



TALES FROM IRISH HISTORY

TOLD BY
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WITH A MAP

BOSTON
LE ROY PHILLIPS
1911

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PREFACE

This book is for children who wish to know something of the great men and great deeds in the stirring history of Ireland. Irish History is, as a rule, very little known in spite of its great interest, and it is hoped that this book will stimulate a further reading and appreciation of the subject.

I am greatly indebted to Mrs J. R. Green, Dr. Todhunter, and Arthur Va Clerigh for permission to use extracts from their works.

ALICE BIRKHEAD

May 1910



MAP OF IRELAND.

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CHAPTER I

THE LAND OF GREAT LEGEND

Ireland has always been a land of heroes, but, in far-off days, these were not real men of flesh, and blood. They were giants of such mighty size that stories of their deeds must needs be greater than any stories of mere men. Even after countless ages, it is still related how they loved and hated, lived and fought. Traces of their presence can be found in all the regions where they dwelt, and in the wild North-country some have left us everlasting tokens lest we should perhaps hear and not believe. There, where Ireland confronts Scotland, through the shadowy mists you can see the marvellous Causeway, built to allow a Scotch giant passage from one land to the other, and not many miles away lies beautiful Lough Neagh, made by Fionn MacCoul as he pursued an enemy in rage, and seized a portion of the earth to hurl after him, and let loose, where the earth had been, a flood of mighty waters, now formed into a lake.

The stories of ancient Ireland are tragic in their theme. The best known of them all are the Three Sorrows—The Fate of the Children of Usnach, The Fate of the Children of Lir, and The Fate of the Children of Turenn.

The children of Usnach dwelt with King Cormac in his great palace of Emania, where assembled warriors famed in annals of war, and poets who chanted their exploits, and musicians who accompanied the lays of the poets on the harp. "The king's room was in the front of the house, and was long enough for thirty warriors. It was ornamented with silver and bronze, and carbuncles and precious stones, so that day and night were equally light therein. A gong of silver hung behind the king, suspended from the roof-tree, and when he struck it with his silver wand with three silver apples, all the men of Ulster were silent."

Disaster fell upon the brave sons of Usnach—Naoisi, Ainle, and Ardan—through Deirdre, the daughter of the king's tale-teller. Very beautiful was Deirdre, but she was sad and lonely as a child, because she was not allowed to play with the ether children of the court, but must watch their games from afar. Dire misfortune was foretold when Deirdre was born, and it was useless to try to avert this prophecy. From her window she saw Naoisi, and straightway loved him for the beauty of his brown-black hair and his white skin, which resembled the driven snow. At night Naoisi visited Deirdre secretly, and, loving her in return, entreated her to fly with him to Alba that they might escape King Cormac's wrath. Accompanied by one hundred warriors, they left their own land and dwelt in a far country, till one day, as they played a game of chess, messengers came to bid the sons of Usnach return to Erin. Deirdre warned her husband in vain that the king meant treachery by his summons. They returned to Emania, and all the three sons of Usnach were slain together, and Deirdre, singing first a mournful lament over their dead bodies, threw herself into the same grave and died with her arms about Naoisi.

The children of Lir were the daughter and three sons of a famous king. When their own mother died, Eva, the second wife of Lir, used them very cruelly, and turned them into white swans; for she was an enchantress, and with her wand could work all evil to those she did not love. She decreed that the swans should never regain their mortal shape till they heard the sound of Christian bells in Ireland. At first the swans sailed on the waters of Lake Darvra, and by day they spoke with the men of Erin, and at night they chanted fairy music with such sweetness that any who listened forgot all pain and grief.

Then the swans were banished to the Sea of Moyle, which lies between Erin and distant Alba. Their hearts were wrung with anguish for the friends they saw no longer, and they suffered cruel hardships from cold and hunger, frost and storm. At last the tale of years had wellnigh run, and the four

swans fled to the western sea and endured sore tribulation there, till a saint came to the island and his bells rang faintly the sound of their release. Youth never was restored to them, and all three bore the marks of more than mortal age when they entreated baptism and awaited the happier change of death.

The children of Turenn were three also—Brian, Ur, and Urcar, exceeding all the champions in Tara for comeliness of person, swiftness of foot, and feats of arms. One day these warriors slew King Kian, with whose race they were at feud, and were called to answer for their crime on the great hill, where their own king sat, and by him Luga, son of the murdered man. Their punishment was left to Luga, who claimed an "eric-fine." The sons of Turenn had to bring as gifts to him, first, three apples; second, the skin of a pig; third, a spear; fourth, two steeds and a chariot; fifth, seven pigs; sixth, a hound-whelp; seventh, a cooking-spit; eighth, three shouts on a hill.

The sons of Turenn would have set out joyfully on their quest, had not Luga stopped them to explain the nature of their gifts more fully. The three apples were the golden apples of the Garden of Hisberna (Hesperides) and were guarded by a dragon. The pig's skin belonged to Tuis, King of Greece, and was very jealously guarded because it had the magic power of healing sickness, like the apples. The spear was the property of Pezar, King of Persia, and held precious because the wielder might perform what deeds he chose in battle. The hound-whelp followed the King of Troda, and was such that even the wild beasts of the forest fell down before him. The cooking-spit was to be wrested from warlike women, dwelling on the island of Fincara, and each one of them a match for three warriors in single combat. The shouts must be raised on the Hill of Midkena, where the king watched with his sons to compel all men to silence.

The sons of Turenn had bold spirits that mocked at danger, and they conquered one foe after another, carrying off

six parts of the "eric-fine." Then Luga chanced to hear whispers of their strange success, and cast a spell over them, so that they forgot the cooking-spit and the three shouts on Midkena's Hill.

They returned only to set out on the quest again, and when the full "eric-fine" was paid, Luga felt a thrill of satisfied vengeance to behold those spent and weary warriors laying the gifts before him. Yet he had intended death to all three, and he refused the gift of a golden apple, which Brian asked to cure his brothers wounds, knowing only happiness when the news was brought that Brian, Ur, and Urcar had lain down in despair to meet the fate of all men who dare face danger without fear of the deadly reckoning.

CHAPTER II

ANCIENT DWELLERS IN ERIN

The bards, or Ollamhs, who sang stories of the heroes, were revered in Erin above all other men. Two powers were theirs besides the gift of song. Secrets were revealed to them as to the prophets, and on all who injured them they might pronounce a curse. If the bard's spell lay on the land, it could bring forth no pasturage. Nay, it was impossible to tread it without danger till the wrong had been repented and the curse withdrawn.

The chief bard was next in rank to the king and his person was more sacred than that of the king himself. If a man slew the king, he paid the penalty of death, but any who slew a bard knew punishment that did not end with life.

Wrongs done to ordinary men were punished by "erics" or fines. Two great books contain the old laws of Erin, and in the Book of Aicill and the Senchus Mor, we find that most crimes have a fixed penalty. Hurt to the body was always compensated by a fine, but the amount of the fine depended on the part of the body that was injured, whether it were the head, the arm, the leg, the nail of the toe, or the hair of the eyelashes!

A man, stung by a neighbour's bee, had the right of taking "a full meal" of honey, if the sting drew blood, but, if it only raised a lump, his compensation was reduced to "one-fifth of a full meal." Animals were freed from punishment for taking food which they could eat "in snatches," viz., "three bites on either side of the way." Should a cat eat food found in the kitchen, she would go scot-free by proving that it had been left about by the carelessness of the owner.

Sensible men were punished when they failed in the duty of looking after people not so sensible. Women taking

part in "woman-battle" might use their distaffs and comb-bags in the presence of their guardians. "This is after notice and fasting, but, if it is before notice and fasting, it is to be considered for what reason they did it."

Certain rules for the sale of children are to be found in these books, and laws for bequeathing property, which was not left at the will of the possessor. A son had always a better claim than a daughter, who might only demand "the blade of gold, the silver thread and the tartan cloak" belonging to her mother.

Hospitality was the duty of every chief, and there was a law that all great houses must have a road to them for the approach of guests.

Cases in dispute were brought before a Brehon or judge, but he could not always insist on his judgments being carried out. The people were so scattered in different tribes that there was no strong central government to support the authority of the lawgiver. This division of the Irish into tribes was, indeed, the cause of trouble of every kind, and explains how it was that the Irish failed to drive off their enemies in spite of their love of warfare and their strong desire to rule. The tribes consisted of clans or great families of people, all supposed to be sprung from the same ancestry and bound together by ties of blood.

There were five great provinces—Ulster, Leinster, Munster, Connacht, and Meath—and over each province ruled a Ri or king. The Ard-Ri or over-king of all Erin had his dwelling in Tara and Meath, as his special domain. He received tribute from all the other kings, whose tenants paid tribute to them in kind, viz., cattle, honey, butter, wine, and clothing. The wealthier tenants were obliged to entertain their chief and his followers and to provide them with food and drink. This led to an abuse known as "Coyne" and "Livery," by which a military leader, unable to pay his soldiers, turned them out with weapons to seize other men's property as their lawful pay. Livery is thought by Spenser to have been the food

"livered" or delivered to the horses, and the night's allowance of drink given to the retainers in great houses, also the apparel of a serving-man, so-called "for that it is delivered and taken from him at pleasure." "Coyne" was the maintenance of the soldier himself, and perhaps included actual money on some occasions when the meals were not to his taste.

The chief of each clan had the right of naming his successor or Tanist. This was not always an eldest son but might be a brother, uncle, or cousin, who was thought likely to rule well. The land belonged to the clan, and had to be re-divided whenever a new chief was chosen. Men of the same clan were accustomed to support each other in battle, yet there was never a clan in Erin without a prince plotting to be chief, and everything outside the actual territory of the clan was looked upon as plunder.

The tie of Fosterage was the only one that held good beside the tie of blood-relationship. The son of a chief was put out to be reared or "fostered" in the household of some other chief, and after he returned to his own people must still be faithful to the man who "fostered" him. Disloyalty to country was readily pardoned by a race with but an imperfect understanding of the bond which ought to exist between men, of one nation. Disloyalty to a "fosterer" was held to be the blackest of crimes.

The Irish king seldom had a standing army, but called on the men of his tribe to serve him in war as occasion arose. There were two kinds of foot-soldiers—Kerns and Gallowglasses. The first were light-armed men and wore the saffron linen tunic, which all native soldiers preferred to armour. The Gallowglasses had heavier protection and carried battle-axes. Fighting was the favourite occupation of the chiefs, and they were buried standing in full battle array, sword in hand and face towards the territory of the enemy. The men of Erin believed that the body in this position could exercise an evil influence on the foe, who were thereby always defeated in battle.

The religion of such warriors was full of strange beliefs, encouraged by the Druids, who gave instruction in all kinds of learning. They were lawgivers, poets, and physicians, and wielded the power of knowledge over the ignorant and superstitious. They were also skilled magicians. They professed that they could make a man invisible by giving him the "cloak of darkness," that they could drive him mad by flinging a wisp of straw in his face, and foretell his future by consulting the clouds and sky. The ancient people worshipped idols, the chief being "Crom Cruach," a pillar of stone covered with gold and surrounded by twelve smaller idols. They also worshipped wells, the sun and moon, and fire. They had a dim belief in some land of everlasting youth—a place inhabited by fairies, who were said to carry off mortals to dwell with them, sometimes against their will.

Paganism inspired a fighting spirit, and the history of Ireland is one of warfare without end. The women took part in it equally and fought side by side with the men till a law was made to forbid them in the days of Columbkille, which were the golden days of peace. In legendary ages, the Irish often crossed the sea—and traces of their visits can be found in Scotland, Wales, and the Isle of Man, so close to their own shores. Niall of the Nine Hostages was the most adventurous of the early kings. He even led invading armies into Britain, then under the declining power of Rome, and once made an expedition into Gaul.

CHAPTER III

THE RULE OF THE SAINTS

Saint Patrick, the greatest of all the saints of Ireland, was brought to the island as a slave when he was in his seventeenth year. He is said to have been born about 390 A.D., but the place of his birth is uncertain, some scholars asserting that it was in Scotland and others in the west of Gaul.

St. Patrick became the property of Milcho, a prince of Ulster, who sent him to herd swine on Slemish Mountain in Antrim and made him perform such hard service that he was minded to buy his freedom and return to his country. Yet he prayed "at least a hundred times a day and as many times during the night," and when he was instructing the Irish pagans in Christianity many years later, he was eager to convert his master.

St. Patrick escaped to his own country after six years of slavery and studied with all his might to learn everything that would help him to turn the minds of heathens to the true god. He had constant dreams of the people of Ireland in their darkness, and voices seemed to come to him crying for his return. Before he was ready for the journey of conversion, the Pope blessed him and made him a bishop. He landed on the coast of Wicklow, but the people drove him away and he sailed northwards. Dicho and his followers were the first to receive baptism from St. Patrick, and afterwards a monastery rose in his honour, near Downpatrick.

It was always St. Patrick's aim to win the hearts of the great chiefs, wherever he went, because he knew that the people would follow their example. He found Laegaire, King of Meath, very hard to touch, though the people of Meath showed themselves willing to hear Christian teaching. With the idea of keeping Easter on the Hill of Slane, St. Patrick lit a

Paschal fire, which was seen by the king from Tara. Now there was a law to forbid any man to kindle a beacon before the fire was lit for the king's pagan festival, and Laegaire was filled with wrath against the saint. The Druids told him that the fire which had been lit could never be put out after that night had passed, so the king sent at once for St. Patrick to appear before him. At this meeting, some of the bards were converted, falling under the strange spell that St. Patrick seems to have cast over all who heard him. The king allowed them to spread Christian doctrine, but he was one of the few to cling to the ancient religion of Ireland while the missionaries journeyed through the country. From Tara the saint went to Connacht and thence to Ulster, drawing men after him in thousands, for none had ever greater glory as a minister of God. Wherever he went, churches and monasteries were built to carry on his work, and his disciples lived in toil and poverty, strengthened by the faith which he had taught them. Some brought their own neighbours to Christianity, while others risked every danger to sail to foreign lands, where they sought to approach half-savage people.

St. Patrick is said to have received a sign of his successor when he went on a visit to King Conall Gulban. When the king asked for a blessing, the saint turned to his son Fergus, saying, "Of his lineage will be born a son that is Columbkille." As he returned, the axle of his chariot broke at the ford of the river Deelee; when mended, it broke again as a sign that the land north of that river had no need for him, but must be left for another saint to bless.

Columbkille, "Dove of the Churches," was born at Gartan, to the North of Ireland, in the year of our Lord 521.

He was of royal birth, son of the princess Ethne and a chief Feidilnid, but he gave up all claim to the kingdom for the sake of God. He was given to a priest for "fosterage," and the priest taught him to read, they say, by writing the letters on a cake.

Columbkille built the church of Derry, then Daire, "an oak-grove." The king gave him a dwelling in this place, which he loved so dearly that he wrote fine verses in its praise. The cutting of the trees was sad to him, and he left Daire with a heavy heart to go to "Scotland of the ravens." He had caused many battles in his own country, and some think he had to take refuge in Iona on that account.

Iona or Hy became the seat of a great monastery, where all the arts of peace were taught. The monks of Ireland busied themselves with painting, carving, and bookbinding. Many of them "illuminated" very beautiful manuscripts, which are still treasured, among them being the Cathrach, a famous copy of the Psalter made by Columbkille, who also wrote three hundred copies of the New Testament with his own hand. A great struggle raged over the possession of the Cathrach, because Columbkille had copied it from a book belonging to St. Tinian, who claimed the copy as his own. When the case was brought before the king, he laid down the law that as the calf went with the cow, so the copy went with the book. In spite of this, Columbkille seems to have kept possession of the Cathrach, which was preserved as a precious relic by the O'Donnells. "It is covered with silver under gold; and it is not lawful to open it; if it be sent thrice, rightwise, around the army of Kinell Conaill when they are going to battle, they will retire safe with victory." From this custom it took its name—Cathrach, the Battler.

In his exile at Iona, the saint was still consulted by his country on such great questions as the position of the bards, who had become troublesome by writing bad verses about the hosts whose entertainments did not please them. Some of the Irish would have done away with the bards altogether, but Columbkille was too great a friend of learning, and proposed that their number should be reduced, while certain laws were laid down to govern their conduct.

Columbkille died on the isle of Iona on the Sunday of Pentecost, and many saw a light in the sky on the night of his

death, and some heard the voices of angels high in the air. The bards, gathered under an ancient yew tree, told how an angel came to them to bear the sad news. There is an old saying, too, that Columbkille may have died in Hy, yet his soul is in Daire, and his body under a flagstone in Ardmacha.

