was then over.

FitzGerald "had been apprehended after such sort as was convenable to his deservings, the same had been much more thankful and better to our contentacion."[1] It was quite evident that the unfortunate Geraldine would have to atone for his rebellion with the sacrifice of his life, although Norfolk had advised that the conditions made with him by Gray and Lord James Butler be kept, otherwise no Irishman would ever again trust himself to an Englishman, or believe in his promises.[2] This advice Henry did not take, nor was his ferocious rage satisfied with the blood of a single victim. He wished to extirpate the whole FitzGerald family, and he found a ready instrument of his will. On the last day of the year (1535) Sir William Skeffington had died at Kilmainham, and Lord Leonard Gray had been appointed his successor. He was but a short time in office when, under the pretext of friendship, he invited the five uncles of Silken Thomas to a banquet at Dublin. They went, fearing as little as had O'Connor of Offaly in former days, when invited to a banquet by Bermingham, the "treacherous Baron." They were treated with similar treachery, for Gray arrested them and sent them prisoners to England, where, as well as their nephew, they were imprisoned in the Tower of London. They were conveyed to England in a vessel called the *Cow*, and this proved to be a source of serious alarm to them, as they had heard of a prophecy which said that an Earl's five sons should in time to come be wafted for England in a cow's belly, but should never return.[3] The fate of Henry's prisoners was not a pleasant one, and has been justly described as a condition in which they were lodged like hogs and fed like dogs,[4] and the pitiable state to which Silken Thomas was soon reduced would

[1] From this it appears that FitzGerald did *not* surrender, as Skeffington declared, "without condition," and the same appears from the letter of the Privy Council, and also from Norfolk's letter to Cromwell (*State Papers*, vol. ii. pp. 275-8, 280).

[2] *State Papers*, vol. ii. p. 277.

[3] Ware's *Annals*; Leland, vol. ii. p. 153; *State Papers*, vol. ii. pp. 304-5.

[4] Gasquet, *Henry VIII. and the English Monasteries*, p. 4.

move the hardest heart to compassion. In a letter from the Tower, which he wrote to his friend O'Brien of Thomond,[1] he begged him to send him £20 for the purpose of procuring food and clothes. And he told his friend, Rothe, that since he came to London he had got no money, that he was without either stockings or shoes, that he had no shirt but one, and that, instead of a velvet cloak furred with lambskin fur, he had no garment but a single frieze cloak; that repeatedly, during the severity of winter, he had gone barefooted and barelegged, and that he would have had to go naked but for the charity of some of his fellow-prisoners, who had given him old socks and shoes and shirts. To such a condition of poverty and hunger and nakedness was that young noble reduced who had so long known the comforts and even splendour of luxury and power. His father was already dead—the knowledge of his son's folly had killed him; his uncles were his fellow-prisoners, and were no doubt reduced to the same pitiable condition as himself; and, broken in spirit, it must have been a relief to his tortured mind that on the 3rd February 1537 he and his five uncles were led forth from their prison and executed together at Tyburn.[2] Three of these uncles had opposed their nephew in his rebellion, but it mattered not: they were of the FitzGerald family—in Henry's eyes this made them enemies of the State, and as such they deserved to be sacrificed.

Henry's rage was even yet unappeased, for there still remained a son of the late Earl of Kildare, a boy twelve years of age, and named, like his father, Gerald. When his uncles were seized and sent to England the lad was ill in one of his father's castles in Kildare. His mother was in England. He was in charge of his tutor, a priest named Leverus,[3] and this faithful friend, rightly judging that his pupil's life would be sought, had him secretly sent to O'Brien of Thomond.[4] Even

[1] *State Papers*, vol. ii. pp. 402-3. [2] *Ibid.* vol. ii. p. 429.

[3] He was afterwards Bishop of Kildare, and, refusing to take the Oath of Supremacy (1559), was deprived of his diocese (Ware's *Bishops*).

[4] *State Papers*, vol. ii. p. 363. He was in Thomond in 1536, and O'Brien refused the Irish Council's demand to give him up.

there he was not safe. O'Brien wished to befriend him and was willing to defend him, and for a time the boy's place of residence was kept secret, and was changed from time to time. But it could not always be kept thus secret, for there were spies on his track. And Gray, the Lord Deputy, though he was young Gerald's uncle, was more anxious to curry favour with his royal master than to defend his nephew; and Henry would not be satisfied until the lad was in his power.[1] Unable to conceal his whereabouts, and doubtful of his capacity to defend him against a leader so skilful and daring as Gray, and with such resources at his command, and no doubt anxious besides to save his province from the horrors of war, O'Brien sent young Gerald to his aunt in Cork—Lady Eleanor MacCarthy. She had been married to MacCarthy of Carbery; she was now a widow, and just at the time (1538) received an offer of marriage from Manus O'Donnell, the chieftain of Tirconnell. She was devotedly attached to her nephew, and perhaps more for his sake than for her own she accepted the offer, and both aunt and nephew set out from Cork to Tirconnell. On their march through Desmond and Connaught they were treated with every mark of respect. It was well known that the boy was an object of special detestation to Henry, that those who treated him with respect, and still more favoured his escape, would earn the King's enmity, and that, on the other hand, whoever betrayed him was sure that pecuniary reward and royal favours awaited him. Yet neither menaces nor bribes, neither fear of the King's anger nor hope of his favours, was sufficient to procure the boy's betrayal, and both he himself and his aunt arrived safely at Tirconnell, where Lady Eleanor and O'Donnell were married.[2]

The pursuit and persecution of this boy irritated the Irish chiefs. The Geraldines were popular. They had become

[1] He was offered the King's pardon and to be the King's "true and loving subject," but the fate of his uncles and brother was recent, and his advisers did not think it wise that he should trust himself to such promises (*State Papers*, vol. ii. p. 537).

[2] *State Papers*, vol. iii. p. 28.

thoroughly Irish, with the faults and virtues of Irish chiefs, and it did seem hard that a lad who had committed no crime, and whose youth and innocence might have shielded him from harm, should be punished because of his brother's folly, and thus persecuted and hunted down in his native land. Laying aside for the moment their ancient jealousies, the Irish chiefs formed what was called the First Geraldine League, the object being to protect young Gerald FitzGerald and ultimately to restore him to his father's estates; and to make sure of his personal safety he was assigned a bodyguard of twenty-four horsemen, who were to accompany him wherever he went.[1] The members of the League were O'Neill and O'Donnell in the north; the Connaught chiefs; O'Brien and Desmond in the south; and with them were O'Connor of Offaly and O'Carroll, who were young Gerald's relatives. This was unpleasant news both to the Deputy and the King. What Henry would have wished was to see these chiefs quarrelling, but unity, and, above all, unity to protect young Gerald, he both hated and feared. But he was stubborn and persistent, and not easily baulked of his prey. The Deputy was eager to carry out his wishes, and even to anticipate them, and despairing of taking young FitzGerald by force, he was ready to employ treachery, and hoped that by treachery he would succeed. He invited O'Neill and O'Donnell to a friendly council near Dundalk (1539), to which they promised to bring young Gerald. But the two Northern chiefs, perhaps because they had reason to suspect that treachery was intended, declined coming to the conference at all, and Gray was disappointed and baffled, for his treacherous plans had failed. He candidly told his master, Henry VIII., what he intended. "And if they had kept appointment with me, having young Gerald with them, howsoever the thing had chanced, by the oath that I have made unto your Grace they should have left the young Gerald behind them quick or dead." [2]

[1] *State Papers*, vol. iii. p. 44 (Ormond's letter to the Irish Council). Ormond says that young Gerald was to be sent to the King of Scotland, for what purpose he could not tell.

[2] *Ibid.* vol. iii. p. 127.

O'Donnell had so far been a faithful member of the Geraldine League, but his wife thought she had reason to suspect his fidelity, and that perhaps he would betray her nephew ; and it was time to take alarm when the Irish Council could tell Henry VIII. that they had secured the friendship of O'Donnell as well as O'Neill.[1] To ensure the lad's safety, he was put on board a vessel bound for St. Malo, disguised as a peasant, and having with him his faithful tutor (Leverus), besides two others. But even in France he was not safe. A certain person named Warner was directed to proceed to Rennes and watch his movements, and report everything to the British Ambassador at Paris.[2] Wherever the young lad went he was followed by Henry's spies ; he had frequently to change his place of residence, and though he was treated with kindness everywhere and received every mark of respect,[3] yet he did not feel secure in France, and finally made his way to Rome. His kinsman, Cardinal Pole,[4] was able to protect him there, surrounded him with everything he required, had him educated as became his position ; and when Henry VIII. was dead and his son sat on the throne, Gerald FitzGerald was allowed to return from exile (1552), and was restored to his possessions, and two years later he became Earl of Kildare.

[1] *State Papers*, vol. iii. p. 196. [2] *Ibid.* pp. 211-13.

[3] Even the spy Warner declares that he was a "very proper young gentleman."

[4] If one Cardinal (Wolsey) treated the FitzGeralds with harshness and injustice, it is gratifying to know that another Cardinal (Pole) expiated Wolsey's enmity to the house of Kildare (Meehan's *Geraldines*, p. 55).

CHAPTER XXVIII

Henry becomes King of Ireland

AMONG the State Papers relating to Ireland in the reign of Henry VIII., the first place is given to one written in 1515, which describes the state of Ireland at that date, and in addition furnishes a plan for its reformation.[1] The writer is unknown, but he signs himself Panderus, or The Pander.[2] He was probably an Englishman; his sympathies are strongly English, his views are English, his desire was to see all Ireland brought effectually under English rule, and his plan of reformation was drawn up for that purpose. The story he has to tell in itself is not an agreeable one, and it must have been humiliating to England, for it is the story of its failure in Ireland so far. Three centuries and a half had passed since Henry II. spent Christmas in his wickerwork palace in Hoggin Green and had feasted the Irish chiefs, almost all of whom had submitted to him as their king. And it was the fashion to speak of that monarch as the conqueror of Ireland. But in the sixteenth century so far was it from being conquered that but a small district on the east coast acknowledged the supremacy of England and was subject to its laws. A line drawn from Dundalk to Kells, through Ardee, from Kells to Trim and Kilcock, then southward to Naas, and eastward from Naas to Rathcoole and Tallaght, ending at Dalkey on the coast, marked the boundaries of the Pale. It was a small and contracted area, not more than half of the modern counties of Louth and Meath, but a small portion of Kildare, and some-

[1] *State Papers* (Henry VIII.), vol. ii. pp. 1-31.

[2] He lived during the reigns of Edward IV., Edward V., Richard III., Henry VII., and Henry VIII. (Ware's *Writers*, p. 90).

thing more than half of the county of Dublin. Within this area dwelt the English subjects—some English by birth, many English by descent, but all recognizing the supremacy of England, acknowledging themselves as its subjects, accepting its laws, and demanding from it that protection of life and security of property which it is the duty of every government to give its subjects.

Yet these English subjects were not happy, nor was their condition, compared with the purely Irish outside, anything to be envied. The number of officials was large, much larger than was required or desirable for so small a territory, and these officials, eager to enrich themselves, harassed the people with their exactions. In spite of all the enactments against coyne and livery, the people of the Pale were often made familiar with both ; for money came but slowly and reluctantly from England, expeditions had to be made against the neighbouring Irish, whose inroads were often destructive, and when money was not to be had for the payment of the troops they had to be paid by coyne and livery. A subsidy was sometimes demanded by the English king from his Irish subjects, and loyalty urged them to satisfy his demands. Finally, there was the payment of large sums by way of Black Rent ; for the Irish chiefs were restless, and to purchase quietness from them it was necessary that they should be paid. From Down, O'Neill of Clanaboy got £40 a year ; a like sum was paid by Louth to O'Neill of Tirowen ; while from Meath, O'Connor of Offaly got the large sum of £300 a year, and £20 a year from Kildare. Scattered over the country were a few walled towns, especially the seaports, where English subjects dwelt and English laws were obeyed, and these, surrounded by the native Irish, were compelled to purchase their goodwill. Wexford paid Black Rent to MacMurrogh, Kilkenny and Tipperary to O'Carroll, Cork to MacCarthy, and Limerick had to pay £40 a year to O'Brien of Ara and a like sum to O'Brien of Thomond.[1] The remainder of the country was held by sixty chiefs of Irish descent and thirty of English descent, and each of these

[1] *State Papers*, vol. ii. p. 9.

Irish chiefs held by the sword and made peace and war as he pleased.

The chiefs of English descent made peace and war in the same way. They had ceased to be England's subjects or to recognize its laws. They intermarried with the Irish, adopted Irish customs, spoke the Irish tongue. Each of them had his brehon to administer the law, and each had an Irish harper in his hall. Such as these were referred to by the English as degenerate English, for they certainly had fallen away from English ways. Such was the case with the Earl of Desmond in Munster and his kinsmen the FitzGeralds, Sir John, Sir Thomas and Sir Gerald of Desmond, as also the Barrys, the Roches, the Cogans, the De Courcys and Barrets of Cork, and the Powers of Waterford. In Connaught the Burkes and Berminghams and Stantons and Jordans and Nangles and Barrets and Prendergasts were as Irish as the O'Connors or the O'Kellys. In Ulster the case was similar with the Savages and the Russels. And in Meath, in the neighbourhood of the Pale itself, were the Dillons, the D'Altons, the Tyrells and Delameres and Tuites, no longer holding their lands by English tenure, but each in the Irish fashion being called the captain of his nation.[1]

The Pander laments that such is the existing state of things, and attributes the falling away of these Anglo-Irish to the fact that the central government at Dublin was weak and ill supported from England, and that they adopted Irish habits and followed Irish ways as the best way to protect themselves. Nor does he look to the future with much hope. He quotes an old proverb which speaks of the pride of France, the treason of England, and the wars of Ireland.[2] He lays it down that coyne and livery will never cease to be exacted from English subjects until the Irish cease from their wars, that the Irish wars will never cease, and therefore it necessarily follows that

[1] *State Papers*, vol. ii. pp. 5, 25-26.

