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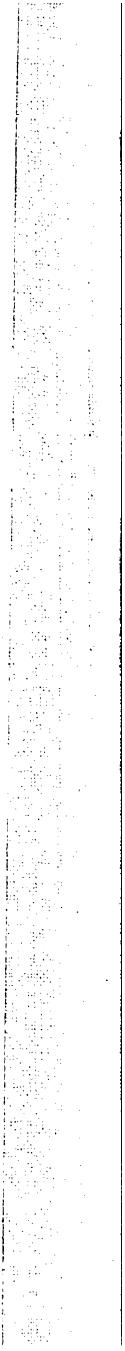
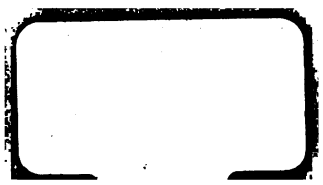
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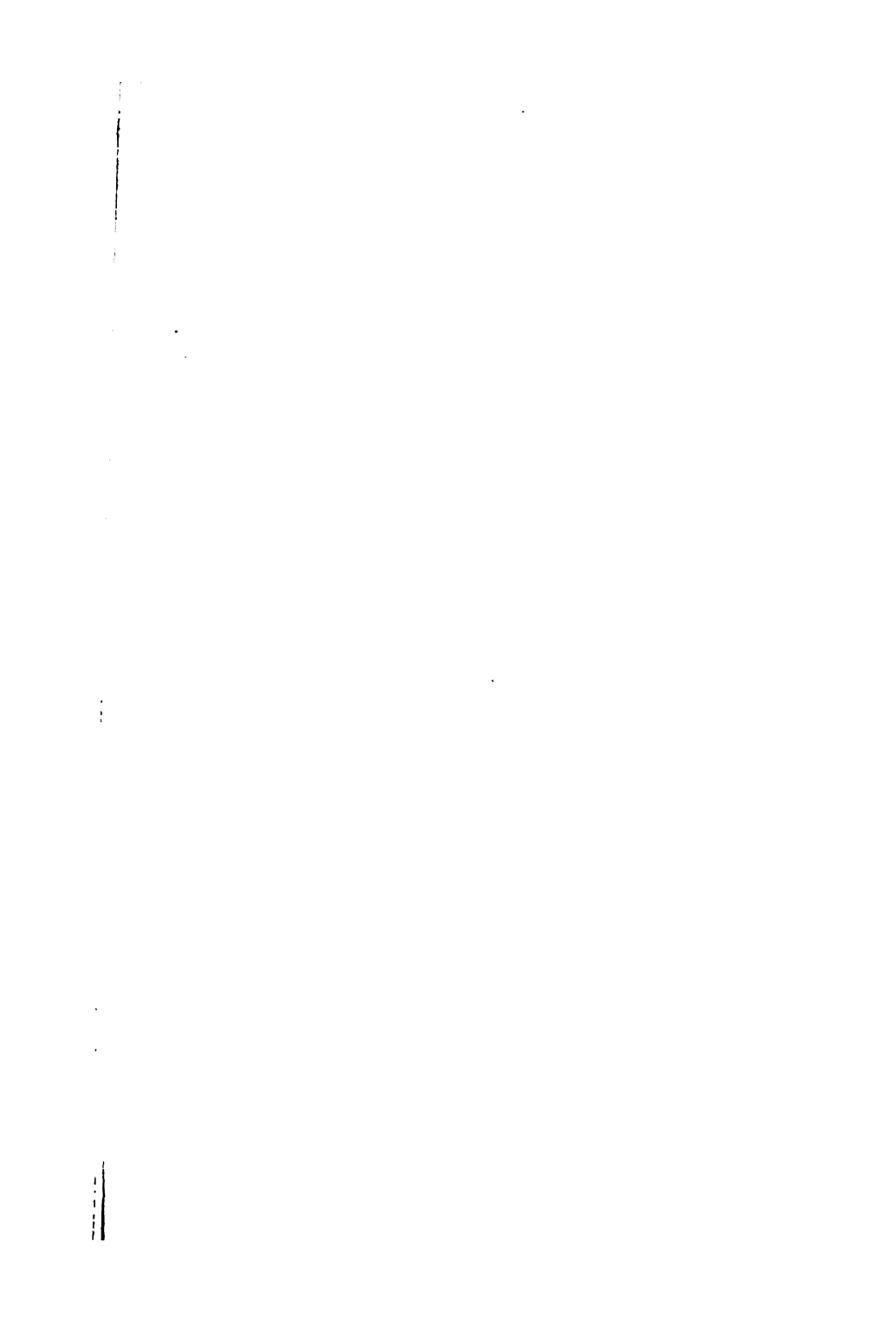
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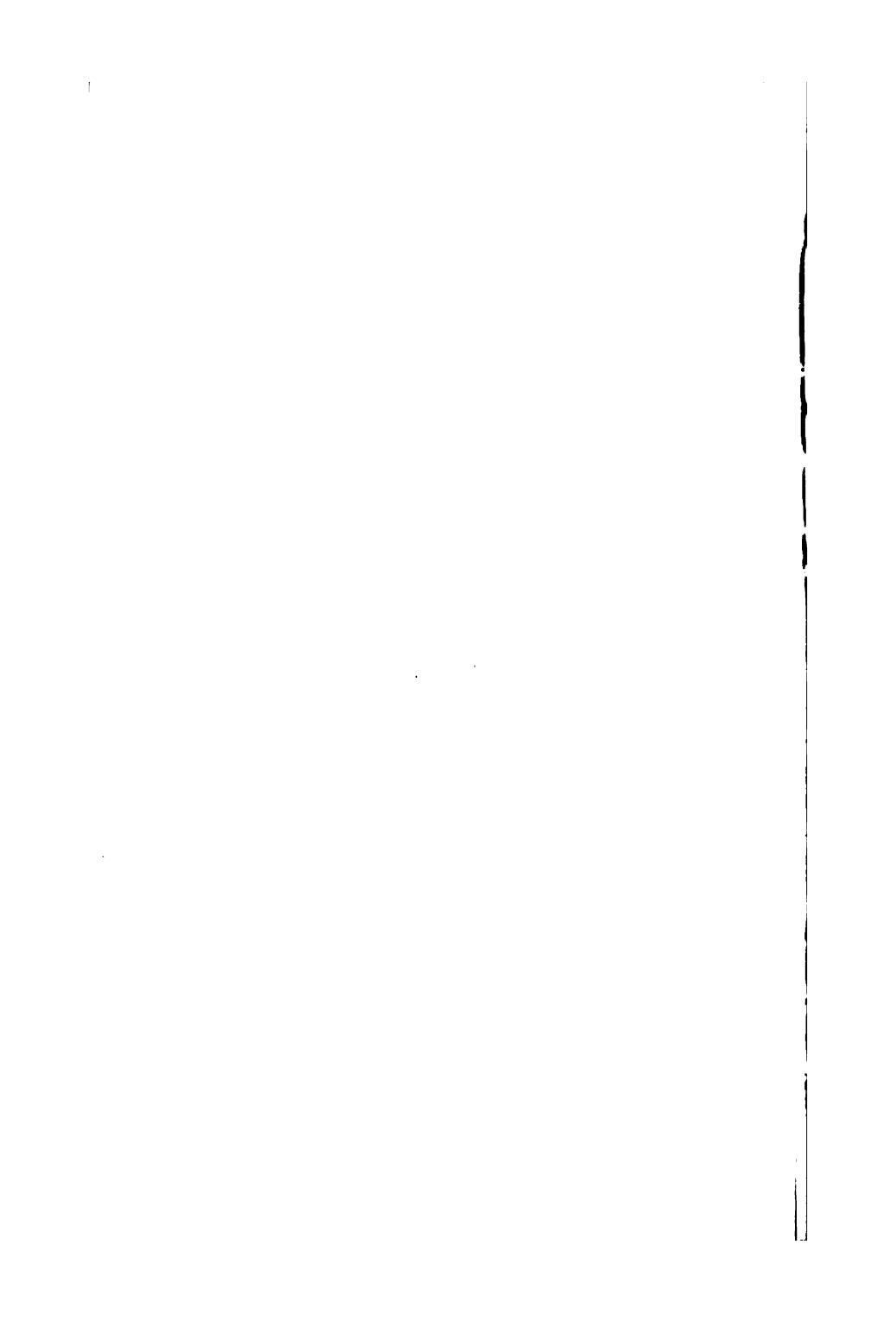
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# REVOLTED IRELAND.

1798 AND 1803.

BY THE

HON. ALBERT S. G. CANNING,

AUTHOR OF "MACAULAY, ESSAYIST AND HISTORIAN," "THOUGHTS  
ON SHAKESPEARE'S HISTORICAL PLAYS," ETC. ETC.

"Who dares to speak of '98?  
Who blushes at the name?"

*Irish Ballad.*

"They say it is the fatal destiny of that land, that no purposes whatsoever which are meant for her good will prosper or take good effect; which, whether it proceed from the very genius of the soil, or influence of the stars, or that Almighty God hath not yet appointed the time of her Reformation, or that He reserveth her in this unquiet state still for some secret scourge, which shall by her come unto England, it is hard to be known but yet much to be feared."—Edmund Spenser's *View of Ireland*. Written in the 16th century.

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1886.

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L. M. J.

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## P R E F A C E.

I BELIEVE that the remarkable period of 1798 might be instructively recalled to public attention at the present time. This work comprises extracts from writers differing widely from each other, with my remarks on the subject.

A. S. G. CANNING.

*London, May 1st, 1836.*

MOVING  
CLUB  
YEAR

# REVOLTED IRELAND.

1798 AND 1803.

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## CHAPTER I.

ALTHOUGH the latter part of this century has diffused more education through Ireland than ever before, there appears considerable ignorance of its history even among men familiar with its agricultural, commercial, and financial position.\*

For most practical purposes of the present day Irish history appears of comparatively slight

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\* "That proportion of the national talent and scholarship which ought in every country to be devoted to elucidating the national history, has in Ireland not been so employed. Irish history has passed to a lamentable extent into the hands of religious polemics, of dishonest partisans, and of half-educated and uncritical enthusiasts." —Lecky's *England in the 18th Century*, vol. ii. ch. vi.

importance till the reign of James II. At his accession he was what no other King of Ireland had ever been—an acknowledged Roman Catholic monarch, by the sincere, unanimous concurrence of English Episcopalians, Scottish Presbyterians, and Irish Roman Catholics, unopposed by either foreign Powers or rebellious subjects. To this fact Macaulay calls particular attention.\* According to him, and to those authorities whom he trusts, the second King James might have effected the real union of Ireland with Great Britain as surely as his grandfather, the first James, had accomplished that of Scotland with England by his accession to the British throne.

These two kingdoms previously were always independent of, and often hostile to, each other ; but after his accession no *national* enmity ever armed one against the other, either in rebellion or civil war. In the tremendous revolution which deprived his son, Charles I., of his life, all national distinctions between England and Scotland had disappeared. The Royalists were represented in both countries chiefly by the

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\* *History of England*, vol. ii.

nobility and landed gentry, mostly composed of Episcopalians. The Republicans in both kingdoms consisted chiefly of Independents and Presbyterians, allied with a few Episcopalians, while British Roman Catholics took little part in the contest, but decidedly favoured the king.

In Ireland, the native chiefs, though fiercely resisting the British Republicans under Cromwell, probably desired the restoration of their own independence rather than that of the British monarchy.\* Upon this point, however, there seems some doubt, though certainly most of the Irish Protestants and Presbyterians descended from British colonists were in favour of the monarchy. Their loyalty thus incurred the angry reproaches of the British Republicans, expressed in the bitter eloquence of Cromwell's political and poetical ally, John Milton. This sublime writer reproached the Irish Protestant

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\* "The picture, indeed, is a strangely confused one, the lines of division of Irish and English, of Catholic and Protestant, of Royalist and Republican, crossing and intermingling."—Lecky's *England in the 18th Century*, vol. ii. ch. vi.

loyalists with as much intolerant vehemence as his own party had previously endured from Royalist opponents.\*

Meanwhile, the Irish Catholics were finally overcome by the British Republicans, who accused them of adhering to the monarchy. But their ultimate designs were never clearly proved, or at least have always caused a difference of opinion among Irish historians. The Republican triumph resulted in the almost absolute, yet unpopular, dictatorship of the Independent general, Cromwell,† followed by the peaceful restoration of the monarchy in the person of the eldest son of the executed king.

Charles II., though troubled by plots, conspiracies, and a Scottish revolt, was never opposed by open rebellion in England or in Ireland. It was reserved for his unfortunate brother, James II., to witness the amazing spec-

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\* See Milton's remarks on peace with Irish Rebels. *Prose Works*.

† Macaulay states that "beyond the limits of his camps and fortresses Cromwell could hardly be said to have a party."—*History of England*.

tacle, so opposed to all precedent and all lessons and ideas of the past, of the British monarchy, defended by Irish Roman Catholics against a revolutionary union of British and Irish Protestants.

These allies summoned their king's son-in-law, Prince William of Orange, without yet calling him their sovereign, to head their revolt against the lawful descendant of their long line of kings. Their firm resolution and united skill and bravery soon placed their victorious leader on the throne of the deposed monarch, who, with his infant son, were banished and proscribed.

"None but the Irish Catholics will stand by me now,"\* finally exclaimed the lawful heir of all the English conquerors of Ireland. His words proved true. His reign beheld a spectacle not only different from, but opposed to all historical precedent in the adhesion of the native Irish to an English king banished and deposed by English subjects. The claims and interests of the divided Christian

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\* Macaulay's *History*.



faith in this memorable instance overcame all historical aspirations for Irish independence. Thus, chiefs of ancient family, some of royal descent, now attended the *levées* of the English Catholic Viceroy, Tyrconnel, in Dublin, offering their services to a Saxon king, though at the price of the restitution of all lands granted to that king's fellow-countrymen, to be held in obedience to his regal supremacy. To this demand James—though, it is said, unwillingly—consented.

The paramount influence of their common Roman Catholic faith, now assailed by different sects of allied Protestants, mainly caused this extraordinary treaty between the native Irish princes, as they still considered themselves, and the regal descendant and representative of their hereditary foes.

The Irish Catholics, hitherto implacable and hereditary enemies of England, were now transformed into the English king's last army. Their defeat at the Boyne river and at Limerick decided the fate of the British sovereign in Ireland ; and the new Government, established by revolution, assumed supreme power, and now

treated opponents as rebels to its sole and lawful authority.