The days when the saints ruled Ireland were the most blessed days of all. St. Patrick bore the surname of Succath, the Warlike, and Columbkille was quite unlike a dove in spirit; but the country, under their sway, waxed strong in prosperity and civilization. Its monasteries were famous throughout Europe. Slane in Meath, where a King of France received his learning; Kildare, where the fire of St. Brigit was kept alight for centuries; Armagh, where a fine cathedral rose. There has never been a period in her history when the fame of Ireland spread so far.

CHAPTER IV

THE COMING OF THE LAND-LEAPERS

After the death of Columbkille, the Irish Christians went on teaching the word of God in Ireland and going on missions to other lands, but, outside the monasteries, the people were as warlike as ever, and battle succeeded battle just as in heathen times.

The four great houses of O'Conor, O'Brien, MacMorrogh, and O'Neill ruled the four provinces of Connacht, Munster, Leinster, and Ulster, and the O'Neills were over-kings of the whole island in name. Yet no chief could check, if he would, the strife of clan with clan.

Then in the eighth century came a foe from without to join in the confused warfare the men of Erin waged among themselves. A band of Northmen appeared first on the Irish coast in 795 A.D., when they plundered the church of Columbkille, off Lambay Island, near Dublin. At first they came only to plunder, and did not go far inland, though they had the daring to capture the king on one of their raids and to take him off to their ships. They often captured bishops and learned men and shut them up in the strong fortresses they took, with the plunder that the new churches furnished, for the Northmen were heathens and hated Christianity and all who were of the new faith. The beautiful cathedral of Armagh was burnt to the ground in one of their first raids. The Irish trembled as they saw it fall with all the treasures they had stored there lovingly, and still more they trembled when Turgesius or Thorgist, lord of the Northmen, came on a raid in 845.

Dreadful crimes of impiety followed this king's coming to the island; and Ota, wife of Thorgist, dared to take her seat on the High Altar of the Church of Clanmacnois, and there

give audience. Such sin did not escape punishment, they say, and Thorgist was drowned by a miracle after his wife's sacrilege.

Religion suffered in other ways too. Cloichtechs or Round Towers had been built in the neighbourhood of churches and monasteries to serve as storehouses for precious relics and refuges of the defenceless. Many a time, in the troubled years of the Northmen's raids, old men and women and children hastened, with all their goods, to the Round Tower of the district, and ascending the ladder that led to the strong door, pulled it up after them in panic, while the warriors waited below to beat off the attack from their homes. It was not always safe in the Round Towers when the Northmen were resolved on plunder. In 950 we hear that the Cloichtech of Slane in Meath was burned by the enemy "with its full of relics and distinguished persons, and the crozier of the patron saint and the bell, which was the best of bells."

About the middle of the ninth century, Northmen began to settle near the coast of Ireland. They built fortresses in Dublin, Limerick, and Waterford, and gave new names to several Gaelic towns.

Soon after the death of Thorgist, seven score ships had come, bearing men of more dreadful aspect than the first Northmen, for these carried tents with them, and muffled them with such dark colourings that they were not likely to be seen at once. They wore black armour, too, and were so fierce that the sight of their dusky ships struck terror into the Irish when they approached. The first Northmen were called the Fair Foreigners, but they probably did not differ much in complexion from the second raiders, known as the Black Foreigners.

A pitched battle was fought in gob at Ballaghmoon in Kildare. "Woeful indeed was the tumult and clamour of that battle, for there rose the death-cry of the Munster men as they fell, and the shouting of the Leinster men exulting in slaughter." In this battle King Cormac fell on the field, his

horse stumbling on the ground slippery with the blood of the slaughtered warriors. He died with a prayer upon his lips, for he was a bishop and scribe as well as a king, and greatly honoured for his piety.

At a battle near Rathfarnham, the Northmen conquered the army of the High King with "red slaughter," and O'Neill himself was slain with twelve chieftains around him. His defeat was avenged by Murkertagh of the Leather Cloaks, who succeeded him as High King.

Murkertagh set out once in mid-winter to traverse the island in search of foes, and exact tribute from them. One thousand men went with him, the flower of all his troops. They spent each night at a different place, and received hostages and tribute from the Foreigners. From one northern queen, Murkertagh took a gift of bacon, and fine good wheat, and joints of meat, and fine cheese, and coloured mantles for each chieftain. At Kilcullan, snow fell, and the only houses to protect the warriors were their strong leather cloaks. They carried off Lorcan, King of Leinster, with "a rough bright fetter on him." They then passed into Ossory, receiving ale and hogs from a hospitable chief. "Not a man of them returned to his home without a beautiful present of dress."

Murkertagh returned home in state, leading captive kings to the Ard-Ri, who declined to keep them, but freely bestowed a blessing on the captor. In 943, Murkertagh fell in battle near Ardee, fighting valiantly for his kingdom.

In the second half of the tenth century, two other bold defenders rose against the Northmen—Malachy, the Ard-Ri and head of the O'Neills, and Brian Boromna, chieftain of the Dal Cais, who dwelt in the north of Munster. It was time indeed that the tyrants should be checked, when, as the bard of O'Brien's house writes, they had "a king in every territory, an abbot in every church, a steward in every village, and a soldier in every house, so that none of the men of Erin had power even to give the milk of his cow, nor as much as the clutch of eggs of his hen, in succour or kindness to an aged man, or to a

friend, but was obliged to preserve them for the foreign steward or bailiff or soldier."

In England the Northmen settled among the English, and became united to them in course of time; but in Ireland, the race-differences were too great, and the Northman was always "the foreigner," hated and despised by the people he ruled so harshly.

After the Northmen built their forts at King's Island, near Limerick, and placed their ships on the Upper Shannon, they harried especially the land of the Dal Cais. Mahon, King of Leinster, was forced into paying tribute; but his brother, Brian Boromna, retired into the woods, and held out till he was in the last extremities. At a meeting of the Dal Cais, every voice declared for war; so, in 968, a battle was fought at Sulcost, near Limerick, which lasted from sunrise to midday, and ended in a complete rout of the Northmen and their allies. The fort and town of Limerick fell into the hands of the victors; the prisoners were collected on a hill near Limerick, and "every one that was fit for war was put to death, and every one that was fit for a slave was enslaved."

In 978, Brian attacked Donovan, a native chief, whose daughter had married Ivar, a Northman of Waterford, and who was himself allied with the invaders. Brian defeated the traitor, became undisputed King of Munster, and after a long struggle with Malachy, the High King, received his submission and reigned in his stead.

For twelve years Erin had peace under Brian, who was a wise ruler, though he had gained his power by force of arms, and insisted on levying the "boromna" or cow-rent, a tribute, which made the men of Leinster his deadly enemies. He sought to be supreme over his tribe, yet showed himself a brave warrior and skilful leader, both in his struggle with Malachy and his continued warfare with the "proud invader." He rebuilt monasteries, erected fortresses, restored schools and colleges, and brought the country to such a state of order that a beautiful maiden is said to have decked herself in rich attire,

adorned with jewels, and to have gone alone from one end of the kingdom to the other without encountering danger.

Brian was collecting forces for an attack on Dublin, a stronghold of the Northmen, and they mustered an army to meet him with, the help of kinsmen from across the sea. The final struggle brought Brodar, a Viking, of giant proportions, with armour "that no steel could bite," and Sigurd of Orkney, who carried the raven standard, which was shaped like the bird of evil omen, and seemed, when the wind blew, to flap its wings. The men of Leinster and Ossory took the Northmen's side, while Brian gathered the men of Meath under their old king, Malachy. Ulster and Connacht would not take part in the battle, which was fought at Clontarf on the Friday before Easter, 1014. Before the battle, Brian went round his camp, holding a crucifix in his left hand, and a sword with a golden scabbard in his right. He wished to remind his men that they fought for the cause of Christ against heathens, who were ruthless in destruction of all that was sacred to Christianity.

On the Viking's side, over ten thousand men had been summoned by the dispatch of the war-arrow, sent from settlement to settlement to give the warning of battle, and call out the fighting men. The Raven-standard was their rallying-point, and the belief that the man who bore it was doomed to death gained more credence from the day of Clontarf, when Sigurd took it into his hands unwillingly, and fell on the battlefield, his mighty strength availing naught.

Brian's army stood in closely-packed lines to meet the fierce host, who had proved the curse of Ireland. The men of South Munster were overthrown, but as the Northmen scattered in pursuit, Malachy came up and drove the enemy with "red slaughter" to their ships.

Brodar, the Viking, made for the woods, and as he passed Brian's tent, he saw the old king, and slew him with an axe. The Irish avenged the death of their leader by pursuing Brodar and hacking him to pieces, but all the glory of their victory at Clontarf was undone. The hope of a settled

government vanished. Malachy was restored to the throne, and the old disorder soon made Brian's reforms of little value. Till the coming of the race that was to conquer Ireland, there is nothing in her history save a bewildering record of feud between the great houses and successive usurpations of the throne, and all that loss of life in battle that was too true a shadowing of the history yet to come.

CHAPTER V

THE MARRIAGE OF STRONGBOW

In the reign of Roderick O'Connor, a certain chief of Leinster, by name Diarmid, or Dermot, carried off the wife of O'Rourke, another chief, with cattle and plunder of all kinds. Devorgil does not seem to have been unwilling to leave her husband, but a great outcry followed her so-called capture, as soon as it was known.

Diarmid was a violent man, with little care for the hurt he did to others. He had begun his reign by attacking Kildare, killing many townsmen and members of the convent, and making the abbess leave her cell to marry one of his courtiers. It was, indeed, a time of lawlessness, when might was right, and chief vied with chief in acts of cruelty. One of the kings put out the eyes of his own son, and kept him in prison after he had sworn to be at peace with him. It was so usual a custom to blind captives likely to be dangerous, "that scarcely a princely house throughout Ireland was there where some blind warrior lived not, occupying the corner of the hearth." Yet there were still many to be shocked by Diarmid's robbery from O'Rourke, and his own subjects were the first to turn against him. They ranged themselves on the side of O'Connor, King of Ireland, who was minded to answer the appeal of O'Rourke. He marched into Leinster, plundered the land where men were still faithful to Diarmid, and destroyed the palace of Fearha.

In 1166, the King of Leinster was fain to flee from Ireland and take refuge at Bristol, where his father had old friends. There had long been a traffic in slaves between Bristol and the ports of Ireland. Diarmid intended to seek the help of Henry II., King of England, on the plea that Irish soldiers had helped that monarch against the Welsh. Henry was then in Aquitaine, whence his queen had come with great possessions.

He agreed to give Diarmid letters to empower the Norman nobles to take part in an adventure to Ireland, if they wished.

There were scores of idle men in England, trained only for the wars, and always eager for plunder. They had spent sad days since Henry II. came to the throne, because he refused to allow them to rob and quarrel according to their habits under a weaker king. Strongbow, Earl of Pembroke, was one of these Norman barons now deploring the money they had lost since peace prevailed. He was no longer young, and sought provision for his old age, quite careless as to the means by which he might obtain it. When Diarmid approached him, he consented quickly to go to Ireland and help the ousted king against his subjects, on condition that he should marry Eva of Leinster, and have the succession to Diarmid's kingdom.

A famous Welsh family, afterwards known as the Geraldines, were bribed to help Diarmid by the promise of Wexford, though the town was in the hands of Northmen. They set out for Ireland in 1168, an historian famed as Giraldus Cambrensis, or Gerald of Wales, accompanying the expedition, and chronicling the wonderful exploits of his family. As soon as they landed, the adventurers attacked Wexford, but did not find it an easy possession to win. They had to set fire to all the ships in the harbour before the inhabitants submitted. Giraldus records that their leader was knocked down from a wall by a blow of such might that sixteen years later all his double teeth fell out in consequence!

Diarmid rewarded his Welsh allies by the promised gift of Wexford, and then began to quarrel with them. He even told Roderick O'Connor that they should be sent back to their own country, if he might have Leinster on easy terms.

Then Strongbow arrived, a warrior to be dismissed by no treacherous excuses. He was longing to use his sword again in the old free way of the Norman barons. Being almost all that he possessed, it was doubly precious for that reason. Waterford fell before the combined assault of Diarmid and Pembroke, and in the midst of the warfare, a strange marriage

was celebrated. Eva, daughter of King Diarmid, was a young and beautiful maiden. A compact united her with tears and blood to the elderly Norman baron. In triumph their chariots passed over the bodies of dead and dying men, and in triumph they began another union as ill-assorted—that of Great Britain and Ireland.

Strongbow and Diarmid had now the assembled forces of the kingdom against them. Dublin was the city which they attacked, hoping to avenge a private insult offered to the father of Diarmid, who had been buried by Northmen in the same grave with a dog. The old King of Leinster fought his last battle well—it was chiefly through his valour that the city was taken. In the following year he died, appointing Strongbow to succeed him. "Diarmid Macmurchadha, King of Leinster, by whom a trembling rod was made of Ireland—after having brought over the Saxons, after having done extensive injuries to the Irish, after plundering and burning many churches—died before the end of a year of an insufferable, unknown disease, without making a will, without penance, without the body of Christ, and without unction as his evil deeds deserved."

The native chiefs did not allow Strongbow accession to Leinster without protest, but the Norman defeated them by his daring, and then went forth to the attack of the Danish king.

Henry II. heard of his subject's success in war, and grew alarmed at the news of each fresh victory. He resolved to go to Ireland and demand homage from Strongbow in that country.

In 1171 he landed at Cork, then marched to Waterford Harbour with horsemen, archers, and great stores of weapons and provisions. Strongbow feared to oppose the king, who had ruled him firmly, and came humbly to Waterford to promise full submission. The Irish chiefs came too, except O'Neill of Ulster, and Henry became feudal lord and King of Ireland "without firing a single shot in anger, or spilling, so far as we know, a single drop of Irish or Norman blood."

At Dublin they erected a royal building in honour of the English king "of beautiful earth roofed with wattles." Henry dazzled the Irish by the splendour of his robes, and the quality of his glittering weapons. Gold and silver and scarlet and fur made them think him the greatest of monarchs. He added to this admiration by the lavish way in which he entertained all guests. Luxuries had been brought in ships to Ireland of a kind that had never been known there hitherto. The wondering chiefs learnt for the first time to eat such birds as herons, cranes, peacocks, and wild geese, finishing the repast with fruit and almonds from the East, and the noted cheese of Gloucester.

Henry also received the Irish clergy, whose simple habits formed a strange contrast to his ostentation. Gelasius, Bishop of Armagh, brought his own white cow with him, and refused any other nourishment than her milk!

In 1172, Henry had to return to England. He had made changes for the better both in the law and Church of Ireland, for he was a fine administrator, and could not endure disorder. He insisted that the Irish princes should treat him as their overlord, and allowed Strongbow, Earl of Pembroke, to retain Leinster, leaving Hugh De Lacy as the First Lord-Deputy in Ireland.

CHAPTER VI

EDWARD BRUCE, KING OF IRELAND

The Norman nobles left by Henry II. in Ireland, added nothing to the peace of that kingdom. The Lord-Deputy never had a very large army to help him in the task of keeping order, and the barons were nearly as indifferent to his authority as to that of the king "across the water." The native chiefs continued to fight each other, the barons had fierce quarrels too, and the invaders lived like men in an enemy's territory, trying to win new lands and plundering without shame.

King John came in haste to quell his subjects of Ireland. Though he only stayed sixty days he acted so vigorously that even the Norman barons submitted for the time, and several Irish chiefs paid homage. At the close of John's reign, the same chiefs made some sort of stand for their rights, and in the reign of Henry III. there was a general revolt against English government. At the same time, civil war raged in Ireland, the War of Meath, the War of Kildare, and the struggle for the throne of Connacht.

A warrior from Scotland, also asserting independence, received a warm welcome when he landed at Larne in 1315 (A.D.) with a band of fighting men. Perhaps he was inspired by his brother Robert's glorious victory of Bannockburn, or perhaps he was jealous of such sovereignty, and desired a kingdom of his own. He found many allies at once among the northern Irish, who looked upon the Scotch as neighbours. With these friends he plundered Ulster, burning and destroying so wastefully that even food was spoilt, while people starved all through the country. He moved southwards to attack Dundalk, the principal garrison of the English, who assembled in force to defend it. A party sent out to reconnoitre brought back the news that the Scots would be but "half a dinner to them." The Scots were never served as a banquet, for they

stormed the town with vigour, displaying all their banners, and then were able to feast victorious on the wine and victual that their foes left in their stampede from Dundalk.

After this success, Edward Bruce was crowned King of Ireland without unnecessary ceremony. He defeated an army raised by Richard De Burgo, the Red Earl of Ulster, at the battle of Connor, and marching into Meath routed an English army at Kells. In 1316 he gained a victory over the army of the Lord-Deputy at Ardscoil.

The Irish could not unite against their conquerors, and were uncertain allies to Edward Bruce. Joined by the O'Briens of Thomond, he marched to Athenry, where the English crossbows did fatal damage in 1316.