[2] *Ibid.* vol. ii. p. 11. He thinks the war will never have an end unless "Godde sett in mennes brestes to fynde some newe remedye that never was founde before."

coyne and livery will never cease. He recalls that St. Bridget once asked of her guardian angel from what Christian land most souls would be damned, and that he replied it was a land in the western part of the world, where there was continual war, from which land souls fell into hell as thick as showers of hail. And he has no doubt that this land is Ireland. "Wherefore (he says), it cannot be denyed by every estymation of man but that the angell dyd understande the lande of Ireland." [1] His only hope is that the King would take the reformation of the country seriously in hand. He points out that such is his duty, and to encourage him he prophesies that if he did, with the army of England and Ireland, he would be able to subdue France, rescue the Greeks, recover the city of Constantinople, vanquish the Turks, win the Holy Cross and the Holy Land, and die Emperor of Rome, and "eternal bliss shall be his end." [2]

So glittering a prospect ought to have roused to action a man even less ambitious than Henry VIII., but apparently he had little faith in the prophet or his prophecy—for prophecies are often made and seldom fulfilled—and Ireland for the next few years occupied but a small share of his thoughts, which were concerned with greater things. The ability of Surrey might have accomplished much if he had been supported by England, and if his plans had been adopted and carried out; but his success in the subjugation of Ireland was only partial and incomplete, and the effects transitory and unimportant. After he left Ireland the country was allowed once more to drift. The English colony, alternately ruled by Geraldine and Butler, was ruined by both, and when another writer [3] undertook to describe Ireland from what he saw and knew (1534), the country was in the same condition as it was twenty years before. The limits of the Pale were still the same and so was the condition of its people. If anything, it had become more Irish

[1] *State Papers*, vol. ii. p. 11. [2] *Ibid.* vol. ii. p. 31.

[3] This was Finglas, who wrote "A Breviate of the Getting of Ireland and of the Decay of the Same." It is the fourth of the tracts in Harris's *Hibernica*, pp. 79-103.

As in the purely Irish districts, war was made, and peace, on individual initiative and without consultation with the Deputy or his Council. Irish dress was worn, coyne and livery were exacted, the Irish tongue was spoken, Irish senachies compiled their genealogies for the subjects of an English king, Irish bards sounded their praises or, perhaps, satirized their foes, and Irish minstrels and harpers were still welcome in their feudal halls. Finglas himself was an official,[1] and, perhaps on that account, conceals much of the exactions and greediness of his class, but it may be assumed that their rapacity remained unchanged. All Ulster was in the hands of the Irish chiefs, and the King, who was by descent heir to the Ulster earldom,[2] had lost all his inheritance in that province except the single manor of Carlingford. From Connaught he received nothing whatever, nor did he from Munster, where the Earl of Desmond, Irish in dress and language and habits, and surrounded by Irish retainers, lived as an independent prince and had a prince's revenue. Even the Kildare Geraldines and the Butlers, though invested from time to time with the office of Lord Deputy, were more Irish than English, exacted coyne and livery, ruled their own territory like independent chiefs, and were not obedient to English laws. The various chiefs on the borders of the Pale, such as O'Neill and O'Connor of Offaly, were still paid their Black Rents. Finglas, indeed, speaks of the weakness of MacMurrogh and O'Byrne and O'Toole, and of the ease with which they might be subdued. Yet MacMurrogh was still paid his yearly allowance out of the King's Treasury, and it may be assumed it was not because he was loved, but because he was feared.

Henry VIII. was kept accurately informed from time to time as to the condition of Ireland. The letters of Surrey in particular were many, the information he supplied accurate and full, and the suggestions he made were characterized by wisdom

[1] He was chief Baron of the Exchequer, and was promoted from that office to be Chief Justice of the King's Bench, May 8, 1534 (Morrin, *Calendar of the Patent Rolls*, p. 12).

[2] As the descendant of the Duke of Clarence and Elizabeth de Burgo.

and statesmanship. The King was not slow to learn, and in his letter to Skeffington (1529)[1] there is evidence that the miseries of the Pale and the obstacles to the advancement of English power in Ireland are not unknown to him—the squabbles and jealousies between Desmond and Ormond and Kildare, the difficulties of subduing the native chiefs, the sufferings the English subjects endured from coyne and livery. Nor could it be anything else to him than a matter of humiliation and anxiety that Ireland was in such a condition. The genius of Wolsey had exalted England to a high position among the great nations of the Continent. From being "an upstart trying to claim for herself a decent position in the august society of European States,"[2] she had risen to the dignity of one of the Great Powers, whose alliance was courted, whose power was felt, whose influence was recognized, whose enmity was feared. But to France and Spain and the Empire she was an upstart still. If one of these Powers obtained the assistance of England, they were ready to flatter and caress; but if they found her among their foes they spoke of her as an upstart and a parvenu among the nations, and her King was told to complete the conquest of Ireland, if he could, and leave continental affairs to the continental Powers. Such words had been used by the German princes to Richard II., and there is no reason to doubt but that some such sneers were flung at Henry VIII. But if Ireland was thus the cause of mortifying the King's vanity, she was to him a source of danger as well. O'Donnell had intrigued with the King of Scotland against England. The Earl of Desmond had been in treasonable correspondence both with the Emperor and the French monarch. O'Neill of Tirowen had acted similarly; and when Silken Thomas broke out into rebellion he appealed for continental aid. A French or German army, in alliance with an Irish chief or combination of chiefs, would have easily overrun the Pale and extinguished the feeble remnant of English power, and the whole resources of England would have been taxed to

[1] *State Papers*, vol. ii. pp. 147-50.
[2] Creighton's *Cardinal Wolsey*, p. 3.

recover Ireland from their grasp. But in such circumstances, no matter what the cost, it would be necessary that it should be reconquered, for Ireland, the subject or independent ally of a continental Power, would lower the prestige of England, and even be a menace to its existence. Henry VIII. was not blind to these dangers. He sent men and money to Ireland for the conquest of the land, urged each successive Deputy to prosecute the work with vigour, watched with anxiety how they progressed, and was irritated and impatient when they did not succeed. The magnitude of the task was made apparent to him when the rebellion of Silken Thomas cost his Treasury the sum of £40,000.[1] This rebellion had been entered into without sufficient thought and with inadequate preparation ; it had been carried out on no well-considered plan, the warfare had been desultory and intermittent, and its leader had neither experience nor talents. He was without money, his soldiers were without discipline, and he received but partial support from the native chiefs. And if it had been so expensive and so difficult to put down such a rebellion, what sacrifices would it not entail to conquer the whole land? Yet Henry could not hesitate, for the time had come when England must abandon Ireland altogether or conquer it. The latter course was determined on, and as soon as Lord Thomas FitzGerald and his uncles had been safely lodged in the Tower of London, the Lord Deputy Gray proceeded to conquer those chiefs and nobles who refused to recognize themselves as subjects of England.

To obtain submission from the Irish and Anglo-Irish chiefs, in the same manner as did Henry II. and John and Richard II., might not be a matter of much difficulty, but such submissions would be hollow and insincere. The English king would be paid some tribute and receive some respect as long as he was strong, but when he was involved in some great war and his government at Dublin had become weak, he would no longer get from these chiefs either tribute or respect. Such submissions Henry VIII. did not value or demand. He wanted Ireland to be an integral part of his dominions, where

[1] Cox, p. 242.

English law was to be in force, English dress worn, English customs adopted, and the English language spoken; and if the Irish did not submit in this way quietly and peaceably, he was determined to wring submission from them by the sword.

United under a single leader, the Irish could have set all his threats at defiance. Some chiefs, such as O'Neill or O'Brien, could bring an army of 2000 men into the field, the least of them could muster 300 or more,[1] and the army which could be called into action by the Earl of Desmond or the Earl of Ormond would be as great as the greatest of the Irish chiefs; and if all were combined there might be an army of at least 50,000 men. The population of England was greater than that of Ireland, and so was its wealth, and if its utmost efforts were put forth, even a greater army than this might have been enrolled and equipped for a campaign. In point of military equipment, also, it would be superior, and if the issue was to be decided in a single battle, or even in a short campaign, the probability that England would conquer would be strong. But a skilful Irish leader would not risk all on a single battle. He could retire before the English into the shelter of the woods with which the country was covered. He could harass the invading army by falling upon detached parties and by night attacks. He could waste the country through which they passed and make it necessary for them to get all their supplies from England. He could threaten, perhaps cut off, their communications. An army of not more than 3000, under Art MacMurrogh, had by such tactics baffled Richard II. and his army of more than 20,000 men; and what army could have conquered an equally daring leader at the head of 50,000 men? But to expect that all Ireland would thus unite cordially against a common enemy was falsified by the experience of the past. In Tirconnell and Tirowen and Connaught and Thomond the same language was spoken, the same manners and habits prevailed, but this was the only bond of agreement between them. O'Donnell would not serve under O'Neill nor acknowledge his supremacy,

[1] *State Papers*, vol. ii. p. 5.

and O'Brien would not act with O'Donnell except, perhaps, to plunder O'Neill. Jealousy and suspicion and mutual hate kept these chieftains wide apart, and even the presence of common danger was powerless to extinguish their animosities. They fought as persistently as did their ancestors, and since the days of Brian Boru had never acted together.

And if the old Irish could not agree in defending their country, still less likely was it that the Irish and Anglo-Irish would coalesce ; FitzGerald and Bermingham and Burke were Irish in dress and habit and language, and the ties which bound them to England were slender and weak, yet these ties were not altogether sundered. They still traced their descent from an Anglo-Norman source, and, settled in a country which their fathers' swords had won, they regarded the people around them as belonging to an inferior race. They allied themselves by marriage with the native chiefs, but they would enter with reluctance, and certainly without enthusiasm, into any movement which proposed to finally destroy English power in Ireland, and on its ruins to establish a united monarchy, with an O'Neill or an O'Brien as its king. Nor was there any Irish leader that could compel their obedience, no descendant of the ancient kings with the genius and courage to abolish the old clan system with the strifes and jealousies and weakness which it bred, to break down the barriers that separated one province from another, to discard as useless, and even mischievous, institutions which belonged to a long past age, and to gather together the strength of the whole nation as Brian did under his own victorious banner. Such, then, was the condition of Ireland, weak, feeble, distracted, disorganized, still wanting a central government, still broken up into clans, each independent, each relying on itself, distrustful and suspicious of its neighbour, with whom it was ever willing to quarrel and never willing to agree.

But if on the side of Ireland the elements of weakness were many, on the English side were all the elements of strength. The English kings of the Plantagenet and Lancastrian lines were but the first among the powerful feudal nobles. In the extent of their landed possessions, in the amount of their wealth,

in the number of their armed retainers, in the splendour of their retinue, such nobles as Warwick, the King-maker, might vie even with the Crown.[1] In all his public undertakings the King was compelled to consult these nobles and to be guided by their advice. In his wars their aid was respectfully, even timidly, invoked. They often thwarted his designs and marred his projects; and when they combined against him they were able to wring from him, as they did from King John, the most humiliating concessions. The Wars of the Roses had effected a mighty change, for while it destroyed the power of the feudal lords, it increased the power of the Crown. Many of these nobles had fallen in battle, some beneath the headsman's axe; some had been attainted and as such lost their lands and castles; all emerged from these disastrous wars, their wealth dissipated, either wholly or in great part, their followers slain, their power gone. And when the struggle was over, the strength of any one noble, or any combination of nobles, the King was strong enough to despise. When Henry VIII. became king the greater part of those who were actively engaged in these wars had passed away, but the memory of what they had gone through survived, and their children who succeeded them were ready to submit to anything and everything rather than renew the horrors of the past. The last of the pretenders who had disturbed the reign of Henry VII. had disappeared; none such appeared in the reign of his son; and with none to question his right or dispute his title the second Tudor monarch sat secure on the English throne. At the time he resolved on the conquest of Ireland (1535) he had already broken with Rome, made himself head of the Church as well as the State, and plundered the monasteries so well that their plunder brought into his Treasury a sum equal to £50,000,000 of our money.[2] He was at peace with France and with Scotland; the whole resources of the country were at his command; his Treasury was

[1] Warwick was so powerful that the people believed whatever side he favoured in the Wars of the Roses was sure of success (Lingard, vol. iv. p. 92). And at his house in London six oxen were consumed at a breakfast, "and every tavern was full of his meat" (*ibid.* p. 78).

[2] Gasquet, *Henry VIII. and the English Monasteries*, p. 77.

full ; his Parliament was made up of slaves, eager to enact whatever he willed ; the high-placed churchmen were either his creatures or his prisoners ; the nobles, deprived of their feudal privileges, crouched in terror at his feet ; and the King himself had developed into a tyrant and a voluptuary, as absolute and as immoral as the most despotic monarch of the East. The tyrant became capricious, as tyrants will. To be his favourite was dangerous, to be his enemy was fatal, and the favourite of to-day became the enemy of to-morrow. Formerly it had been considered little less than exile to be sent to Ireland ;[1] but there was safety in being distant from a capricious tyrant, and the ablest public servants were thankful to be employed there, as they were careful to carry out the King's commands with accuracy and diligence, knowing that failure meant his displeasure and their own ruin, and that the only way of safety was the way of success.

The first of the Irish chiefs to be attacked was O'Brien of Thomond. He had sheltered Silken Thomas in his territory, and he had been disposed to assist him, and he had sheltered young Gerald of Kildare, for whose capture the King was so eager. He was in alliance with Desmond, and coming from West to East Thomond, he had often spread terror through the lands of the English subjects. His power was considerable, but he knew well he would be no match for the united forces of England. He foresaw the danger that menaced him, and in a letter to Henry VIII. (October 13, 1535), couched in the most submissive terms,[2] he assures the King that he never sent for Thomas FitzGerald, that he never gave him any help nor did any of his people, but that when FitzGerald came into his country he could not, for very shame, refuse him meat and drink, " for it hath been of old custom amongst Irishmen

[1] It was so considered by Sir Richard Pembridge, who was appointed Viceroy (1371), but refused to go to Ireland, even though punished with the loss of all his offices in England and threatened besides with imprisonment for disobedience (Gilbert's *Viceroys*, pp. 232-3).