After the fall of Limerick, in 1691, there ensued, according to Macaulay, a long peace in Ireland, which continued almost unbroken till 1798. He writes:\* “All this time hatred, kept down by fear, festered in the hearts of the children of the soil. They were still the same people who had sprung to arms in 1641 at the call of Phelim O’Neill, and in 1689 at the call of Tyrconnel. At length, after a hundred years of servitude, endured without one vigorous or combined struggle for emancipation, the French revolution awakened a wild hope in the bosoms of the oppressed. The spirit of Popery and the spirit of Jacobinism, irreconcilable antagonists everywhere else, were for once mingled in an unnatural and portentous union. Their joint influence produced the third and last rising up of the aboriginal population against the colony. The Celt again looked impatiently for the sails which were to bring succour from Brest, and the Saxon was again backed by the whole power of England. Again the victory

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\* *History of England*, vol. iv. ch. xvii.

remained with the well-educated and well-organized minority. But happily the vanquished people found protection in a quarter from which they would once have had to expect nothing but implacable severity. By this time the philosophy of the 18th century had purified English Whiggism.”\*

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\* Earl Russell, in his preface to Moore's Life, mentions the '98 rising as "so wickedly provoked, so rashly begun, and so cruelly crushed," thus apparently confirming Macaulay's words. To prove, however, what effect "purified English Whiggism" produced on the Irish revolutionary spirit, it may be instructive to quote the opinions of John Mitchel, the convicted revolutionist of 1848, upon both these distinguished Whigs—the Prime Minister and the historian. Mr. Mitchel (*History of Ireland*, vol. ii. p. 417), after stating that, during the Irish famine of '47, the verdict of wilful murder was returned against Lord Russell, then Premier, by several coroners' juries, observes: "The verdict was perfectly justifiable, and the crime quite manifest; but, as there was no power to bring the criminal over to Ireland for trial, and as there would have been no use in arraigning him before an English jury, he was never brought to justice." Mr. Mitchel was transported in '48 as a felon, together with Messrs. Smith O'Brien and Meagher, by a Whig Government, when Lord Clarendon was Viceroy, whom Mr. Mitchel usually termed the Butcher-General of Ireland. These facts surely prove that he and his party thought their rebellion of '48 quite as "wickedly provoked," if not as "cruelly crushed," by

These words of Macaulay may considerably mislead readers not familiar with Irish history. The '98 Rebellion cannot fairly be termed a "rising up of the aboriginal population against the colony." Such an idea would have horrified its chief leaders, and destroyed all their hopes, plans, and expectations.\*

That it would eventually have caused this

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the Whig Ministers, Russell and Clarendon, as that of '98 by the Tory statesmen, William Pitt and Lords Camden and Cornwallis. In his *Irish History*, vol. ii., Mitchel bitterly censures Lord Clarendon for "packing juries" for his own trial, and in the first page censures Macaulay as one "who, of all modern historians, has uniformly exhibited the most inveterate malignity against the Irish nation." No impartial student of Macaulay would probably take this view. But it is instructive to know the impression which his truly English Liberal opinions produced on a man like John Mitchel, whose talents, ardour, and sincerity certainly gave him, although a Unitarian in creed, great influence even over the disaffected Irish Roman Catholics. His *History of Ireland*, though prejudiced and one-sided, is written with remarkable animation.

\* "There has seldom been a national commotion in which religion was so little concerned; the Society of United Irishmen was professedly based upon the extinction of all theological animosities."—Reid's *Presbyterian Church in Ireland*, vol. iii. ch. 30.

result is likely enough, had the rebellion succeeded. But the "United Irish," theoretically and practically, comprised men of all religions. Their revolt was essentially different from the two former Irish wars with which Macaulay classes them. The historian does not even mention authorities for his allusions to the '98 rebellion. British readers, ignorant of Ireland, have doubtless read and believed these statements, and consequently formed erroneous ideas about this insurrection.

It has been often admitted and deplored by Englishmen of sense and education how ignorant they were of Ireland when dealing with its political government or social feelings. This ignorance is less surprising when even learned historians write about it without sufficient authority for the conclusions they both form for themselves and convey to others. Macaulay's comparison of the '98 revolt with the two previous Irish wars is a remarkable proof of the superficial manner in which even this illustrious writer indulges when dealing with the grave and delicate subject of Irish disaffection, the importance of which the pro-

gress of this century has increased rather than diminished.

It is, indeed, of practical consequence that the designs, motives, and principles of the '98 rebellion should be rightly understood in England, for it certainly explains all subsequent Irish disaffection more clearly than any former rebellion can be expected to do. The wars of 1641 and '89 were each closely connected with the British revolutions of these periods, hence the probable reason why they are both comparatively well known to British readers.

Cromwell and William III., the champions or principal foes of contending English parties, headed armies in Ireland, and, wherever their names appear, British attention and interest follow them. No famous prince or general appeared during the '98 revolt. The movement was confined to Ireland, and no party in Great Britain had apparently much sympathy with it. France, the ancient historical foe of England, was its chief external aid and promoter. The anti-English feeling, for centuries prevalent there, was eagerly appealed to and utilised by the "United Irish" leaders, no

longer to recall a past time—the avowed and cherished object of all previous Irish wars—but to create a completely new one, not to restore the political supremacy of the old faith, or the territorial power of hereditary chiefs, but to utterly repudiate the ascendancy of any form of religion, the political influence of any particular class, and, above all, the monarchical principle itself.

This extreme republican spirit, far less moderate than that of America, was first known in Ireland during '98. It has been, however, encouraged ever since, both by French and American sympathisers to the present time.

Previous to '98, the republican spirit was unknown in Ireland, except when it animated Cromwell's fierce soldiery against the native Irish, and even against some Protestant Royalists. Religious enthusiasm animated the Irish against England both in 1641 and 1689. The native chief, Sir Phelim O'Neill, and the English Catholic Viceroy, Tyrconnel, alike appealed to it and fully shared it. But this was a sentiment specially denounced by the "United Irish" leaders, who exhorted all inhabitants of Ireland

—Protestant and Catholic—to unite against England, and establish a Republic after the French model, under which no religious denomination was to have the least ascendancy.

Despite Macaulay's comparison, therefore, an attentive student of the "United Irish" Rebellion of '98 will perceive that, instead of being directed against the colony, this revolution was chiefly planned and conducted by British descended and Protestant colonists. The objects of the two previous Irish wars, headed by Sir Phelim O'Neill in 1641, and stirred up by James II.'s loyal Viceroy, Tyrconnel, in 1689, were : the first, to regain the former independence of the Irish chiefs, under, perhaps, the nominal authority of Charles I. ; the second, to maintain the Roman Catholic House of Stuart on the Irish throne, by uniting the national and religious enmity of the native Irish against the British nation and colony, likewise united by religion and race.

The '98 insurrection was a remarkable contrast to both these wars. Neither the restoration of independent Irish chieftains, nor the supremacy of Roman Catholicism, were its



avowed objects, but were, on the contrary, alike incompatible with them. Its real design was, indeed, clearly stated to be the establishment of a Republic, composed of Irishmen of all religious persuasions, closely allied with the Jacobin Republic recently established in France. But no idea of either extirpating or banishing British Protestant colonists was ever entertained by the "United Irish" leaders, whose chosen name, indeed, excluded any such project.

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## CHAPTER II.

IN Macaulay's essay on Pitt,\* one of his latest writings, the historian says:—"He was the first English Minister who formed great designs for the benefit of Ireland. Had he been able to do all that he wished, it is probable that a wise and liberal policy would have averted the rebellion of 1798. But the difficulties which he encountered were great, perhaps insurmountable, and the (Irish) Roman Catholics were, rather by his misfortune than by his fault, thrown into the hands of the Jacobins. There was a third great rising of the Irishry against the Englishry—a *rising not less formidable* than the risings of 1641 and 1689."

Again, in the same essay (p. 352), Macaulay describes the Irish rebels in '98 as merely "a

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\* *Miscellaneous Writings*, vol. ii.

mob of half-naked Irish peasants." These statements appear hardly reconcilable, for such foes could never have been as formidable as the comparatively disciplined troops led by the able and gallant Sarsfield in 1689.

This is the second time that the great historian compares the '98 rebellion with the revolution of 1641 and the civil war of 1689. Yet historical facts, surely, do not warrant his conclusion that it was "not less formidable" than they.

In 1641 by far the greater part of Ireland was in the power of the native Irish. Great Britain was distracted by civil war. The British colonists in Ireland sympathised with the overthrown British monarchy, and reluctantly joined the Republicans under Cromwell as their only chance of escape from banishment or extirpation by the native Irish.\* In the civil war of '89 the Irish were, perhaps, in a still stronger position. The capital and the chief towns, except Enniskillen and Derry, were in their hands. They were well armed, and well commanded by

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\* Reid's *History of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland*; Milton's *Prose Works*; Carte's *Life of Ormond*.

Irish and foreign generals of experience and ability—Sarsfield, Rosen, St. Ruth, &c. But in '98 the “united” revolutionists never held a single town or fortress of importance, never stood a siege, and were never headed by any leader of military skill. Their few French allies, under General Humbert, who landed at Killalla, were totally opposed in principle to their predecessors, who, under St. Ruth, had ably assisted the Irish in 1689. St. Ruth and his men were devoted Roman Catholics; Humbert and his soldiers were atheists.\* The former sympathised with the religious feelings of the Irish, and cordially joined them in actual warfare; the latter openly insulted their religion, and were too few to assist them effectively in the field.† St. Ruth had been extremely severe towards the French Protestants—the Huguenots—in behalf of the Church of Rome.‡ Humbert and his men boasted that they had recently

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\* Bishop Stock's diary. See Maxwell's *Irish Rebellion*.

† Maxwell and Harwood's *Histories of the '98 Rebellion*.

‡ Macaulay's *History*, vol. iv.

banished the Pope from Italy, and proclaimed all religion an imposture.

Professor Goldwin Smith\* writes on this subject with clearness and force :—“The leading Roman Catholics were on the side of the (British) Government. The mass of the Catholic priesthood were well inclined to take the same side. They could have no sympathy with an atheist republic, red with the blood of priests, as well as with the blood of the son of St. Louis [the King of France]. If some of the order were concerned in the movement, it was as demagogues sympathising with their peasant brethren, and not as priests.”

This important fact — the loyalty of Roman Catholic noblemen, gentry, and bishops to British rule in the midst of a rebellious Catholic population — has never, perhaps, been enough considered.

While the “United Irish” chiefs, mostly Protestants and Presbyterians, incited the ignorant Catholic peasantry to revolt by eloquent and exaggerated statements of their wrongs, their

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\* *Irish History and Character*, p. 159.

natural leaders, lay and clerical, fortunately possessed enough European knowledge to perceive and thoroughly understand that their true remedy lay not in republican revolution, allied with French atheists, and imbued with their views and principles.

Yet the Irish Catholic gentry and chief prelates, from their superior education and knowledge, must, for these reasons, have felt the more keenly the injustice of many legal disabilities imposed on account of religious faith alone. They, indeed, occupied a very trying position, between the national hostility and distrust of British Protestant government, and the deceitful temptations offered by republican revolution. They yet decided wisely by adhering in word and deed to a Government which, however, seemed hardly to expect their loyalty.

Accordingly, they issued an earnest, pathetic appeal to their more ignorant co-religionists, dated May 6th, 1798, from which the following is an extract\* :—“The unfortunately deluded will do well to consider whether the true interests

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\* Plowden's *History of Ireland*, vol. ii.

and honour of the Roman Catholic religion are likely to be most considered by the bishops of that persuasion, by the ancient families who profess that religion, and who have resisted every temptation to relinquish it, or by a set of desperate and profligate men, availing themselves of the want of education and experience in those whom they seek to use as instruments for gratifying their own wicked and interested views." They added that the accomplishment of the views held by the deluded of their persuasion, "if effected, must be effected by the downfall of the clergy, of the ancient families, and respectable commercial men of the Roman Catholic religion," &c.

This remonstrance was signed by the Catholic Lords Fingal, Gormanstown, Kenmare, Southwell, and Sir Edward Bellew, and also by the Rev. Patrick Flood, D.D., President of the Royal College of St. Patrick at Maynooth, for himself, professors, and students of said college. While Lords Fingal, Kenmare, and others, made good their words by leading armed yeomanry against the insurgents, Archbishop Troy, of Dublin, and Bishop Caulfield, of Wexford, vainly laboured

to dissuade the Catholic peasantry from joining the rebellion.

Bishop Caulfield, in a remarkable letter to the Catholic Archbishop of Dublin, mentions those priests who joined the rebellion as chiefly men of irregular conduct and out of favour with their spiritual superiors. The historian Plowden states he had this letter in the handwriting of that prelate, giving the names of those priests as having acted in complete disobedience to him.

The fact was that the educated Irish Catholics at this time, composed chiefly of their few gentry and prelates, perceived that among British Protestants there was growing, though slowly, a wish to improve their social and political position. None knew better than the Irish Catholic nobility and chief prelates that the result of their long period of subjection had proved exactly the reverse of the desires of their British Protestant rulers. Instead of making the Irish peasantry Protestant, it had always rendered them all the more devotedly Roman Catholic.\* They natu-

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\* "Yet these (Irish Catholics) only clung the closer to their faith on account of the storms which assailed it.



rally associated British Protestant rule with gross oppression, rather than with that religious and political freedom which most Protestants believed would accompany the supremacy of their religion.

Thus, at the French Revolution, when the Romish clergy were attacked, both in France and Italy, by a union of republican revolution with infidel doctrine—when the Pope was driven from Rome by insurgent atheists, and Catholic priests exposed to contempt, hatred, and death by French and Italian republicans—the Irish priesthood firmly retained moral and political influence over their people, not only unimpaired, but materially strengthened, by the severity of British Protestant rule.\* To this cause, in a great

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In common parlance, the Penal Laws date from the treaty of Limerick, but the legislative assaults on Irish Catholics began with Elizabeth.”—Lecky’s *Rationalism*, vol. ii.

\* “The teachers of France were the teachers of Europe. At length the revolution came. Down went the old Church of France, with all its pomp and wealth. Some of its priests, rejoicing in the new licence, proclaimed that their whole life had been an imposture. Others, more faithful to their principles, were butchered by scores without a

measure, the Irish Catholic clergy owed preservation of their spiritual authority amid the general, though temporary, revolt of European opinion against it.

Yet, although this religious influence remained intact, it was beyond the power of the Catholic nobility or prelates to prevent a vast number of their people, including some ignorant, fanatical priests, from joining the rebellion.

But this revolution was planned and headed by persons who, of all Irishmen, had least cause of complaint, and the least reason to view British rule with hostility. Of all the "United Irish" leaders, the most talented and influential were Lord Edward Fitzgerald, son of the Duke of Leinster, Theobald Wolfe Tone, the brothers Emmett, the brothers Sheares, Bagenal Harvey, Russell, and M'Cracken. These men were all Protestants or Presbyterians, and, as their names indicated, of British origin.

That such persons incited Roman Catholic

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trial, drowned, shot, hung on lamp-posts. The churches were closed, the bells were silent, the shrines were plundered, the silver crucifixes were melted down."—Macaulay's *Essay on Ranke's History of the Popes*.

fellow-subjects to revolt against England in behalf of Irish Nationality, while all the chief Catholics, lay and clerical, were either loyal or passive, is a very remarkable fact. Ardent proclamations appeared, denouncing British rule in eloquent English, chiefly addressed to a Roman Catholic population, yet composed and signed mostly by Protestants of British descent. The republican spirit, excited and roused by the late French and American revolutions, seems to have mainly influenced these new leaders of Irish popular opinion.\* Thus, to the dismay of the chief Irish Catholics, the peasantry "were thrown," as Macaulay says, "into the hands of the Jacobins."