As Bruce laid siege to Carrickfergus for the second time, his brother Robert arrived and found the English reduced to eating hides, and even the bodies of the Scots they had made prisoners. The brave garrison were at last forced to surrender on condition that their lives should be spared.

Early in the spring of 1317, the two brothers set out for Dublin, destroying as they went all that came their way. The citizens were bold in the defence of this city under the mayor, Robert Nottingham, who had held office seventeen times. The Earl of Ulster was father-in-law to Robert Bruce, and the citizens made him a hostage for the safety of Dublin. This ruse was successful—the Scots army turned aside.

After Robert Bruce returned to his own kingdom, the final battle was fought near Dundalk between King Edward and Sir John Bermingham, the English leader. The Bishop of Armagh blessed the enterprise of the English army before they met the foe. The death of Edward decided the conflict, which raged fiercely. He was slain by Maupas, a knight, after a struggle at close quarters. Maupas paid with his own life, and was found on the body of the king.

Edward Bruce's head, salted and placed with other heads in a chest, was set before the King of England at a royal

banquet. The "dainty dish" caused the monarch little emotion, for he watched complacently the horrified rush of Scottish ambassadors from the table, and expressed himself "right glad to be rid of a felon foe." He rewarded Bermingham with the earldom of Louth and the kingdom of Ardee, rejoicing that the battle of Dundalk had made an end of Scottish rule in Ireland.

The Irish people were left to carry on resistance to English oppression in their own way, yet the late disasters had done much to limit the English rule. Bruce had been a friend of O'Neill, chief of the northern Irish, and had helped him to keep up the customs of "gossipred" and "fosterage," which were against the laws of the new rulers. The English gradually lost all hold on Ulster, and year by year their power diminished as the settlers began to intermarry with the natives, and made common cause with them. Some of the greatest English nobles took Irish names, and declared themselves independent of England. Only the Pale or district round Dublin remained faithful to recent conquests, and had to pay Black Rent to Irish chiefs on the borders for their own defence.

In 1361, Lionel, Duke of Clarence, came on a visit to Ireland. He thought all the trouble was caused by the busy intercourse of native and settler, and determined to stop it by law. The statute of Kilkenny, passed in 1367, forbade intermarriage, fosterage, and gossipred. It was against the law henceforward to use, the Irish dress or language, to ride a horse without a saddle, or adopt any other Irish custom. Nobody was to entertain in his house bards, pipers story-tellers or mowers, because they were often spies on the English. The old Brehon laws were to pass out of use, and English must be spoken even by those who did not know it!

Lionel's rule was a failure, and his want of sympathy with the Irish made him unable to go through with his reforms. They became mere forms disregarded by the Irish nation as they grew more and more beyond control.

CHAPTER VII

ART MACMORROGH, KING OF LEINSTER

The English rulers in succession to Lionel, Duke of Clarence, were as foolish and oppressive as that ill-fated prince. They seem to have seldom paid any debts they made in Ireland. Sir Thomas Rokeby is praised for "beating the Irish well" in his time as Lord-Deputy, and also for paying his way honestly. "I will," he says, "use wooden platters and spoons, but give gold and silver for my food and clothes, and for the men in my pay."

In 1375, Art Macmorrogh was elected King of Leinster, promising "to splaye his banner within two miles of Dublin, and after to invade the whole land." He carried out his threat so valiantly that even the Dublin Council had to pay him Black Rent as the price of peace. So woeful a story was told by the Irish settlers, who fled to England, that King Richard II. declared he would crush this rebel himself.

The king landed at Waterford in 1394 with the largest army that had ever come to Ireland. As soon as Art Macmorrogh heard of this arrival, he attacked New Ross, an English settlement, burned its houses and castles, and carried away gold, silver and hostages. The King's fine army performed nothing worthy of its size, and its divisions were easily defeated by the native chiefs. Richard gave up the hope of victory and tried to please his Irish subjects by knighting O'Neill, O'Connor, Macmorrogh and O'Brien, the descendants of four royal races in Ireland.

After a visit of nine months the king decided to return home, leaving his cousin, Roger Mortimer, to be deputy. As soon as he departed, the chiefs, who had sworn loyalty to him, rebelled and slew the deputy with a great number of English settlers at Kells, 1397.

Richard, in wrath at this insult, determined to avenge the death of his cousin. He gathered another large army and a vast store of provisions. He also took with him to Ireland the Crown Jewels and a precious flask of oil, said to have been sent down from heaven to Archbishop Becket as he prayed at the shrine of Columbkille.

Richard, landing at Waterford, marched straight to the Wicklow mountains, where Macmorrogh was in ambush. He ordered his men to cut down the wood, in which the Leinster chief was hidden, but the royal army was foiled for eleven days in their attack. Parties sent out to forage were stopped, and the English began to know starvation. When supplies were brought to Waterford, the soldiers rushed into the sea, "as if it were straw." They opened the casks of wine at once, and no less than a thousand of them were seen drunk at one time. Next day, they marched towards Dublin, constantly harassed by the Irish in the rear.

Macmorrogh at last offered to come to terms with the English leader, and came to a conference riding without saddle "a horse that had cost him four hundred cows." The two parties could not arrange matters, for Macmorrogh had married an Anglo-Norman heiress, and wanted his wife's lands, while the English were not disposed to agree to his possession of them.

Richard II. was angry at the failure of negotiations and still resolved to have the life of the rebellious Macmorrogh. He never carried out his resolve, for he reached Dublin to hear that his own kingdom was lost. During his absence, one of his subjects had been crowned king as Henry IV. These two rash expeditions to Ireland had indeed cost Richard his throne. He was taken prisoner as soon as he arrived in England, and only now enjoys the fame of being the last English king for three hundred years to cross the Channel on a royal visit.

After the fallen king's departure from Ireland, Art Macmorrogh became a still greater danger to the English government. He managed to become owner of his wife's lands, and though he was defeated once by the Lord-Deputy, Sir

Stephen Scroope, he gained two signal victories over the people of Wexford before his death in 1417. It was thought that Macmorrogh died from poison, administered by an enemy, after a common practice of the times. He was one of Ireland's most heroic defenders and enjoyed the glory of complete success in his determined stand against submission to the English yoke.

CHAPTER VIII

GERALD, EARL OF KILDARE

Of an ancient and noble race, warriors and scholars too, that family of the Geraldines, who had first come to Ireland as invaders, became in course of time more Irish in its ways and customs than the native chiefs themselves. They had intermarried and "gossiped" with the leading Irish families, they had given up their own language and engaged in warfare with the boldest. Perhaps it was their natural love of fighting that made them so beloved by the ancient Irish race!

Gerald, Earl of Kildare, was Lord-Deputy in the time of King Henry VII., who was a usurper and had constant trouble with pretenders to the throne of England. Lambert Simnel gave out that he was a Yorkist prince and gained many friends in Ireland, because there had once been a very popular Deputy from that house. Kildare chose to support Simnel instead of being loyal to the reigning monarch, and in 1487 the pretender was actually crowned as Edward VI. in Christchurch Cathedral, Dublin. Kildare was present at the coronation, a strange ceremony, since the crown was a diadem borrowed from a statue of the Virgin, and the new king was shown to the people on the shoulders of Darcy Platten, the tallest man in Ireland.

Kildare ordered the citizens of Waterford to join Simnel's party, but the mayor was a member of the family of Butler and the Butlers were sworn foes and rivals of the Geraldines. He sent a messenger to Kildare, declaring that anyone who had taken part in the mock coronation was a traitor. Kildare had the messenger hanged, and then gave orders through a herald bearing the arms of Geraldine, that the citizens should proclaim Edward VI. on pain of being hanged at their own doors. The only reply to this threat was to the

effect that Waterford would send out men to meet the Deputy's army and save him the trouble of coming to hang them.

Simnel did not gain much ground in Ireland and crossed to England, taking Irish soldiers, who fought valiantly in his cause at Stoke, and met a cruel fate in battle through their scanty clothes and useless weapons. Henry VII. took Simnel prisoner, thanked the men of Waterford for their loyalty, and encouraged them to harass the Earl of Kildare and the men of Dublin by sea and land. Later on, he pardoned the rebels, allowing Kildare to continue Deputy. He called the Irish nobles to his court that they might swear allegiance to him. "My masters of Ireland" was his greeting, "you will crown apes at length." At dinner Lambert Simnel, now the king's servant, had to offer wine to the guests, who were very unwilling to take the cup from him, since they remembered the days when it had been their duty to serve him. At last the Earl of Howth, a follower of Henry VII., asked for the cup, saying, "I shall drink it off for the wine's sake and mine own sake also and for thee; as thou art so I leave thee, a poor innocent."

Henry made the Irish nobles linger at his court till they were nearly ruined by the expense, then dismissed them with a gift to the only loyal man of three hundred pounds in gold, and the robe he had worn when he received them.

As soon as Kildare returned to Ireland, he quarrelled with his old enemy Sir James Butler. Various friends tried to patch up this quarrel by arranging a meeting in St. Patrick's Cathedral. Sir James came with peaceful intentions but was seized with panic and barred himself in the Chapter House out of reach of the enemy. Kildare promised not to injure him, and thrust his hand through a hole in the door, cut for the purpose. When they had shaken hands and Butler opened the door, the two chiefs embraced, declaring friendship. To make amends for the rioting in the church, the Pope ordered the mayor to go barefoot through the town on the day of Corpus Christi, a custom faithfully observed till the time of the Reformation.

In 1492, Kildare lost his position as Deputy and was succeeded two years later by Sir Edward Poynings, an Englishman, sent out to diminish the power of the Irish nobles. At the Parliament of Drogheda, 1494, the famous Act was passed, afterwards known as Poynings' Law, and declaring that no Act in the future was to be passed by the Irish Parliament, unless it had been approved by the English king and his Privy Council. Another provision aimed at Kildare by forbidding the use of war-cries such as "Crom aboo," "Butler aboo," which had been the usual taunts in the quarrels of Geraldines and Butlers. The Parliament accused Kildare of making war on the king and plotting to kill the new Deputy. At his trial in England, Kildare proved more than a match for Henry VII. and was released. One of his accusers exclaiming, "All Ireland cannot rule this man!" the king replied grimly, "Then if all Ireland cannot rule him, he shall rule all Ireland."

Kildare was reinstated as Deputy and showed some gratitude to Henry VII. His loyalty was so little suspected afterwards that he was allowed in 1503 to take back his son Gerald, who had been left as a hostage at the English Court.

But a Kildare must needs be fighting, and, in 1504, a fierce battle took place at Knocktow between Kildare's followers and William Burke, who had married the Deputy's daughter, "which was not so used as the Earl could be pleased with." A council of war was summoned, including bishops and men of law. O'Neill objected to the presence of bishops at this meeting, "for their profession is to pray and preach, to make fair weather and not to be privy to manslaughter or bloodshed." O'Connor was contemptuous about the men of law, saying that it was a time to discuss with bow, spear, and sword rather than with pen and ink. In spite of disputes, all things were put in order before night came when men lay in camp, "watching, drinking, and playing at cards, who should have this prisoner and that prisoner." The earl's speech to his army was broken by three great cries. "What meaneth this cry?" said he, "do they think we are crows that we will fly with

crying?" Then he took a great oath that men indeed should the enemy find when they took to battle, and inspired with fierce anger he gained the victory of Knocktow, over his fellow-countrymen. The English king was so glad to be rid at a blow of 9000 Irishmen, that he rewarded Kildare by making him a Knight of the Garter.

In 1512, the Deputy invaded Ulster, took the castle of Belfast, and spoiled the land far and wide. The following summer he marched against his last enemy and was shot while he watered his horse in a stream.

CHAPTER IX

SHANE THE PROUD, HERO OF THE NORTH

The O'Neills were among those noble Irish families compelled to give up their lands to Henry VIII. and receive them again in feudal tenure. The title of Earl of Tyrone was granted to Con O'Neill, the Lame, on the understanding that it was to pass to his son Matthew Kelly, then Baron of Dungannon. But Con had another son, who disputed Matthew's rights, declaring that he was only a blacksmith's boy and could not rule all Ulster. Shane O'Neill was beloved by the people, and after Matthew was killed, the chief took him into favour though he suspected that he had brought about Matthew's death for reasons of jealousy. Shane repaid his father's confidence by driving him out into the Pale, where he died, a deposed ruler. Still the hero of all Ulster, Shane then placed his foot upon the royal stone, and out on the mountain side, he was proclaimed O'Neill.

In 1560, Elizabeth, Queen of England, had grave cause to fear danger to her power. Her general reported from Dublin that it was almost impossible to keep the field against soldiers who lived on food "that would satisfy none others of God's making." The English had been trying to set up the O'Donnells against O'Neill, a plan that was frustrated by Shane's capture of Calvagh O'Donnell and his sister.

Sussex, the Lord-Deputy, managed to take Armagh but came very near to losing it again. Shane appeared outside the walls quite suddenly with the army led by a procession of monks. Each soldier carried a faggot in order to burn the cathedral over the heads of the English, and the Primate urged on the attack, lauding the piety of Shane, their leader. The mass sung by the monks was drowned by screams and battle-cries—"Strike for O'Neill!" The Bloody Hand!"—as the soldiers rushed upon the English. Sussex drove them back

after hard conflict and lost many men in his skirmish with O'Neill. He was afraid to tell Elizabeth how difficult a task she had set him in Ireland, and tried to induce Neil Grey to murder Shane. The queen determined to summon the Irish chief to her court to explain his right to the throne of Ulster, while Matthew's son still lived. O'Neill showed remarkable prudence, refusing to cross to England before he was paid all travelling expenses and insisting on the escort of the Earl of Kildare. He finally set sail from Dublin with a train of gallow-glasses, and was received in state by Elizabeth at her court on January 2nd, 1561.

"Now was Shan O'Neill come out of Ireland to perform what he had promised a year before, with a guard of axe-bearing gallow-glasses, bareheaded, with curled hair hanging down, yellow surplices dyed with saffron, long fleeces, short coats, and hairy mantles."

The council, the bishops, and the ambassadors had assembled to gaze at the Irish chief as though he were some wild animal, and when Shane threw himself at Elizabeth's feet, crying for pardon in the Irish tongue, his hearers thought the sound was like the howling of a dog!

Shane was detained in England on all kinds of pretexts, for the queen felt that she was safer while he was apart from his clan. He spent his time in the English pursuits of hawking and hunting and was regularly admitted to the council of the queen. He took the opportunity of begging for a wife "some gentlewoman of blood," though he had an unfortunate captive countess, who was always chained to a foot-boy in his absence, and he does not seem to have been a tender husband. The English wits dubbed him—

"Shane O'Neill, Lord of the North of Ireland;
Cousin of St. Patrick. Friend of the Queen of England;
Enemy of all the world besides."

At last Elizabeth could find no excuse for keeping Shane at Court any longer. Matthew's son was to have come to

state his claim in Shane's presence, but he was murdered by Tirlough O'Neill and nobody could question Shane's succession. Elizabeth tried to bribe her rebel by giving him all he asked, and Shane returned home with a purse full of money and the title of Captain of Tyrone. He summoned the chiefs of Tyrone before him and ordered them to acknowledge him their lord. When the O'Donnells refused, he called his men to arms and marched into Tyrconnell.

The chief still hankered after an English wife, preferably the sister of Lord Sussex, who tried to use the lady as a means of subduing Shane, but never intended to give her to him. Failing in this scheme, Sussex wrote to the queen that there was every chance of O'Neill being accepted king by the four provinces, unless English forces were sent against him.

Con O'Donnell added a complaint that Shane had carried off his father and mother and demanded the surrender of his castles. When O'Donnell had held out from loyalty to the English, Shane had burnt his farms, destroyed his cattle, and brought about his utter ruin.

Sussex was allowed to make war, but all his efforts were unsuccessful. He had ill-armed men and scanty supplies of food, and, above all, a certain belief that he could never conquer his enemy. He made very bitter excuses for his failures, bewailing his lack of money and tools for fortification. These laments made Elizabeth impatient, and she merely gave fresh concessions to O'Neill, who was, in reality, the ruler of all Ulster. Again, Sussex tried to get rid of his foe by foul means, sending a cask of poisoned wine to O'Neill's household. The scheme was discovered and the chieftain clamoured for redress, suggesting that the queen should give him Sussex's sister in order to humble the proud earl.

Shane had to content himself without his English bride, but took vengeance on Sussex by assuming the sovereignty of Ulster. He was only opposed by the Scots Lords of Antrim, and became so powerful that he set free O'Donnell, who fled from his dungeon to the English Court and sought for shelter.

Shane was now firmly established as a chief, and grew rich on the spoil of his enemies. He built a fort on an island of Lough Neagh, and named it Foogh-ni-gall, or Hate of Englishmen; he ruled well and maintained a kind of savage splendour in his dwelling with pipes of wine in his cellars and hundreds of men-at-arms feasting at his table. To show the chief's respect for religion, there was always a royal banquet for beggars at the gate.