[2] He addresses Henry "most noble, excellent, high and mighty prince, and my most redoubted sovereign High Lord, in the humblest manner that I can or may I recommend me unto your Majesty."

to give meat and drink and such little goods as we have."[1] His cringing and slavish tone was not appreciated, nor his professions of loyalty. It was felt necessary to have him crushed, or at least further humbled, and Captain Francis Herbert writes to his friend, Cromwell, in the following year, that O'Brien is the greatest Irishman and the strongest man of power in Ireland, and that if he were subdued and his pride beaten down, it would cause all Irishmen to quail and to incline to their prince's pleasure and commandment.[2]

Before proceeding against O'Brien and the Munster Geraldines, the Deputy went north (June 1536) to parley with the Great O'Neill, whom he found very tractable in words but unwilling to give definite and binding pledges. Yet Gray dissembled his disappointment, for he believed that O'Connor of Offally and O'More of Leix were in league with O'Brien, and this formidable confederacy was enough, without having open war with O'Neill. Nor did he believe it wise to proceed so far south as Limerick without having first subjugated the district near Dublin, and with this object in view he entered MacMurrogh's country, besieged and captured his strongest castle at Ferns, and struck such terror into the whole family of MacMurrogh that they all agreed to accept such terms as the Deputy would impose; and The MacMurrogh, who had been in receipt of 80 marks a year as Black Rent from the Treasury at Dublin, was now glad to receive back his castle of Ferns on condition of paying the Deputy 80 marks yearly, and bound himself, besides, to surrender the castle whenever the Deputy demanded its surrender.[3] In the early part of the year a Parliament was held at Dublin at which the allies of Silken Thomas were attainted, the lands of absentees were confiscated to the Crown as also the lands held in Ireland by English monasteries, and all payments by way of Black Rent were abolished.[4] The succession to the

[1] *State Papers*, vol. ii. p. 287. [2] *Ibid.* vol. ii. p. 307.

[3] *Ibid.* vol. ii. p. 347 (Letters from Allen to Cromwell).

[4] *Ibid.* vol. ii. p. 315. Among the absentees specially mentioned are the Duke of Norfolk, the Earl of Wiltshire, and the Earl of Shrewsbury.

Crown was declared to be vested in the offspring of Anne Boleyn. In addition, the King was declared—though not at once—the head of the Church, nor did this act pass with the consent of the Proctors, who are "loathe that the King's grace should be Supreme Head of the Church."[1] From Dublin the Parliament was prorogued to Kilkenny, and Gray, leaving a small force at Dublin to defend the city and its surroundings, and directing that bridges be built at Woodstock and Athy, marched against O'Brien. He had with him nearly the whole of the English forces, and assisting him also was the Earl of Ossory and his son, "with a goodly company," the gentlemen of Wexford and Waterford, the Lord Roche and divers others. Finally, impelled either by policy or fear, the Irish chiefs were aiding him—O'More, MacMurrogh, Magillapatrick, O'Byrne, and O'Carroll.[2] At the head of this army, formidable in numbers and in equipment, Gray directed his steps through Cashel to Limerick, entering that city through the territory of the Earl of Desmond, whose strong castle at Lough Gur[3] he captured. It was pretended that the Parliament which had been prorogued to Kilkenny was further prorogued to Limerick; but Gray was resolved less on legislation than on war, and neither at Kilkenny nor Limerick were any legislative enactments passed.

A traitor within the camp is more to be feared than an enemy from without, and in the long struggle between Ireland and England it is but historic truth to say that many such traitors have been found on the Irish side. One such now appeared in the person of Donogh O'Brien. He was the nephew of O'Brien of Thomond. He was married to the Earl of Ossory's daughter, the Earl was a strong and powerful patron on the English side, and Donogh abandoned and betrayed his uncle and his country and took the side of Ossory and the English. Three miles from Limerick, westward and a little by south, was the strong fortress of Carrigo-

[1] *State Papers*, vol. ii. p. 316 (Brabazon to Cromwell).
[2] *Ibid.* vol. ii. p. 354.
[3] A little south-east of the city of Limerick.

gunnell,[1] which for 200 years had been in the possession of the O'Briens. It was strongly built and well manned, and Donogh O'Brien stipulated for nothing more than this—that the fortress be captured by the English and given into his custody. It was captured in due course and garrisoned, and its custody given over to the Earl of Ossory, who in turn was permitted to hand it over to Donogh's keeping. But the capture of Desmond's stronghold at Lough Gur, or of O'Brien's castle at Carrigogunnell, were small operations compared to the capture of O'Brien's Bridge. Built some miles above Limerick on the Shannon, it was of unusual strength. On the numerous arches that spanned the river there were built two strong towers, each some distance off the land, the strongest facing the east bank, built of hewn marble and having walls at least twelve or thirteen feet thick. These towers were filled with many defenders—"gunners, gallow-glasses and horsemen."[2] They were armed with hand-guns, had some lighter pieces of ordnance and one enormous gun, which discharged balls as large as a man's head. The attacking army was astonished at the skill with which the defenders had fortified themselves with timber and hogsheads of earth.[3] They had, besides, broken down four of the arches of the bridge near the land, nor was access to the banks of the river possible for an army encumbered with heavy guns, except by an unknown and secret path. This secret way was known to Donogh O'Brien, and he led the English army by it to the river-banks, on which they were enabled to erect their batteries and attack, at short range, the nearest and strongest of the bridge towers. But their efforts were fruitless. The batteries made no impression on walls thirteen feet thick, nor was it until the broken arches had been daringly spanned by ladders, enabling the English to assault the defences and the

[1] I assume that the castle in question is that which is marked on the county maps, in the county of Limerick, not far from the right bank of the river Mague.

[2] *State Papers*, vol. ii. p. 351.

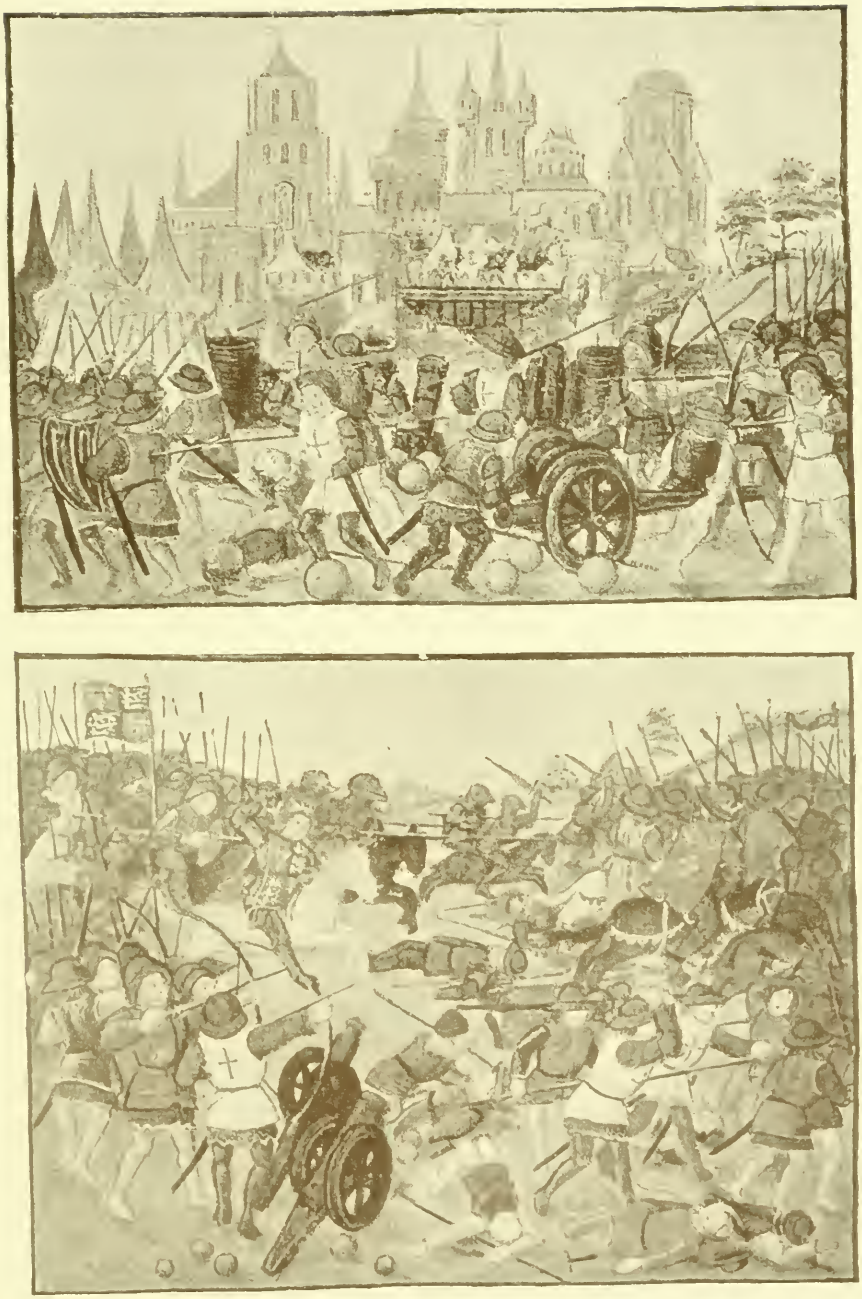
[3] The Council in their letter to Cromwell declared (August 9) that the like "had not been seen in this lande" (p. 351).

defenders at close quarters, that the Irish garrison retreated and the bridge and its towers fell into the enemy's hands. The bridge was broken down, O'Brien's territory was thus cut in two, for he was denied access to East Thomond; there was much jubilation on the English side, and Gray expected honours and congratulations, and was disappointed at the congratulations being so few.[1] Flushed with these triumphs, he would have wished to boldly march into West Thomond and encounter and perhaps defeat O'Brien, or at least terrify him into submission, but the fruits of his victory were soon lost. Some of the English soldiers mutinied, and when he commanded them to do anything they cried out together, "Let us have money and we will do it." And so menacing was their conduct that he had to turn his guns on them, and protested he was in danger of his life;[2] and he had to return to Dublin, being unable to follow up his success. The fortress of Carrigogunnell was soon betrayed to the Irish, as O'Brien's Bridge had been betrayed to the English; O'Connor of Offaly was in open revolt; the Deputy and Ossory commenced to quarrel; neither Desmond nor O'Brien would submit nor surrender young Gerald FitzGerald; and the King angrily demanded, in the following year, how it happened that O'Brien's Bridge with its towers was again built up, and was once more a menace to the English possessions east of the Shannon. He bluntly blames the unfortunate Deputy for his negligence, and appointed a commission, of which St. Leger was chief, to proceed to Ireland and sit in judgment on Gray and the other Irish officials, and find out how their duties had been discharged.[3]

Against Brian O'Connor of Offaly the English were especially incensed, for he had not kept his pledges with the Government at Dublin, nor paid his stipulated tribute. For these reasons Gray entered his territory (1537), compelled, on

[1] "If others being in the same rome before me had don the 10th part which I have don the same had been largely dilated and highly praised" (*State Papers*, vol. ii. pp. 385 *et seq.*—Gray to Cromwell).

[2] *State Papers*, vol. ii. p. 355. [3] *Ibid.* vol. ii. p. 462.



ARTILLERY AND CAVALRY IN ACTION. TEMP. HENRY VIII

FROM THE COTTONIAN MS. IN THE BRITISH MUSEUM

his march, MacGeoghegan and O'Molloy to join their forces with him, then attacked and captured O'Connor's castles of Brackland and Dangan, wasted most part of his territory, destroyed the corn, demolished his fortresses, chased the unfortunate chief into Ely O'Carroll, and handed over Offaly to Cahir O'Connor, who, in relation to his namesake and relative, had been a traitor and a spy.[1] And the Irish Council recommended Cromwell to have Cahir made Baron of Offaly, for then the Irish will so hate him[2] that he will be compelled by necessity to be faithful to the English, as he will have to rely on their support. From Offaly, Gray proceeded to MacMurrogh's country, took two castles of the O'Nolans, and compelled the Kavanaghs to give new pledges of good behaviour. This done, he entered and wasted O'Carroll's country, because he had befriended Brian O'Connor. O'Carroll had to submit, as also did Magillapatrick and O'More of Leix, both of whom, in addition, had to aid the Deputy in his war.[3] At last O'Connor was reduced to that condition of misery that he was going from one to another of his old friends to have meat and drink, and was more like a beggar than a captain or ruler of a country.[4] Harassed on every side, pursued from one place to another, driven to desperation, Brian O'Connor made offers of submission, and was willing to accept any condition from the English. But they would give him no terms, and at last, getting some followers together, he re-entered Offaly, drove his brother Cahir out, and when he was again attacked by the Deputy and driven into O'Doyn's country, he soon returned and intrigued with his brother Cahir, who began to desert the English, as they began to distrust him. And St. Leger in his letter to Cromwell gave vent to his disappointment at this desultory and endless warfare, telling him that Offaly is much easier won than kept, and concluding with the observation that, as to O'Connor's assurances, there is no

[1] *State Papers*, vol. ii. pp. 440-41.

[2] *Ibid.* vol. ii. p. 444. This shows that the Irish did not yet *love* the English, though they certainly feared them.

[3] *Ibid.* vol. ii. p. 468.

[4] *Ibid.* vol. ii. p. 474 (Gray's Letter to Cromwell).

more trust in him than a dog.[1] But a little later, moved by policy more than love of Brian O'Connor, that chieftain, having come to Dublin and acknowledged in the fullest manner that he was the King's subject, and abandoned the Pope, and promised to pay a tribute to the English out of Offaly, was taken by them into favour. By the end of 1538, in one province at least, English power had become predominant. The MacMurroghs no longer received their Black Rent from Dublin, but instead paid tribute to the Deputy for their possessions, as also did O'Toole. The MacGeoghegans had fought with the English to overawe the O'Mores and the O'Connors. Magillapatrick, the adherent of Lord Ormond, had renounced the Pope in order to purchase the favour of the Government at Dublin. And the once dreaded O'Connor, whose ancestors had so long menaced the Pale, trembled for his possessions, and even for his existence, at Offaly; and O'Carroll agreed to pay the King's representative twelvepence for every ploughland he held, to cut passes and make roads through his territory for the passage of English troops, and to aid the Lord Deputy in his wars.[2]

If Leinster was Ireland, then the conquest of the country might be said to be achieved. But the state of the other provinces was very different from that of Leinster. In the south, the MacCarthys and Desmond were still strong; west of the Shannon, O'Brien maintained his independence and his strength; the Connaught chiefs ignored the Government at Dublin and disregarded its power; and the resources of O'Neill and O'Donnell were never greater. That all these chiefs were in alliance for the protection and defence of young FitzGerald was ominous for England; but that the alliance should assume a religious character and put forth its strength in defence of the ancient faith, as it threatened to do, was more ominous still. Both O'Neill and O'Donnell were at peace with the Deputy, but their sincerity was suspected, and

[1] *State Papers*, vol. ii. p. 536. This seems meant for Cahir as well as for Brian.