Ireland, at the beginning of 1798, presents a perplexing spectacle, even to an attentive student of its sanguinary and troubled ancient history. The Viceregal office was held by Lord Camden, aided by Lords Castlereagh and Clare, whose

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\* "A considerable proportion of them held deistical principles; some of them were habitual drunkards, and not a few of them were barristers, of much talent but of no fixed principles in religion, and who had little to lose in the scramble of a revolution."—Reid's *Presbyterian Church in Ireland*, vol. iii.

duty it was to keep a constant watch on the acts, speeches, and writings of the disaffected.\*

Lord Edward Fitzgerald, whose revolutionary ideas were well known, was concealed in Dublin; Wolfe Tone was in Paris, where he urged the French Directory, with all the impetuosity of his fiery spirit, to despatch what he called a liberating army of French allies to Ireland; while the other "United Irish" leaders, dispersed over the country, constantly reminded the people of their former sufferings, relating and exaggerating—though in eloquent English, instead of the Erse of former days—the cruelties inflicted by the British, from their first invasion of Ireland, and exhorting Irishmen of all religious persuasions to take arms for the cause of Irish freedom.

These leaders were not, as in former times, native chiefs seeking revenge and claiming

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\* Lord Camden was succeeded in the Lord Lieutenancy by the Marquis Cornwallis. The latter's interesting memoirs prove both his humanity and intelligence, but he was unable to calm effectually the malignant passions which he found animated the divided Irish population, though he tried earnestly to do so, and seems to have been not altogether unsuccessful.

restitution, but enthusiastic young men, of British descent mostly, gifted with remarkable eloquence and great moral courage, but with little, if any, military knowledge or capacity. The professed Protestantism of most of them clashed strangely and unnaturally with the intense hatred they expressed and really felt against England.\*

Meanwhile, the ancient families of O'Brien and O'Neill, of Irish regal descent, though now Protestant, held large estates in Clare and Antrim in steady loyalty to British rule, and vied with the Catholic nobles and prelates in trying to restrain their tenants and followers from joining the republican movement.† But the successful American revolt and the establishment of a

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\* The poet Spenser, writing in the reign of Elizabeth, thus mentions the enmity of the earliest British settlers towards the mother country. After stating that the Veres and Fitzursulas changed their names to McSwyne and McMahan, he says:—"Proud hearts do oftentimes, like wanton colts, kick at their mothers. So, they say, did these for private despite turn themselves against England."—*View of Ireland*.

† "Few of the existing representatives of the ancient Milesian chieftainries now profess the Catholic faith."—Sullivan's *New Ireland*, vol. i. ch. vii.

French Republic so encouraged the Irish disaffected that, without promise of American aid, and with a very uncertain reliance on France, they rushed to arms, proclaiming an Irish Republic wherever they dared do so, and thus aroused against them the whole power of Great Britain, which they had so recklessly defied.

The most able and influential of the "United Irish" leaders was certainly Wolfe Tone. He may, perhaps, be called the chief founder of the "United Irish" Society. He and his political friends had naturally viewed with regret and shame the disgraceful, sanguinary quarrels that had long distracted the Irish population and the lawless, 'desperate gangs called Hearts of Oak, Hearts of Steel, Peep o' Day Boys, Defenders, Right Boys, and White Boys, who had so inflamed the Irish peasantry—Catholic and Protestant—against each other.

To reconcile and unite a people so long and so bitterly alienated in one firm bond of national feeling and aspiration was indeed a noble ambition, and, perhaps, might have been accomplished had the patriotic task devolved upon men of discretion, cool judgment, and political experi-

ence. But in all these qualifications, or rather essentials, Tone was peculiarly deficient.\*

Yet he was certainly a man of great and varied abilities, great energy and perseverance, a rare combination of light-hearted gaiety, with extreme daring, and ardent enthusiasm. The national poet, Moore,† describes him briefly, but accurately, as “a truly Irish mixture of daring in design, with light-heartedness of execution.”‡ In

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\* “The genius of Wolfe Tone was accompanied by its full share of eccentricity. His mind, powerful and impulsive, rushed at its object, without looking to consequences, and, when foiled in one direction, charged with double energy in another. So, too, his feelings, though strong and rapid, were not deep, and his spirits were seldom in the same state for any length of time—now playful and buoyant, the next moment melancholy and depressed.”—*Life of Lord Plunkett*, vol. i. p. 61.

† *Life of Lord Edward Fitzgerald*.

‡ Many extracts from Tone’s diary prove he yielded shamelessly to that degrading vice which the excellent Father Mathew so energetically opposed throughout Ireland. “A bottle of Burgundy is too much, and I resolve every morning regularly to drink but the half, and every evening regularly I break my resolution. . . . I reckon I am the poorest ambassador to-day in Paris; but that gives me no great concern. Huzza! *Vive la Republique!* . . . When Christmas comes about again, oh! then we shall have money. . . . Received my pay, and are all as

1791 Tone wrote an address to the Irish people in words that strikingly display the remarkable force of his character :—“The present state of Ireland is unparelled in history or fable. Inferior to no other country in Europe in the gifts of Nature, blest with a temperate sky and fruitful soil, intersected by many great rivers, indented round her whole coast with the noblest harbours, abounding with all the necessary materials for unlimited commerce, teeming with inexhaustible mines of the most useful metals, filled by four millions of an ingenious and gallant people, with bold hearts and ardent spirits, posted right in the track between Europe and America, within fifty miles of England and three hundred of France ; yet, with all these great advantages, unheard of, unknown, without pride, or power, or name, without ambassadors, army, or navy, not of half the consequence in the Empire of which she has the honour to make a part with

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drunk as so many swabbers. . . . I am vastly musical and engaging this evening, methinks ; *but God knows the heart.*”—*Life of Tone*, edited by his son, vol. i. pp. 37, 147, 173, 177.



the single county of York, or the loyal and well-regulated town of Birmingham.”\*

Mr. Goldwin Smith, who, perhaps, rather disparages the other United Irish leaders, thus describes Tone†:—“The only man of real mark in the party was Wolfe Tone; he was not a first-class man of action; but he was a first-rate man of the second class—brave, adventurous,

\* Tone's *Memoirs*, edited by his son.

About two centuries before, the English poet Spenser (who died in 1599) thus describes the natural advantages of Ireland in a somewhat similar manner, though with a very different object:—“Sure it is yet a most beautiful and sweet country as any is under heaven, being stored throughout with many goodly rivers, replenished with all sorts of fish most abundantly, sprinkled with very many sweet islands and goodly lakes, like little inland seas, that will carry even ships upon their waters, adorned with goodly woods, even fit for building of houses and ships, so commodiously as that if some princes in the world had them they would soon hope to be lords of all the seas, and ere long of all the world; also full of very good ports and havens opening upon England, as inviting us to come into them to see what excellent commodities that country can afford; besides, the soil itself most fertile, fit to yield all kind of fruit that shall be committed thereunto, and lastly, the heavens most mild and temperate,” &c.—*View of Ireland*.

† *Irish History and Character*, p. 166.

fertile in resource, buoyant under misfortune, warm-hearted, and capable of winning, if not of commanding, men. Though his name is little known among Englishmen, he was near being almost as fatal an enemy to England as Hannibal was to Rome. Mainly through the perseverance, insinuation, and address of this obscure envoy, the French Directory were induced to send forth the great armament of Hoche, which appeared in Bantry Bay, and would certainly have effected a landing but for the obstacles of wind and weather, such as steam has now annulled."

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## CHAPTER III.

No Protestant Government ever did or could show greater enmity to Roman Catholicism than the French republicans displayed in France and Italy during the last century.

While throughout Europe they declared themselves the implacable and vehement foes of the Papacy, in Ireland alone they were received and welcomed as the rescuing champions of the very cause they were endeavouring to destroy.

In fact, by publicly abolishing religious worship in France and banishing the Pope, they had apparently succeeded in doing more injury to the Papacy than any Protestants had been able to do. Their avowed sentiments in Ireland quite agreed with their previous language and conduct in France and Italy. Either they

were utterly ignorant of Irish feeling and principle, or purposely ignored them. The latter reason for their behaviour seems more probable, considering Tone's long residence in France as the accredited envoy of the "United Irishmen" to the French Republic, and the frequent intercourse maintained between the French revolutionary Government and the Irish disaffected.

The loyalist historian Maxwell,\* quotes the following proclamation to the Irish people of the French general Kilmaine, copies of which, he says, were abundantly distributed in Ireland, though the general himself never landed. The feelings of the Irish Catholic clergy may be imagined at reading such sentiments heralding the approach of their liberating allies with the Protestant leader, Wolfe Tone, and freely spread among their parishioners:—

"Health and Fraternity to the People of Ireland.—The great nation [France] has sent me to you with a band of heroes to deliver you from the bonds of tyrants. Property is a common right belonging to the valour that

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\* *History of the Irish Rebellion*, p. 224.

seizes it. Fly to our standard, and we will free you from spiritual as well as temporal subjection; we will free you from the fetters of religion and the frauds of priestcraft. Religion is a bondage intolerable to free minds. We have banished it from our own country, and put down that grand impostor, the Pope, whose wealth we have sacrificed on the Altar of Reason," &c.\*

Tone states in his memoirs that he was on most intimate and friendly terms with General Kilmaine, whose important manifesto, therefore,

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\* "With respect to foreign states and countries the French Revolution has produced a protracted religious war of twenty-one years, for it was such not only from its origin, but from its revolutionary and destructive character, and from its fanatic opposition to everything holy. There was a fixed principle at the bottom of this modern Paganism. It was political idolatry, and it matters little what may be the immediate object of this idolatry—what the idol of the day, whether a Republic and the goddess of Reason, the *grande nation*, or the lust of conquest and the glory of arms—it is still the same demon of political destruction—the same anti-Christian spirit of government, which wishes to mislead the Age and control the World."—Schlegel's *Philosophy of History*, Bohn's edition, pp. 493-4.

The English poet, Coleridge, in 1793, thus wrote on

would scarcely have been issued without the knowledge or sanction of the accredited "United Irish" envoy to the French republic, who was also agent of the Irish Catholic revolutionary committee.

The "United Irish" historian, Harwood,\* quotes from the Protestant Bishop Stock's diary in Killalla, that it astonished the French officers to hear the Irish recruits, when they offered their services, declare that "they came to take arms for France and the Blessed Virgin."

The Frenchmen said "They had just driven the Pope out of Italy, and did not expect to find him again so suddenly in Ireland." Harwood, though a decided revolutionist, distrustfully

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the French Revolution in rather a similar spirit to the German philosopher:—

O France, that mockest Heaven, adulterous, blind,  
 And patriot only in pernicious toils,  
 Are these thy boasts, champion of human kind?  
 To mix with kings in the low lust of sway,  
 Yell in the hunt and share the murderous prey;  
 To insult the shrine of Liberty with spoils  
 From freemen torn, to tempt and to betray.

*Ode on France, Poetical Works, vol. i.*

\* *History of the '98 Rebellion, p. 230.*

adds, "Had a revolution been effected by the help of these very anti-Catholic allies, this antagonism would have placed formidable difficulties in the way of a cordial and permanent unity between the two nations."

It is now both interesting and instructive to study the real sentiments of Tone himself, the trusted representative of Irish revolutionists in France, as he may fairly be considered, to reveal the secret views of the chief leaders of the "United Irish" society, of which he was the original framer, and certainly the master-spirit.\* In 1791 he wrote prophetically in his journal at Paris†:—"The emancipated and liberal Irishman, like the emancipated and liberal Frenchman, *may go to Mass, may tell his beads, or sprinkle his mistress with holy water; but neither will attend to the rusty and extinguished thunderbolts of the Vatican, or the idle anathemas which, indeed, His Holiness is now-a-days too prudent and cautious to*

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\* "Mr. Tone's diaries were not meant for the public, which is indebted for them to the very curious inadvertency of his son."—Wills's *Illustrious Irishmen*.

† *Life of Tone*.

issue.”\* Again, he writes in an address to the Irish people—“Look to the origin of your first connection with Britain, that proud and selfish

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\* In this same year—1791—another illustrious Irishman was studying the French Revolution in a very different spirit. In a letter to a member of the French National Assembly, Edmund Burke wrote—“Your Assembly addresses a manifesto to France in which they tell the people, with an insulting irony, that they have brought the Church to its primitive condition. In one respect their declaration was undoubtedly true, for they have brought it to a state of poverty and desolation. To what a state of savage, stupid, servile insensibility must your people be reduced, who can endure such proceedings in their Church, their State, and their Judicature, even for a moment! But the deluded people of France are like other madmen, who, to a miracle, bear hunger, thirst, cold, and confinement, and the chains and lash of their keeper, while all the while they support themselves by the imagination that they are generals, prophets, kings, and emperors. Everything seems out of nature in this strange chaos of levity and ferocity, and of all sorts of crimes jumbled together with all sorts of follies. Jacobinism is the revolt of the enterprising talents of a country against its property. When private men form themselves into associations for the purpose of destroying the free existing laws and institutions of their country—when they secure to themselves an army by dividing amongst the people of no property the estates of the ancient and lawful proprietors—when a State recognises those acts—I call this Jacobinism by establishment.”—*Selections from Burke's Writings*, pp. 104-149.



nation, and see what is the foundation of the authority of your oppressors. Six hundred years ago the Pope, Nicholas Breakspear, Adrian IV., an Englishman, conferred the Irish Crown on Henry II., King of England, who was pleased in return to guarantee to his countryman, the Pope, the payment of a certain tax, to be levied off the Irish people; but were the people consulted whose liberties and properties were thus bartered away between these two Englishmen?\* No such thing! Their independence was sold by one foreigner to the other without their privity or concurrence,

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\* "Adrian IV., who then filled the Papal chair, was by birth an Englishman, and being, on that account, the more disposed to oblige Henry, he was easily persuaded to act as master of the world, and to make, without any hazard or expense, the acquisition of a great island to his spiritual jurisdiction. The Irish had by precedent missions from the Britons been imperfectly converted to Christianity. Adrian, therefore, in the year 1156, issued a bull in favour of Henry. He exhorts the king to invade Ireland in order to extirpate the vice and wickedness of the natives, and oblige them to pay yearly, from every house, a penny to the See of Rome. He gives him entire right and authority over the island, and commands the inhabitants to obey him as their Sovereign."—Hume's *History of England*, ch. ix.

and to consummate the injustice of this most infamous and audacious bargain, they were compelled themselves to raise the purchase money of their disgrace, and to pay for being enslaved. Such was the commencement of the British Monarchy in Ireland.”\*

Lastly, in March, 1798, the eve of the rebellion, Tone,† though agent of the Irish Catholic com-

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\* “The state of the kingdom (Ireland) by this cool, unexampled policy is most affectingly described in the King of Ulster’s letter to John XXII., then Pope: ‘Your predecessor, Adrian IV., who was by birth an Englishman, instead of punishing Henry II. for invading the rights of the Church and the murder of the Archbishop of Canterbury (Thomas à Becket), has delivered up our nation as a prey to his countrymen. More subtle than foxes, they surprise and destroy us. During the course of so many centuries our sovereigns, jealous of their glory, never would suffer their independence to be called in question. But that spirit which they opposed to force, they would not to the simple decree of Adrian.’”—O’Halloran’s *History and Antiquities of Ireland*, p. 254. O’Halloran states (p. 3) that Pope Alexander III., immediate successor to Adrian, confirmed this decree, adding that Adrian died in 1158; and yet this celebrated decree, of which he was the supposed author, never appeared till the year 1192, during the pontificate of his successor, Alexander III.