In the North, Shane had no rival. Ulster was at peace while Munster was torn by a conflict between the Butlers and Geraldines, so fierce that through Tipperary, Kilkenny, and Cork, "a man might ride twenty or thirty miles nor ever find a house standing." In 1565, Sir Henry Sidney came to Ireland with the intention of crushing O'Neill, now grown bolder by success. He marched across Ulster, entered Tyrconnell, and restored the O'Donnells, leaving them to hold the North, while he passed into Connacht. So many English soldiers perished from disease that Shane decided to meet the native chiefs in battle, without fear of their new allies. He was defeated by the O'Donnells near Letterkenny, losing part of his army in Lough Swilly as they tried to escape, among these being O'Donnelly, his foster-brother, and the man "most dear and faithful to him throughout his whole existence."

Shane fled by lonely passes to Tyrone and threw himself on the mercy of the Macdonnells. He brought them the wife he had captured, hoping to find favour with the lady's kinsmen, but they greeted her with the resolve to avenge her cruel treatment at his hands. Pretending friendship, they entertained Shane as a guest till two days had passed, when they bade him welcome at a supper in the camp of Cushendun. Then a warrior rose and flung a taunt at a follower of O'Neill. The chief sprang to his feet to answer the insult, and, hearing the slogan of the isles, sought madly for his weapon. The enemy fell upon him before he was prepared, and all around the dirks did their deadly work beneath the cold moonlight. Shane himself, gashed with fifty wounds, was wrapped in an

old shirt and flung into a pit at Glenarm. Afterwards his head was hacked from his body and carried on the point of a spear from Drogheda to Dublin, where it was left to bleach on the battlements of the Castle.

CHAPTER X

SIR JAMES FITZMAURICE, REBEL

In 1566, Sir Henry Sidney became Lord-Deputy of Ireland. He proved himself a strong ruler and marched on a royal progress through the country after the death of Shane O'Neill, noting the general distress and poverty of the South and West.

The houses of Desmond and Ormonde had long been engaged in deadly feud, though they were both sprung from the famous race of Geraldine. Their kinship was forgotten once they met in field of battle, flying their banners and shouting their war-cries after the manner of foreigner against foreigner. Their raids and cattle-driving, wars and exactions of tribute were ruinous to the people they lived among, and an open insult to the queen, under whose government they should have kept the peace. Sidney thought to put an end to their brawling, at last, by the capture of the Earl of Desmond and his brother, who were shipped off to the English Court.

The queen favoured Ormond, who was related to her own mother's family and had been the playmate of her young half-brother, Edward VI., whereas Desmond had never been on good terms with the English, and was suspected of disloyalty. Desmond, therefore, was made prisoner, and when he attempted to escape, his life was spared only on condition that he gave up all his lands to the Queen of England. Englishmen were sent out to take up confiscated estates, but some of them ventured on plundering the favoured family of Ormonde. Their treatment of the natives was so cruel that fear and rage caused many to take up arms.

Sir James Fitzmaurice, cousin of the Earl of Desmond, was one of the first to head a rising. Even Ormonde, who was now in England, declared that he should not remain loyal to

England if the land of faithful subjects was given up to marauders.

Ormonde was pacified, but Fitzmaurice carried on a vigorous skirmish with the Deputy, retiring to the mountains and making sallies to get plunder and burn towns, then retiring to some remote place before any one could capture him.

Sir John Perrot, President of Munster, boasted that he would soon have "that fox out of his hole," but he found it hard to make good his words. After Fitzmaurice had successfully opposed him for many months, he suggested that they should have a fight to decide the matter, but the Irishman refused, knowing that his death would leave the rebels without a leader of mark. He held out staunchly, till money and men failed, when he consented to kiss the President's sword, in the church of Killmallock.

In 1575, Fitzmaurice went to France, hoping to win support. The French were pleased to see him, and made many fair speeches, greeting him in Paris as King of Ireland. He found, nevertheless, that they were slow to follow up their promises, and set out for Rome to seek an audience from the Pope. Elizabeth was, of course, under the papal displeasure, and her enemy was encouraged in his revolt against a Protestant. The Pope pardoned a number of wild Italian robbers, who spent their time infesting the roads where travellers journeyed. These were placed at Fitzmaurice's service, as good fighting men. Dr Nicholas Saunders, an English Catholic, also joined the Irish expedition, and attempted to persuade Philip of Spain to take up the cause of his religion against Elizabeth. Philip thought the rebellion was doomed to failure, but he allowed Stukeley, an English traitor, to fit out a fleet in Spain. Stukeley was heart and soul for the Roman Catholic cause, his enemies declaring that he aimed at the red hat of a cardinal.

He was not to be depended on in a crisis, and was too rash for a leader. He touched at Lisbon on his way to Ireland, became mixed up in a quarrel that led to the battle of Alcanzar,

and fell fighting for Sebastian, King of Portugal, disloyal to his own queen and country to the last, but with all his wounds in front.

The Italians perished with Stukeley, and Fitzmaurice did not regret their loss, saying to Saunders, "I care for no soldiers; you and I are enough. Therefore, let me go, for I know the minds of the people of Ireland." When he landed in Munster, he tried to raise an army of Irishmen, but in the end had a mixed company of Italians, Spanish, Flemish, and a few English soldiers. There were men in Elizabeth's own kingdom not satisfied with her religious views, and these followed Fitzmaurice. The rebel leader landed at Dingle in triumph, for there was only one poor ship in Ireland to oppose him. One of his foes describes his landing bitterly: "The traitor upon Saturday last came out of his ships. Two friars were his ancient bearers, and they went before with two ancients. A bishop with his crozier-staff and mitre was next to the friars. After came the traitor himself, at the head of his company, about one hundred, and went to seek for flesh and kine, which they found and so returned to the ships."

Fitzmaurice crossed from Dingle to Smerwick, where he constructed a fort that became famous as the stronghold of the Desmond rising. John and James Fitzgerald, brothers of the Earl of Desmond, joined him, but the earl himself had too great a dread of English power after his three periods of captivity. The younger lords of the Pale knew no fear, and declared for Fitzmaurice, the leader who had inspired the South of Ireland with frenzied expectation.

The rebels brought papers with them from Rome, declaring that they fought for the glory of God, and Saunders did his best to give a religious aspect to the rising. He described Elizabeth constantly as a wicked woman, who insulted the papal power by her rule and was a mere usurper of the throne of England. Meanwhile, Spaniards, French, and Englishmen worked steadily at the entrenchments of the fort of Smerwick, making the prisoners assist them. Everything

seemed to be in favour of the rebels when a sudden quarrel deprived them of their leader.

Fitzmaurice was in Connacht, trying to gain more followers and using all his efforts to win Burke to his side. Burke refused in words that reflected on the honour of all who fought against their queen. A fight ensued in which Fitzmaurice met his death at the hands of a musketeer who had marked his yellow doublet. He met death coolly, entreating his friends to cut off his head as soon as he knew that he was mortally wounded, because he feared mutilation by the enemy. His end was as the knell of doom to the rising of the Desmonds. The English general, Lord Grey of Wilton, put down the rebellion with harsh determination, shrinking, in spite of himself, at the butchery he ordered his soldiers to perform.

The Earl of Desmond was hunted through the mountains, and stabbed mortally in the humble cabin, where he had taken refuge. Of all that splendid race of Geraldine, only one sickly child was left. He was known by the name of the Tower Earl, from which his fate can easily be guessed.

CHAPTER XI

MR SECRETARY SPENSER

With lord Grey De Wilton, in his camp at Smerwick, was a young English Secretary named Edmund Spenser. For services to the country, Spenser received a grant of 3000 acres of land in the county of Cork. He was one of the men known as "undertakers," because they undertook to displace the natives of Ireland and to look after their forfeited estates.

An "undertaker" paid no rent and was allowed many privileges, but his position was not a very happy one with the old possessor living in the same district and often making raids to get back his property. It must have been hard, too, to behold the pitiable distress of Munster, once the most fertile part of Ireland, now a desert.

Spenser had certain duties to perform for his queen, but he had still time for writing poetry in his castle of Kilcolman. He was already a famous poet, and had written the Shepherds' Calendar and some beautiful verses to a lady he admired before he met Elizabeth Boyle, who was married to him at Cork. Spenser did not find in Ireland many literary men, such as he had been accustomed to meet at the splendid court of Elizabeth, but an official named Ludovic Bryskett, who was also a translator of Italian writings, invited him to a gathering at Dublin, where the company consisted principally of lawyers and soldiers. It was there that Spenser promised to write the wonderful poem of the "Faerie Queene." It is now one of the most famous poems in the English language, and the story can interest even children too young to understand the full beauty of the verse. Spenser wrote it in honour of Elizabeth, whom he dubs Gloriana; he praises other noted people of the time, and describes Lord Grey under the character of Arthegall.

The "Faerie Queene" has traces of its origin in lines which picture the scenery of Ireland. Spenser speaks of the glen of Aherlow, in Munster, as though it had once been singularly blessed by prosperity but then laboured under a dreadful curse. Robbers, indeed, lived in the beautiful woods near Aherlow, and later on, two chiefs—Owen Macrory and Tyrell—lurked in these woods until they found an opportunity to attack the castle where the English poet lived.

Spenser's life was saddened by dread of such neighbours—perhaps that is why he admires Lord Grey, the man most capable of protecting English settlers through his stern rule over the natives. Yet the lonely and neglected poet had more time for dreaming than when he lived at the court in London, where there was always much bickering and jealousy among the courtiers, and a man had to be ever looking how he might best gain some advantage over his fellows. The glorious beauty of the land also gave the poet the power to write of woods and glens as few have written. He always had a view of surpassing loveliness before him though it was bare enough of men and women.

The first three books of the "Faerie Queene" were composed under difficulties. A friend of the poet's, one Gabriel Hervey, might have discouraged Spenser from completing it by his belief that it was not of high merit, had not another friend expressed the warmest admiration. This was Walter Raleigh, who had come to live at Youghal, which was not too far from Kilcolman for willing neighbours to ride backwards and forwards to pay visits. Walter Raleigh had met the poet at Smerwick while both were working under the Lord-Deputy, one with sword and one with pen. Raleigh had fallen into disgrace with the queen in 1589, and gone to take up estates in Ireland like many another Englishman of adventurous spirit. He lived at an old house, not unlike the farm where he was born in Devon, and learned to love it on that account. It was a romantic dwelling with an under-ground passage connecting one room with the tower of St Mary's

Church; it had rich carvings and low ceilings, and a splendid library where the exiled courtier studied. Raleigh was a poet and a dreamer, and many of his later exploits were probably planned in the peaceful time he spent at Youghal. He had a fine garden where he planted great yellow wallflower and cedars and cherry trees, and he also introduced the potato and the tobacco plant. He amazed his world when he returned from a voyage to America with smoke issuing from his mouth, but other men soon followed his example, and the Irish learnt to smoke, if they could afford to buy tobacco. It was a luxury of the rich in those days, and even enthusiastic devotees were troubled by the expense of their new habit. A certain Captain Bodley writes eloquently in defence of the practice. "Almost all have but one argument, that would make a dog laugh or a horse burst his halter, saying that neither our sires or grandsires took tobacco, yet lived I know not how long. Indeed they lived till they died without tobacco, but who knows whether they would not have lived longer had they used it."

Spenser describes his first meeting with Raleigh in exile in a poem, "Colin Clout's Come Home Again"—

"One day, quoth he, I sat (as was my trade)
Under the foote of Mole, that mountain bore
Keeping my chief amongst the cooly shade
Of the green alders by the Mullae's shore,
There a straunge shepheard chaunst to find me out,
Whether allured with my pipe's delight,
Whose pleasing sound y shrilled far about
Or thither led by chaunce, I know not right:
Whom when I asked from what place he came,
And how he Night, himself he did yclepe
The Shepheard of the Ocean by name,
And said he came far from the main sea deepe."

Through the influence of Raleigh, the "Faerie Queene" was completed, and Spenser went to the English Court with the first three volumes as soon as they were written. After he

had presented them to Elizabeth, the poet returned to Kilcolman, thankful to be away from the bustle of town life.

In 1596, Spenser wrote a prose account of the condition of Ireland in that time. His duties as an English official caused him to see much that was painful, and his sympathies were not with the Irish people. He disapproved of many customs that were naturally astonishing to a foreigner, and had scant admiration for the appearance of the natives. He denounced the loose mantles worn by both men and women as "a fit home for an outlaw, a meet bed for a rebel, and an apt cloak for a thief." Another Englishman, Sir Peter Carew, appears to have thought the same mantles very useful, for he asked that all his soldiers might be provided with them, seeing that the cost was only five shillings and the garments "were of great comfort both in sickness and health."

Spenser very much disliked the "glibb," a kind of mat into which the hair was twisted. The "glibbs" came down low over the eyes, and Spenser said they were as useful as mantles to conceal a thief. "For whensoever he hath run himself into that peril of the law that he will not be known, he either cutteth off his glibb quite, by which he becometh nothing like himself, or putteth it so low down that if is very hard to discern his thievish countenance." In a treaty between the rebel Tyrone and the English, it was specially stipulated that none of his people should wear the "glibb," so the dislike of that fashion was not confined to Spenser.

The bards were blamed in "The View of the Present State of Ireland" for stirring up rebellion and keeping barbarous customs. They were often rewarded lavishly, and could be very mocking about hosts whose entertainments did not please them. Spenser was bitter on their choice of evil subjects, and on their loose way of writing. They seem to have chosen evil-doers for particular praise, and to have gloried in actions best left without comment. "As of a most notorious thief, a wicked outlaw, which had lived all his time of spoils and robberies, one of their bardes in his praise will say, that he

was none of the idle milkesops that was brought up by the fire-side, but that most of his days he spent in arms and valiant enterprise, that he did never eat his meat before he had won it with his sword, that he lay not all night slugging in a cabin under his mantle, but used commonly to keep others waking to defend their lives and did light his candles at the flames of their houses to lead him in the darkness."

Spenser felt contempt for such writers because he himself would never stoop to pervert his gifts, but used them to glorify the right and true. All through his great allegory runs the belief that evil will be conquered by good, and might by purity. He dreaded, we imagine, the power of these bards, and no doubt he blamed them when the disaster he had foreseen at last came upon him, and he was driven, a homeless fugitive, from the Castle of Kilcolman, leaving all that was precious to him in the hands of rebels, now taking vengeance on an English "undertaker."

CHAPTER XII

ANOTHER VIEW OF THE STATE OF IRELAND

Spenser drew in his book the Ireland that he S knew, a country under the heel of a conqueror, before whom all prosperity soon vanished. His was the time of Ireland's downfall he had never known that glorious age when envy followed her mercantile success. Not altogether blessed for Ireland was the trade of the fourteenth and fifteenth century, which led her nearest neighbours to bring about her ruin.

If Spenser had visited those great fairs of thriving Ireland, he would surely have walked in wonder among merchants, clad in gorgeous apparel of silk and finest cloth, that aped the highest civilization of a European court. In silk hose and rich tunic the prentice ruffled by his master, mincing daintily in long, pointed shoes, tied by silver laces. The women bore on their heads high piles of home-spun linen, but they were by no means satisfied with the products of their own accomplished hands. They must have brave Italian fashions, and for great occasions even cloth of gold.

Women, held in high esteem during the age preceding conquest, were wont to preside with dignity at banquets, where they sat in converse with the learned of the land. They were taught foreign tongues and wise Irish proverbs, in which their own virtues were extolled. They would have summoned Spenser to their houses, furnished with costly luxury, and vied with the later Elizabethans in the board they spread for him. Wine from hot southern countries was always poured for an honoured guest, and, as he partook of choice fruits and spices, the singing of the bards struck sweetly on his ears. Spenser might have regretted still more the baseness of their fall, if he had seen the high estate in which every poet once lived secure.

Or, in a more humble dwelling, the same guest would have found the mistress busy at her loom, but not too much occupied to neglect the great duty of hospitality, which the Irish of that day all practised. She would offer whatever food the household afforded, and think it a disgrace to her bounty if the stranger visited an inn.

Perhaps Spenser would have chosen for a visit the famous fair held at Eniscorthy on Great Lady Day. He could then have proved his skill in tongues by parley with the merchants who came from foreign lands, eager to exchange their wares for those of Irish manufacture. Wandering down the splendid road that led towards the town he would have met, among the merchants, pilgrims bent on more pious errands to some monastery. Highways had been laid waste when Spenser lived in Ireland—they made the way too easy for a conqueror. He found his path a rough one when he went to visit Raleigh, yet he could have chatted to the pilgrims without a thought of danger. And Spenser would have received as well as given in talking to the learned men who went about the country in that time. The great warriors themselves were often scholars, and collected libraries to satisfy their own love of books as well as to provide for the tastes of scholar-guests.