[2] *Ibid.* vol. iii. p. 15.

not without some reason. They were in correspondence with the King of Scotland and probably also with the King of France; they regarded Henry as a heretic,[1] and, in common with the vast majority of their countrymen, objected to him as such. O'Neill in particular had been specially appealed to by the Pope to defend the ancient religion, and he wished to respond to an appeal so flattering to his pride.[2] He made peace with O'Donnell, and these two chiefs who had so seldom agreed were now ready to do battle side by side. Early in 1538 the Deputy entered Farney in South Monaghan and plundered that district because its chief, MacMahon, had violated his engagements with the English, and this must have been unwelcome news to O'Neill, for MacMahon was his neighbour and his tributary. A little later Gray attacked O'Reilly.[3] Early in the following year he went to Dundalk to parley with O'Neill and O'Donnell, and when these chiefs did not appear, he wasted the district round Armagh, and he lamented that in consequence of the weather being so bad he could not do O'Neill much harm.[4] Determined to revenge all these outrages, the two Northern chiefs mustered all their forces, burst into the Pale, ravaged and plundered Louth and Meath, and were proceeding south to Tara to join hands with their Southern allies—O'Brien and Desmond—when the news reached them that the vigorous Deputy was marching to encounter them. They hastily retraced their steps, and at Bellahoe,[5] on the boundary between Meath and Monaghan, Gray overtook them. Loaded with spoil, the Northerns were attacked, unprepared and in disorder, and were severely defeated. The booty was lost, many of the army were slain, and the vanquished retired to their own territories; and Gray then turned into Down and captured several castles from Magennis and Savage.[6] Early in the next year (1540) he entered Tirowen, occupied Dungannon,

[1] *State Papers*, vol. iii. p. 140.

[2] Leland, vol. ii. pp. 172-3. The appeal was made to O'Neill through the Bishop of Metz.

[3] *State Papers*, vol. iii. pp. 3-24.

[4] *Ibid.* vol. iii. p. 133.

[5] Four miles from Carrickmacross (*Four Masters*).

[6] *State Papers*, vol. iii. p. 155.

and fell to preying and burning O'Neill's country, at which he continued for the space of six days.[1]

During these years Gray's activity was not confined to Ulster or to Leinster. Taking with him some troops from Dublin, and accompanied by Lords Gormanstown and Delvin, Darcy, Bermingham, O'Connor of Offaly, and O'More, each with some followers, he set out (June 1538) on an expedition which might easily have proved disastrous, and which only the want of unity, or even of spirit, among the chiefs prevented from being so. Through O'Molloy's country he passed into Ely O'Carroll, thence onward to Limerick, crossed O'Brien's Bridge, which had been partially rebuilt and which he again broke down, then through Thomond and Clanrickard's country on to Galway, returning through Hy-Many and O'Madden's country, thence across the Shannon into Westmeath, and finally reached Maynooth, where he rested.[2] Except O'Brien of Thomond, all the chiefs through whose territories he passed gave him pledges of submission, and whenever there was any hesitation about yielding he attacked and captured their castles. To proceed among hostile chiefs and into unknown districts, so far distant from Dublin, and with so weak an army as he had, was an act of reckless daring.[3] But his audacity stood him in good stead, and such was the terror that he inspired that no chief had the courage to attack him. Even O'Brien allowed him to capture some of his castles, though he might easily have fallen on him and destroyed him. In the next year (1539) the Deputy went south on a similar expedition, and received the submission of those chiefs in the neighbourhood of Limerick and Cork.[4]

Gray's energy since he came to Ireland had been conspicuous. His capacity and daring were of the highest order ; he was not scrupulous as to means ; and no Deputy who went before him

[1] *State Papers*, vol. iii. p. 183. [2] *Ibid.* vol. iii. pp. 57-62.

[3] His having escaped was attributed to the fact that he was the uncle of young Gerald FitzGerald. It is otherwise hard to understand the inaction, it might be said the cowardice, of the chiefs (*State Papers*, vol. ii. p. 62, note).

[4] *State Papers*, vol. iii. pp. 164-7 (Letter of Ormond to Cromwell).

succeeded so well. There was not an Irish leader—native chief or Anglo-Irish lord—who did not fear him ; the narrow limits of the Pale had been generously enlarged, and no longer was it confined within that protecting rampart behind which the subjects of England cowered, and outside of which "they durst not peep."[1] Gray's zeal for the interests of his royal master could not be called in question. Yet his zeal and his services were soon forgotten, and like Wolsey, ten years earlier, he was destined to discover how fickle was the favour, how shallow and transient the gratitude of his King. During his last years in Ireland he quarrelled often and seriously with the Earl of Ormond,[2] and the Earl's son complains that he is the Earl of Kildare newly born again.[3] He treated the Council at Dublin with disdain, and though bound to consult with them he rarely did so, and they had not been slow to accuse him.[4] Archbishop Browne complained that he was still clinging to the Papal supremacy, and on every side the accusation was made that because he was young Gerald FitzGerald's uncle he allowed the boy to escape. Henry did not seem at first to put faith in these stories, and would not relieve Gray of his office and allow him to proceed to England, but after a time the necessary permission was given and Gray returned to England. Then Henry began to suspect the late Deputy, and in his mind suspicion and guilt differed little. It was felt in Ireland that Gray was a fallen man ; his enemies took courage ; the accusations against him fell thick and fast ; and the Irish Council solemnly charged him that, because of his connexion with the Earl of Kildare and blinded by affection for that family, he had favoured the King's enemies, he had harassed the King's friends, he had released prisoners committed by the Council for treason, and he had maintained O'More's sons to rob and spoil the King's subjects. By Henry he was already judged guilty, but the farce of referring his case to Parliament was

[1] Campion's *History of Ireland*, p. 6.

[2] This was Ossory, to whom the title of Ormond had been restored in 1538.

[3] *State Papers*, vol. iii. p. 32.

[4] *Ibid.* vol. iii. pp. 36-39.

gone through; he was quickly attainted of high treason, and in June 1541 was executed at Tower Hill.[1]

When Gray was leaving for England (April 1540), Sir William Brereton was appointed Deputy, and he had not been long in office until a report gained currency that there was to be a general muster of the Irish at Fore in Westmeath. With all the forces within the Pale Brereton marched to meet the Irish, but when he arrived at Fore he had no enemy to encounter. The Irish were not there, and there is no reason to think that they ever intended to be. But to gather together so many, to bring together the whole forces of Dublin and Drogheda, to take the judge from the bench and the learned man from his books and the farmer from his plough, and yet have no fighting to do, was at least disappointing.[2] "Whereupon," says Brereton and the Council, "we resolved to do some exploit"; and turning into Offaly, they cut down the corn, demolished the castles, burned the houses, and left the whole district desolate and bare. O'Connor gave them no provocation, it was not suggested that he did, yet the Deputy complains that he remains still in his cankered malice and rancour; for it seems that while his lands were laid desolate and his people plundered, he was expected to be thankful to the despoilers. Nor did Henry censure Brereton; on the contrary, he commended him. O'Connor had been the friend and ally of FitzGerald, and as such the King's mind was embittered against him. But though he commended Brereton for his activity, he did not retain him at the head of the Irish Government, and almost immediately appointed Sir Anthony St. Leger as Lord Deputy.[3]

The new Deputy was no stranger in Ireland. Three years before (July 1537) he had been appointed by the King as head of a Royal Commission to report on the general condition of Ireland.[4] He had looked into the state of the revenue,

[1] *State Papers*, vol. iii. p. 263.

[2] *Ibid.* vol. iii. pp. 224-5 (Letter from the Council to Henry VIII., July 25, 1540).

[3] He arrived in Dublin on the 12th of August 1540 (*State Papers*, vol. iii. p. 227).

[4] *State Papers*, vol. ii. pp. 452-63.

gone carefully round the Pale, visited Waterford, Kilkenny, and Tipperary, noted the conduct of the royal officers from the highest to the lowest, parleyed with the Earl of Desmond, and carefully estimated the strength and dispositions of the native chiefs.[1] And the reports he sent to England impressed the King favourably as to his capacity. Among the English officials in Ireland he had heard the suggestion made, repeatedly and persistently, that no quarter should be given the Irish, that they would never submit voluntarily to the English nor keep any promises they made, that they must be effectually crushed, and that a beginning might be made with the Leinster clans—the MacMurroghs, O'Byrnes, and O'Tooles, whose district so vexatiously intervened between Dublin and Waterford, and thus destroyed the symmetry of the Pale.[2] And their suggestion was that the Irish be driven from the district and English colonists planted in their stead. Such a policy St. Leger was unwilling to pursue. Apart from its barbarity, it might fail, and even success was little better than failure. He had already seen in the case of Offaly that it was easier to conquer than to hold it; the same difficulties would arise with the MacMurroghs and their neighbours. These clansmen loved their fields and would not be driven forth or extirpated without a desperate struggle; their mountains and passes were favourable to guerilla warfare, and amid these natural barriers they could long hold out against a powerful army and might drive them back, baffled and defeated. And there was the danger that the clans in the other provinces might come to the assistance of their countrymen. A policy of wholesale robbery and murder such as this would involve great risks, it would drain the English Exchequer dry, and to such a policy Henry as well as St. Leger was averse. For he did not want to reign over wasted fields and ruined homes. St. Leger resolved to try what conciliation could do, and he found that it was more effective than force.

The time was propitious for such a policy being tried.

[1] *State Papers*, vol. ii. pp. 510-49 (various letters and reports).

[2] *Ibid.* vol. ii. pp. 498-505, 557. Ormond was sure that it was "the highest enterprise to destroy the Kavanaghs (MacMurroghs)" (p. 557).

Both O'Neill and O'Donnell had already made overtures to the King and professed their willingness to become his loyal subjects. The unity between them was of short duration. Their mutual suspicion and distrust was not of recent but of ancient growth, and the defeat of Bellahoe and the recriminations which followed served to revive and intensify ancient jealousy and ancient enmity. Nor did the Southern chiefs—Desmond and O'Brien—care to link their fortunes with the defeated and divided Northerns. A general distrust arose.; the various leaders, seized with panic, became anxious to secure their own personal interests, and, like a beaten and retreating army, it was let every man look to himself. MacMurrogh agreed to renounce his chieftaincy and his name, and, content with the name of Kavanagh, to accept a grant of land from the King, and to adopt English customs and English laws. The O'Tooles and the O'Byrnes were glad to receive their lands on the same condition.[1] The Earl of Desmond, no longer sulking in his tent, came to Limerick to meet the Deputy, made the most ample form of submission on his knees, renounced the privileges which his ancestors had enjoyed for a century, and consented to attend the King's Parliament as the King's loyal subject. And he hospitably entertained the Deputy at his castle at Kilmallock.[2] A Parliament held at Dublin (June 1541) was attended by Desmond, by Magillapatrick (created Lord of Upper Ossory), by O'Reilly in person, and by deputies on the part of MacWilliam Burke and of O'Brien of Thomond. For the first time English lords and Irish chiefs sat side by side in Parliament, and, with the assent of all, Henry VIII. had been proclaimed and acknowledged King of Ireland. And such was the enthusiasm in Dublin, that on the following Sunday bonfires were lighted, wine was abundantly consumed in the streets, great feastings were in the houses, and a solemn Mass and Te Deum was sung by the Archbishop of Dublin, "with great joy and gladness to all men."[3] O'Donnell was not present, either personally or by

[1] *State Papers*, vol. iii. pp. 267-71. [2] *Ibid.* vol. iii. p. 286.
[3] *Ibid.* vol. iii. p. 305.

deputy, but he soon after made submission like the other chiefs, and Henry agreed to make him an Earl.[1] O'Neill was the last to turn his back upon the past. The descendant of the ancient Ardris, he was reluctant to abandon his inheritance and to descend to the meaner position of being a mere subject to a foreign king. Like the swimmer on the river-bank, he long shivered in hesitation to make the final plunge; but the plunge was made at last, and he was content to accept his lands from Henry with the honours of an earldom. He petitioned to be created Earl of Ulster, but this was refused, and finally he became Earl of Tirowen, his son being created at the same time Baron of Dungannon. These honours were conferred at Greenwich (October 1542), in the presence of Henry and his Court, and with great pomp and splendour. In the following year, at the same place and with similar pomp, O'Brien was created Earl of Thomond, his nephew Donogh was made Baron of Ibricken, and MacWilliam Burke was made Earl of Clanrickard.[2] O'Reilly was to be created Viscount Cavan; O'Connor, Baron of Offaly; O'Donnell, Earl of Tirconnell; while the lesser chiefs, such as Magennis, Savage and others, were made knights, a distinction with which MacNamara of Thomond was ill satisfied, as he begged hard to be created Lord of Clancullen.[3]

These Irish chiefs, now turned into English lords and knights, were to hold their lands from the King by knight's service; they agreed to pay him a yearly subsidy, or, failing this, to reserve within their own territory some lands for the King's special profit. The religious houses in their territories were to be suppressed and handed over to the King's use. The King's writs were to be respected, his officers aided in the execution of their duty, the greater lords were to win over to the King's peace the lesser chiefs in their midst; the English mode of inheritance was to supersede the old system of Tanistry, and English law and custom was gradually to take the place of Irish customs and Brehon law.