† *Life of Tone.*

mittee, thus mentions Pope and Papacy in his private diary:—"The Pope is dethroned and in exile. The circumstances relating to this great event are such as to satisfy my mind that there is a special Providence guiding the affairs of Europe at this moment, and turning everything to the great end of the emancipation of mankind from the yoke of religious and political superstition under which they have so long groaned. Some months ago Napoleon accorded peace, and a generous one, to the Pope. Many people thought at the time, and I was of their number, that it was unwise to let slip so favourable an opportunity to destroy for ever the Papal tyranny."\* Again, he writes in triumph:—

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\* It may be instructive to compare these views of Tone, the Protestant political representative of Irish Catholic revolutionists, with those of the Protestant Tory, Burke; on the same subject, and at about the same time:—"The artists of the French Revolution had given their very first essays and sketches of robbery and desolation against his [the Pope's] territories in a far more cruel, murdering piece than had ever entered into the imagination of painter or poet. Without ceremony they tore from his cherishing arms the possessions which he held for five hundred years undisturbed by all the ambition of all the ambitious monarchs who during that period have reigned

“ Providence, for its own wise and just purposes—the happiness of man and the complete establishment of civil and religious liberty—seems to have utterly taken away all sense and understanding from the Pope and his councils.” He then proceeds in a wild strain of mingled exultation and mockery:—“ Thus has terminated the temporal reign of the Popes, after an existence of about a thousand years. The fact is certain, and the Pope who has so often at his will and pleasure disposed of nations and monarchs, is himself deposed without effort or resistance. ‘ How art thou fallen from Heaven, O Lucifer, Son of the Morning.’ The Revelations have many fine things on this subject, touching the Beast and Babylon, &c. He is now a pre-

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in France. That venerable potentate and pontiff is sunk deep into the vale of years; he is half disarmed by his peaceful character; his dominions are more than half disarmed by a peace of two hundred years, defended as they were, not by forces, but by reverence; yet in all these straits we see him display, amidst the recent ruins and the new defacements of his plundered capital, along with the mild and decorous piety of the modern, all the spirit and magnanimity of ancient Rome.”—*Writings of Burke*, pp. 370–71.

late *in partibus*, his means are gone, his cardinals, his court, his wealth, all disappeared, and nothing remains but his keys,"\* &c. &c.

These being probably the true sentiments of many, if not most, of the United Irish leaders, they well explain why the Irish Catholic nobility

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\* "Nor were the calamities of the [Catholic] Church confined to France. The revolutionary spirit, attacked by all Europe, beat all Europe back, became conqueror in its turn, and went raging over the Rhine and through the passes of the Alps. The successor of St. Peter was carried away captive by the unbelievers. He died a prisoner in their hands, and even the honours of sepulture were long withheld from his remains. It is not strange that in the year 1799 even sagacious observers should have thought that at length the hour of the Church of Rome was come. An infidel power ascendant, the Pope dying in captivity, the most illustrious prelates of France living in a foreign country, the noblest edifices which the munificence of former ages had consecrated to the worship of God turned into Temples of Victory, or into banqueting-houses for political societies, such signs might well be supposed to indicate the approaching end of that long domination. But the end was not yet. Even before the funeral rites had been performed over the ashes of Pius VI. a great reaction had commenced. Anarchy had had its day. A new order of things rose out of the confusion; new dynasties, new laws, new titles, and amidst them emerged the ancient religion."—Macaulay's *Essay on Ranke's History of the Popes*, pp. 580–81.

and prelates opposed their influence over the Irish Catholic peasantry, despite their own causes of complaint against British rule at this time. For here in his own private writing the recognised chief and founder of the "United Irish" Society reveals intense hatred towards that Church, which was loved and revered by the majority of those very Irishmen who had sent him to represent them in France.

It was, of course, impossible that any man holding such sentiments could really unite his divided fellow-countrymen in a bond of permanent alliance, far less permanent union. Yet Tone, while he was actually writing this diary in Paris, possessed great political influence over many sincere Irish Catholics, as well as some better educated Irish Protestants and Presbyterians, which extraordinary position proves the dexterous talent, energy, and force of character displayed throughout by this remarkable man.\*

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\* "In his errand of propagandism he well succeeded. By his genius and untiring zeal he induced both the Catholics and the Protestants to lay aside their sectarian squabbles, or rather to subordinate them to the cause of nationality and seek for union and strength in the

His suicide may, perhaps, be said to virtually end the '98 rebellion, being the last important event in that lamentable revolution of which he may be considered the prime mover and originator.

Its next chief advocate, Thomas Addis Emmet, a lawyer, second son of Dr. Emmet, the State physician, seems to have nearly equalled Tone in ability as well as devotion to the fatal cause they had both espoused. Maxwell writes:—"Both in character and talent he was unapproached by any of the individuals in private or professional life who had arrayed themselves against the Government. In his political principles he was a determined republican."\* Tone † thus mentions

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fraternal bonds of the United Irishmen."—*Historical Sketch of Newry*, by "Newriensis."

\* Professor Robertson (*Lectures on Modern History*) states that Daniel O'Connell, the most popular of all modern Irish leaders, a sincere Roman Catholic, believed that Jacobin principles were most opposed to real Irish freedom. He also gives instructive details about Papal legislation against secret societies, including that of the Jacobins, the allies, if not the models, of the "United Irish" in '98.

† *Life of Tone*.

him:—"He is a man completely after my own heart; his opinions and mine square exactly."

Dr. Madden\* relates that on one occasion, when Thomas Emmet was retained to defend persons charged with administering illegal oaths, at that time a capital offence, and was addressing the Court in arrest of judgment—"He took up the pleadings in which the words of the oath were recited, and read them in a very deliberate manner, and with all the gravity of a man who felt that he was binding his soul by the obligation of a solemn oath. The words were to this effect:—"I, A. B., in the presence of God, do pledge myself to my country that I will use all my abilities and influence in the attainment of an impartial and adequate representation of the Irish nation in Parliament, and, as a means of absolute and immediate necessity in the establishment of this chief good of Ireland, I will endeavour, as much as lies in my ability, to forward a brotherhood of affection, an identity of interests, a communion of rights and a union of power among

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\* *Lives of the United Irishmen.*



Irishmen of all religious persuasions, without which every reform in Parliament must be partial, not national, inadequate to the wants, delusive to the wishes, and insufficient to the freedom and happiness of the country.' Having read the test, defended its obligations, with a power of reasoning and a display of legal knowledge in reference to the subject of the distinction between legal and illegal oaths, which the counsel for the prosecution described as producing an extraordinary impression, he addressed the Court in the following terms:—'My Lords, here in the presence of this legal Court, this crowded auditory, in the presence of the Being that sees and witnesses and directs this judicial tribunal—here, my lords, I myself, in the presence of God, declare I take the oath.' He then took the book that was on the table, kissed it, and sat down. No steps were taken by the Court against the newly-sworn United Irishman—the amazement of its functionaries left them in no fit state for either remonstrance or reproof."

In March, '98, before the actual outbreak, Thomas Emmet was arrested on the infor-

mation of the well-known detective, Reynolds, and, with M'Nevin, Oliver Bond, and others, was committed to prison, while warrants were at the same time issued against Lord Edward Fitzgerald, who was known to be concealed in Dublin.

Emmet, had the '98 rebellion succeeded, would, perhaps, have been the most influential of all the United Irish leaders except Wolfe Tone.\* Equally devoted and sincere as Fitzgerald and Tone, he, unlike them, preserved his natural composure, controlling the same ardent enthusiasm to which they impetuously yielded. His calm, rational style of writing after the destruction of his hopes, and while yet a State prisoner, clearly reveals the philosophical turn of his mind, displayed on a most trying occasion.

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\* "Thomas Emmet, born 1764, was a young man of great talents and amiability. He was arrested on a charge of high treason. His punishment was commuted to imprisonment in Fort George [in Scotland] in consideration of his giving the Government full information of the nature and organisation of the conspiracy, though he honourably refused to afford any evidence that might inculpate others."—*Life of Lord Plunket*, vol i.

An agreement was concluded between the Government and Emmet and the other prisoners, that they should give all information in their power of the internal transactions of the United Irishmen, also of all that had passed between them and foreign States, without naming or implicating any person whatever, and give security not to return to Ireland without leave, and that they should be ready to emigrate to such country as might be agreed on between the Government and them.

Thomas Emmet gives the following version of this remarkable transaction.\*—" We entered into this agreement the more readily because it appeared to us that by it the public cause lost nothing. We knew from the different examinations of the State prisoners before the Privy Council, and from conversations with Ministers, that Government was already in possession of all the important knowledge they could obtain from us. From whence they derived their information was not entirely known to us, but it is now manifest that Reynolds, Magan, and Hughes,

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\* Harwood's *History of the '98 Rebellion*.

not to speak of the minor informers, had put them in possession of every material fact respecting the internal state of the Union. There was also another strongly impelling motive for entering into this agreement. If Government, on the one hand, was desirous of alarming its dependants by a display of the vigorous and well-concerted measures that were taken for subverting its authority and shaking off the English yoke, so we, on the other hand, were not less solicitous for the vindication of our cause in the eyes of the liberal, the enlightened, and patriotic. We perceived that in making a fair and candid development of those measures we should be enabled boldly to avow and justify the cause of the Irish Union as being founded upon the purest principles of benevolence, and as aiming only at the liberation of Ireland."

When Tone, who was in Paris at the time, heard of the arrest of Emmet and his associates he wrote in his diary—"It is by far the most terrible blow which the cause of liberty in Ireland has yet sustained. I know not whether in the whole party it would be possible to replace the energy, talents, and integrity of which

we are deprived by this most unfortunate event. What a triumph at this moment for Fitzgibbon!" [Lord Clare].

After the conclusion of this remarkable agreement between the Government and Thomas Emmet, he, with Arthur O'Connor, M'Nevin, and others, was imprisoned in Scotland for about four years, and then liberated. Emmet went to the United States of America, where he became Attorney-General for the State of New York, and never returned to Ireland.\*

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\* Harwood's *History*.

## CHAPTER IV.

AFTER these very important arrests, and during Tone's continued residence in France, the hopes of the Irish revolutionists were chiefly centred in Lord Edward Fitzgerald,\* a man who, unlike the other United Irish leaders, was far more remarkable for personal courage and some military knowledge than for eloquence or love of argument.

Of this somewhat chivalrous and romantic personage Goldwin Smith says†:—"He seems to have been merely a weak, hot-headed enthusiast"; but this opinion is not shared by Dr. Madden, or even Musgrave, whose "History" is certainly prejudiced against all "United

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\* Maxwell's *History*.

† *Irish History and Character*.

Irishmen"; while the poet Moore, Lord Edward's biographer, perhaps over-praises him\* —“As to his military character, he will be found to stand pre-eminent, as, in addition to his great courage and experience, he appears, from the reports of those who knew his opinions, to have taken enlarged and original views of his art, and to have anticipated some of those lights on military subjects which the bolder spirit of modern warfare has since his time elicited.”

Lord Edward was apparently a great contrast to his political associates, being blunt, outspoken, a thorough man of action, and of few words.

In January, '93, during a debate in the Irish House of Commons, he rose, and instead of making a brilliant, heart-stirring speech, as Tone or the Emmets would probably have done on such an occasion, he exclaimed with abrupt vehemence, “I think that the Lord Lieutenant and the majority of this House are the worse subjects the King has†” ;

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\* *Life of Fitzgerald*, vol. ii.

† Froude's *English in Ireland*, vol. iii.

and it was difficult to induce him to apologise for this petulant outburst.

His most amiable quality was his great kindness of heart and sympathy with the feelings and for the sufferings of others; and Lord Byron declared that his life's history would make "the finest subject in the world for a three-volume novel,"\* but nothing of the kind has yet been successfully written.

Perhaps Byron did not sufficiently remember that Fitzgerald's Irish career, except his terrible arrest, displayed few of his rare qualities. His republican allies trusted his sincerity and admired his military knowledge, which, though acquired in the British service, was, to their gratified surprise, devoted to the destruction of British rule in Ireland. He evidently had great influence over his fellow-revolutionists, owing, chiefly, to his military talents, in which they were, generally speaking, very deficient; but he never seems to have induced any member of his own class to join him, or in any way share his views. He stood

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\* *Sham Squire*, p. 108.



alone amid eloquent, imaginative, and unwarlike Irish democrats, a thoroughly practical British officer, yet, like them, devoted to the cause of an Irish republic.\*

As Tone's suicide was the last important event of the '98 rebellion, so the arrest and death of Lord Edward soon after in a Dublin prison may be considered its commencement, and the arrest of the brothers Sheares soon followed that of Fitzgerald.

After these captures, besides those previously effected of Thomas Emmet, &c., Tone being still in France, the United Irishmen had scarcely any

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\* "We find Lord Edward, whose heart and imagination absorbed the whole man, writing as follows:—'In the coffee-houses and play-houses [in Paris] every man calls the other "comrade," "frère," and with a stranger he immediately begins, "Oh, we are all brothers."' At a public dinner in Paris, Lord Edward flung off his allegiance and his civil and military rank, and adopted the title of 'le Citoyen Edouard Fitzgerald.' His dismissal from the King's service followed as a matter of course. Lord Edward did not complain; beyond the limits of the mania by which he was filled, his common sense was too just; he was not subject to those vindictive affections which so commonly warp the sense of factious men."—Wills's *Lives of Illustrious Irishmen*, vol. vi.

leaders of talent or influence. Yet, nevertheless, the insurrection broke out fiercely in the counties of Dublin, Kildare, Wicklow, Carlow, and Wexford. The stoppage of the mail-coaches was the pre-arranged signal for a general rebellion, which the previous arrests of its chief leaders rendered only partial.\* The Belfast, Galway, and Cork mails were, however, stopped and burned. The southern rebels were headed by Messrs. Bagenal Harvey, of Bargy Castle, Wexford, Keogh, and Colclough. The first was a Protestant and a Wexford landlord, but their followers mostly Roman Catholics.

As might have been foreseen, when once the ignorant peasantry were in armed revolt, without able or influential leaders, the principles of *United Irishmen*, probably never quite understood, except by their imprisoned chiefs, now, in their absence, vanished

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\* "Four days after Lord Edward's arrest three out of thirty-two counties rose, and to extinguish even that partial revolt cost the Government twenty-two million pounds and twenty thousand men."—Fitzpatrick's *Sham Squire*, p. 119. These figures are probably exaggerated.

completely, and the old religious feuds between Catholics and Protestants turned the rebels against each other, even before the British troops and loyal yeomanry crushed their combined efforts at revolution.\*

During the two previous wars with England, the Irish had many secret partisans or avowed allies throughout Great Britain. In the campaign of Sir Phelim O'Neill, in 1641, against the British republicans, some of the English believed that the Irish were really fighting to restore the British monarchy.† This design was denied, it is said, by O'Neill just before his execution by Cromwell's followers, but it was never entirely disproved. In 1689 the native Irish were the last of James II.'s subjects who fought for him, and certainly had the entire sympathies of the defeated Jacobites both in England and Scotland.