Raleigh was not the first student in Ireland to ponder over foreign writings. Were not the Earls of Kildare famed for gifts both literary and warlike, and had not even a wild O'Neill more than once shown an inclination for gentler pursuits than raiding? When Spenser visited the western coast, he must have stood to watch the sun set over the broad Atlantic, and seen ships of curious aspect in the harbours as well as more familiar sail. Stone houses and stone piers in such towns as Galway and Sligo are silent witnesses of Ireland's former trade by sea. The exploits of Irish sailors have been overshadowed by the fame of Elizabethan sea-dogs, but their day was one of high renown. A woman, one Grania O'Maille, of a race of sturdy mariners, as valiant as the best, swept the western sea with two

hundred fighting men at her command. She took her husband with her on these voyages "for she was as much by sea as land more than Mrs Mate with him."

The harbours showed fewer sails when the strife by land waxed grim; the smith forged weapons for use instead of to display his skill in artifice; the cattle, lowing of old in fertile orchards, had to browse on scanty pasturage; the hum of looms was silenced by the piteous shrieks of housewives and their children.

Commerce, under the restrictions of new laws, was crushed by the sheer tyranny of conquest. Learning decayed since it was made too difficult for a people who suffered cruel domination.

As the hands of all Irishmen learnt to wield weapons in their own defence, the generations following ceased to possess the ancient skill in manual labour.

Spenser spoke of benefits received from English rule, and hinted that the long, protracted warfare added but a shade of blackness to the former misery of Ireland. He knew the country in his misfortune and never loved it, because he mistook for national characteristics the reign of despair that succeeded the age of pride and plenty. Elizabethan Ireland had been stricken with her death-blow in the very flower of a splendid civilization.

CHAPTER XIII

THE FLIGHT OF THE EARLS

The last revolt against Elizabeth in Ireland was one that shook the English power to its foundations. It was led by Hugh O'Neill, son of the O'Neill who had been dispossessed by Shane. He was a very different man from his relative—a courtier and a favourite of Elizabeth, who allowed him to assume the title of Earl of Tyrone. He had served in the English army with Lord Grey, and knew something of English affairs from long residence in that country. Two grievances urged him to rebel. His brother-in-law, Hugh O'Donnell, had been treated with the utmost cruelty and treachery by the English government, and he was himself persecuted by the accusations of Bagnall, the Lord-Marshal, because he had carried off Bagnall's sister as a wife.

A fierce battle was fought at Yellow Ford, on the Blackwater, a river bounding the territory of O'Neill.

It was a victory for the rebels, and added many followers to their ranks. It really seemed as if the Irish were to cast off English domination in that year of triumph, 1598.

Elizabeth, much alarmed, sent out her best generals, and she grudged neither money nor men in her old age to Essex, one of the favourites of the court. Many think Essex failed to subdue the Irish because he was too merciful to starve them into surrender, the only course likely to be followed with success. Lord Mountjoy came to take his place when he went home in disgrace, and the reign of severity began. The English army marched through Ireland, burning, destroying, putting to the sword. Old and feeble, women and children were killed as well as soldiers. Hardly a speck of green was left, hardly a single blade of corn. The people became gaunt scarecrows, too

weak to oppose the invader now that they cared more for food than deliverance from servitude.

Tyrone's might declined as Mountjoy retook town after town that had fallen into the hands of the rebels. When the Spanish landed at Kinsale, hope rose for a brief moment, but Mountjoy surrounded the town with all his forces and it was given up to him after a short struggle. It was the end of the rebellion. Tyrone had to accept terms dictated by the English and was never satisfied with them, though he was allowed to keep his lands and titles on condition that he would form no further alliance with foreign powers.

On Elizabeth's death, her successor, King James I., invited Tyrone to the English Court. He sailed with Mountjoy, in 1603, and had a narrow escape from shipwreck off the Skerries. He was not well received in England by the country people, who blamed him for the deaths of brave young English soldiers devoured in great numbers by the Irish war. Many a bereaved parent came out to hurl missiles or abuse at him as he drove through villages where there had been heavy loss. He was not warmly welcomed at the court by the nobles who had spent hard days in his pursuit. They did not care to have a former enemy as their companion, and Sir James Harrington was bitterly affronted when he saw the Irish chief sitting at table in a place of honour. "How did I labour after that knave's destruction!" he cries. "I adventured forth by sea and land, was near starving, ate horse-flesh in Munster, and all to quell that man, who now smileth in peace at those who did hazard their lives to destroy him."

Tyrone had fallen on evil days. He returned to Ireland to find himself unpopular as a defeated rebel. When he quarrelled with other chiefs, those in authority managed to put him at a disadvantage, for there was a strong suspicion that he would rebel again. "Artful Cecil" is said to have coveted the possessions of Tyrone, and in 1607, a plot was discovered in which the old chief was implicated by a document dropped at the door of the Dublin Council-chamber.

After a quarrel with O'Cahan, the English government ordered the foes to come to court for trial. Tyrone dared not face the hostility of foreign nobles, and resolved to take refuge in another country which he had not cause to shun. His son served in the Spanish army, so it was easy to hire a ship with Spanish gold. The ship, laden with salt, was brought to the Irish coast on a pretence of fishing.

Tyrone was paying a farewell visit to a friend, and took leave of the whole household so tenderly that they marvelled, for he was not a kindly man and had told nobody of his intended voyage. He went to his own house of Dungannon for two nights, and took his wife with him when he set out for the ship in waiting near the coast. She slipped from her horse in the wild flight and declared that she would go no further, but the Earl drew his sword and swore he would kill her if she did not come and that with a more cheerful countenance! The chief, Tyrconnell had already arrived at Rathmullen when the Earl came up with his reluctant partner. About one hundred persons embarked with the chiefs, chiefly from the families of O'Neill and O'Donnell. Lady Tyrone went with her husband, but Lady Tyrconnell refused to leave Ireland, and steadily repudiated all share in the disloyalty of the fugitives. She was sent to England as a prisoner, and her beauty roused such admiration there that King James was heard to wonder how Tyrconnell could have left so fair a face behind.

The ship was crowded and provisions soon ran short, while the fugitives were pursued by English cruisers. They reached France, but were not allowed to enter Paris. At the same time the French King, Henri IV., refused to surrender the Irish chiefs, for he was of the same religion and would not help the Protestants.

At Douai a warm welcome awaited the exiles, Tyrone's son meeting them with all the captains under his command. The Irish students of the University were ready to feast their countrymen with an accompaniment of Greek and Latin speeches. Tyrone received the younger men into his own

regiment, but the old Earls had to wander into Spain, where they could not find a refuge. They crossed the Alps to Italy, and were entertained by the Governor of Milan till they found a more permanent resting-place at Rome. Here the Cardinals treated them as men who had done well for the Roman Catholic cause. Tyrone had always made a brieveance of Protestant persecution, though he was only religious when it suited him. Unlike some of the Irish chiefs, he was able to restrain himself from rushing out of church "like a wild cat" as soon as the sermon began, but that restraint was probably due to his civilized life at the English Court rather than to a desire to hear preaching. James I. issued a proclamation for the benefit of foreign potentates, stating that Tyrone and Tyrconnell had fled from the consequences of their crimes, and had not the slightest reason to pose as Catholic martyrs.

The Earls lived at Rome in a palace that was given them by Paul V. They had every honour, but did not thrive away from their own country. After a few years' foreign residence they died, and were buried in the Franciscan Church of St Peter at Montorio. "Rome, indeed, was dear to them, but Ireland was still dearer, and the exiled Celt, whether expatriated through force or stern necessity, lives only to long for the old home or die weeping for it."

CHAPTER XIV

THE COLONIZATION OF ULSTER

On the flight of the Earls, all their land was seized by the Crown because they were held disloyal to King. James. In fact, more land than they had ever ruled fell into the hands of English government. Six counties were seized by order of the king—Donegal, Derry, Tyrone, Cavan, Fermanagh, and Armagh. These were to be "planted" with new owners, as though Ireland were a half-known country with savage inhabitants. Antrim and Down were already occupied by the Scots from the Western Highlands, who had often been tempted to cross the sea for the sake of plunder. The chief of these Scots, Sir Randall-Macdonnell, was created Earl of Antrim.

James did not mean to repeat the mistakes that the English had made in planting other parts of Ireland. He saw that the grants made to the "undertakers" of Munster had been far too large, and that the plan of allowing English and Irish to live together in friendly fashion would never do in Ulster, since it had made the "plantation" of Leix and Offaly a failure.

James intended to send to Ireland a party of strong men, able to rule the natives and stamp out the Catholic religion. They must all be firm Protestants and firm believers that English ways were best. They ought to be sufficient protection for themselves against the natives because they were united on all important points. They would only receive small grants of land so that there could be no excuse for hiring the assistance of the Irish. As a further help to the "undertakers," James resolved to ship off the Irish gentry who had only been trained for the noble occupation of fighting. Gustavus Adolphus of Sweden was glad to have some of them for soldiers; the rest were moved from Ulster to different parts of Ireland.

There was no lack of men eager to take advantage of this new opening in life. Shrewd Scots and practical Englishmen saw that fortunes might be made for their descendants, if they took advantage of James's offer. Few of the settlers had any desire to fight or plunder. They took across the sea tools and farm-implements instead of swords. Among them were farmers, merchants and weavers, who hoped that they could carry on their occupation in a new country with greater success than in the old. Land was sold at a ridiculously cheap rate—it had cost nothing to the king, who disposed of it right royally,

The buyers had to fulfil certain conditions when they took their land. A man, who received a grant of any size, was obliged to build a castle or mansion-house on his estate within four years and he had also to introduce skilled workmen, farmers, and labourers as tenants. James hoped that this industrious population would prove peaceful; he was most unwilling to breed a crowd of idle adventurers in Ulster. Trouble had been caused too often by the Irish notion that fighting was the finest way of earning a livelihood.

In practice, it was impossible to carry out one of these condition's. The settlers found that they needed more help on their farms than they had brought with them, and quietly employed hands that were sentenced to idleness by the king. Many of the Irish thus remained in the part of Ireland, where they had been brought up.

The settlers in Ulster were zealous and active men. They soon overcame the idea of the natives that it was a degradation to soil the hands with anything but blood, while there was a chance of warfare. They built towns and settlements, and made their settlements hum with the sound of spinning-wheels, worked by the hands of women. A trade in live cattle was established with the English port of Bristol, wool was exchanged in the south of Europe for wine grown in the vineyards. Traders from half the ports of Europe came to Cork to buy salt fish, salt butter, and salt meat. The native Irish

had already forgotten their busy times of trade. They looked with wonder at the brisk transactions of their masters—a kind of listlessness had come upon them, only to be dispelled by a very stirring conflict.

The Corporation of London and the twelve city guilds agreed to take up the whole country of Coleraine, and to hold the forts of Derry (hence Londonderry), Culmore, and Coleraine. King James encouraged this enterprise by creating a new order of baronets, for he was lavish in bestowing titles. They bore on their coat the Bloody Hand of Ulster, which had been shown hitherto on the shield of an O'Neill. James always gave in the hope of return, and each of the men receiving titles had to pay for the three years' service of a soldier in Ulster. Men who had held military appointments in the late wars were rewarded by special grants of land, and all that class who were known as "servitors" because they held some place in the service of the king.

Under a new order the population of Ulster increased rapidly, and strangers seemed to grasp the natural wealth of Ireland better than the Irish. Soon districts of Ulster showed the smiling pastures of former days, before soldiers had ridden through the land, intent on spoil. The undertakers were proud of the results of their labours, but the displaced Irish had little reason to be pleased with the success of King James's plantation. They left their land reluctantly, hinting at their sense of injustice by slow movements as they took a few belongings to the leaner districts, where the struggle with the soil was hard. The gentry found shelter of some kind, though life had no joy for them henceforward. The mass of the people looked wildly to discover a place where they might lodge in safety. They knew too well the barren soil of Munster and Connacht, and took the miserable tracts of land with bursting hearts. Some died of sheer despair, and others crept back to Ulster and begged for the meanest labour under the masters of their old homes. The promise to make provision for all the

men of Ulster had been broken, and that faithlessness was fiercely cherished till the hour of vengeance came in 1641.

CHAPTER XV

THE SCOURGE OF WENTWORTH

The hopes of Catholic subjects turned very naturally towards the son of James I., because he had married a French Catholic princess, and was thought to favour her religion. A deputation from Ireland sought an early opportunity of waiting on Charles I., and offering him a very large sum of money if he would grant religious and civil freedom. Fifty-one articles, known as the "Graces," had been drawn up to state the grievances, which were burdensome to the Irish. The king was so anxious to have money that he accepted these terms readily, and received part of the bribe at once. He promised that an Irish Parliament should give the force of law to this agreement, but this was one of the many promises that Charles did not keep.

Charles had a favourite scheme of ruling the three different parts of his kingdom by his three devoted ministers. Archbishop Laud was to rule England under his own direction, Hamilton was to bind Scotland to his will, and Wentworth was to find in Ireland the means of overawing his English subjects, if they broke into revolt. Charles expected Wentworth to gain a great revenue from Ireland and to train an army in that country, ready to march against the English at short notice. He chose his men well. Wentworth had already ruled the north of England with a firm hand, and had gained much profit for the king. He was one of the Royalist party in England after the death of Buckingham, the favourite who had once swayed the king by his slightest freak of fancy. Once advanced to high honour, Wentworth did not look back to the hour when he had defended the liberties of Parliament. He was now bent on making the royal power supreme throughout the king's dominions. He had determined, when he set out for Ireland, to show certain unruly patriots in the English Parliament how

meek and obedient to the will of a sovereign a Parliament could be made.

Wentworth became Lord-Deputy in 1633. He ruled fairly well as long as the king's interests were not opposed in any way. A heavy hand crushed the new nobility of the plantations when these seemed inclined to flaunt their patents too proudly, and the petty tyranny of great landowners knew control at last. Wentworth made the shipping trade secure, by sweeping swarms of Algerian pirates from the sea; he was careful to import Flemish weavers, and to encourage flax-spinning, when he destroyed the Irish woollen trade as dangerous to the prosperity of English merchants. Nevertheless, it was soon clear that he placed the well-being of the Irish much lower than the absolute sway of the king, his master. He set about his work without the slightest regard for the injuries he inflicted on a nation that was too weak to resist him effectually.

Wentworth's first step was to summon an Irish Parliament so cleverly "packed" that it contained about the same number of Protestants and Catholics. He took care to have a handful of military men returned as members so that he could gain his way by force, if necessary. He opened Parliament in Dublin with a ceremony and magnificence that had never been seen before. He then proceeded to address the House in a loud, bold voice, demanding money, and warning the members "not to mutter and mutiny in corners." He promised that there should be two sessions of Parliament, one for the Crown, which was to deal with the voting of money, and one for the Irish, in which the "Graces" should be considered. Wentworth had his session first, and bullied the members into granting money, but refused afterwards to perform his promise of attending to the claims of Ireland.

Wentworth's attention was next directed to the church. He intended to establish the form of service which Laud favoured, and took no thought for the opinions of Catholics, Presbyterians or Low Churchmen. They were all to worship

according to High Church doctrines. The Church of Ireland certainly needed reform—buildings were in ruins, parish priests often lived in beggary. Only evil and ignorant men would consent to take livings in a church, which had been robbed of its endowments. In Connacht a vicar was seldom paid more than £40 a year, while some of the bishoprics were only worth £50 a year.

The Deputy ordered a commission for repairing the churches and recovering Church property. The Earl of Cork was obliged to disgorge tithes and lands, belonging to the College of Youghal and the see of Waterford, to the value of £2000 a year. Wentworth called the Bishop of Killala to the Council-Chamber, rated him soundly, declaring that he "deserved to have his rochet pulled over his ears," and wrote jubilantly to Laud that he had so "warmed his old sides" that the bishop had been obliged to give up the attempt to sell Church lands. Wherever it was possible, Wentworth introduced a more elaborate form of service, adopting Laud's plan of moving the communion table from the body of the church to the east end.

Wentworth next attacked the landlords of Connacht, and proved by old documents that their land was the lawful property of King Charles. He went in person through Mayo, Roscommon, and Sligo, alarming the juries till they gave verdicts for the king in sheer terror. He met resistance in Galway, where the people were devoted to the Earl of Clanricarde. He held his court in the earl's own castle at Portrumna, where he fined the sheriff and imprisoned him for bringing together an obstinate jury. The men still gave verdicts for the landowners in spite of this. They were fined £4000 apiece and sentenced to imprisonment till they either paid the fines or altered their decision. The sheriff died in prison, the Earl of Clanricarde sank into the grave with shame and at length complete submission was given to Wentworth's imperious demands in Ireland.