[1] *State Papers*, vol. iii. p. 318. [2] *Ibid.* vol. iii. p. 428.
[3] *Ibid.* vol. iii. p. 450.

With these changes the clan system could not last, and it was indeed time that it had disappeared. Under such a system progress was impossible. The peasant would not drain or fence his land, nor improve the character of his dwelling, as the law gave him no permanent interest in it; and men will not sow that others may reap. His life was the pastoral one, easy, careless and free, an unsettled and nomadic one. There was no incentive to thrift, for the exactions of coshery and bonaght and the rest were such that the savings of a year might be dissipated in a single night. And if the chieftain of his own clan did not oppress him with these multiplied exactions, he was always liable to have his house attacked and his lands laid bare by the chief of some neighbouring clan, bent upon earning distinction by the plunder of other clans than his own. It was considered beneath the dignity of a chief or of one of his blood to engage in trade or commerce, or to descend to manual labour. The number of these idlers was large, the ambition of each was to earn military distinction, and, having nothing to do, they were ready on every pretext to engage in war. The tanist system of succession left everything uncertain. The headship of each clan was open to the aspiring and ambitious; it is seldom such were wanting, and as the clans were so numerous it is seldom the country was free from war. Ireland in the sixteenth century still clinging to the clan system, was still a portion of antiquity, its peasants idle, the lands untilled, the houses primitive and rude, the chiefs quarrelling; and a race of the highest spirit and intelligence, in wealth and commerce, in the comforts and refinements of life, was far outstripped by other races even less gifted than they were. Stagnation was certain while the clan system continued, yet age after age passed, and century followed century, and that system, like the barren fig-tree, still cumbered the earth.

When the change came it was effected by a stranger, and from without. It would have been better if it had come from within, if it had been the work of some one of the same race and language as the people themselves. But it seemed hopeless to expect that such would be. The clan system was severely

aristocratic. Between the peasant who tilled the fields and herded his flock and the chief who did nothing but go to war there was an impassable gulf. There was no middle class, hardly any towns, especially among the old Irish; and for one of the lower or peasant class to rise to leadership and play the rôle of reformer was impossible,[1] for the chiefs would scorn to follow his lead and the people would not follow without their chiefs. Even a chief who exhibited reforming zeal would be met with many difficulties. The Brehon would solemnly warn him that these institutions, political and social, had been handed down to them by their ancestors, and the Bard was ready to sing the praises of a system which had survived the shocks of fifteen hundred years. A strong man might have despised the solemn warning of the Brehon and the rhapsodies of the Bard, but this was not enough. He should have had, besides, many of those very qualities which his fellow-chieftains lacked—strong will, great intelligence, the instinct and spirit of a commander; he should have been patient, persevering, knowing his own mind well, with a fixed, well-defined purpose, and ready to crush any one and every one who stood in his path. Such a leader both chiefs and people would have followed; and they would have supported him, when he taught them to build towns and engage in commerce, and plough the sea in their ships and grasp from the waves the wealth they contained, and mingle with foreign nations and learn from them, and abandon institutions which were centuries too old, and under which no nation on earth could prosper. Reformation from within required some such man. No man of moderate talents would have sufficed—among the O'Donnells and O'Neills and O'Briens and FitzGeralds there had been many such. The nation cried aloud for a man of genius, but five centuries had rolled by since Brian died at Clontarf, and not one such Irishman had appeared.

[1] This is not at all inconsistent with considerable freedom in the social intercourse between chiefs and people, but it is the freedom between a master and a servant of the same family as himself on whose fidelity he knows he can rely.

A bad man may sometimes do good, and when he does he deserves credit, and it cannot be said that in effecting the changes he effected in Ireland Henry VIII. had been unnecessarily harsh. From the tyrant whose hands were ever dripping with the best blood of England, and whose cruelties raised him to the same level as Nero or Domitian, kindness or consideration is the last thing the Irish might expect. Yet he showed both, and his policy and acts in Ireland are in marked contrast with his policy and acts in England. The suggestions of his officials at Dublin that the Leinster clans were to be exterminated or banished he rejected with emphasis; even O'Connor of Offaly he forgave and honoured; and old Turlogh O'Toole,[1] who desired to see him, he treated in London with marked kindness, protected him against the rapacity of his Irish officials, and watched over his interests with something like paternal care.[2] He had the good sense to see that in the more remote parts of the country, such as Connaught and Tirconnell, there was danger in using harsh or precipitate measures, and he was willing to allow time for the old order to be finally abandoned and for the new order of things to succeed. He was a tyrant; but in Ireland, and to those who submitted peacefully, his was a benevolent despotism.

The few last years of his reign were not marked by any notable Irish events. Of all the chiefs O'Donnell was the most active. He wasted Lower Connaught (1542), and insisted on being paid his rent by the chiefs. The same year he attacked the MacQuillans in the north. The next year he was at war with Macguire and with O'Doherty of Innishowen, and later still with O'Gallagher (1544). In this latter year the Earl of Clanrickard died, and there were disputes about the succession, and the next year (1545) O'Rorke was at war with

[1] This Turlogh had declared that he would not make war on the Pale as long as the great lords—O'Neill and O'Donnell—were at war with the English; on the contrary, he would assist the Deputy; but as soon as the great chiefs were at peace then he would make war on the Deputy himself, "which promise he truly kept" (says St. Leger) (*State Papers*, vol. ii. pp. 267-8).

[2] *State Papers*, vol. iii. pp. 370, 395.

O'Kelly and Burke.[1] But these wars were local and temporary, and no national issue was at stake, nor did any chief care to measure swords with the King's Deputy. And when O'More and O'Connor of Offaly did so, they were promptly driven from their territories and declared outlaws, and such was the terror of England's power that when these chieftains returned from their exile in Connaught (1547), and attempted to recover what they had lost, no Irish chief dared give them help or protection, or even food.[2] At last the native chiefs felt they had a master whom it was not so difficult to serve, but whom it was dangerous to provoke and fatal to disobey. It is not surprising to be told by the *Four Masters* that "at this time the power of the English was great and immense in Ireland";[3] it is more surprising to learn from an Irish Annalist that the suppressor of monasteries was a good king.[4]

The Irish were cowed, but they were not yet crushed. The strength of the various chiefs was still unimpaired, and if the Government at Dublin became weak, and England became involved in some disastrous war, they might renounce their allegiance and turn to their ancient ways. The chiefs who submitted were certainly the most powerful, and the terms in which they submitted were as slavish as they could be, yet even such submissions did not necessarily involve the acquiescence of the whole people. When O'Brien was pressed to come to terms by the Deputy, he answered he was but one man and had to consult the various Dalcassian chiefs,[5] and these chiefs were free to support him or not, and could only be coerced by force. The greater chiefs had renounced the supremacy of the Pope—a condition strictly insisted on by Henry—and had in some cases pleaded for a share in the plunder of the monasteries, but the lesser chiefs might not apostatize with equal readiness. They sympathized with the monks, driven out from their monasteries, and could not

[1] *Four Masters.* [2] *Ibid.*; Ware's *Annals.* [3] *Four Masters.*

[4] *Annals of Loch Cé*: "It is certain that there came not in later times a better King."

[5] *State Papers*, vol. iii. p. 288.

willingly acquiesce in a change under which such things could be. They had long believed, as part of their religion, that the Pope was in spiritual matters the head of their Church, and they would not regard with favour dethroning him and putting a man of Henry's base character in his place. From such causes as these it seemed likely that trouble would come; and to the thoughtful it was evident that the conquest of Ireland was neither final nor complete.

CHAPTER XXIX

The Reformation in Ireland

In the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries there was much unrest among the masses throughout Europe. Heavily taxed, oppressed by their feudal lords, their property and their lives squandered in repeated wars, their discontent was deep-seated and bitter, and only a leader and an opportunity were required to make them revolt.[1] In England, Wycliffe had come into prominence, and his teaching attracted many and served to aggravate and intensify the existing discontent. Like many other reformers, he allowed his zeal to outrun his discretion, and, not content with demanding liberty for the people, he attacked both the ecclesiastical and civil authority. And he attacked the doctrines of the Church as well as its discipline. Against landed property in ecclesiastical hands, against pilgrimages, against episcopal and papal laws, against religious orders—against all these and more he preached; and he added that the Bible should be read by all, and that each was capable of interpreting it for himself. Though he was opposed to the friars, he adopted their simple dress. His followers, dressed in the same fashion, went among the people and preached to them, and exceeded even their master's vehemence and fanaticism. Both Church and State, feeling menaced by these attacks, united in defence. Wycliffe's followers were branded with the opprobrious name of Lollards, the severest laws were passed against them and were rigorously enforced; Sir John Oldcastle, the most prominent among them, was executed (1417);[2] the bones of Wycliffe himself were dug up (1428) and burned as the bones of a heretic; the gallows,

[1] Lingard, vol. iii. p. 141.

[2] *Ibid.* vol. iii. p. 253.

the headsman's axe, the burning fagot ended the lives of many and intimidated the remainder; and long before the sixteenth century dawned the Lollards as a sect having influence or power had ceased to exist. Transferred to Germany, Wycliffe's errors were planted in a congenial soil, and in large part supplied Huss and Jerome of Prague with the doctrines which they taught.[1] Nor can it be denied that the state of the Church in Germany called loudly for reform. Bishops were appointed who had neither the vocation to the office nor its spirit. Belonging to the noble families of the Empire, they owed their position to family influence.[2] They were feudal nobles rather than ecclesiastics, idle, ignorant, voluptuous, making many and onerous demands on the people; their clergy caught the manners and imitated the conduct of their bishops; some of them held several benefices and discharged the ecclesiastical duties either by deputy or not at all, and laxness, irregularity and even worse had entered the monasteries. The residence of the Popes at Avignon brought them too much under French influence and lost them the affection, and finally the allegiance, of the Germans. The Great Schism, when a Pope and anti-Pope thundered anathemas against each other, scandalized the faithful; a series of Popes, worldly-minded and ambitious for the advancement of their own families, made matters worse, and that the Church survived the shock of such a Pope as Alexander VI. ought to convince even the most sceptical that she was built upon a rock by her Divine Founder, and had His assurance of indefectibility. The fall of Constantinople had driven many scholars West whose influence became great over the minds of men, and who were imbued with no friendly feelings towards the Church of Rome. In the study of antiquity which followed, the novelty and charm of pagan letters appeared and excited admiration and enthusiasm; scholasticism and

[1] Alzog's *Church History*, vol. iii. pp. 99-110.

[2] The following case is given by a contemporary writer:—Albert of Brandenburg, brother of the Margrave, at eighteen was Canon of Mainz, at twenty Archbishop of Magdeburg, at twenty-four Archbishop of Mainz and Primate of Germany (Lilly. *Renaissance Types*, pp. 256-7).

orthodoxy became unfashionable and gave way to flippant infidelity; it became the rule to appeal to reason rather than authority, and like Plato to acknowledge its supremacy; the lives of popes and bishops and monks, their ambitions, their intrigues, their want of piety, became the favourite subject of satire and epigram; and when Luther appeared the materials were at hand for a mighty change.

Its insular position left Ireland out of the range of these influences. Its people, engaged in pastoral occupations, held little commercial intercourse with the Continent. Its scholars no longer went to teach in foreign universities, nor did foreigners come to learn in Ireland, for the glory of the Irish schools had passed away. Even the eastern portion of the country, which was largely leavened by English influence and in frequent communication with England, was little, if at all, affected by Wycliffe and his followers. The whole nation firmly held by the ancient faith, and though there were many things in the Church which would bear improvement, there was no demand and no desire for a reform of dogma, whatever desire there might be for other reforms. Never once since the English came had any party arisen with a demand for a change of doctrine, and the number of cases were few where even individuals had any novel doctrines to propound. In the fourteenth century one Adam Duff, one of the O'Tooles of Wicklow, publicly made some aspersions on the chastity of the Blessed Virgin Mary. He was not a preacher and had no followers, nor was he permitted to hold such views with impunity, and in accordance with the laws of the time he was arrested (1328) and publicly burned as a heretic in Dublin.[1] The same fate befell two men at Waterford, though what doctrines they held does not appear.[2] More serious than either of these was the condition of Ossory (1335), where some heretics taught that Christ was a sinful man and was justly crucified, that His Sacred Body was not to be worshipped, nor did they accept the Sacrament of the Eucharist or the

[1] Grace's *Annals*.

[2] Mant, *History of the Church of Ireland*, vol. i. p. 21.

decrees of pontiffs.[1] They also consulted demons, and one of them, Alice Kettler, was executed at Kilkenny for witchcraft.

The most prominent person to come into conflict with the Church's teaching and to merit and receive its censures was FitzRalph, Archbishop of Armagh.[2] He was a native of Dundalk, and, educated at Oxford, he became Chancellor of that University, and from that position was promoted to be Archbishop of Armagh. The mendicant friars were then active in the diocese of Armagh. Their power and influence roused the jealousy of the new Primate; perhaps they encroached upon his rights, at least they excited his anger, and in a series of sermons delivered in London (1356) he attacked the mendicant orders in general. He pointed out that Christ when on earth was always poor, that He never begged nor taught men to beg, but on the contrary that they ought not voluntarily to beg; and from this he deduced that voluntary poverty is not a necessary part of the rule of the mendicant friars, nor could they consistently with prudence and sanctity bind themselves by vow to perpetual begging. He did not object to their receiving what was freely offered them, but only that they should not beg. Their right to preach and hear confessions in his diocese he also disputed; but when the superiors of the Franciscans and Dominicans appealed to the Pope, judgment was given in their favour.[3] Two centuries after FitzRalph's death, the reformers held a Synod at Dundalk, at which, under George Dowdall, the dead Primate was pronounced to be a saint, and it was directed that in the future the festival of St. Richard should be celebrated. In their eyes it was a merit that he had fought with the friars and been condemned by the Pope. By all he was admitted to be a scholar of eminence, his personal character was above reproach, but it was reserved for the reformers of the sixteenth century to discover that he was

[1] Theiner, *Vetera Monumenta Hibernorum et Scotorum* (Letter from Benedict XII. to the King of England, 1335).