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\* "When the northern rebels heard of the cruelties perpetrated on their Protestant brethren in other parts of Ireland by the Roman Catholic insurgents, they threw down their arms in disgust and indignation."—Reid's *Presbyterian Church in Ireland*, vol. iii.

† Carte's *Life of Ormond*.

But the Irish republican insurgents of '98 apparently obtained neither sympathy nor support from any party throughout Great Britain. Their close alliance with France, the historical foe of England, may partly explain this fact, while their republican friends in America seem to have given them far less assistance than they have furnished of late years, to encourage Irish enmity to British rule.

It is unfortunate for the cause of historical truth that rebel atrocities are almost alone detailed or mentioned by the loyalist writers, Maxwell and Musgrave, and in the former's history are often illustrated by Mr. Cruikshank's able pencil. The artist, besides portraying many rebel atrocities, certainly invests all the rebel visages with expressions more diabolical than human, while the loyalist excesses are rarely mentioned by either historian, and never made subjects for pictorial illustration.

On the other hand, Plowden, Dr. Madden, and Harwood made very little allusion to any atrocity committed by the rebels, while eloquently describing their wrongs and sufferings,

as if they were injured innocents incapable of giving much provocation.

Many later historians have displayed nearly as much ardent "party spirit" as if they wrote amid the passionate excitement of civil war or revolution.\* From all accounts, however, it would seem to an impartial reader that the original design of the "United Irishmen" had at least one noble object—the reconciliation of the divided and conflicting Irish people, Catholic and Protestant, with each other.

A short time before the outbreak this good end seemed nearer attainment than ever before in Ireland's history, and Protestants, Presbyterians, and Roman Catholics had begun to talk and think in friendly concert for the good of their common country. Unfortunately, however, the improvement of British legislation,

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\* For instance, Mr. Froude writes: "The combination of fiendish malignity with pretensions to piety are the peculiar growth of the Church of Rome."—*English in Ireland*, vol. i. p. 434. It is probable that no historian holding such sentiments could write fairly about Irish politics or Irish warfare.

instead of being the first object of this new alliance, was soon utterly repudiated by it, and the result might have been foreseen. Many Roman Catholics distrusted Protestant rebels allied with them against a Protestant Government. Most of their clergy viewed with dread a movement headed by professed Protestants and allied with French infidels, and this distrust soon became hatred.

The revolutionary alliance once destroyed, the British troops and Irish loyalists soon triumphed. But the suppression of the '98 rebellion left the Irish peasantry more mutually embittered and thoroughly disunited than ever since the fall of Limerick in 1691. Such was the final and practical result of the "United Irish" Society, which at first promised so differently.

This complete and shameful destruction of all his hopes apparently broke the heart of the high-spirited Wolfe Tone, reducing his vehement enthusiasm to equally vehement despair. His longing for death displayed the last gleam of that ardent spirit which had pursued its designs with such fiery energy throughout an eventful

life, which, after capture, was ended by determined suicide.\*

Dr. Madden,† after giving a list of the chief United Irish leaders, among whom it seems that Arthur O'Connor and Napper Tandy were Protestants, says of "the organizing leaders" that the Protestants and Presbyterians, compared with Roman Catholics, were in proportion of about four to one, and adds—"There never was a greater mistake than to call this struggle a Popish rebellion. The movement was pre-eminently a Protestant one." On the other hand, Mr. Froude‡ says:—"French Jacobin doctrines were confined to the clubs of Dublin and Belfast, and had but a faint existence among the rebel bands in the field. The '98 rebellion was neither Jacobin nor Catholic; it was the revival of Irish nationality, and because the religion of the Irish was cemented so closely with the national spirit, the rebellion, like every other Irish rising since the Reformation, as-

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\* *Maxwell's Irish Rebellion.*

† *Lives of the United Irishmen.*

‡ *English in Ireland.*

sumed a Catholic aspect. The aspirations of the native race had been quickened into life by the fantastic pretensions of the Protestant colony to independence."

Mr. Froude dwells much on the fact of the Catholic priests, John Murphy and Philip Roche, heading armed rebels;\* but these priests were among a few exceptional instances, the majority abstaining from the contest, while the Catholic bishops all opposed the insurrection. Its ablest and most active promoters were certainly Lord Edward Fitzgerald, Thomas Emmet, the brothers Sheares, and Wolfe Tone, all Protestants, whose ultimate objects were, of course, very different from those of the majority among the Catholic insurgents. A very few Presbyterian clergymen also joined the rebellion, but

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\* "Flood, Grattan, Wolfe Tone, O'Connor, Edward Fitzgerald, these all in their way had seemed to pass for representative Irish patriots. But here was the real thing. The politicians were but shadows; Father John was the substance. With pistols in his holsters, his sword at his side, and a large crucifix in his arms, he rode at the head of his army, the true and perfect representative of Catholic and Celtic Ireland."—*English in Ireland*, vol. iii.



failed to induce the majority of their co-religionists to follow their example.\* Thus both revolutionary Catholic priests and Presbyterian ministers were evidently a very small minority of their respective classes.

The eloquent, enthusiastic young Protestant laymen, the real chiefs of the rebellion, were, like their admired French republican allies, vehemently opposed to any clerical influence whatever. It was, therefore, with good reason, derived from European knowledge, that the Irish Catholic nobility and chief prelates unanimously opposed the '98 rebellion.

The Catholic Lords Fingal and Tara actually served in the Government army. Yet any student of Irish history might have expected these men to head a revolt against England, rather than Protestants of British descent like Fitzgerald, Tone, the Emmets, Sheareses, Harvey, &c. The state of continental Europe,

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\* "Many of the Presbyterians were no doubt implicated in the movement; but they were acting in opposition to the authority of the Church to which they belonged."—Reid's *Presbyterian Church in Ireland*, vol. iii.

where republicanism was then allied with avowed atheism, chiefly explains the strange position of parties in Ireland during this extraordinary revolution. A population mostly Roman Catholic appeared in open revolt against British Protestant rule, yet headed chiefly by British descended Protestants, allied with French republicans, who alike despised and ridiculed those very religious principles for the triumph of which the rebel majority was in arms! It is beyond all doubt that most of the rebel leaders, though not professed, and, perhaps, not really atheists, were utterly opposed to those deep and all-influencing religious feelings which so eminently distinguish the Irish character, whether Catholic or Protestant.

The majority of the insurgents thus differed completely in their ultimate designs from those aspiring to lead and represent them. When wounded or under sentence of death they were usually most anxious to see their clergy, and to receive spiritual consolation from them. Among the Irish loyalists massacred by the rebels the same earnest religious feelings were consistently shown. But Tone, the brothers Sheares, Robert

Emmet, &c., seem, like the pagan heroes of antiquity, to have devoted their last words and thoughts to their worldly reputation, to the apparent exclusion of all other anxiety.

This is, of course, a subject about which no writer can be absolutely certain, but from all external evidence there certainly existed a complete difference between the "United Irish" leaders and their followers in this respect. Wolfe Tone, the Sheares brothers, and the two Emmets, the ablest of all the rebel leaders, were, perhaps, greater contrasts to their Irish adherents than any of the others. Lord Edward Fitzgerald, a brave, practical soldier, probably resembled, despite his rank and Protestantism, many ardent, dashing young Irish rebels in reckless courage, and in love of daring and adventure. But intellectual theorists, like the other chief leaders, devoted to republican systems, and practically ignorant of Irish character, were never thoroughly understood in Ireland except by each other. They avowedly opposed all clerical influence, and had, therefore, no real hold on the confidence of their Catholic followers. Hatred to British rule formed the

chief if not the only bond of union between them.

The Irish Catholic insurgents, amid the excitement of revolution, preserved throughout a sincere and often enthusiastic attachment to their clergy.\* The French republican principles of Tone and the Emmets utterly repudiated obedience to the Catholic clergy or to religious authority of any kind.

The French General Kilmaine's address to the Irish people, calling the Pope an impostor, and religion itself "an intolerable burden to free minds," proves the utter contrast of both French allies and "United Irish" leaders to the majority of the Irish whom they aspired to lead and represent. Yet Tone and the Emmets resided much in France, and the former was intimate with Kilmaine.

The conduct of the French officers and privates

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\* "The Irish character was distinguished by a more than ordinary bias towards a submissive and superstitious spirit in religion. This spirit may justly be traced, in a great measure, to the virtues and piety of the early preachers of the Gospel in that country."—Hallam's *Constitutional History*, vol. iii.

in Ireland, under General Humbert, quite accorded with this language. They openly ridiculed the Irish for retaining either obedience to or reverence for their clergy, whom, from generation to generation, they had viewed in the same spirit, unmoved by all the great changes in European opinion since the introduction of Christianity among them.

The unpopularity of British Protestant rule had, of course, greatly contributed to preserve the religious influence of the Catholic clergy, and this reason was sufficiently obvious. Yet the French allies and liberators could not repress their scorn at what they considered contemptible and slavish obedience.

Had the "United Irish" leaders possessed real knowledge of the people they aspired to lead and pretended to represent, they might have prepared their allies for what they found in Ireland, and prevented the avowed contempt of the French, virtually destroying all real alliance with the Irish Catholic peasantry directly they met together. But these leaders, at least the chief ones, like Tone, the Emmets, &c., men of

education and talent, yet apparently without either knowledge of Irish character or political foresight, seem to have lived in an Ireland of their own imaginations, strangely different from the reality.

When arrested, tried, and condemned, they spoke with brilliant eloquence, and suffered death or imprisonment with brave fortitude, yet, when they passed away, their peculiar opinions disappeared with them.

Hostility to British rule, indeed, continued unabated; but this sentiment had for centuries preceded the "United Irish" movement, and was totally independent of it. The grand object of its leaders, to unite the new French republican principles with the old national animosity against England, failed perhaps more from its utter unsuitableness to the Irish character than from the defeat of its nominal supporters in the field.

A "United Irish" republic, imitating and allied with a French Jacobin one, was, in fact, a moral as well as a political experiment utterly opposed to the religious principles of the Irish people. Its failure was, therefore, complete, and

the idea vanished with those unfortunate young enthusiasts who aspired to be its promoters and died its victims.\*

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\* "In 1798 the rebellion bore unmistakably what may be called the 'follow-my-leader' character. It is doubtful whether any formidable and organised movement might have been made but for the leadership of such men as Wolfe Tone and Lord Edward Fitzgerald."—Justin M'Carthy's *History of Our Own Times*, vol. iv. p. 53.

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## CHAPTER V.

As might have been foreseen, the failure of this revolution left the Irish lower classes—Catholic and Protestant—more embittered against each other than ever since the civil war of 1691.

Again the alleged cruelties of Cromwell and King William, of O'Neill and Tyrconnel were remembered, exaggerated, and made subjects of insolent triumph and vindictive denunciation. Some writers believe that the British Government, taking advantage of these animosities, increased them, in the hope of strengthening its authority; while others, again, declare that its efforts were steadily directed to calm and restrain them.

Though the Government was certainly often mistaken in the result of political measures, it may well be doubted, by impartial thinkers,



if their failure was not chiefly owing to the peculiar position of the divided and contending people for whom it was its difficult duty to legislate.\*

It is likely that the British Government was more blamed than it deserved for its conduct during the '98 rebellion. It is at least evident enough that Irish loyalists, who had suffered or apprehended violence from the rebels, were far more enraged against them than were either the British Government or public.

In England, indeed, some Irish rebel leaders were afterwards viewed with a certain degree of admiration by men of genius and influence. The Whig statesman, Lord Holland,† actually expressed his "approbation of Lord Edward Fitzgerald's actions," and Lord Byron termed

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\* "The laws and liberties of England were the best inheritance to which Ireland could attain, the sovereignty of the English crown her only shield against native or foreign tyranny. It was her calamity that these advantages were long withheld, but the blame can never fall upon the Government of this island."—Hallam's *Constitutional History of England*, vol. iii.

† *Memoirs of the Whig Party*, vol. i. p. 103.

him a noble fellow.\* Lord Russell compassionately described the '98 revolt as wickedly provoked and cruelly crushed, thus intimating no slight sympathy for the avowed enemies of England; yet to Irish loyalists the brave captive drummer-boy, killed by the rebels for refusing to beat his drum, or the heroic Highland sentinel, slain by a number of French soldiers, after killing several himself, or, indeed, many other loyal victims, would have appeared more deserving of admiration from British poets and statesmen.†

It is easy, and sounds generous, to admire as well as pity the unfortunate in rebellions and civil wars. But pity and admiration may surely

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\* "He combined advantages of birth, education, and personal character, which would have enabled him to reconcile, better than any other man, the jarring materials of which the conspiracy was composed. He could, too, have directed their military operations, if not with consummate skill, at least with less ignorance and rashness than characterised all their wretched efforts in the field. Lord Edward was a good officer. His temper was happily formed to engage the affections of a warm-hearted people."—Lord Holland's *Memoirs*, vol. i. pp. 106–8.

† Maxwell's *History of the Irish Rebellion*.

be kept entirely distinct. The conduct and fate of well-meaning enthusiasts like some of the "United Irish" leaders may well deserve the former, but cannot be said to merit the latter, except from decided partisans.

It is, perhaps, doubtful if Lords Holland, Byron, and Russell sufficiently realised the probable and almost certain result, both to England as well as to Ireland, had the '98 rebellion triumphed. A Jacobin republic would have been established, presided over by Citizen Fitzgerald, as Lord Edward delighted to call himself, by Wolfe Tone, or by the Emmets, closely allied with the infidel republic of France.

The probable fate of Irish loyalists, under such a rule, and the consequence to England herself of having such a near neighbour, were apparently forgotten by these distinguished Englishmen, whose patriotic duty should have made the glory and safety of England the chief objects of their admiration and desires.

But whatever may have been the errors of British rule in Ireland, the chief "United Irish" leaders had no personal reason to complain, for they belonged to the same race

and to the same form of Christianity as their alleged tyrants.\* The probable reasons for their conduct were the attractive examples of the new French and American republics, which apparently overpowered the judgment as well as the imagination of their enthusiastic admirers. Believing that the Irish people, both Catholic and Protestant, would, like themselves, be captivated by new ideas and ignore old memories, Tone and his friends sought and obtained French aid and alliance. They persuaded themselves that with such assistance Irish Catholics and Protestants, once politically united, would first throw off the British yoke, and then the influence of all clerical authority.

This hope is evident from Tone's memoirs, as well as from the proclamations of the French generals. Ireland, they all expected, would soon become a second France. But the Irish

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\* "The Roman Catholics had serious reasons for discontent, for statutory enactments excluded them from civil rights. With the Protestants it was different; they had much to reform, but nothing to obtain."—Maxwell's *Irish Rebellion*, p. 38.