The powerful Deputy was approaching his own downfall. In 1641, Charles sent for him in haste to join in plans for suppressing the Parliamentarians, who had taken up arms against the king's tyranny. Wentworth held council with the Royalists and went back to Ireland again to find men and money for the coming strife. He had no difficulty in wresting what he wanted from the cowed and beaten natives. The Irish Parliament owned him master and promised to furnish Charles with grants of money and a well-provided army. Wentworth, now Earl of Strafford, hastened across the Channel, well satisfied with his visit. He found that the king had betrayed him by signing a treaty with the Scots and that he was left to face the hatred of Parliament.

At Strafford's trial, witnesses crowded to hear evidence of tyranny. Many came from Ireland—Connacht landowners, castle officials, Presbyterian pastors—the weight of accusation fell heavily against the fallen minister. England and Ireland watched the trial with the same excitement, for Strafford's character was such that even tyrants had bent before him. Rejoicing burst forth when the public learnt that Charles had signed the Bill of Attainder that sent his most faithful adherent to the scaffold.

CHAPTER XVI

OWEN ROE O'NEILL, PATRIOT

Ireland had the appearance of a subdued nation when Strafford met his fate, but below the surface there was a terrible thirst for vengeance on the government which had sent the tyrant and given him authority. The plantation of Ulster had been followed by laws forbidding Catholics to have their own religion. Now Sir William Parsons, the deputy succeeding Strafford, threatened that very soon there should not be a single Catholic left in Ireland. A frenzy of horror ran through the Irish, who expected nothing less than general massacre.

In 1641, a leader from one of the noblest Irish families came forward. Rory O'Moore became the popular hero of the hour and "For God and Our Lady and Rory O'Moore" was now the watchword of the rebel party. O'Moore's attempt to capture Dublin failed, but it was followed by a general rising in Ulster.

An O'Neill, as was natural, led this party, and nearly every town in Ulster fell into the hands of the rebels. Scant mercy was shown to the Protestant settlers by Sir Phelim O'Neill, a man of cruel nature. The "undertakers" fled panic-stricken whenever they could escape from his butchery. Reports of a horrible massacre in Ulster reached England, and the English people rose in condemnation of the crime. Sir Phelim and his men were too ready to exact vengeance but the Irish, as a nation, hotly resented the records of the massacre, which the English historian, Carlyle, speaks of as "a huge blot, an indiscriminate blackness." They defended their own treatment of the settlers and declared that the soldiers conveyed them to places of retreat. Many priests, certainly, were well known to have sheltered English suppliants under their very altar-cloths and to have sacrificed their own lives for those who threw themselves upon their mercy.

From Ulster the rebellion spread farther. At the end of 1641 the Pale was up in arms, and with the exception of Dublin, Drogheda, and some of the seaport towns of the south and west and a few garrisoned places of the north, the whole of Ireland was in the hands of rebels.

O'Neill was too incompetent a leader to follow up his first success in Ulster. The towns he had taken were lost one by one while his own followers deserted him. Matters were in a desperate state when Owen Roe O'Neill landed in Donegal Bay at the head of one hundred officers.

He was not a true O'Neill, but the grandson of Matthew of Dungannon and nephew of the banished Earl of Tyrone. Red Owen, as he was called, was by far the noblest of his race. He had served as a soldier in Spain so gallantly that he gave up a high command in the Spanish army to go to the help of his distressed country. Had he ignored the claims of Ireland, there is no doubt that Owen would have gained everlasting fame in the annals of military exploits. It was the supreme test of his nobility when he gave up all thoughts of his own advancement and came to take a place among men fighting for their own interests and opposed to him in every aim of life.

O'Neill set to work at once to drill the Irish armies and bring them into order. The troops were no longer allowed to plunder as they travelled through the country. They drove their own cattle before them, and pastured their herds on the enemy's lands, knowing it had once belonged to their fathers. For seven years the army could boast that they demanded nothing at the sword's point, yet never lacked provisions. They never lost a battle and never mutinied against their leader. When their renown had travelled far, both France and Spain asked for Irish recruits to join their armies.

Owen became the supreme commander of the Ulster party, whose great object was to win back national independence. There were three other rebel parties in Ireland—the Anglo-Irish nobility, who demanded civil and religious freedom but did not wish to be separated from

England; the Puritan party, which joined the Scotch Presbyterians and was anti-Irish; and the Royalist party headed by Lord Ormonde who engaged in the struggle of King Charles against his Parliamentary enemies.

Owen O'Neill wished to unite with the Anglo-Irish party. A meeting was held at Kilkenny to bring about this union, and it was decided that war must be waged for the glory of the Catholic religion and the destruction of the Protestants. Loyalty to King Charles was eagerly proclaimed, a printing-press set up to issue proclamations and a mint established for coining money. In 1643, when truce had been made for one year, Irish forces were sent to Scotland to help the king's cause. Thanks to O'Neill's training, these soldiers won unbounded praise, and struck such terror into the king's enemies that they carried all before them.

In 1645, the pope sent a messenger to Ireland to preach the Catholic cause. Rinuccini, Archbishop of Fermo, was supported by O'Neill, but he cared nothing for King Charles and denounced the peace that was concluded between the king and the rebels. He preached so eloquently against it that heralds sent to Clonmel and Waterford to proclaim the peace were driven from those towns. At Limerick, the mayor himself was beaten for attempting to proclaim it.

The pope's messenger was delighted with his first success. Protected by Owen O'Neill, with ten thousand men behind him, he made a public entry into Kilkenny, drove the Supreme Council from the Council Chamber and flung them into prison. When a new council was elected, Rinuccini was at its head.

Meanwhile, news came to Ireland that Charles had been captured by his subjects and intended to ask help from the Irish. His supporters rallied to his standard but were ingloriously defeated by Owen Roe at Benburb on the Blackwater. The Scotch and English suffered a heavy loss in this battle while O'Neill lost only seventy men. He never engaged in conflict unless he was certain of superiority to the

enemy. When the rebel leader of the south had failed to take Dublin, the command of Leinster was given to Owen Roe, but the council actually declared war against him rather than give him the command of Munster. Now O'Neill was beset by jealous rivals, who distrusted his motives, so much purer than their own. Quarrel succeeded quarrel in the rebel camps, and at last O'Neill decided to make terms with the English Parliamentary party against the Royalists. Ormonde had been obliged to leave Dublin and cross to France, where the queen and her children had taken refuge. He returned to raise a new army, bringing with him Prince Rupert, the king's gallant nephew. Royalists came to Ireland as fast as sails could bring them, trusting firmly in Prince Rupert to save the crown for Charles I.

It was too late for the most determined resistance. A new treaty was to be drawn up, promising a free Parliament and repealing laws against the Catholics, but before this was proclaimed, the tidings came that King Charles had suffered the death sentence. Still the Royalists refused to give up hope. Charles's eldest son was proclaimed as Prince of Wales at Cork and Waterford. Rebels from different parties flocked to Ormonde's standard. He welcomed them all, but his great desire was to win over the first general in Ireland, Owen Roe O'Neill. Overtures were not immediately successful and O'Neill's last days advanced. He hastened his march though he was so ill that he had to be carried on a litter, and when he lay on his death-bed he sent part of his army with advice to Lord Ormonde as to the best way of conducting the war. He died at Cloughouter in Cavan from mortal injury, which he received from a pair of poisoned boots presented to him at a banquet.

Cromwell, the English Parliamentary general, came to Ireland with victory assured to him now that the only man, who could have saved the country, was taken from it in the time of direst need.

CHAPTER XVII

THE CURSE OF CROMWELL

The conflicting parties united for the moment to meet the general, who came as a soldier of God to take vengeance on God's enemies.

Oliver Cromwell was a Puritan of the sternest type, high-principled, upright, hard of judgment. With him came the soldiers he had drilled into an almost invincible army. They were fresh from conquest in England and their minds were intent on making the rule of Parliament avail against both Papists and Malignants, as men were called if they supported the doomed king's family. Ireland must have seemed strangely chaotic and turbulent to Cromwell's "Ironsides." They looked scornfully at the quarrels rending different parties, and saw that the new alliance could not last.

In all Ireland only two towns had declared for Cromwell when he first set foot in it—Dublin and Londonderry. The first blow Cromwell struck at Drogheda, a garrison Ormonde had believed impregnable. The town was taken, the garrison put to the sword, and all in arms were slain. Some of the soldiers fled to St. Peter's Church steeple, which was set on fire by Cromwell's orders. Those who escaped death were shipped to the Barbadoes to work as slaves in the plantations. Sir Arthur Ashton, the governor, was one of the first to fall. "All the friars were knocked on the head but two."

Cromwell wrote military dispatches to England describing the siege of Drogheda, and with satisfaction as "a righteous judgment of God, on men who had been guilty of the Ulster massacres." He expressed the hope that it "would prevent more innocent blood being shed."

After the death of Owen Roe, Cromwell marched on Wexford. The townspeople would not have surrendered at his

orders but Captain Strafford betrayed the Castle. The troops put ladders to the walls of the town, scaled them and rushed on the Irish in the market-place. It was a desperate skirmish, for the English gave no quarter. A party tried to escape by boat and were sunk and drowned to the number of three hundred. Some two thousand men had been killed when the town was given up to plunder. Cromwell reported that his soldiers "got a very good booty in this place."

Such ruthless measures struck terror into the native population. Town after town surrendered to the victorious general. Then the English sent out a fleet to drive Prince Rupert from the Irish coast and blockade the different ports.

In the winter, Cromwell rested so that his troops might recover from disease, caused partly by the moisture of the climate. He found it easy to obtain supplies from the country people, because he paid for what he got and punished his soldiers whenever they took anything by force. A man in his service was hanged for stealing a fowl from a peasant's cabin, and this served as a deterrent to the others.

In March, Kilkenny was besieged by a strong Parliamentary army. Quarrels had broken out in the Royalist ranks, and Hugh O'Neill, successor to Owen Roe, was hardly as brilliant a general. Sir Edward Butler held Kilkenny for eight days in spite of sickness in the garrison. The soldiers finally marched out with all the honours of war and the town capitulated to Cromwell.

Waterford resisted stubbornly and Cromwell was obliged to leave Ireland before he had conquered the garrison there. There was rebellion against the Parliamentary party in Scotland and there he marched in 1650, leaving his son-in-law, Ireton, as Deputy of Ireland. The war dragged on for two years before Waterford finally surrendered.

Ireton and Coote, who had helped to subdue Ulster, advanced against Limerick, defended resolutely by Hugh O'Neill. When this town was taken the rebels lost all hope.

Ormonde could fight no longer for he was unpopular as a Protestant and had to leave Ireland before news was brought that Prince Charles had tried to win over the Scots by a declaration against Popery, the religion of his mother.

The plantation of the island began as soon as conquest was complete. Grants of land had been promised to the soldiers, whose tenure was secured by the banishment of natives. Punishment was meted out with the utmost severity to all who were suspected of any part in the massacre of Ulster. Sir Phelim O'Neill deserved his fate because he had brought shameful dishonour on his nation but many innocent persons suffered with him. Parliament did not believe in half measures. Death or banishment disposed of numberless Irishmen, who would have been in the way of the faithful Puritans, who succeeded to their territory.

The disbanded soldiers were so likely to be dangerous that they were shipped off to Spain, Poland and Austria, which were glad to have such recruits. Over 30,000 crossed the seas, leaving wives and children to a fate far more dreadful than involuntary exile. These were sent to the Barbadoes, where they began a terrible new life in slavery. The merchants of Bristol had dealt in human sale and barter when the first conquest of Ireland was begun. They sent over agents to seize Irish women and children, who would prove a valuable source of income. This horrible transportation was carried on as a regular business, delicate high-born ladies being taken with their tenants and servants, for the men engaged in the work heeded no plea for mercy. Between six and seven thousand had already been transported when some English women were captured by mistake, and some limits had to be imposed on such transactions in consequence of the indignation that was felt by men who had not troubled about the hapless Irish.

The gentry had to leave their property before a certain date, which did not allow much time for preparation. In the middle of harvest, the drum sounded that was to send them into banishment. The penalty of death was to fall on any man

found lingering on his estate after the order of banishment was issued. Winter advanced and the time of the journey advanced too quickly. There was every likelihood of famine if the new year's crop could not be sown. Even the Parliamentary soldiers, so ready in general to do their work, asked for more time that the exiles might gather together what was needful. A short respite was given to the sick and aged before the exodus, began. Across bad roads in wet, wild weather they tramped with the gloomiest forebodings of the life awaiting them in the waste lands across the Shannon. Stragglers were arrested and imprisoned in answer to the impatient demands of the adventurers, who would not wait long for their lands. The walled towns gave up a stream of emigrants, and people of English blood saw that Ireland was not safe for them. Merchants of Cork and Waterford crossed to foreign ports and carried on their trade while Galway, once the centre of a flourishing Spanish commerce, was bestowed as a gift on the citizens of Liverpool and Gloucester in return for men and money supplied to the Parliamentarians during war.

Dr Petty, physician to the Parliamentary forces, undertook the formal survey of Ireland. He received large grants himself which came back oddly enough to native possession when his daughter was married to the Earl of Kerry. The land was desolate indeed after one-third of the population had been expelled. Fields lay waste and so many wolves infested the land that a reward of five pounds was offered for the head of a full-grown wolf and two pounds for that of a cub. They came sometimes to the very walls of Dublin.

Old inhabitants still remained in spite of every precaution. Young and hardy men escaped into the woods, and took to the life of robbers. A price was set by government on the heads of these desperate "Tories." Bands of soldiers sent to capture them

soften adopted the plan of smoking them out of caves, as if they had been savage animals. Savage they undoubtedly

became in time, and a continual source of danger to the settlers. Catholic priests, too, lurked in the country against the command of Parliament and were driven to strange shifts. Disguised in various costumes they led a hunted life for the sake of performing secretly the offices of their religion.

The plantation was a failure. No laws could prevent the constant intermarriage with the Irish who remained. Many of these had taken the meanest service in their old neighbourhood rather than face the unknown privations of Connacht, where all inhabitants were divided from their former territory by a ring of armed men. Within forty years of the plantation of Ulster, children of Cromwell's soldiers were proclaiming the ill-success of the attempted banishment by tongues which showed ignorance of a single word of English.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE BATTLE OF THE BOYNE

After Cromwell died, Prince Charles duly came to the throne of England in 1660, and managed to stay there till his death, because he was crafty enough to study the prejudices of his subjects. His brother James, who succeeded, gave great offence to thy; Puritan party by declaring himself a Papist. He was soon at war with his Protestant malcontents, and had finally to leave England and seek the help of any nation in sympathy with the Catholic cause.

Louis XIV. of France was the most powerful monarch of his time, He would fain have brought England under the rule of the Pope and promised therefore to aid James II. by money and men. He also extended a warm welcome to the Royal Family at his court.

Ireland, hoping for the restoration of the Catholic power, declared for James. The Irish had no reason to declare war on William, Prince of Orange, who was to be king instead of his father-in-law, King James, but they had heard that he was a staunch Protestant, and feared his rule in Ireland.

As soon as it was decided to fight in the camp of James II, Tyrconnell, the Lord-Deputy of Ireland, issued a call to arms. All good Catholics now decided that William of Orange should find the Irish difficult to crush. A few towns declared for the Protestant party because their inhabitants held strong religious views in favour of the Protestant religion, among these being Londonderry, Sligo, and Coleraine.

Tyrconnell mustered an army ready enough to brave death, but so ill-equipped that their enemies described them with a sneer: "Some had wisps of hay or straw bands instead of hats, others tattered coats or blankets cast over them,

without any breeches. Stockings and shoes were strange things. As for shirts, these proved a miracle."

James resolved to lead his troops in person, and landed in Kinsale Bay in 1689. He had a royal welcome from the people, who looked at him "as if he had been an angel from heaven." They crowded to meet him in such numbers that the road to Dublin looked like some eat fair, and in many places the peasants threw down their frieze coats to save the hoofs of royal horses from the mud. James had become accustomed to cold receptions from his subjects of England, long before they banished him. He must have been touched by the gay festivity of the streets of Dublin, that Palm Sunday when he entered it in state to the sound of Irish harps and bagpipe, the peal of bells and the boom of cannon. Householders had flung forth their richest treasures of silk and tapestry to adorn the balconies of buildings, where loyal citizens stood to cheer King James, treading roads made ready for his passage with the bridal tribute of flowers and green branches.

In Dublin, the king held council before advancing on Derry, where the inhabitants had made preparations to withstand a siege at the hands of the Catholic army. The town held out gallantly, and the garrison were reduced to such extremities before it was relieved, that the sight of a fat man within the walls roused the starving citizens to anger. The siege of Derry lasted from 20th April to 31st July 1689, the brave conduct of the defenders rendering it for ever memorable in history.