[2] Ware's *Bishops*; Stokes, *Ireland and the Anglo-Norman Church*, pp. 334-5.

[3] Stuart's *Historical Memoirs of Armagh* (ed. Coleman), pp. 107-8.

also a saint.[1] He is sometimes considered to be, as a reformer, the forerunner of Wycliffe; but whatever his influence may have been in England, he founded no sect in Ireland, and until the sixteenth century there was no party, such as the Lollards or the Hussites, and, after FitzRalph, no individual appeared ready to depart from ancient and established beliefs or make them the subject of attack.

But while the unchangeable character of the nation's faith is thus established, it cannot be affirmed that the Church was in a healthy condition, nor denied that abuses existed similar in some respects to those which existed in England and Germany. The Archdeacon of Waterford had to be dispensed by Pope Alexander IV., having held, and still holding, a plurality of benefices; Honorius IV. dispensed the Dean of Dublin for a similar reason; and Boniface found it necessary to appoint a commission to sit in judgment on the Archbishop of Tuam (1303), who, blinded by cupidity (*caeca cupiditate seductus*), had usurped the See of Annaghdown and also of Mayo, and taken possession of their revenues.[2] Bishops were appointed through the influence of the English king[3] and were usually of English birth. They knew not a word of Irish; they were always zealous for English interests, and had no sympathy with the natives. The abbots and priors of monasteries were great landholders, some of whom lived in England, and those living in Ireland were, like the feudal lords around them, sitting as peers in Parliament, and concerned more with temporal than with spiritual affairs. The clergy of Irish and English descent seldom agreed, and even the monasteries were often the scenes of such quarrels. In the districts still subject to native chiefs the love of learning survived,[4] and it was during the troubled times of the fifteenth century that Augustin Magraidin continued the *Annals of Tighernach*, that MacFirbis compiled the *Book of Leccan*, and that Macguire of Fermanagh wrote the *Annals*

[1] Olden, *The Church of Ireland*, p. 307.

[2] Theiner, *Vetera Monumenta*.

[3] This fact is abundantly proved from the *State Papers*.

[4] Stokes, *Ireland and the Anglo-Norman Church*, pp. 371-2; Ware's *Writers*.

of Ulster.[1] But there was a falling away, and a Papal Commissary who visited Clonmacnoise and described it (1515) shows how great was that fall. "On the right towards the east is a cathedral church almost ruined, unroofed, with one altar only, covered with straw, having a small sacristy with one set of vestments only and a brass crucifix. Here Mass is seldom celebrated."[2] Among the people around the very name of its founder, St. Ciaran, was unknown. To such a condition was that school brought whose fame once resounded through Europe. The churches in each clan, if they were favoured and protected by their own chiefs, became the objects of aversion and attack at the hands of some hostile chief, nor was it unusual for an invader to burn and destroy the churches of a territory through which he marched. These churches were in his enemy's province, and as such deserved to be attacked. When the fire and vigour of youth were chilled by age, when death approached and the shadow of futurity was cast upon his path, the influence of religion reappeared, the chief's thoughts became of a more sombre cast, and not infrequently he donned the garb of a simple monk and ended his days in a convent cell. But while youth and strength remained, his ambition was for war, and the influence of religion was powerless to restrain him from violence and sacrilege. The Pander attributes the disordered state of the country (1515) to the bishops and clergy, "for there is no Archbishop, abbot or prior, parson or vicar, or any other person of the church, high or low, great or small, English or Irish, that preaches the word of God except the poor friars beggars."[3] And when the disorders that prevailed are remembered, the conclusion is inevitable that either the friars' utmost efforts were powerless to stem the tide of lawlessness, or that the zeal of the friars themselves had grown cold. Nearly four centuries after the days of St. Malachy, we are confronted with a state of things similar to what existed in his day, but in the sixteenth century no man such as Malachy

[1] Olden, p. 282. [2] *Ibid.* p. 287 (quotation from Theiner).
[3] *State Papers* (Henry VIII.), vol. ii. pp. 1 *et seq.*

appeared to take up the work of reform. And it never occurred to the Irish that a reformer would come from England, least of all that he would be found in the person of Henry VIII.

At the Fifth Lateran Council (1512) decrees were passed providing for a reform of morals and discipline. A plurality of benefices in the hands of a single person, concubinage of the clergy, and the excessive use of the study of pagan classics were all condemned.[1] But these measures were halting and insufficient, the existing evils were of long standing and of the gravest nature and required the most drastic measures, and there was no advantage in passing decrees without seeing that these decrees were enforced. Nor was it likely that such would be done under a pontiff such as Leo X.[2] The well-meaning within the Church, who deplored the ills which existed and hoped for a reformation from within, were disheartened. The innovator, the daring speculator, the Christian who had the pagan rather than the Christian spirit, the bishop without learning, the priest without piety, the monk without morals—all these would regard a change to a stricter discipline and purer morals without enthusiasm, and even with regret. The party who cried out for a change of doctrine and who were ready to break with the ancient Church were hourly gathering strength, and they found a suitable leader in the person of Martin Luther. He was a monk, but had none of the monk's humility,[3] and as professor at Wittenberg he indulged in a boldness and freedom of speech not usual in one of his order. In his Address to the German Nobles he made good use of the abuses that prevailed in Germany—the vast sums of money sent from Germany to Rome, the benefices kept vacant and their revenues used by foreign bishops, the excesses in collecting money for indulgences committed by Tetzel, and others. He pointed out how after all this the Germans were despised at Rome; the Emperor was but the satellite of the Pope; he roused Teutonic pride to shake off Italian predominance, and

[1] Alzog, *Church History*, vol. iii. p. 77. [2] Roscoe, *Life of Leo X.*
[3] Luther's *Primary Works* (Ware and Bucheim), p. 299.

among his own countrymen became a leader and a hero. He professed allegiance to the Pope,[1] though he called the Popes Antichrists and wolves,[2] and he maintained that he was still in the Church, though he taught the novel doctrines that justification came by faith alone,[3] that ceremonies were useless, and that there were only three Sacraments—Baptism, Penance, and the Eucharist.[4]

His attack on the Sacraments was vigorously replied to by Henry VIII. of England. Until the death of his elder brother, the King was intended for Church preferment. He had a taste and an aptitude for theological discussion, and he replied to Luther so effectively that he was rewarded by the Pope (1521) with the title of Defender of the Faith—a title which succeeding English kings, with strange inconsistency, have ever since retained. In the ten years that followed, the faith of the monarch remained unchanged, but his morals did not improve. His queen was no longer young. Her amiable disposition, her lofty character, her faith, her constancy, her affection for the King were not lessened by time, but the bloom and freshness of youth was gone, and she was no longer able to hold captive the wayward affections of her husband. His animal p. sions were strong, he was impatient of the least restraint, his amours were many and diversified, and if Anne Boleyn had been willing to be simply his mistress he would have never troubled about a divorce. But she was not willing to be Henry's mistress; her ambition was to be a queen, and the King, a captive to her youthful charms, pretended to have scruples about the validity of his marriage with Catherine, and petitioned Rome for a divorce. When his petition was refused by the Pope, he got his own creature, Cranmer, to pronounce the nullity of his marriage with Catherine, forthwith married Anne Boleyn, renounced the supremacy of the Pope, and declared that he himself was, under Christ, the supreme head of the Church in England. The obsequious Parliament passed the Act of

[1] Luther's *Primary Works* (Ware and Bucheim), p. 422.
[2] *Ibid.* p. 356 ("Babylonish Captivity of the Church").
[3] *Ibid.* p. 333. [4] *Ibid.* ("Short Catechism").

Supremacy (1534), recognizing Henry as head of the Church and State, the Oath of Supremacy became the test of loyalty, and those who refused to take it were cast into prison, some of them starved there, others executed at the block, and not a few burned at the stake. Henry took his new position quite seriously, and seemed to think that, like the Pope, he had the plenitude of spiritual power. He appointed Cromwell Vicar-General of the kingdom, conferred benefices, appointed bishops, granted dispensations, and made it penal to hold any communication with Rome.

The first to accept the King's spiritual supremacy in Ireland was the Earl of Ossory and Ormond. Anxious to enjoy the royal favour, he knew that this was the most direct road to that end, and bound himself by indenture (May 1534) that he would resist the usurped jurisdiction of the Bishop of Rome, and would assist the King's Deputy and officers to make an end of it.[1] These officers one and all, from the Deputy down, had to act as Ormond did. To take the Oath of Supremacy was necessary if they were to be regarded as faithful servants, or even loyal subjects. The moment they refused to do so their position was vacated, some hungry place-hunter stepped into their shoes, and their liberty, and even life, were imperilled. Fear rather than conviction induced the Anglo-Irish lords within the Pale to conform, otherwise their lands might be overrun by the Deputy and his soldiers, acting in the King's name and with the King's hearty approval. But none of them had any enthusiasm for the spread of the new doctrines, and Henry's main reliance in Ireland was placed on Browne, the Archbishop of Dublin. He had been Prior of the Augustinian Hermits, was greedy, grasping, and avaricious, with none of the spirit of poverty which was characteristic of his Order, and bearing the restraints of his vows with such impatience that when he came to Ireland he married. From the beginning he viewed Henry's break with Rome with pleasure. He was probably one of those who in secret had sympathized with the doctrines of Luther. He approved of Henry's divorce and

[1] *State Papers*, vol. ii. p. 197.

of his marriage with Anne Boleyn, and perhaps it was he who performed the marriage service.[1] Attaching himself to Cromwell, he soon became his favourite and attracted the favourable notice of the King, and, in 1534, was appointed one of two visitors who were to visit the various monasteries, report as to their state, and induce or compel the monks to accept the King's spiritual supremacy. The Franciscan Observants and the Carthusians in London and in the south of England he specially tormented, visited them at all hours, argued with the monks, induced some of the weak-minded and lax to yield, made promises of preferment and favours to others, threatened the obstinate, and when they refused to change their faith and rejected his promises, as they despised his threats, he had them turned out of the monasteries. Some were cast into prison, where they perished of hunger and ill-treatment; some were allowed to escape, destitute and fugitives, to France or Scotland or Ireland; while more than one—such as Forest—was burned at the stake.[2]

In May 1536 a Parliament was summoned at Dublin by the command of the King, at which Archbishop Browne used all his eloquence to have those Acts passed which had been already passed in England. The opposition of Cromer, Archbishop of Armagh, was strong and persistent, and was bitterly complained of by Browne; but after a time some of the desired enactments were passed—those regulating the succession of the Crown and some others. But when it was proposed to pass the Act of Supremacy, as had been already done in England, Browne and his friends had greater difficulty. The Archbishop's speech on the occasion has survived, and is rightly characterized by his co-religionist, Mant, as more remarkable for brevity than for argument.[3] His point is that our Saviour paid tribute to Caesar, even though a pagan, so also did the Popes to succeeding Emperors; and therefore Henry, for even

[1] Gasquet, *Henry VIII. and the English Monasteries*, p. 51 (note).

[2] Gasquet, pp. 52-59.

[3] Mant, *History of the Church of Ireland*, vol. i. pp. 117-18. His speech was "distinguished more for its straightforwardness, brevity and decision than for deep argument or rhetorical display."

a stronger reason, being a Christian, was entitled to be acknowledged supreme both in Church and State, and "he who will not pass this Act as I do is no true subject to his highness." Such reasoning as this could not have convinced even the most dull-witted. Our Saviour in His day and the Popes after Him paid tribute to pagan monarchs, not as ecclesiastical but as civil rulers, and had the martyrs of the Colisseum recognized the pagan Emperors as the head of their faith, they would never have been cast to wild beasts. The opposition to Browne was from the clergy. From each diocese two representatives, called Proctors, were sent to Parliament, and these formed part of the Lower House, and it is of them that Brabazon in his letter to Cromwell specially complains.[1] Threats were used against them, inducements held out to them, the Parliament was prorogued; but neither time nor threats nor persuasion could alter their decision or purchase their assent; and at length it was enacted by Parliament itself that Proctors had no legislative capacity, but were only advisers and counsellors.[2] When the Proctor's opposition was thus violently disposed of, there was no difficulty in passing the required Acts, for Cromer and the bishops and abbots who had seats in Parliament were outvoted, and the Act of Supremacy was passed, as also an Act giving the first-fruits and twentieth part of bishops' and abbots' revenues to the Crown.[3] Such a Parliament, if the King demanded it, would have enacted with equal readiness that the religion of the State should be that of Buddha or Mahomet.

But an Act of Parliament cannot change the faith of a whole nation. It can punish individuals, but cannot affect their religious convictions. It was necessary to reach their understanding by persuasion and argument, and this Browne undertook to do, though he soon found that the task was beyond his capabilities. He had already told his friend

[1] *State Papers*, vol. ii. pp. 316, 438-9.

[2] *Ibid.* These Proctors "do temerariously presume and usurpedly take upon themselves to be parcel of the body—claiming that without their assent nothing can be enacted at any Parliament within this land."

[3] *Ibid.* vol. ii. pp. 370-1.