Catholic peasants, despite their ignorance of modern politics, showed more correct historical knowledge than the eager enthusiasts who called and fancied themselves their leaders. When reminded by Protestant revolutionists of former British cruelties or existing oppression, they remembered their own history well enough to know that to the enmity or worldly interests of Irish Protestants most of their grievances were attributable. They had no more reason to detest the British Government or soldiery than to detest the British Protestant colonists, their hereditary foes.\*

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\* "They [Irish Catholics] were indeed likely to obtain but a very scanty measure of justice from the English Tories, a more scanty measure still from the English Whigs; but the most acrimonious English Whigs did not feel towards them that intense antipathy compounded of hatred, fear, and scorn with which they were regarded by the Cromwellian who dwelt among them. They had less to dread from a legislation at Westminster than from a legislation at Dublin. Twice within the memory of men then living [1698] the natives had attempted to throw off the alien yoke. Twice England had come to the rescue, and had put down the Celtic population under the feet of her own progeny."—Macaulay's *History*, vol. v. p. 58. In a note Macaulay mentions a remark-

On the other hand, the Irish Protestant peasantry, even when republican, could feel little confidence in a sudden, close alliance, offensive and defensive, with the descendants of mortal enemies against fellow Protestant rulers. Accordingly, the so-called *United* Irish revolt proved the most *disunited* rebellion imaginable. The Rev. Mr. Gordon, a Protestant, admits\* that some Irish Protestants believed it their destiny to exterminate Roman Catholics, while the actual massacres of Protestants at Scullabogue and elsewhere during the revolution prove that a similar idea inspired some Roman Catholic insurgents.

As if, though unintentionally, to warn both Irish Catholics and Protestants from joining in this ill-fated revolt, the French manifestoes denouncing all religion effectually prevented

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able paper written by an Irish Catholic in 1711, in the possession of the Catholic Lord Fingall, beseeching the British Parliament to make good the Treaty of Limerick, and accusing the Irish Parliament of encroaching on its supreme authority, and charges the colonists generally with ingratitude to the mother country, "to which they owe so much."

\* Gordon's *History of the '98 Rebellion*.

connection with the Irish clergy of any denomination.

The "United Irish" leaders thus soon found themselves alone, betrayed and deceived, yet chiefly through their own ignorance of Irish feeling. Arrested by mean, low informers like Newell and Jemmy O'Brien, tried, condemned, executed, or banished without the least attempt at rescue, their fate proved that they had never obtained their fancied influence over the Irish people. Yet they usually displayed, even in their last speeches, that remarkable eloquence which had probably imposed on themselves as well as on their few deluded followers.\*

Yet it must not be inferred that loyalty to British rule caused the complete failure or collapse of the "United Irish" movement. Disaffection towards British authority was quite as deep-

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\* "Every popular Government has experienced the effects of rude or artificial eloquence. The coldest nature is animated, the firmest reason is moved by the rapid communication of the prevailing impulse, and each hearer is affected by his own passions and by those of the surrounding multitude."—Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, vol ii. chap. xx.

rooted and general after the revolts of '98 and 1803 as before their commencement.

The truth seems to be that in neither of these revolutionary failures was the real spirit of Irish discontent suppressed or even diminished. The enthusiasm of eloquent leaders hurried a few thousand excitable and thoughtless specimens of an excitable race into rebellion, while the mass of the people remained passive, more through aversion to atheism, then associated with republican revolution, than from any attachment to existing laws.<sup>5</sup>

This distrust of a revolt, headed by avowed enemies of all religion, was neither caused by fear of British power nor by attachment to British legislation; and thus the vision of a United Irish Republic, allied with French atheists, in a great measure dissolved of itself. Unsuitable to Irish Protestants, who naturally distrusted alliance with those who still considered them invaders, it was equally unsuitable to sincere Catholics, whose religion its allied promoters openly denounced.

In examining Irish history, especially since the Reformation, the conduct, motives, and position



of the Roman Catholic clergy require calm and earnest consideration. Yet neither Protestant nor Catholic historians have been very successful in their treatment of this subject. The former usually blame and denounce them, the latter usually praise and admire ; but generally, whenever Irish Catholic priests are mentioned, feelings of prejudice in their favour or against them are aroused, which alike oppose that strict veracity so essential to the moral value of history. Writers desiring to impart the whole truth about the '98 revolt should not keep Ireland alone before them, as many seem to do. The state and history of Christian Europe, Great Britain especially, must be studied and remembered before and during a fair examination of all Irish political history.

The Protestant reformation throughout Europe had partly succeeded and partly failed. Religious enthusiasts eagerly expected the abolition of Roman Catholicism, or the ultimate extinction of all Christian doctrines which assailed it ; but neither result occurred.

The end of the political contest—for the doctrinal one still continues—left the north of

Europe Protestant, while the south remained Catholic. In the British Empire the religious contest was peculiarly severe. In Scotland Roman Catholicism made less resistance than in England and Ireland. It vanished completely from the majority of Scottish minds, which were then for some time divided in a fierce doctrinal contest between different forms of Protestantism. In England the old Church resisted Protestant attacks with far more vigour and determination.

The royal family were remarkably divided in religious opinion, which has caused opposite inferences from various historians as to their motives. Henry VIII. was first a Catholic, then a Protestant. His daughters, the Catholic Queen Mary and the Protestant Queen Elizabeth, encouraged and persecuted the old and new churches with vehement eagerness. Their successors, James I. and Charles I., were both Protestants ; the first detested Roman Catholicism, the latter apparently preferred it to any form of Protestantism except his own, that of Anglicanism.\* After his death the religious

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\* Macaulay's *History of England*.

rule of Cromwell precisely reversed the late king's policy by encouraging all Protestant sects except Anglicanism, which he politically distrusted, while viewing Catholicism with peculiar hostility. In the following reign of Charles II., who was finally an avowed, and perhaps always a secret Roman Catholic, the old Church, though distrusted and often insulted, regained some influence, which in the succeeding reign of his brother James II. developed into absolute supremacy.

Then ensued a complete reaction. All Protestant sects whose violent disputes had temporarily restored the power of their common foe now united in politics, though not in doctrine, and, by deposing the king and insisting on a future Protestant monarchy, firmly established Protestantism throughout Great Britain. This revolution was a truly *national* movement, alike in England and Scotland, being headed by the wealthiest, wisest, and most influential in both countries, and conscientiously supported by the mass of both the English and Scottish people. At this time, and indeed ever since, Ireland presented a remarkable contrast, not only to

Great Britain, but to every European country, in its religious aspect and condition.

While in Great Britain Catholicism was represented by a small minority, comprising, however, some distinguished families in both England and Scotland; in France, Italy, Austria, and Spain it remained the established religion, and steadily opposed all political as well as doctrinal revolution. In Sweden, North Germany, and throughout all northern Europe, except Russia, which had for centuries adhered to the Greek form of Christianity, Protestantism triumphed completely, and both rulers and subjects were apparently united and peaceful after their change of doctrine.

In Ireland alone the Romish Church was, as it were, forced into a democratic position. It had accompanied and sanctioned the English invasion, and steadily supported British rule in the island.\* But the eagerness with which nearly all British

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\* "Pope Adrian IV. assumed the right of sanctioning the invasion on the ground of its advancing civilisation and propagating a purer faith."—Milman's *Latin Christianity*, vol iv. chap. vii.

colonists became Protestant evidently caused the native Irish to adhere with all the more devotion to the old faith, and, as they formed a large majority of the population, Roman Catholicism, abandoned generally throughout Great Britain, acquired in Ireland extraordinary moral force and vitality. Its clergy, the strict, consistent advocates of established authority, legal rights, and monarchical rule throughout the Christian world became, it may be said, involuntarily the representatives of Irish democracy.

While in every other European country Catholic priests and popular demagogues were, and still continue, implacably opposed, in Ireland alone they are in many respects united. Ardent Catholic and Protestant writers alternately praise and blame the Irish priesthood, but impartial historical students will perceive that the religious history of Europe *generally* has placed them inevitably in the exceptional position they occupy in Irish politics and estimation.

The '98 rebellion was perhaps in some respects their severest moral trial, at least since the establishment of Christianity. To use a common phrase, they stood between two fires during the

whole contest — British Protestant rulers who had for many years persecuted their religion in Ireland, and French infidel allies who were striving to abolish it throughout Europe. Yet at its conclusion their spiritual authority and political influence were apparently greater than at its commencement.

The defeated Catholic rebels, besides specially needing the religious comfort obtainable only from them, knew that, despite their common dislike to Protestant rule, their priests had, with few exceptions, warned them against joining the republican revolution, advising them “to rather bear those ills they had than fly to others they knew not of.”

The United Irish leaders and the few followers who understood their opinions at length perceived that their republican principles, at this time allied with atheism, were politically suppressed even in France, their birth-place, by Napoleon, and subsequently by the restoration of the strictly Roman Catholic French monarchy. The United States of America then seemed their proper refuge, and nearly all who escaped from the laws of the

British Government betook themselves to that country.\*

The historical writers, Plowden, Gordon, Goldwin Smith, Madden, Harwood, and the poet Moore, agree in viewing this revolt as chiefly a Protestant movement; while Musgrave, Maxwell, Froude, and others incline to a contrary opinion, and contrast Protestant loyalty with Roman Catholic sedition.† After comparing many different writers, however, the truth seems to be that this insurrection, in its leaders, objects, and motives, belonged exclusively to neither religious denomination.‡

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\* "Dr. Madden gives a goodly catalogue of United Irishmen and sons of United Irishmen who have risen to stations of trust and honour in the American Republic."—Harwood's *Irish Rebellion*, p. 227.

† "It was among Ulster Presbyterians that the foundation was laid of the association known as the United Irishmen, who formed, up to the days of Fenianism, the most formidable conspiracy against English rule."—T. P. O'Connor's *Parnell Movement*, chap. xii. p. 520.

‡ "If the United Irishmen had remained as steadily united as they were at heart, it might, in a moment of difficulty or disaster, have led to the severance of Ireland from Great Britain, and its permanent subjection to the tyranny of the French democracy. 'It is,' says Lord Castlereagh, 'a Jacobinical conspiracy throughout the

The majority of educated Irishmen being Protestant, most of the "United Irish" chiefs were the same; while the mass of the Irish lower classes being Catholic, the majority of the insurgents were therefore Catholic. But the revolutionary spirit was essentially political, and equally opposed all religions.\* In fact the total failure of the "United Irish" project among the Irish people was far more decisive than the defeat of its few half-armed supporters by well-disciplined troops. This result is not surprising, since its avowed principles, revealed by Tone and his French allies, were positively fatal to

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kingdom, pursuing its object chiefly with Popish instruments, the heated bigotry of this sect being better suited to the purpose of the republican leaders than the cold, reasoning disaffection of the northern Presbyterians.'"—Alison's *Life of Lord Castlereagh*, vol. i. chap. i.

\* "The words Papists and Priests are for ever in their [the loyalists] mouths, and in their warmth they lose sight of the real cause of the present mischief—of that deep-laid conspiracy to revolutionize Ireland on the principles of France, which was originally formed, and by wonderful assiduity brought nearly to maturity, by men who had no thought of religion but to destroy it."—Letter of the Viceroy, *Lord Cornwallis' Correspondence*, vol. ii. chap. xix.



those deep religious feelings and influences which, from the earliest histories of Ireland, have always distinguished its inhabitants.\*

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\* "Of all Catholic nations or countries in the world—the Tyrol alone excepted—Ireland is perhaps the most papal, the most Ultramontane! In Ireland religious conviction—what may be called active Catholicism—marks the population, enters into their daily life and thought and action; and devotion to the Pope, attachment to the Roman See, is probably more intense in Ireland than in any other part of the habitable globe."—Sullivan's *New Ireland*, vol ii. chap. ii.

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## CHAPTER VI.

SINCE '98 Irish disaffection seems to have found its chief external support in the United States of America, even to the present day.\* The conduct of the French Republic, and afterwards of Napoleon, towards the Pope, prevented all subsequent alliance between Irish and French revolutionists. Previously the daring irreligion of a nominally Catholic nation, hitherto the proved and historical champion of the Papacy, was never known to or suspected by sincere

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\* "For the first time a base of operations had been established out of Ireland. While Dublin city was the head-quarters of the malcontents, their plans, their persons, their fate and fortunes, were any day within the grasp of the Crown. Not so when America became the base, and New York head-quarters."—Sullivan's *New Ireland*, vol. ii. chap. iv.

Irish Catholics.\* From this time, therefore, the hopes of Irish revolutionists were apparently transferred from France, the ancient foe of England, to the rising Republic of America, owing to the increasing number of Irish there.

In that country Irish political refugees found a welcoming home. The Americans, indeed, never shared their hatred to England, but were yet naturally proud of their own successful revolt from British control. Their Republic became the next model for Irish imitation after the terrible failure of the French Revolution, which had associated both republicanism and Napoleon's empire with hostility and insult to the Papacy. For though Napoleon never avowed the irreligious principles of the republicans whom he supplanted, his rule was altogether opposed to the policy and wish of the

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\* "The French Revolution shook the belief of the whole of Europe, in France for eleven years suppressed it altogether. Not only was its hostility to the Christian faith the most direct that the world has seen since the days of Julian, but it possessed in itself that frightful energy which can only be likened to the propagation of a new religion."—Dean Stanley's *Eastern Church*, p. 51.

Pope, who steadily desired the restoration of the old French monarchy.

All these changes among Roman Catholics abroad had their political effect on the Irish Catholic priesthood, and through them on the mass of the Irish population, and should be remembered by all who study the Irish rebellion of '98. Professor Goldwin Smith,\* writing many years after Plowden, Gordon, Madden, Harwood, Musgrave, Maxwell, Moore, and Sir Jonah Barrington, observes:—"No one has yet fairly undertaken the revolting, yet salutary task of writing a faithful and impartial history of that period"; and, perhaps, there never was a series of historical events more distorted by party feeling, and perverted for party purposes than the Irish Revolution of '98, and its tragic sequel in 1803. This last brief revolt was like its predecessor in miniature, Dublin alone being its theatre. A rash uprising of an excited mob, a wanton murder, an ignominious suppression by a few soldiers, ending with the execution of its enthusiastic

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\* *Irish History and Character*, p. 176.

leader, and all was over.\* Yet the name of Robert Emmet is still dear among his fellow-countrymen, to whom he really did no practical benefit, while that of the judge, Lord Kilwarden, the murdered victim of men whom Emmet's enthusiasm had roused to rebellion, is forgotten or ignored.† Yet he had long faithfully and humanely served his country throughout a life of toil and usefulness, while Emmet had lived in Ireland a comparatively short time. No real benefit to his countrymen had ever resulted from those brilliant talents, which poets have celebrated and thousands admired. But of these two gifted and ill-fated Irishmen, old and young, the power of a wonderful eloquence, has immortalised the baffled conspirator, while the

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\* "It was but the last wave of the Rebellion of 1798, and originated in the over-heated brain of an amiable and gifted, but most unpractical, enthusiast."—Lecky's *Leaders of Public Opinion in Ireland*.