William of Orange sent out one of his generals in August, the Duke of Schomberg sailing up Belfast Lough with a fleet of ships. He followed Schomberg in the following year with a mixed army of English, Dutch, French, Danes and Scotch, all men well used to warfare. The Protestant Irish hastened to enrol themselves under William's banner while his arrival was the signal for a fresh outburst of loyalty to King James on the part of the Catholics in Ireland.

William marched straight to the River Boyne, where he found the enemy waiting for him. "I am glad to see you, gentlemen," he said, "if you escape me now, it will be my own fault."

The Protestant forces were far more numerous than those which James had mustered. Their leader decided to pitch his camp on the heights of Tullyallen, from which he could watch the movements of the enemy and keep his own men under cover. The Irish Catholics lay on the Meath side of the river, camping about the Hill of Donore.

At midnight, William rode through the camp to give his last orders to the troops. He was a delicate man and the long march had wearied him, but spirit flashed from his eyes, which shone bright and piercing in his pale face. A big plumed hat, flowing wig and long jackboots were revealed by the flare of torches, showing his picturesque figure in strong relief against the blackness of night. He told the soldiers to wear green sprigs in their hats to distinguish themselves from the Catholic Irish, who had adopted the white cockade of the French, in honour of allies sent by Louis XIV. Henceforward, green was the revolutionary colour of Ireland, and Orange the symbol of a true Protestant in that country.

The battle began shortly after sunrise with the thundering of William's guns. He directed the fire of the battalions himself, keeping the greater part of the army under cover. The Irish fought against great odds, without the necessary guns to fire back at the enemy, without a general in supreme command, without previous military training to fit them for such a contest. James was a coward at heart, and was planning his own retreat to Dublin while his men desperately faced some of the finest soldiers in Europe, and thought only of the cause.

At last, William gave orders for an attack on Oldbridge, the village near the river on James's side, now occupied by Tyrconnell and his dragoons. Schomberg was in charge of the main body, and the King led the left wing,

consisting chiefly of mounted men, over a deep ford near Drogheda, which could not be crossed by infantry.

"Suddenly the bugles rang out and from the mouth of William's glen appeared the Blue Dutch Guards. Down they came at the double in the hot July sunshine, straight down to the Boyne, marching in column, drums beating, colours flying, and fifes, they say, screaming the insulting tune of Lillibullero, followed by the French and Enniskillen Foot. The Dutch took the river highest up the stream, the French and Enniskilleners dashing into the water by Grove Island through the reeds and osiers of which they struggled. Then came Sir John Hanmer and Count Nassau with their regiments; and lastly Danes and Germans, who had probably come down by the eastern defile, where the water was up to their armpits. In a few minutes the river was full of men, fighting the sullied stream in the excitement of their first reckless onset."

The Irish ought to have fired while the enemy were in difficulties but they delayed too long and then fired so hastily that half their shots did not take effect. They were driven back as the Dutch came ashore and scattered in different directions while skirmishes took place at the river fords for more than an hour. Hamilton, the gallant leader of the Catholics, would not own that King James's cause was lost. He made a last splendid charge at Plotin Castle, eight miles south of Oldbridge and there he was met by William, surrounded, and taken prisoner.

The Irish were compelled to retreat after fighting with the greatest courage and determination. James followed out his prudent plan of flight to Dublin, as soon as he saw that his own side was doomed to failure. Arriving at the castle-gates at about ten o'clock at night, he was met by Lady Tyrconnell. "And after he was upstairs, her ladyship asked him what he would have for supper. Who then gave her an account of what a breakfast he had got, which made him have little stomach for his supper."

James complained, with more than a touch of ingratitude, that his troops had run away, but Lady Tyrconnell

would not listen to such dispraise of her country people, and answered dryly, "But your Majesty won the race."

The Lord Mayor and Council of Dublin were summoned once more to meet James in consultation. It was a very different meeting from the first, which had been held in a city decked so gaily in honour of the sovereign, who was now inclined to leave the citizens to shift for themselves. James knew that Louis X IV. would receive him at St Germain, and did not wish to stay longer in Ireland. He advised the men of Dublin to submit to William of Orange and to set their prisoners at liberty. He then sailed for Brest, and proceeded to the court of the French king, which was, after all, a gayer refuge than he could have found elsewhere.

William III. arrived in Dublin on 4th July 1690. He found the people in better spirits than he expected, because they regarded his famous victory of the Boyne as little more than a drawn battle, and had good reason to hope that King James would send them help from France to continue the struggle against a Protestant monarch.

CHAPTER XIX

PATRICK SARFIELD, DEFENDER OF LIMERICK

The cause of the Irish Catholic found a champion, after the Battle of the Boyne, in the person of Patrick Sarsfield. He was an officer of James's army, with a name of noble renown and a long record of distinguished service. Rory O'Moore was an ancestor of whom Sarsfield was particularly proud; on his mother's side the family was said to be so ancient that they traced their descent from Ir, son of Milith, who had given his name to Ireland. Sarsfield had led a life of roving adventure before he took service with King James. He had been trained in a French military college, but his first commission was in the army of Monmouth, a natural son of Charles II.

In 1685 he had fought against Monmouth at the Battle of Sedgemoor, taking the side of James II., King of England. As an ensign he had once carried the golden fleur-de-lis of France, and fought with equal courage for Louis XIV. He first rose to distinction as a leader in his own country, though he did not share the laurels of Hamilton at the Battle of the Boyne. He did good service by garrisoning Galway during the war, and by his efforts Connacht remained loyal.

Sarsfield refused to agree with those of the Catholic party, who would have made terms with William of Orange when the rival king had fled. He said that the cause remained the same whether James led the army to battle or a general on the same side. He induced the troops to defend Limerick, likely to be besieged by William when he left Dublin, because it was the second town in Ireland at that time.

French officers remained in Ireland to sneer at Sarsfield's hopeful projects. Lauzun, the French Marshal, laughed at the idea of defending Limerick. "Why should the

English," he asked, "bring cannon against fortifications that could be battered down with roasted apples?" Sarsfield was not the man to yield to ridicule. He went on fortifying the town by earth-works thrown up beyond the usual defences, and made up his mind to fight without the French, who were led off to Galway by Lauzun.

On the 9th of August 1690 the siege of Limerick began. The day after William appeared before the walls Tyrconnell followed the French to Galway. He had lost his reputation as a bold leader, and no longer cared to take an active part. The second command in the war had already been given to Sarsfield, who was left to sustain a siege with his Irish Foot.

Limerick was then one of the largest towns in Ireland; the houses were of stone, strongly built and protected by battlements, and there were high walls to serve as a natural defence. William perhaps despised it unnecessarily, like Lauzun, for he left his battering-train on its way from Dublin, and hoped that Limerick would surrender without much waste of gunpowder. He pitched his camp on the Munster side of the Shannon in the district called Singland or Sois Angel, because St. Patrick was said to have seen an angel there.

A French gunner deserted from William's army and told the enemy that a battering-train was on its way to Limerick. Sarsfield determined that he would meet it before it could reach the town, and he managed to surprise the camp by a lucky accident. It was easy to find the soldiers in charge of the train, but not so easy to evade the outposts stationed on guard. At night nobody was allowed to pass a certain place without giving the password, which was often changed. One of Sarsfield's men met the wife of a Protestant soldier of William's army, and acted as a guide through a lonely part of the country. She was a simple, unsuspecting woman, and in conversation soon let out the secret that the password for the night was "Sarsfield."

When Sarsfield reached the enemy's outposts he was challenged, gave the word, and was allowed to pass. A second man challenged him at the camp. He exclaimed, "Sarsfield! Sarsfield is the word, and Sarsfield is the man!" After he had killed the astonished sentry, he rushed on to fire the train, which exploded with such force that the noise could be heard in William's camp outside Limerick.

Sarsfield gained much glory from this exploit, and the Irish were encouraged to defend Limerick when they heard that the dreaded powder could now do no damage to their walls.

On 17th August the attack was begun in deadly earnest by William's grenadiers, who, in their dress of "piebald yellow and red," seemed very outlandish warriors to the Irish. The furred caps which they wore gave them the fierce aspect of beasts of prey. They threw the Irish into confusion, and served to keep the advantage till William's new battering-train came up, when he opened a tremendous fire on the city. Within a week breaches had been made in the defences, and the men working in the trenches had to wear woolsacks as a protection. The people in the houses of Limerick had terrible adventures, for shot frequently pierced the walls and did fatal damage. For nearly ten days the inhabitants kept off the besiegers, but the grenadiers, with one of their irresistible charges, broke through the defenders at last and made their way into the town. They did not escape without hurt in spite of the victorious onset. Women boldly hurled stones and broken bottles, and even dared to go nearer to the enemy than their own men.

William was satisfied with the breaking-down of the defence, and left the people of Limerick to destroy their earthworks, while he sailed back to England.

Sarsfield enjoyed the favour of James II. after his long struggle for the cause. He was made Earl of Lucan, Viscount of Tully, and Baron of Rosberry. All his honours, nevertheless, could not help him to keep the peace among his party, which was rent by quarrelling and even mutiny.

In 691, St. Ruth, the French general, was defeated at the terrible Battle of Aughrim. Sarsfield retreated with the remnant of his army, and once again prepared to defend Limerick from siege. Some French engineers had been at work there, and the town could boast better fortifications than when Lauzun had spoken of destroying them with roasted apples.

William's general, Ginkel, was left to besiege Limerick under very hard conditions. The war had already cost so much money that William warned him to expect no more help from England. He would have been glad to make terms with Sarsfield, but the Irishman had learnt to distrust the enemy's faith, and was determined to hold Limerick to the last. He was alone as a leader when Tyrconnell died, just before the siege began, and his dearest friends and allies were proving treacherous. Even Henry Luttrell, whom he had trusted before all other men, was found to have furnished Ginkel with information.

The second siege of Limerick was carried on without much spirit, for Ginkel cared little for victory. The first shell in the city killed Lady Dillon, wife of the ex-Governor of Galway, and wounded several others. In the following month Irish soldiers appeared frequently in Ginkel's camp as deserters. The rest held out doggedly, always expecting the arrival of the French, who were to help them. The sails of those French ships were awaited through weary days of watching. But behind the walls treachery was so rife that Sarsfield was obliged to make terms with the enemy. On 23rd September, the drums beat a parley round the walls of Limerick, and the white flag of truce was hung out. Two days after the agreement was concluded, a French fleet sailed into Dingle Bay.

Sarsfield had to leave Ireland, defeated but not dismayed. He had it in his mind to strike another blow for King James one day, and so crossed to France, where he took service again under Louis X IV. Other men followed him, cherishing the same hope. Exiles, known as the "wild geese,"

winged their way across the channel long after William of Orange died. Ireland was no happy home for a Catholic after its conquest by the Protestant king.

Sarsfield fought on so valiantly that he was rewarded by a Marshal's baton. At Landen, in 1693, he was struck in the breast by a musket-ball as he drove the enemy to the river. Mortally wounded, he fell to the ground, and putting his hand to the wound, saw it stained with blood. "Would to God this were shed for Ireland!" he exclaimed, thinking to the last of that victorious army he was to have led in revenge of Aughrim.

While he lived, Sarsfield struggled against the jealousy of allies, the faithlessness of friends; but the Irish nation loved him, and his name will ever live in the hearts of all men who recognize the heroism of a dauntless patriot.

CHAPTER XX

DEAN SWIFT, "THE MOST POPULAR MAN IN IRELAND"

Though he was born at Hoey's Court, Dublin, in 1667, Jonathan Swift was not of Irish descent, and always claimed England as his country. When only a year old he was taken to Whitehaven by his nurse, and kept there, through her great affection for him, till he was three. At that age he was able to read any chapter of the Bible, so that the time he spent in England was certainly not wasted! Perhaps he learnt more in those first years of infancy than he learnt at Kilkenny School, where he became a pupil, or at Trinity College, Dublin, with which his connection was not at all creditable.

Swift's father had died before Jonathan was born, and his mother was "rich and happy" on £20 a year. He had therefore to depend on an uncle with many children of his own, and thought himself very badly treated by this relative. He once told a friend that he had been given "the education of a dog." The friend's comment was that Swift certainly had not the gratitude of a dog or he would have refrained from abuse.

Swift was still discontented when he became Secretary to Sir William Temple of Moor Park, Surrey. He said that he was treated like a servant, and had to sit at a different table from his patron, yet, while there, he met King William III., who offered to make him a captain of horse and taught him the Dutch way of cutting asparagus. In later life, Swift used this last accomplishment to the dismay of his guests. When Faulkner, the Dublin printer, was dining at Swift's house, he asked for a second supply of asparagus. The dean told him sharply to finish what he had on his plate. "What sir, eat my stalks?" exclaimed the guest. "Ay, sir," replied Swift, "King William always ate his stalks."

Swift had leisure for reading at Moor Park, which had a fine library. He began to write verses and sent some of them to Dryden, the famous poet and playwright, but he was told bluntly that he would never have any success with his poetry.

In 1694, Swift left Moor Park in a rage with his patron on account of some fancied slight and went to Ireland, where he took orders. He became a clergyman in the hope of obtaining fame and wealth, but he never neglected his duties and tried to raise the standing of the profession. The clergy had little honour in those times and hardly expected to be treated as gentlemen. Swift taught them not to be ashamed of poverty but to respect themselves so that others would respect them. When he was waited upon by all ranks of men, he was particular about wearing his gown and cassock, and never humbled himself to the rich.

In March 1669, Swift was presented with the rectory of Agher and the vicarage of Laracor and Rathbeggan. He also had the prebend of St. Patrick's cathedral bestowed on him and for twenty years was never known to absent himself from morning prayers.

In the reign of Queen Anne, Swift spent much time in London, where he was the friend of Addison and all the wits of the time. He had then written two great satires—"The Battle of the Books" and the "Tale of a Tub." He was so drolly humorous that he convulsed society with laughter yet very rarely was seen to smile. His manners were harsh and overbearing, and betrayed the same contempt for mankind that can be seen in his writings. He sent the Lord Treasurer to summon the principal Secretary of State from the House of Commons. "For I desire," he said, "to inform him with my own lips that if he dines late I shall not dine with him:"

"I treat them like dogs," he wrote to a friend, "because I expect they will treat me so."

Though Swift held no office in the state, he had a power in politics such as a man of letters has never had before

or since. He was neither wealthy nor aristocratic, yet all the richest and noblest were at his feet. Statesmen courted him and great ladies were willing to forgive his rudeness if they could only persuade him to dine at their tables. The poor Irish priest had one of the most brilliant intellects of the time, and it gradually received a universal recognition.

In 1719, Swift began to turn his attention to Irish affairs. He issued a pamphlet proposing that the Irish should use their own manufactures instead of importing foreign goods. It was a protest against the injustice of the English government, which had passed a number of laws since 1665, all aiming at the ruin of Irish commerce. Prosperity was now impossible for Ireland. Flourishing villages had become waste places and thousands of poor people had to beg their bread. Famine stalked the land in its grimmest form, internal enmity tore the people. Catholics quarrelled with Protestants, Episcopalians with Nonconformists, Whigs with Tories. "There is, hardly a Whig in Ireland," wrote Swift, "who would allow a potato and buttermilk to a reputed. Tory."

Swift did not love the Irish nation, but the state of Ireland filled him with rage because he loved justice. He determined to appeal to the people themselves to bring about reform, and to place their country on the same political footing as England. The printer of Swift's first pamphlet was arrested, and Whitshed, the Chief Justice of Ireland, tried to compel the jury to bring him in guilty. After a long struggle, the case was dropped by order of the Lord-Lieutenant. This was a sign of the greater victory to be gained by Swift.

In 1722, a patent was granted by the English government to William Wood to coin farthings and halfpence for circulation in Ireland. Wood intended to make a large profit by the transaction, but it was not the idea of loss to themselves, so much as the grievance that nobody in Ireland had been consulted in the matter of the coinage, that caused such general indignation among the Irish. In 1724, Swift began to publish the "Drapier Letters," supposed to be written by a

draper, as an appeal to the middle and lower classes against Wood's farthings and halfpence. Why should Wood gain this profit, asked the draper, in defiance of the wishes of the nation? Was it simply because he was an Englishman and had friends of high rank?

The country responded as one man to the appeal of the "Drapier Letters." Anybody who used Wood's coins was marked, and then cut off from all intercourse with his neighbours. Swift wrote further letters and it became clear that Ireland was to be incited to the defence of national liberties. "Were not the people of Ireland born as free as those of England?" Swift asked. "Are they not subjects of the same king? Am I a freeman in England and do I become a slave in six hours by crossing the Channel?" Questions such as these roused the spirit of the nation. Meetings were held and clubs formed to pass resolutions against the receiving or tendering of Wood's coinage. Butchers and brewers met together for this purpose, and the very news-boys of Dublin then known as "flying stationers."