Cromwell (1535) that Cromer, Archbishop of Armagh, had preached strongly against the King's spiritual supremacy and had laid a curse on those who would recognize it, that the bishops and clergy were in agreement with him, and that, as to the people, they were attached to Rome, and were more zealous in their blindness than the saints and martyrs were in truth at the beginning of the Gospel.[1] Nor had he much success to chronicle two years later; and so irritated was the King at his failure, that he wrote him an angry letter attributing the barrenness of his efforts to his pride and presumption—"delighting in we and us,"—reminded him sharply that it was he who made him Archbishop, and that he could unmake him with equal readiness and put another man of more virtue and honesty in his place.[2] This rebuke struck terror into the Archbishop; it made him, he said himself, "tremble in his body for fear of incurring his majesty's displeasure."[3] And it appears to have roused him to activity, for Lord James Butler, writing to the King early in 1538, speaks of the many predications of the Archbishop and of the success of his teaching, though our curiosity is left unsatisfied as to the particulars of this success.[4] Accompanied by Allen, the Lord Chancellor, Sir William Brabazon, and Aylmer, the Chief Justice, Browne, in the early part of the next year (1539), made a circuit in the "four shires above the Barrow," to publish the King's injunctions, to preach the King's spiritual supremacy, and to pull down idols and extinguish idolatry and the authority of the Bishop of Rome.[5] He first preached at Carlow, then at Kilkenny, afterwards at Ross, Wexford and Waterford, and finally at Clonmel. At this latter place the statement is made that two archbishops and eight bishops took the prescribed Oath of Supremacy openly, and in presence of a large congregation.[6] If this be true, the action of these bishops is in

[1] Ware's *Annals*, pp. 148-9 (*The Life and Death of George Browne*).
[2] *State Papers*, vol. ii. p. 465.
[3] *Ibid.* vol. ii. p. 513.
[4] *Ibid.* vol. ii. p. 564 (Letter dated March 31, 1538).
[5] *Ibid.* vol. iii. p. 111.
[6] *Ibid.* vol. iii. p. 117 (the Council to Cromwell). Browne is one of the signatories to the document.

marked contrast with that of Cromer and the bishops of the Northern province. In the Council's letter the names of the conforming bishops are not given, but we are left to assume that they were all bishops appointed by the Pope in the usual way and converted as a result of Browne's teaching. The omission of their names is strange, for Browne was not remarkable for modesty, and such striking success as this deserved to be related in all its details. But the names are given by a modern writer, and are—Butler of Cashel, Bodkin of Tuam, Milo Baron or FitzGerald of Ossory, Comyn of Waterford, Coyne or Quin of Limerick, Hurley of Emly, Sanders of Leighlin, O'Coirin of Killaloe, Tirrey of Cork and Cloyne, and Nangle of Clonfert.[1] Of these bishops, three owed their position to Henry VIII.—Bodkin, Tirrey, and Nangle; and among them Bodkin was the only apostate bishop. As Bishop of Kilmacduagh, he had taken the Oath of Supremacy from Lord Leonard Gray (1538), and was appointed by Henry VIII.—but not by the Pope—Archbishop of Tuam. The others were priests who apostatized for a mitre, but they had never been recognized by the Pope, who in each case had another bishop appointed—Hoveden in Cloyne and De Burgo in Clonfert.[2] Both Butler and FitzGerald voluntarily surrendered monasteries—Athassel and Inistioge—of which they were priors, and perhaps Browne counted this sufficient conformity. Coyne of Limerick did take the oath from Lord Leonard Gray (1538), when passing through to Galway.[3] Sanders is counted among the reformers,[4] but of the others nothing is known, and in relation to the new doctrines, not one of them, except perhaps Nangle, could be called an enthusiastic witness. In their letter to Cromwell the Irish Council were therefore wise in not entering into particulars. To state vaguely that ten bishops had been converted by a single sermon was imposing. It showed that Browne was zealous in doing the work of his royal

[1] Bagwell, *Ireland under the Tudors*, p. 305.

[2] Ware's *Bishops*; *State Papers*, vol. ii. p. 516.

[3] *State Papers*, vol. iii. p. 59.

[4] He is so counted, at least by Harris, the editor of *Ware* (Ware's *Bishops*).

master, and that the seed of the new doctrine which he had cast from him had not fallen upon rocky ground, but, on the contrary, had produced fruit a hundredfold.

In undertaking "to pull down idols" the reformers did not confine themselves to words. Their master, Henry, had despoiled the churches in England and robbed the monasteries; his rapacity demanded the spoils of the Irish churches and monasteries as well; and his servants in Ireland proceeded to carry out his wishes with every circumstance of indignity and brutality. In Christ Church, Dublin, was that noted and venerated relic called the Bacal Jesu, or Staff of Jesus. Taken from Armagh in the twelfth century, it was deposited in Christ Church, where for nearly four centuries it remained, still used as at Armagh to ratify solemn engagements, still guarded with jealous care; and such was the number of pilgrims from far and near who came to visit the church in which it was contained, and because it was contained there, that a special Act of Parliament was passed (1493) to guard them from being molested. Besides this sacred relic was a cross and a portable altar, to all of which miracles were ascribed.[1] But neither age, nor the sacred associations connected with them, nor the veneration in which they were held by the people, could protect these relics from outrage. Browne and his co-reformers had them forcibly removed from the church, and to the horror of the people the Bacal Jesu was publicly burned. At Ballybogan in Meath an image of our Saviour on the cross, to which popular veneration was for centuries attached, was treated with similar indignity, and the statue of the Mother of God at Trim, which so many pilgrims visited and which was reverenced by all, was also given to the flames. The Lord Deputy Gray stabled his horses in the Cathedral Church at Down, and, it is thought, scattered the relics of St. Patrick, St. Bridget, and St. Columba; he rifled the abbey of Ballyclare, near Galway, and took away all the rich ornaments from the principal church at Galway. A Royal Commission of which Browne was one was instituted (1539), the object of which was to search for all

[1] *Obits and Martyrology of Christ Church* (Todd's Introduction).

images and relics which were special objects of popular devotion, and these were to be broken in pieces or carried away.[1] And the Commission did its work so well that "there was not in Erin a holy cross or a figure of Mary, or an illustrious image over which their power reached that was not burned." [2]

As in England, the monasteries were the special objects of attack. The plunder of the English monasteries had filled the King's coffers to overflowing, but his greed was not yet satisfied, nor his hatred of the monks. Not satisfied with the thirteen monasteries suppressed by the Irish Parliament in 1537,[3] Henry issued letters patent (April 1539) directing Browne and his fellow-commissioners to suppress all the monasteries that had not yet been suppressed, or had not been voluntarily surrendered.[4] The gold and silver which they possessed, the crosses, chalices, and altar vessels of every kind, were to be the King's special property, even the bells and lead of the roofs were melted down and sold, while the lands were either sold to the highest bidder or given to some royal favourite. Resistance to these decrees was futile, and many of the monks and nuns, realizing such to be the case, surrendered their monasteries and convents voluntarily; and before 1539 had passed away, besides a large number of the smaller religious houses, there had been suppressed, either voluntarily or by force, twenty-four monasteries of the higher class, whose abbots or priors had sat in Parliament as spiritual peers.[5] Those who voluntarily surrendered were to get a pension [6] at the discretion of the Commissioners; those who

[1] Moran's *Archbishops of Dublin*, pp. 12-13; Hardiman's *History of Galway*, p. 239.

[2] *Annals of Loch Ce*, 1538.

[3] *State Papers*, vol. ii. p. 370.

[4] Morrin, *Calendar of the Patent and Close Rolls*, pp. 52-53. The members of the Commission were Browne, Brabazon, Allen, Cowley, and Cusake.

[5] Mant, vol. i. pp. 158-60.

[6] Morrin, pp. 55-59. Nearly forty such surrenders are recorded. The pensions vary from £50 to 4 shillings. The former sum was given only to two, the Prior of Fore and the Abbot of St. Mary, near Dublin; the latter sum to David Busher of Inistioge (p. 61).

resisted were treated with severity, and, in not a few cases, their lives were sacrificed. What promises were made, what arguments used, what threats uttered, what insults heaped upon priests and monks and nuns, we do not know, but it is possible to conjecture. Browne and his fellows did not differ much from Legh and Layton and Ap-Rice in England, and the State Papers exist to tell of *their* acts of wanton brutality.[1] Nor do we know the full extent of the lives sacrificed, but we know what happened in the Trinitarian monasteries at Dublin, Limerick and Atharee; and the inference is warranted that what happened in other monasteries was not dissimilar. The Trinitarians of Atharee numbered forty-two. Warned that the King's officers were to visit them, they made their preparations, and distributed all their goods to the poor, and when they were summoned to take the Oath of Supremacy (February 1539), one and all refused. Their Superior declared on their behalf that "they recognized no head of the Catholic Church save the Vicar of Christ, and as for the King of England, they regarded him not even as a member of that Church, but as head of the Synagogue of Satan." One of the royal officers drew his sword and with a blow cut off the head of the intrepid priest. Of the other members of the community some were cast into prison, where they died from the injuries they received there, some were secretly murdered, and others were publicly hanged in the market-place. Their brethren at Dublin displayed the same constancy and gave the same answer to the same demand, the Provincial being killed by a musket-ball, and another having his head cloven in with a stroke of a hatchet. Of the remainder, some at least escaped by flight. At Limerick, the coadjutor-bishop, O'Neill, was a member of the same Order. Instead of conforming, he courageously entered the pulpit and in the presence of the royal officers exhorted his congregation to reject the new doctrines as heresy, and excommunicated any of those who embraced them. It was thought unsafe to attack him in the presence of so many people, but the reformers sought him at

[1] Gasquet, *Henry VIII.*, pp. 79 *et seq.*

his house on the same evening, and when he refused the Oath of Supremacy, a blow of a sword severed his head from his body. The Trinitarian monastery was attacked and robbed and the monks put to death.[1] The other monasteries of the Order were treated similarly. Everything valuable was taken away, books and manuscripts were destroyed, even the buildings themselves often levelled to the ground. Under a Christian king and in the name of Christianity, the atrocities of Turgesius were revived.

These harsh measures wrought havoc and desolation on the monasteries, and inflicted untold miseries on priests and monks and nuns, but the faith of the people remained the same. Agard, writing to Cromwell (1538), mournfully confesses that, except Browne, Brabazon, Ormond, and one or two more of small reputation, there is none from the highest down who accepted the new doctrines.[2] And Cowley, writing a little later, informs him that the reformers are making small progress, that "the Papistical sect springs up and spreads abroad, infecting the land pestiferously."[3] Even in Dublin Browne had to complain that neither by gentle exhortation nor evangelical instruction, neither by oaths taken nor by threats of sharp correction, could he persuade or induce any one, either religious or secular, amongst the clergy to preach the Word of God, "or the just title of our most illustrious prince."[4] The case was similar in Kilkenny, where none had embraced the new doctrines but Lord Ormond, and all the people were imbued with "an evil and erroneous opinion of the King's most noble grace."[5]

Outside of the Pale it seemed as if the reformers would fare better. The vigour with which Silken Thomas had been combated and the completeness of his defeat struck terror into the native chiefs. Unwilling to unite, they were separately unable to resist so skilful and enterprising a leader as Gray.

[1] Moran's *Archbishops of Dublin*, pp. 22-27.
[2] *State Papers*, vol. ii. p. 370.
[3] *Ibid.* vol. iii. p. 50.
[4] *Ibid.* vol. ii. p. 539.
[5] *Ibid.* vol. ii. p. 562 (White to Cromwell).

The union of O'Neill and O'Donnell, which religion promised to make permanent and effective, did not long survive the defeat of Bellahoe, and one after the other the chiefs made their submission. Their only desire was for their own personal safety. Of the people they thought nothing. They greedily sought for favours and titles from the English king, grovelled in submission before his Deputy, took the Oath of Supremacy, and repudiated the Pope with a vigour and strength of language which was worthy of Cranmer or Cromwell. The first of these chiefs to submit was Magillapatrick of Ossory. The position of his territory so near to Dublin, and therefore so convenient for attack, rendered it prudent that he should placate the King's Deputy; his relationship with Lord Ormond[1] brought him within the range of that nobleman's influence; there was nothing heroic in his character—he was, on the contrary, selfish, timorous, and time-serving, and abandoned the faith of his fathers because by doing so he purchased security of his lands and territory, and was to be made a baron of Parliament. The terms of his submission lack nothing in completeness. He recognized Henry VIII. as supreme head of the Church on earth, and he undertook to do all in his power to totally abolish and extirpate in his territory the usurped power of the Bishop of Rome.[2] O'Connor of Offaly soon followed his example, and in March of the following year bound himself by agreement with the Lord Deputy that henceforth he would not admit the jurisdiction or authority of the Roman Pontiff, nor would he allow others to admit it when he could.[3] The submission of O'More of Leix is dated the following August, and, though not so explicit as O'Connor's, yet contains a recognition of the King's supremacy, as he styles him Head of the Church on earth immediately under Christ. The other Leinster chiefs acted similarly, in every

[1] He was Ormond's son-in-law.

[2] *State Papers*, vol. ii. p. 515. His submission is dated November 1537.

[3] *Ibid.* vol. ii. p. 560: "Promittit se posthac jurisdictionem et auctoritatem Romani Pontificis non admittere nec ab aliis, pro posse suo, admitti, recipi, aut uti permittit."

case recognizing that the King and not the Pope was the head of their Church.[1]

The distant and more powerful chiefs still refused to change the faith in which they were born and in which their fathers had died, and it seemed unlikely that O'Donnell and O'Neill, and O'Brien of Thomond, and Burke of Connaught, and the Earl of Desmond would act as the Leinster chiefs had done. But it soon became apparent that whoever built hopes upon their constancy might be likened to him who built upon the drifting sands. The Earl of Desmond, in humbly submitting himself to his dread sovereign Lord (1541) as supreme head of the Church, protested that he utterly denied and forsook the Bishop of Rome and his usurped primacy and authority, and that he would with all his power resist and repress the same.[2] O'Donnell's apostacy soon followed, and its language is equally vigorous and unambiguous. By indenture, dated August 1541, he renounced and abandoned the usurped primacy and authority of the Roman Pontiff, nor would he protect or defend, or even permit, any adherent of the Pope in his territory, but, on the contrary, with all diligence and zeal would expel them or reduce them to submission to the King.[3] Such was the language of Manus O'Donnell, the founder of the Franciscan monastery of Donegal. But a short time intervened until Conn O'Neill also made his submission, and, in the same full and explicit terms as O'Donnell, renounced the usurped authority of Rome, and recognized Henry as the head of the Church.[4] He who had been appealed to by the Bishop of Metz as the champion of the faith in Ireland, thus shamefully abandoned it. One of the last to submit was O'Brien of Thomond, and the terms in which he addresses Henry are those of the most abject, even sickening, servility. He calls him the most worthy of kings or emperors on earth living, submits himself in everything to the King's Deputy, and protests that he must make,

[1] *State Papers*, vol. iii. p. 90.

[2] *Ibid.* vol. iii. pp. 286-7. He took the oath to St. Leger, the Deputy (January 1540), *on his knees*, and in presence of two hundred persons, including the Archbishop of Cashel and the Bishops of Limerick and Emly.