† "When Attorney-General, the mildest discharge of his duty had raised enmities against his person, which the duties of chief judge in a criminal court were not likely to diminish."—Wills's *Lives of Illustrious Irish men*.

virtuous life of the worthy judge has been almost unnoticed. Yet both his life and death well merit the admiration of his fellow-countrymen. At the last moment he exclaimed to some friends who eagerly desired the speedy punishment of his murderers, "Let no man suffer for my death, save by the laws of his country."\*

It is remarked by Edmund Spenser that during and before his time Irish poets usually celebrated the lives and deeds of Irish rebels as "examples to follow."† In this respect, as in some others, the lapse of centuries has made little difference in Ireland, for the poet Moore, who never extolled Lord Kilwarden in verse, wrote beautiful lines upon Robert Emmet

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\* *Maxwell's Irish Rebellion.*

† "These Irish bards seldom use to choose for themselves the doings of good men for the arguments of their poems; but whomsoever they find to be most lawless in his doings, most dangerous and desperate in all parts of disobedience and rebellious disposition, him they set up and glorify in their rhymes, him they praise to the people and to young men make an example to follow."—*View of Ireland.*

which are to this day admired in England and popular in Ireland.\*

Posterity, however, cannot doubt which of these men best deserved the praise and honour of consistent patriotism. This rare quality, so often falsely assumed, was proved by Lord Kilwarden in a long life of arduous public duty nobly discharged. It was only shown by Emmet in attractive theory—in splendid eloquence, and in a heroic death. Yet the talents and fate of the latter are still extolled and lamented, while respecting the former, whose useful life was cut short by wanton murder, Irish posterity remains comparatively silent and uninterested.

In reflecting upon these Irish revolts of '98 and 1803, which may be considered one movement, having precisely the same object, and being quelled by similar means, the historical student may instructively compare them with

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\* "Oh, breathe not his name, let it sleep in the shade,  
Where cold and unhonoured his relics are laid ;  
Sad, silent, and dark be the tears that we shed,  
As the night-dew that falls on the grass o'er his  
head," &c.

—*Moore's Irish Melodies.*

the previous Jacobite rebellions in Scotland and the north of England during 1715 and '45.\* These Scottish and Irish revolts, though so different in their objects, were alike directed against a strong, established Government, and were headed by rash, enthusiastic men. But the British insurgents, striving to restore the banished House of Stuart, though displaying far more valour than the Irish Republicans, were comparatively devoid of that remarkable eloquence which distinguished the latter, and, indeed, invested their fate with an interest and even glory quite undeserved by their previous career.

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\* "The whole history of Irish insurrections and Union forms not a parallel but a contrast to the Jacobite conspiracies and the Union between England and Scotland. In Scotland the Tory principles of a few great families, and national pride, united some powerful interests, even in a country where the people were Presbyterian, in favour of a Roman Catholic prince. In Ireland a sense of suffering and deep resentment for the persecution of ages connected the great mass of Catholics with a democratical republic [France], yet reeking with the spoils of a popish establishment."—Lord Holland's *Memoirs of the Whig Party*, vol. i. p. 105.



Shakespeare's account of a famous rebel in *Macbeth*—"Nothing in his life became him like the leaving it"—well describes many "United Irish" leaders. Imprudence, ignorance, both of their fellow-countrymen and of the science of war, together with a dreamy enthusiasm, marked both their conduct and language till the last moment came. Then and not till then were displayed their highest qualities and mental powers. The brave British Jacobites executed in 1715 and '45, despite their self-devotion, and the romantic interest of their cause, aroused little sympathy at their trials, and most, if not all, died without any display of eloquence. The few last words which Walter Scott ascribes to the Highland chief, M'Ivor, are, indeed, worthy of his historical prototypes, Lords Balmerino and Derwentwater, but they evince no oratorical talent.\* They are merely the brief expressions of brave men far more fitted to use the sword than either pen or tongue in behalf of political views. The United Irish leaders, except Lord Edward Fitzgerald,

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\* *Waverley*.

were just the reverse.\* They apparently lived in a dream about Ireland, and thus prepared

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\* If the last words of Robert Emmet are compared with those of M'Ivor they certainly show the superiority of Irish eloquence. The latter says to his judge—"Proceed then, in the name of God, to do what is permitted to you. Yesterday, and the day before, you have condemned loyal and honourable blood to be poured forth like water. Spare not mine. Were that of all my ancestors in my veins, I would have peril'd it in this quarrel." Emmet, in precisely the same situation, exclaimed—(Maxwell's *History of the Irish Rebellion*):—"If the spirits of the illustrious dead participate in the cares and sorrows of those who were dear to them in this transitory life, O ever dear and venerable shade of my departed father, look down with scrutiny on the conduct of your suffering son, and see if I have for a moment deviated from those true principles of morality and patriotism which it was your care to instil into my youthful mind, and for which I am now about to offer up my life. My Lords, you are impatient for the sacrifice. The blood which you seek is not congealed by the artificial terrors that surround your victim—it circulates warmly and unruffled through the channels which God created for nobler purposes, but which you are bent to destroy for purposes so grievous that they cry to Heaven. Be ye patient. I have but a few words more to say. I am going to my cold and silent grave, my lamp of life is nearly extinguished—my race is run. The grave opens to receive me, and I sink into its bosom. I have but one request to ask at my departure from this world, it is, the charity of its silence.

their ardent minds alike for an imaginary success and for a probable failure.

This success, however, was very different from the practical triumph of their ignorant, excited followers. The Irish of their imaginations only existed among a few personal friends. Their adherents were inspired by wholly different feelings, hopes, and designs, and only joined them owing to their common hatred to British rule. This is clearly proved by Tone's diary, as well as by the language of both the Emmets.\* But

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Let no man write my epitaph, for, as no man who knows my motives dare now vindicate them, let not prejudice or ignorance asperse them. Let them and me repose in obscurity and peace, and my tomb remain uninscribed, until other times and other men can do justice to my character. When my country takes her place among the nations of the earth, then, and not till then, let my epitaph be written. I have done."

\* "Clarke asked me what I thought of some of the Irish priests yet remaining in France. I answered that he knew my opinion as to priests of all kinds; that in Ireland they had acted all along execrably; that they hated the very name of the French Revolution; and that I feared, and, indeed, was sure, that if one was sent from France, he would immediately, from the *esprit de corps*, get in with his brethren in Ireland, who would misrepresent everything to him."—*Life of Tone*, vol. i. p. 68.

these leaders were well prepared for defeat, trial, and sentence. Nothing then lay before them but their reputation, and to its vindication they devoted that moral courage and eloquence which have established it in the hearts of posterity.

After the Culloden defeat, the British Jacobites apparently remembered little about their brave leaders, celebrated in the noble works of Scott,\* who, as before observed, said little at any time, leaving their acts and motives alone to vindicate their fame. All Irish revolutions, or attempts at revolutions, from '98, inclusive, have been distinguished by fervent speech-making and animated, glowing, powerful language. The Scottish Jacobite revolts displayed nothing of the kind whatever. But the Irish rebel leaders, as if foreseeing utter failure in actual warfare, appealed to their powers of eloquence throughout, and to it they chiefly trusted for the vindication of their memory.

Since their time many popular leaders have appeared on the troubled scene of Irish politics,

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\* *Waverley, Rob Roy, and Redgauntlet.*

and have all, though in different degrees, incited their adherents against British legislation. O'Connell, though most popular with his fellow Roman Catholics, eagerly demanding repeal of the Parliamentary Union with Great Britain, always recommended loyalty to the British throne, but he had little or no influence over Irish Protestants. The objects of the far-descended Irish, yet Protestant, chief, Smith O'Brien, were apparently more fanciful, not only than those of O'Connell, but than those of his political associates, Messrs. Meagher, Duffy, Mitchel, &c.\*

These leaders, though able and energetic men, never obtained the influence of O'Connell, who was in almost every respect an admirable representative of Irish Catholic feeling and character.†

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\* "His Conservatism never wholly abandoned him. He had a horror of revolutionary doctrines."—Sullivan's *New Ireland*, vol. i.

† "An Irishman and a Catholic, above all things, O'Connell was the idol of the nation. There was no rival to his supremacy, there was no restriction to his authority. He played with the fierce enthusiasm he had aroused with the negligent ease of a master. The noblest instance of his moderation is furnished by his constant denunciation

He was far more respected in Ireland than any subsequent political leader. O'Brien and the other chiefs of the '48 or Young Ireland movement, which can hardly be called a rebellion, were easily arrested, and sentenced to various terms of imprisonment, without obtaining much popular sympathy. Their peculiar opinions, like those of the "United Irish" leaders, had, compared to O'Connell's, very little effect on the minds of their fellow-countrymen.\*

After the lapse of more than twenty years, during which the Fenian Society, headed by James Stephens, advocated republican revolution, which was condemned by Cardinal Cullen† and

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of rebellion. O'Connell uniformly warned the people against appealing to arms."—Lecky's *Leaders of Public Opinion in Ireland*.

\* "The Young Irelanders, like the leaders of the Rebellion of 1798, were chiefly Protestants—very young and very enthusiastic men. The great characteristic of the party was its advocacy of rebellion. Mr. Mitchel declared that, next to the British Government, he regarded O'Connell as the greatest enemy of Ireland, for it was altogether owing to his eloquence and to his principles that the Irish people could not be induced to follow the revolutionary movement of 1848."—Lecky's *Leaders of Public Opinion in Ireland*.

† See Sullivan's *New Ireland*, vol. ii. chap. iv.

the Catholic clergy, a new leader has appeared in the Protestant Charles Stewart Parnell. He has succeeded in obtaining the confidence of the Irish Catholic clergy, both bishops and priests, more thoroughly, perhaps, than any non-Catholic leader ever enjoyed before in the history of Ireland. He has hitherto certainly showed far more knowledge of Irish character than any previous political leader, except O'Connell.

Whether he addresses Irishmen in England, Ireland, or the United States of America, his influence is extraordinary, yet thoroughly practical. Although a Protestant of aristocratic connections, and a landlord, he leads and controls thousands, nearly all of whom detest both his religion and social class. This singular position of a man so isolated, yet so powerful, who politically controls an immense Irish majority, both at home and scattered over the world, has given him the title, not altogether bestowed in jest, of the "uncrowned King of Ireland." Unlike the "United Irish" leaders, he does not advocate a Republic; unlike O'Connell and Smith O'Brien, he neither appeals to Roman Catholics exclusively nor to historical

traditions of Ireland.\* All religious exclusiveness, all romantic aspiration, he utterly disavows. He appeals to the pockets, or immediate worldly interests, as he believes, of the Irish majority, in a new style and by different means than were ever employed before.

What these new methods are need not be named here, his views and policy being daily discussed by far more English newspapers than were ever before devoted to Irish politics. But the '98 movement was the first of the many Irish revolts against England of which a republic was the avowed object. Since that time to the present this idea has never left the minds of many Irishmen, and is eagerly advocated by many of Mr. Parnell's followers. Yet Daniel O'Connell, the great and popular champion of Irish Roman Catholics, always disavowed it, and, while he influenced public opinion, republican views, if

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\* Unlike almost every other Irish political leader, "he dislikes speech-making, and always prefers to remain silent," but his followers are certainly among the most eloquent men now in Parliament.—See *The Parnell Movement*, by T. P. O'Connor, M.P.



secretly entertained, were seldom expressed by any of his party.

In considering Irish history during and since 1798, it appears that the countries which have mainly aided Irish revolution were France and the United States of America. The former, however, since '98 has shown much less sympathy with Ireland. In 1848 Smith O'Brien and some political friends went to France congratulating the French Republic, but were coldly received by M. Lamartine, who was then the leading man of the new Government.\* The conduct of the French Socialists in 1870, who deliberately executed the Archbishop of Paris and several priests, horrified the Irish Catholics beyond measure, while the infidel spirit more or less actuating French republican legislation ever since, destroys all admiration for it among so religious a people as the Irish are and have always been.

Since '98, therefore, America, with its ever-

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\* "We are at peace," said Lamartine, "and we are desirous of remaining on good terms of equality, not with this or that part of Great Britain, but with Great Britain entire."—Cassell's *History of England*, vol. ii. chap. iii.

increasing Irish population, has been, and continues to be, the chief external aid of Irish enmity to British rule. No Catholic monarchy, not even Spain, in former times friendly to Ireland, displays much sympathy for Irish nationality. America, however, proffers both money and sympathy, though both proceed chiefly from the Irish settlers mostly living in American towns. Thus a new Ireland apparently encourages and strengthens the mother country in hatred to England, recalling in speeches, books, and especially in newspapers, her alleged historical wrongs since the first British invasion, but no longer appealing directly to any European country for assistance, or even for much sympathy.

In fact, the Irish at home, allied with their fellow-countrymen in America, present a more compact and independent opposition to England than was ever known before. Yet Ireland seems no longer viewed by France as a useful ally against England, owing probably to the decline of the anti-English feeling in that country. It is the Irish themselves, both in Europe and America, who now revive historical

animosity against Great Britain, and demand complete independence. The North of Ireland, at least its Protestant population, descended from British colonists, firmly resists this demand, being devotedly loyal to British rule, which the majority of them has always supported from generation to generation, since their first settlement in Ireland.

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## CHAPTER VII.

It is observed by Macaulay,\* in comparing the relative progress of Great Britain and Ireland, that in the midst of light the thick darkness of the Middle Ages still rested on Ireland. His remark specially applies to a period previous to the '98 rebellion. Yet of the three kingdoms it is evident that Ireland, even to the present day, has changed far less than either of the others in the feelings, ideas and wishes of its population.

Were an Englishman or Scotchman who had lived during the Pretender's wars in the last century to re-appear, he would find British sentiments which were then prevalent as completely banished from men's minds as those of

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\* *History of England*, vol. i.

previous centuries. But an Irishman, who had lived in the yet more remote period of James II.'s reign, would recognise many feelings and motives of that time still animating Irish minds.

The demand for the restoration of all lands given to British settlers by James I. which was granted by his grandson, James II., as the price of Irish Catholic loyalty, much resembles in ultimate aim and historical origin the present claim of Ireland for the Irish advocated by an organized and self-styled National League, who openly call the English "hereditary foes of their religion and race," from whom they desire complete separation. In these ideas and objects the spirit of the civil wars and rebellions of former times is clearly expressed, though brought to bear on the public mind by new agencies and influences hardly available till the present time. Thus the counsel, money, and support of the increasing Irish in America are more devoted to aid Irish enmity to England than ever before. The increased number of Irish in England and in the British Colonies have also been induced, more than at any former

time, to join in demanding the separation of Ireland from England, though the two countries have been ruled by the same sovereigns for centuries.

Thus, amid the many wonderful changes which modern times have effected in Europe, the historical student, if he examines the subject calmly, will easily recognise the strong resemblance shown in the present display of Irish enmity against England to that manifested during and since the early invasion of Ireland by British colonists.

One remarkable feature in Irish politics, however, of the present time, well merits careful attention. A brave minority of Irish Catholics enter the British service as soldiers and sailors, and also uphold British rule as judges, magistrates, and police. These practical loyalists are, perhaps, less heard of or less considered than either the discontented Catholic majority, or the loyal Protestant minority. They apparently have few, if any, parliamentary representatives, while unlike most of their fellow-countrymen, whether Protestant or Catholic, they do far more than they say, and are therefore not suf-

ficiently noticed. But though their valuable services are undeniable, and their practical adherence to British rule unopposed by their clergy, they seem to have little influence in the political contests of their country. It is true that this class forms a minority—a small minority—of Irish Catholics whose enmity to England is openly and eagerly avowed. But the ability and learning of Catholic judges and other law officials, together with the courage, fidelity, and self-control of Catholic officers, soldiers, and police, may well be contrasted with the conduct and language of their disaffected co-religionists.

Among the latter the most talented probably are Mr. Parnell's followers in Parliament—able, eloquent, and zealous men certainly, but mostly undistinguished yet in any professional career. Many of the clergy who sanction them are, doubtless, sincerely devoted to the interests of their Church, but, as politicians, even the wisest and best among them, cannot display their highest qualities. Indeed, their almost exclusively religious education and engrossing professional duties alike tend to unfit

them for politics, as is well known and practically acknowledged in Roman Catholic countries.\*

During the riots and trials which often accompany and follow Irish political contests, the interference of Catholic soldiers and police, and subsequently of Catholic judges and magistrates, is frequently required and always devoted to the steady vindication of British law. The strange spectacle is, moreover, sometimes shown of Irish Catholic soldiers returning home with wounds and honours received in supporting British rule abroad, but who are forced to hear the Government which they faithfully served eagerly denounced even by their clergy and relatives as the worst and most odious of existing tyrannies. Yet loyal Irish Catholics still enter the British service unopposed by clergy or relatives.

These practically loyal Irish, however, say little or nothing, and are, therefore, in theory almost

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\* "No class of men, by their principles and their modes of life and of thought, are less fitted for political leadership than Catholic priests. It is inevitable that they should subordinate political to sectarian considerations."—Lecky's *England in the Eighteenth Century*, vol. ii. chap. vii.



ignored. In the midst of a vehemently eloquent population this class, of all others, seems rarely to make itself heard. Thus a very prevalent idea, often supported by appearances, is that all Catholic Ireland is firmly opposed to British rule, which is alone advocated by a Protestant minority.

It may well be hoped that the time may come when loyal Irish Catholics will display the same spirit in words which they have certainly shown in deeds, and not allow it to be thought, despite of their own conduct, that loyalty to England only exists, in Ireland, among Protestants. Yet the apparent weakness of loyal Irish Catholics *in their own country* cannot be denied. At elections and public meetings they are usually silent. British rule, and sometimes even connection, are warmly denounced by many Catholics of comparative education, amid enthusiastic approval of numerous and more ignorant hearers. On the other hand, Irish Protestants, with equal earnestness, avow resolute and often claim exclusive attachment to England, and declare their abhorrence of Irish Nationality.

If the early education and social ideas infused among the Irish even to the present day are examined, the enmity animating their different classes and religions is more easily understood. Irish Catholics are often taught, perhaps as much by parents and relations as by clergy and schoolmasters, to view Protestant fellow-countrymen as hereditary, and, therefore, implacable foes. Though they may frequently assist or sympathise with them, the old animosity derived from alleged historical injuries is seldom forgotten. On the other hand, Irish Protestants are often taught, by the example and precept of those they respect, that Irish Roman Catholics are their inveterate enemies, hereditary and implacable. Even disreputable specimens of Catholics and Protestants are consequently often thought more worthy of the support and confidence of their co-religionists than the most respectable of their fellow-countrymen, whose religion alone causes them to be thought implacable enemies, with whom real friendship is therefore almost impossible.

Such prejudices, in their full intensity, are almost unknown at the present day throughout

Great Britain. As among Irish landed gentry Catholics form a very small minority, their opinions and interests are usually ignored, for even they often employ Protestant agents and bailiffs over their tenantry, an immense majority of whom are Catholics. Thus the ordinary desire—too prevalent, probably, everywhere—of landlords to obtain and tenants to withhold as much as possible, is in Ireland usually mingled with the distrustful hostility between Catholics and Protestants, the bitterness of which is, perhaps, only understood by those who have lived long in Ireland.

An hereditary animosity of this nature, wholly irrespective of conduct and character, neither aroused by personal injury, nor excited by personal affront, is peculiarly difficult to overcome, but extremely easy to strengthen and inflame.\*

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\* "One of the best and brightest changes visible in Ireland is the almost total disappearance of sectarian animosities, and the kindly mingling of creeds and classes in the duties of every-day life."—Sullivan's *New Ireland*, vol. ii. chap. xvii. This pleasing statement, written in '77, Irish history of the last eight or nine years has certainly not confirmed.

The praiseworthy desire for personal popularity, perhaps felt by some persons almost unconsciously, is in Ireland often encouraged and gratified in a way most injurious to the real interests of a divided community. For instance, even if a Christian clergyman assails certain religious or political views with peculiar bitterness of invective, he is generally admired instead of restrained by co-religionists and political partisans, while opponents often regret that such a valuable champion does not belong to their own party. Fairness towards opponents, a desire to hear or discuss both sides of any religious or political question, are usually thought, even in these days of educational enlightenment, merely signs of a weak spirit or a wavering mind, unfit to lead or exhort one party against another, and therefore unworthy of public, if not private confidence. In fact, a social as well as political reward are virtually offered in Ireland to conduct and language which deserve, and in most civilised countries would incur, general disapproval.

It is certainly surprising that, despite the increasing education and enlightenment of this age,

there remain in Ireland inveterate religious and political prejudices, apparently very slightly diminished by influences usually found to remove them. These feelings may remain dormant for a time, but at any electoral contest they reappear in all their vindictive intensity. It is then that the speeches and counsels of fair-minded, moderate men appear to many as weak, spiritless, even cowardly, and not without a false appearance of reason. For people, after hearing their own religious or political opinions denounced in the most offensive language by opposing speakers and writers, are naturally in no mood to hear fair-minded, moderate men of their own party. They long, as if for an antidote, to hear their calumniators reviled in precisely the same manner. Hence, mutual injustice causes practical resemblance in a disgraceful competition of ignorant and often ferocious rancour.

In cases of personal quarrel or vindictive enmity, independent of legal dispute, the influences of parents, mutual friends, and of religion in most civilised lands usually suffice, if not to reconcile, at least to calm and render compara-

tively harmless the effects of anger, dislike, prejudice, or misconstruction. But these pacifying influences are seldom, indeed, devoted to heal Irish religious animosities, which, as before observed, are closely connected with the enmity existing between landowners and tenants.\* On the contrary, parents, relations, and friends usually inspire children and young companions with their own prejudices, which, being the result of sincere conviction, they naturally dread to see diminished in the least degree among those it is their duty to instruct and prepare for the world. At the same time, the interests of their differing forms of Christianity are, to most young Irishmen, represented as utterly hostile, if not fatal, to each other. Probably many who by their own natural feelings would gladly live, not only in peace, but in friendship with each other, are expressly warned against any reconciliation

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\* "The subjection of Ireland to the English Crown—the confiscations of six centuries—meant in their minds [Catholic tenant-farmers] change of masters to whom rent was payable, but never a change which annihilated their right to occupy the land on payment of its rent."—Sullivan's *New Ireland*, vol i.

by those very influences which might be expected to enjoin and encourage it.

Thus, in appearance, the history of Ireland, in some respects, repeats itself to the present time. In all Irish revolts or seditious movements since '98 inclusive, eloquence, powerful writing, and fervent oratory have been remarkable and far more common among the disaffected than among the loyal. British rule has usually been more vindicated by force of arms than of words, and what is called the popular side generally opposes existing authority.

A strange absence of just reasoning is still observable in most Irish religious and political parties, and language is habitually used and believed among them which would never stand the test of truthful examination.

For instance, some people imagine that to be attached to British rule is a positive moral and Christian duty; others, again, believe it precisely the reverse. The truth, surely, is that it is no duty to be either. It is entirely a matter of private conscience and conviction. If men really think a government ill-suited to the welfare of the governed, it is impossible for

them to approve it, and they have a perfect legal and moral right to form this conclusion. Obedience to established laws and authorities is quite another matter; yet this appears to be sometimes confounded with attachment. The former is essentially a moral and political duty. Its violation, besides involving tremendous responsibility, would destroy the safety of all society, and incur just punishment from the best government that could be formed by men.

One peculiarity of Irish revolutionary feeling from '98 to the present day is well worth notice. It seems to desire and pursue an ideal government, an attractive fancy, which has no existing model. Lord Edward Fitzgerald and Tone certainly praised the French republic, and called themselves citizens; but history has proved that all French republics, from the first one, established in the last century, to the one now existing inclusive, were all more or less hostile to the political, and even to the educational, influence of the Catholic clergy.\* Yet

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\* "Ever since the French Republic has become stable, a war against the Roman Catholic Church has been relentlessly pursued."—English *Times* Leader, April 3rd, 1886.



this influence is, and always has been, specially popular in Ireland, and any laws against it would never be acceptable to the country.

O'Connell, the most popular of all Catholic Irishmen, well knew this, and denounced, though in coarse, violent language, both British Whigs and French Republicans.\* These political parties have usually been friendly to each other, though doubtless the former sincerely regret the crimes and follies committed by the latter.

Lord Macaulay's disapproval of Burke's attack on the French Revolution,† and recently Mr. John Morley's admiration of the great anti-Catholic, if not anti-Christian, philosopher, Voltaire, alike evince a spirit utterly opposed to Irish Catholic feeling and principle.‡ But in

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\* See Robertson's *Lectures on Modern History*.

† Essay on Southey.

‡ "The partisans of the Christian religion in any of its forms have dealt unrelenting contempt and hatred to the foe who did more than anyone else to reduce their churches, once so majestically triumphant, to their present level, where they are forced, under various guises and with much obsolete pretension, to plead for the tolerance of rational men on the comparatively modest ground

all the eloquent censure of British rule uttered by Irish orators, no other European Government seems to please them better. Neither the Swedish, Russian, German, Austrian, or Spanish monarchies are praised, though they present instances of Greek, Roman Catholic, and Protestant churches in political supremacy. Yet none are chosen for Irish imitation, or avowedly preferred to the much-abused rule of England. The United States of America are alone occasionally mentioned as Ireland's model, but it should be remembered that in the civil war there, since '48, the Irish took opposite sides in the contest.

It is also remarkable that in both speaking and writing against British rule, Irish subjects have hitherto enjoyed a licence and an impunity which probably no European country, perhaps not even America, would permit. When violent speeches and newspaper articles express the bitterest hatred to British tyranny, the freedom of both

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of social fitness. Their hostility, we may agree, is not very astonishing when we reflect on the provocation."—*Morley's Voltaire*, page 37.

speakers and writers in so doing is in itself almost a refutation of the charge. But the practical loyalty to Protestant England of an Irish Catholic minority of proved sense, education, and courage, is a fact in modern Irish politics not enough considered, perhaps, by any political party. Can this class be increased in number, more brought forward, more strengthened, and encouraged? This question should, indeed, engage the thoughts of all unprejudiced, fair-minded men interested in the welfare of Ireland; and it specially demands the attention of those whose health, talents, and position enable them to take active part in the government of that unfortunate country. Unfortunate, indeed! There is no doubt about that. All parties unite in so terming it. Harsh, landlords, dishonest tenants, bigoted Roman Catholics and bigoted Protestants, all agree in calling Ireland what their own conduct, far more than soil or climate, have certainly made it. The remedy, according to the lessons of history, lies not in the power of any social class or religious denomination exclusively. It cannot be reasonably expected till the influential among all

religious and political parties acknowledge, at least to themselves, their own errors, instead of exaggerating, with bitter exclusiveness, that of opponents, and thus act according to the spirit of Christianity, which nearly all Irishmen call their guide, their model, and standard of practical duty.

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London : Smith, Elder and Co.

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### THOUGHTS ON SHAKESPEARE’S HISTORICAL TALES. London: W. H. Allen & Co.

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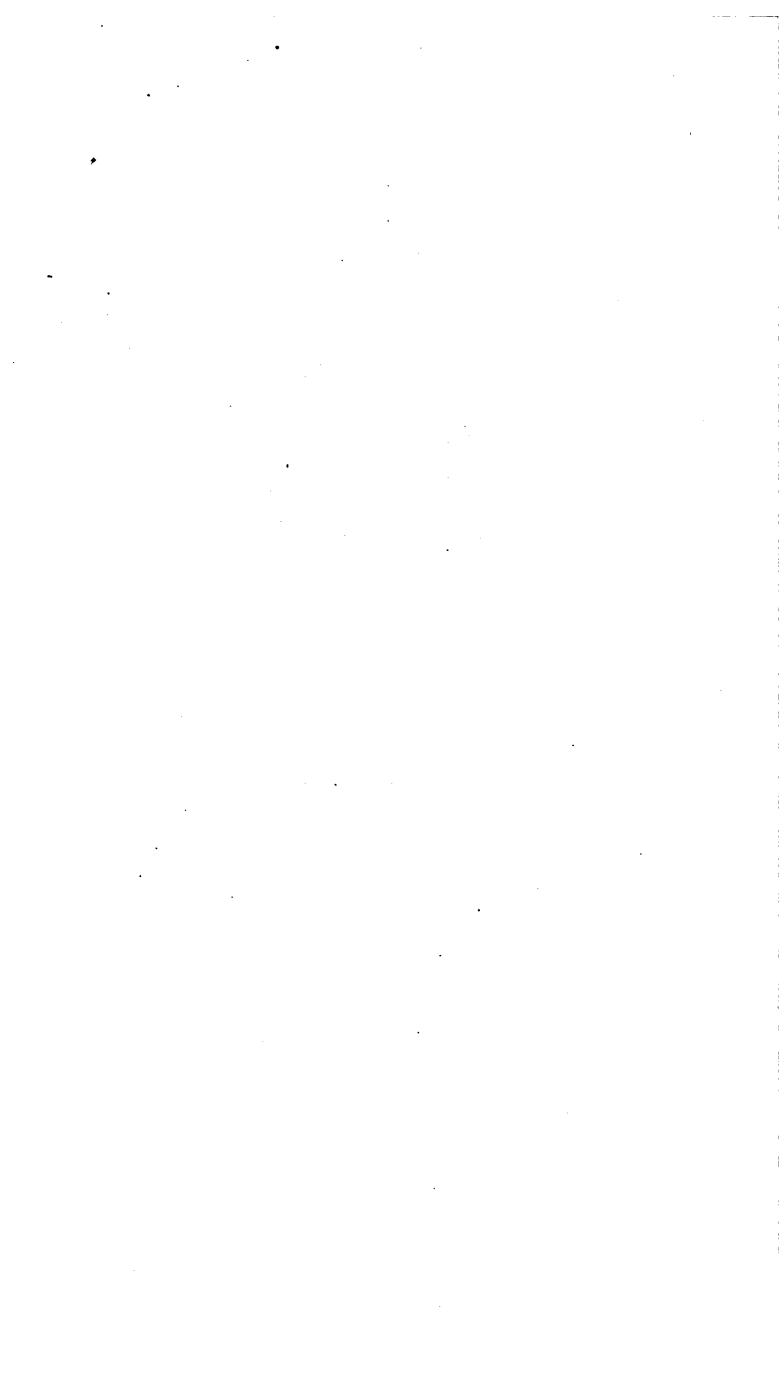
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