[3] *Ibid.* vol. iii. p. 318.

[4] *Ibid.* vol. iii. p. 353.

in addition, his submission to the King himself, whom he desires to see above all creatures on earth living.[1] It was the language of a slave in the mouth of a hypocrite, and was a fitting prelude to his subsequent request that the religious houses in Thomond should be suppressed, and that he should be a sharer in the plunder.[2] The conduct of the greater chiefs was universally copied, and both Anglo-Irish and native chiefs in all quarters of the country hastened to submit, and when they did, they were left in peaceful possession of their lands.

[1] *State Papers*, vol. iii. p. 345. It is worth while giving this letter in full. It will show the character of these chiefs, of whom O'Brien was not the worst: "Most excellent, myghtie, replete withe all verteus and grace, and moost redoubted Kinge and Emperour, undre God my ledge Lord and Vice Dei; moost worthie, above all Kinges or Emperours on yerthe lyvinge, to whom I, your moost bownde, obedient subject, Maurus O'Breyne, do onelie cum, as my moost bownden dewtie, lowlie submittinge my self unto your Excellencie, clerelie to yield unto your Grace, my bodie landes and goodes, with all and singular thinge or thinges quycke or deade, under Heavyn and above yerthe, and all maner of degre or dignytie that I have, or to me by anye meanys appertenithe or belongithe, into your Graces handes, therewythe to do your Gracys wyill and pleasure, as to my dewtie appertenithe, beinge now Your Gracys obedient subject, wiche at this howar, I moost hyghlie enjoye in, and moost sorrowe to me to remembyre my longe tyme so yll spent for lacke of grace and knowledge, contrarye to Godes lawes and Your Graces. And althowghe before this, I have wyllinglie withowt coactyon or compulsyon of anye creature but only the advertezement of your Graces Deputy ther made lyke submissyon to Your Graces Depute now in Irland, and upon the same have my pardon undre Your Graces Great Seale of Irland, of the said good Lorde Deputie, yett my mind never satysfied, tyll I have done the same to Your Graces owne Person, whom I moost desire to see above all creatures on yerthe lyvinge, now yn myne old days; *wiche sight I dowbt not but shall prolonge my lyff.* Moost humblye beseechinge your excelent goodness of Your Graces pardon for me and all myne; and yn case, as God defend that all Irland shuld dysobeye from their dewties and alledgeance to Your Grace, yet shuld I, with all myne, lyve and dye Your Graces true faythfull and obedyent subjectes and servantes: and for the truthe herof to appeare, I to this poore rude and symple submyssion do sett my hande and seale, and with all my herte protest to the Lord God, here before Your Excellencye, and to Your Grace, to fulfyll the same yn all poyntes for ever." Under capable leadership the Irish could defend their liberties even against Henry VIII.; but what could they do under such leaders as O'Brien and his fellows?

[2] *Ibid.* vol. iii. p. 398.

Many of them, no doubt, were acting from fear, for they knew that if they did not submit and take the Oath of Supremacy they would be put down as enemies of the King, their property confiscated and their lives imperilled. Such sacrifices men have often made for their faith, but among the Irish leaders of that day there were no heroes, none who saw any attraction in a martyr's crown. As they had not the patriotism to forget their personal jealousies and animosities, and subordinate their personal feelings to the common good, and as they were thus rendered unable to defend their country's liberty, for a similar reason they were unable, and besides were unwilling, to defend its faith.

That these chiefs were sincere in taking the Oath of Supremacy, or that they meant to carry out the promises they had made, is in the highest degree improbable. The excuse has been made for them that they acted rather from ignorance than from malice, that they had no desire to play the rôle of apostates, and that in their eyes the substitution of Henry for the Pope as the head of their Church only involved a political change.[1] But this assumes that they were all men of the densest ignorance, of the dullest understanding, and is not borne out by the State Papers of the time.[2] They conformed to Henry's religion because they feared to irritate a despotic and powerful monarch, whose enmity in their divided condition meant their ruin. But they evidently had no desire to fulfil the promises they made, and although O'Neill and O'Donnell undertook to wipe out the jurisdiction of the Pope in their territories, yet the monasteries of Tirowen and Tirconnell were not interfered with, and long survived these chiefs as well as Henry VIII. And even if the leaders throughout the land were prepared to inaugurate a crusade against the old faith, it is quite certain that the mass of the people were not prepared to follow their lead.

[1] This is Dr. Joyce's opinion (*Short History of Ireland*, pp. 387-8).

[2] Of the sixteenth century alone forty poets are enumerated, whose surviving pieces amount to over ten thousand lines, a fact which shows a considerable amount of culture to have existed (Douglas Hyde, *Literary History of Ireland*, p. 471).

Protestant writers regard as the greatest mistake of the reformers that they did not address the people in their own language, and to this omission they attribute the failure of the Reformation in Ireland, at least in its initial stages. And without doubt the expectation seemed unnatural and absurd that a people would embrace doctrines which had not been explained to them, and which they could not therefore understand. In one of his letters to England, Browne declared that he would himself continue to preach in the English-speaking portion of the country, and that he would get his friend, Dr. Nangle of Clonfert, who could speak Irish, to preach in the exclusively Irish-speaking districts.[1] But this project was not carried out, for, as Browne had failed so conspicuously in the district round Dublin, it was at least equally probable that Nangle would fail in the rest of Ireland.

The failure of Browne cannot be a matter of surprise, if we consider what were the characters of these first reformers. The force of example is strong, and personal character adds much to what the preacher has to say. If the fishermen of Galilee had been vain and self-seeking, anxious for wealth and ambitious for worldly honours, they would have done little. They succeeded where Plato and Aristotle would have failed, because they were humble and meek, despising honours and wealth, facing dangers and enduring hardships with a readiness which demonstrated their sanctity and zeal, and performing miracles in support of what they preached, which demonstrated that their doctrines were true, and their Church the Church of Christ. Judged by these tests, Browne and his friend Staples, and, above all, their master Henry VIII., stand in no favourable contrast. In defiance of his vow of chastity, Browne was a married man; in spite of his vow of humility, he became so proud and presumptuous that he had been specially reprimanded by the King; and he so far forgot his vow of poverty that he

[1] *State Papers*, vol. iii. p. 123. Nangle was not able to assert himself in Clonfert, much less do missionary work elsewhere. When he showed the King's seal appointing him Bishop of Clonfert to MacWilliam Burke, that chief "threw it away and vilipended the same" (Mant, vol. i. p. 204; Olden, pp. 301-5).

was not content with the ample revenues of the See of Dublin, but pleaded for his share of the suppressed monasteries, and when the monastery of Gracedieu,[1] near Dublin, was not given him he considered himself an ill-used man. His fellow-reformer, Staples,[2] had also broken his vow of celibacy, for he too was married. Nor did these two agree; on the contrary, the bitterest animosity existed between them. From a pulpit in Dublin, Staples publicly denounced Browne, called him a heretic and a beggar, and adjured his hearers to give him no credence, "for I tell you if you will in faith I will not";[3] and in a letter to St. Leger he gives his solemn assurance that every honest man was weary of Browne, and that pride and arrogance seemed to have deprived him of his reason.[4] It was admitted that the sermons of these preachers were by themselves inefficacious to wean the people from their faith, and that these sermons must be supported by the Deputy's sword. And here too Browne was disappointed; for Gray, though he had taken the Oath of Supremacy, and had been guilty of many acts of violence, was said to be insincere, and even had a special zeal for the Papists; and when at Trim, to the disgust of the reformers, he went into the church and heard very devoutly three or four Masses before the statue of the Blessed Virgin.[5] He deposed Tirrey, the reforming Bishop of Cork, and put a Grey Friar in his place, whom Browne calls a rank traitor.[6] His reluctance to spread the new doctrines was quickened by his personal antipathy to Browne, whom he opposed and impeded in every way, entered his house at Dublin and took away some of his property, and when the Archbishop on one occasion called Cardinal Pole a Papish Cardinal, Gray in a great fume retorted by calling Browne a "poleshorn friar."[7] Such was the hatred between these apostles of a religion which

[1] *State Papers*, vol. iii. p. 10.

[2] He was a native of Lincolnshire and was appointed Bishop of Meath in 1530. He was deprived of his See by Queen Mary in 1554 (Ware's *Bishops*).

[3] *State Papers*, vol. iii. pp. 1-2.

[4] *Ibid.* vol. iii. p. 29.

[5] *Ibid.* vol. iii. pp. 96-103.

[6] *Ibid.* vol. iii. p. 124.

[7] *Ibid.* vol. iii. p. 209.

was founded primarily upon love. It is difficult to recognize in *them* the heirs and successors of those primitive Christians whose love for one another excited the admiration of the Pagans.

If we turn to Henry VIII., we shall not find either in his personal character, or in the doctrines he professed, or in the manner in which he sought to propagate them, anything which would attract popular sympathy to the Church of which he was the founder. The very embodiment of tyranny, like all tyrants he had become wayward and capricious. No one dared question his authority or dispute his will. His throne encompassed by slaves and sycophants, every prejudice was studied, every passion was flattered, every act was applauded. Those whom he favoured for the moment became temporarily endowed with every virtue, as those whom he hated, or even suspected, with every vice and with every crime ; and every change in his conduct or opinions which interest or caprice dictated was regarded as an inspiration from heaven. When he married Anne Boleyn, an obsequious Parliament enacted it treason to question the validity of the marriage or the legitimacy of the offspring. After she had been divorced and executed, the stigma of illegitimacy was attached to her child ;[1] and when the King executed Catherine Howard, and divorced Anne of Cleves, the servile crowd of courtiers and apostates who surrounded his throne were ready with their applause. Placed at the head of the Church, he seemed to think that, like the Pope, he was infallible ; and going further than the Pope, he assumed the right to change his creed at will, and insisted that the nation should follow his example. At one time he showed a disposition to join hands with the German reformers and to accept the Confession of Augsburg (1530), which affirmed that justification came from faith alone, rejected the veneration and invocation of saints as well as confession, and denied transubstantiation.[2] A few years later it was woe to those of Henry's subjects who held such doctrines. By the Six Articles (1539) it was decreed to be heresy to deny transubstantiation ;

[1] Lingard, vol. v. p. 36. [2] Alzog's *Church History*, vol. iii. p. 235.

confession was declared necessary for salvation; the only deviation from the ancient faith now remaining was that Henry still claimed to be head of the Church.[1] Those who denied that he was were condemned to be hanged and quartered as traitors, those who denied the Real Presence[2] were condemned to be burned as heretics; and it was not uncommon to see both classes led on the same hurdles to the place of execution.[3]

To justify the suppression and plunder of the English monasteries, the plea was put forth that they were dens of infamy, their occupants lazy, useless, idle, ignorant and immoral;[4] but in Ireland this plea was not maintained, and, except Browne's statement that they were ignorant and attached to the Pope,[5] nothing else was laid to their charge. These monks and nuns were of the same race as the Irish themselves—their manners, their language, their sympathies were the same. To the shelter of their monasteries the poor came for food and clothing, which in those days no State-endowed institutions could supply; the sick were attended and relieved, the traveller found hospitality, the weary found rest, the sorrow-stricken was consoled, the sinner was welcomed to repentance, and the warrior, weary of battle, was solaced by prayer and religion in his declining years. These monks and friars preached the truths of the faith to the people, they educated their children, and across mountain and moor they brought the consolations of religion to the sick and dying, braving alike the inclemency of the weather and the terrors of some fatal disease. When their monasteries and convents were violently invaded, their property confiscated, themselves driven forth in beggary, or perhaps murdered, every class of the community felt aggrieved.

[1] Lingard, vol. v. p. 64.

[2] This was one of the counts in the indictment against Cromwell—that he had led people to a disbelief in the Blessed Sacrament (Gasquet, *Henry VIII.* p. 154).

[3] Lingard, vol. v. p. 74.

[4] Gasquet, *Henry VIII. and the English Monasteries*, cap. 7.

[5] *State Papers*, vol. ii. p. 539. He blames especially the Franciscan Observants, "which be worste of all others." *Vide* also vol. iii. p. 7.

The fate of the secular churches and secular priests cannot have differed much from that of the monasteries and the monks. These churches were robbed of everything they possessed. The vessels of the altar, the shrines of saints, relics, crosses, pictures and statues were either taken away or destroyed. In most cases the reformer's motive was cupidity; but Browne, in addition, had the fanaticism of the German Lutherans, and in reference to statues and pictures he was animated with the destructive spirit of the iconoclast. Idols he called them, and the respect paid to them idolatry.[1] With a keener intelligence than the reformers, the Irish were able to distinguish between the statue or painting and the person it represented. When a picture is set in a valuable frame, or when flowers are placed at the base of the statue, it is not to the canvas or marble that honour is given. And when the people beheld a representation of a saint—of St. Patrick or St. Columba or St. Bridget, of the Blessed Virgin, of the Infant Saviour resting on His bed of straw or nestling in the arms of His Mother—they thought of the saint's zeal, of the Virgin's sanctity, of the Saviour's love. The recollection was inspiring. They prayed not to the statue before them or to the picture which hung upon the walls, but to Him whom it represented, and as they prayed they felt their faith grow vivid, their devotion increase, and their charity was enkindled anew. The reformers confined their efforts to preaching, but in religion it is necessary to reach men's hearts as well as their understanding; and the invocation of saints, the honours paid to their relics or their shrines, the ceremonies and rites—which the reformers considered unnecessary,—these will touch the heart and move the will when preaching by itself may fail.

A religion which was avowedly novel, and above all whose high priest was an English king, was certain to be regarded by the Irish with suspicion and ill-favour; but when it furthermore involved the destruction of churches, the suppression of monasteries, and the murder of priests and monks and nuns, it was equally certain they would regard it with aversion and hate.

[1] *State Papers*, vol. iii. p. 35.

There must have been many in Ireland who wished well to England, and who hoped that Henry's attack on the Church was but a passing storm which, at least with his death, would subside. They knew that the people would not embrace the new doctrines or abandon the old without a struggle, and if the efforts to change them were continued, then, for the first time, both Anglo-Irish and Irish would unite, and trouble and bloodshed and misery both for England and Ireland would ensue

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