In the fourth letter, Swift threw off all disguise as to his real meaning. He declared that the Royal Family had no more right to ignore the feelings of Irish subjects than they had to impose what they did not want on the citizens of the mother-country. He denounced the custom of giving all the best positions to Englishmen, and said that all government without the consent of the governed was nothing better than slavery. Three hundred pounds was offered for the discovery of the author of the "Drapier Letters," Harding, the printer, was thrown into prison. When he was released without punishment, something had been won for Ireland. When the English put an end to Wood's patent in 1725, the writer of the famous pamphlets stood out as the man who had struck a most decisive blow for Irish independence.

The whole island rang with the praises of Dean Jonathan Swift. Medals were struck in his honour and both men and women wore medallions and handkerchiefs imprinted

with his strange sour face. When he appeared in the streets, all heads were uncovered to do him reverence. His birthday was celebrated with loud rejoicing. He became the idol of Ireland and might have known happiness, had he cared greatly for the admiration of his fellow-creatures. But Swift was even then the loneliest and unhappiest of mortals. He wrote one of the most delightful children's books ever written, yet he had years before made a strange resolution "not to be fond of children or let them come near me hardly." *Gulliver's Travels* is tinged with a bitter dislike of mankind generally. It pleases children but it was not to give them pleasure that Swift wrote it. He proposed two years later that the children of poor people in Ireland should be eaten. Though he made this suggestion in mockery it was a horrible jest that showed how great a burden he thought a peasant's family must be.

Swift was a man of gloomy nature, but a public-spirited man because he hated to see folly and baseness. "Good-night, I hope I shall never see you again," was his usual leave-taking to one friend. In his last verse he must needs fling a taunt at the country which worshipped him as a national hero. A new magazine had been built in an Irish town for the storing of arms and stores, and Swift wrote—

"Behold a proof of Irish sense:
Here Irish wit is seen,
When nothing's left that's worth defence,
They build a magazine."

CHAPTER XXI

THE SOCIETY OF UNITED IRISHMEN

The American colonies had rebelled against England and cast off her yoke in triumph, the people of France had risen against the nobility and robbed them of their power—it was a time when Irishmen thought they too must struggle for liberty. Grattan, a noble patriot, had gained the right of Free Trade for Ireland almost by force, lining the streets of Dublin with armed volunteers when the Irish House of Commons presented their demand to the Lord-Lieutenant. A still greater advantage for Ireland was gained by the repeal of Poyning's Law. The Irish Parliament might now pass laws without consulting the Parliament at Westminster.

Still there was discontent in Ireland. Catholics were not allowed to sit in Parliament and most of the country were of the Catholic religion. The Irish Parliament could not do much for the country it did not justly represent, until reforms were made in the election of members. Societies were formed to abolish the political distinction between Catholic and Protestant, and also to obtain a full representation in Parliament of the whole Irish nation. Many of the Ulster Protestants wanted a republic entirely separate from England—they were encouraged in this desire by the example of the French. Catholics in the south were resolved to use force to gain their rights, if force were necessary. It seemed to the advantage of these different parties to form one great society with two aims in common. The Society of United Irishmen was formed accordingly in 1791. At first it was not hostile to the government, but certain disturbances, after its foundation, led to an order that it should be suppressed. After 1794, each member was bound to secrecy and was a rebel, in some sort, against the law. The two leaders of the society were Lord Edward Fitzgerald and Wolfe Tone.

Fitzgerald was a man of high rank, a Protestant and an officer of some ability. The Irish followed him, partly out of respect for his family and partly from personal affection, for he was a very kindly man and he was to have command of the military forces, which showed towards the end of 1796 that the United Irishmen were no longer in favour of peaceful measures.

Wolfe Tone was sent to France to ask for help in the struggle against English government. He spent some time in Paris, where he was struck by the gaiety and courage of the citizens, who had then got rid of king and nobles. He visited the theatre, he walked the streets, and everywhere saw soldiers as fond of amusement as of fighting. At a fete in a French church, he noticed young men, just of an age to serve in the army, led up to veterans to receive arms while they listened to the strains of a new national anthem—the Marseillaise. A statue of Liberty had been placed before the altar, ablaze with candles, and the national colours of red, white and blue hung on the walls. Tone remembered the Irish regiments he had seen whenever he came upon the French Grenadiers in their gay uniforms, or observed the bouquet of flowers that a sentinel would place on his hat or even on his gun. The visit to Paris was a success, for Hoche, a brilliant French general sailed with a fleet to Ireland. In this fleet was Tone, who served under the name of Adjutant-General Smith.

The expedition was unfortunate from the outset. It should have left the port of Brest on the 1st of September 1796, but was not able to sail till the 18th of December. One ship ran on a rock and sank, while others missed the way. Both Hoche and the admiral, Morard de Galles, were in the lost ships, and all the money for the war. A strong easterly gale not only threw the fleet into confusion, but hindered the French from landing when they sailed into Bantry Bay. The men would have landed, for they "were close enough to toss a biscuit on shore," but they were obliged to spend Christmas waiting for the storm to go down, and then had to return to

Brest. The last ship to reach harbour was the one with the general and admiral on board. They had never reached the country they meant to invade.

If the French had landed, it is probable that their invasion would have been successful. The utmost terror had seized the Irish on the coast when they saw the fleet approach, and they could hardly have offered a valiant resistance to such experienced campaigners. England, indeed, might congratulate herself once more on the luck that so often protected her by gales and foul weather. The Republicans aimed at the destruction of the English navy when they came to the help of Tone. The death of Roche, in 1797, was, however, the end of real help from France to Ireland. Henceforth, the United Irishmen had to fight their own battles.

In March 1798, martial law was proclaimed in Ireland. English soldiers now had the right of claiming free quarters everywhere. Notice was given that the men of certain counties must give up all arms and ammunition within ten days. These orders were carried out so cruelly that the Irish sullenly prepared for rebellion. District after district was filled with soldiers, who lived on the best fare in any house that was suspected of disaffection. They searched everywhere for rebel weapons known as "pikes," burning down any building that contained them; they shot down all who resisted these searches, and carried off horses used for work on farmlands; they drove whole families from their homes without a single stick of furniture. Torture of every kind was used in the discovery of weapons. Blacksmiths were scourged almost to death for making pikes; men with hair cut short after the fashion of Republicans were called "Croppies" and ill-treated by the soldiers. A cap was invented made of linen or thick brown paper, and fitted to the head with burning pitch so that it could not be torn off without dragging out hair and wounding the skin horribly.

Even women did not escape the penalties of the suspected rebel. If they ventured to wear Republican green on

their gowns, they were likely to have them cut from their backs when they met a company of soldiers.

In February of 1798 about half a million people had joined the Society of United Irishmen. They agreed to take up arms at a signal to be given on the 23rd of May, when the mail-coaches would be stopped by rebels in four different places at the same hour. Several arrests were made by government before this date, and a reward of £1000 was offered to anyone who gave such secret information as might lead to the capture of Lord Edward Fitzgerald, the leading spirit of the conspiracy.

Fitzgerald lay in hiding about Dublin, visiting his wife and children whenever he could don a woman's clothes and elude the watch set over him. He was too daring in his movements, or one of the society was a traitor. The government soldiers discovered the house, where he lay in bed, and came to seize him. In the scuffle that took place Fitzgerald was wounded by a bullet, and fever set in while he lay a prisoner. He died miserably from the effects of the wound, and never took part in the rebellion.

CHAPTER XXII

THE REBELLION OF '98

In spite of the capture of their military commander, the rebel flag was raised at the given signal. Dublin, Kildare and Meath were the first counties to defy the government. The first blow was struck at Naas, where the combatants met in battle. At Tara, the defeat of the rebels was a check on the rising of Meath.

The outbreak in Wexford led to horrors, never to be forgotten in the annals of Ireland. The natives of this county had been prosperous and peaceful. They were chiefly the descendants of English settlers, and held aloof at first from the United Irishmen. Fear of massacre, and above all the oppression of Catholics, drove them to revolt, for the Catholics were in the majority throughout Wexford and had a leader in the curate of the parish, Father Murphy.

Quarrels had been rife for some time between Catholic and Protestant of the lower classes. Secret plans were muttered in the chapels on Sundays while the trees were cut down in grim token of the general discontent. As soon as the pikes were made the rebels showed their intentions. They took the town, of Eniscorthy, and went into camp on Vinegar Hill. It was a wild and picturesque sight, that camp of rebels, none of them trained soldiers or skilled in military organization. Tents of all shapes and colours dotted the ground—they had been hurriedly shaped from wattles and covered with tablecloths, curtains or blankets from plundered houses of the neighbourhood. A ruined windmill, afterwards of dreadful notoriety, stood in the centre of the camp, and from its summit waved the green flag of defiance. A few guns had been placed in a battery but this was a war of hand-made weapons. Pikes did deadly injury in all the battles of the year. The soldier fared well on provisions taken from the larders of the gentry,

and often sprawled about the camp the worse for wine, stolen from the cellars of great houses. Numbers of women were gathered on Vinegar Hill, grown almost as merciless as the soldiers. Some of them boiled cattle in great copper brewing-pans outside the tents, while others played musical instruments they had found on some wild expedition of plunder.

Vinegar Hill was the only settled camping ground the rebels had. The summer of '98 was unusually fine and the soldiers, who took this as an omen in their favour, often bivouacked on the bare earth without the shelter of a tent. Vinegar Hill was also the scene of some of the cruellest outrages of the year.

Father Murphy followed up the success at Eniscorthy by an attack on Wexford. The inhabitants were terror-stricken, having learnt the nature of the rebel forces. They agreed to surrender, and many tried to leave the town before the enemy approached. In the frenzied escape by ships, more than one was found to prefer death by drowning to the mercy of the rabble that was soon pouring into Wexford. There were grotesque figures of men, adorned with the gayest attire from some fine lady's wardrobe—hats, feathers and tippets, especially those of a green shade, were the favourite articles of dress. The trembling inhabitants of Wexford hastened to hang green from their windows, and pinned into their hats the green cockades.

The rebels would have marched on Wicklow, if they had not been checked by the defeat of Newtown Barry. They had a kind of superstitious faith in their leader, Father Murphy. It was commonly reported among the soldiers that he could catch bullets in his hands without being hurt. He had led them into battle near Wexford, holding a crucifix aloft, and all the glory of the day was attributed to this.

The battle of New Ross was the fiercest in the rebellion, raging from four in the morning till late in the afternoon. The rebels began by driving black cattle before them, to break through the ranks of the English. This

stratagem served its purpose and the day opened victoriously for Murphy's men. Lord Mountjoy, one of the staunchest friends of the Catholics in former times, fell fighting for the government. Men ignorant of military tactics showed desperate courage at New Ross. One stood in the thick of the fight holding up a cross, and his companions paused to kneel down and kiss it before charging the enemy, as if inspired with fresh enthusiasm. Women showed themselves as daring in actual warfare as on the looting expeditions. A peasant-girl went in and out among the rebels, supplying them with cartridges, apparently unconscious that she risked her life a thousand times. She was matched by the wife of a loyalist townsman, who chose to remain in New Ross alone after the other inhabitants had fled. Here she spent the day of battle mixing wine and water for the soldiers. At night the rebels were obliged to break and flee from the field, having lost about two thousand of their party:

A dreadful outrage followed the battle of New Ross. Some Protestant prisoners, who had been placed in a barn at Scullabogue, were dragged out to meet the punishment of death, and then the barn was set on fire that none of them should escape. This massacre roused the government to a tardy sense of danger. Rebellion did not break out in the North as soon as was expected, considering that the Presbyterians of Ulster had been closely concerned with the Society of United Irishmen. Ulster had been placed under martial law before the other provinces, and the military kept a very strict watch on all signs of conspiracy. Then, too, the opinions of the people began to undergo a change, as reports came of that riotous Catholic rabble which plundered and murdered ruthlessly instead of drilling for battle. The men of Ulster were chiefly Protestants who had sympathized with Tone's desire for an Irish Republic, quite independent of England. They had pinned their faith to an alliance with the French, and saw the policy of France change with a sensation of dismay. They had no desire to establish a despotism, where the soldier ruled, a very tyrant; and slowly the dream of being free citizens was dispelled by

the course of affairs abroad. Antrim and Down were the only northern counties to aid the insurrection. They broke out and were suppressed by government within a few days of their first rising.

In the south, the decline of the rebellion dated from the defeat of the insurgents of Arklow. The camp at Vinegar Hill was stormed by reinforcements sent from England, and Wexford passed once more under the rule of government. Father Murphy died, but when or how he met his end has never really been discovered.

A struggle went on in the Wicklow Mountains after the rebels had capitulated in other parts. The French sent an expedition to their help, and Humbert, landed in Killala Bay. Hoping to find trained soldiers, he found only a trampled peasantry, who were childishly eager to join him because they were attracted by the gay uniforms he brought, and the weapons they used as toys for shooting at birds or trees. Humbert failed through lack of any real support, and the same disaster fell on a third French fleet, which carried Wolfe Tone on board. The English took the ships and sentenced Tone to be hanged. He had always felt a horror of this shameful death and evaded it by taking his own life in prison.

The rebellion was now at an end. The leaders had been punished and the peasants cowed into submission, when the birthday of King William III. came round. As the conqueror who gave Ireland to the rule of the Protestant, his birthday had always been celebrated with great ceremony by the Orange party in Dublin. Processions and peals of bells, and the firing of a *feu de joie* bade the Protestant rejoice in his deliverance. Orange and blue adorned the statue of the king in Dublin, while his horse, decked with the same colours, trampled a green silk scarf, the emblem of the United Irish, in token that their cause, too, lay in the dust.

CHAPTER XXIII

THE UNION

Before the swords of the English soldiers had been sheathed again, English statesmen began to discuss the project of a union between England and Ireland. There had been talk of such a union long ago, and for a short time during the rule of Cromwell, thirty Irish members had gone regularly to sit in the Reformed Parliament at Westminster. With the downfall of the Commonwealth, this custom ceased and Irish members sat in their own Parliament at Dublin.

In 1707, Scotland and England were united to the great advantage of the Scots, who were able to extend their trade in consequence. The English had not been very willing to adopt this measure but they were afraid of the hostile spirit of the Scottish Parliament. In the long run, they found that the union had not caused them any real loss. Even before 1707, the Irish Parliament had proposed that it should join the English Parliament and, when the Scottish union was effected, Ireland would gladly have made the same terms. During the eighteenth century many great writers seemed in favour of union, but the feeling of the Irish changed when their nation was at last relieved from the restrictions on trade and their Parliament was declared independent by the efforts of Grattan. The rulers of Ireland were chiefly country landowners, who had very great influence over the people of other classes of society. They would rapidly have lost this influence, if they had gone across to Westminster to sit in Parliament, for absentee landlords were never popular with the tenants. Though the new Irish Parliament had shown loyalty to England in giving men and money for wars abroad, they had a growing desire to encourage the prosperity of their own nation and could not believe that the English would ever do anything to stimulate Irish trade. The Protestants, on the whole, were far

more hostile to the proposed union than the Catholics. The Catholics in Ireland had been persecuted since the conquest by William of Orange. A series of "penal" laws had been passed that gradually took from them all the privileges that freemen usually enjoy. It must be remembered that some of these laws had their origin in the Irish Parliament, where sat Protestant members who had every intention to keep the power they had gained by the victory of the Boyne. As no Catholic could ever become a member of Parliament or even vote at an election, the laws against Catholics had been made harsher year by year.

If the eldest son of a Catholic with landed property declared himself a Protestant, he was allowed to seize his own father's land. A Catholic might not accept land left to him by will and he could not buy it, whatever price he offered. A Protestant had the right of taking any horse he fancied from a Catholic's stable, provided he made the offer of £5, which was equal to about £30 at the present day, but might not be a fair price for the horse. A Protestant also had the legal right of taking possession of a Catholic farm, if the farmer was making too much profit over and above the rent.

William Pitt, the English statesman who was especially anxious to bring about this union of England and Ireland, held out the hope that the Catholics should be freed from an injustice which reduced them to the condition of slaves. On this account, he gained support from certain of the Catholics, though these were not powerful enough to change the general opinion of Ireland. Pitt's intention of helping the Catholics was, of course, strongly opposed by the Protestant nobility and gentry, who would have nothing to do with a scheme of Union. The Irish barristers were equally against it because it would almost ruin them to go to sit in an English Parliament, where they would be far removed from the pursuit of their calling in Dublin.

The rebellion of '98 won over a few Irishmen to the Union by causing property-owners to feel some insecurity and

by arousing the patriotism of others who were afraid of a French invasion. Pitt thought it a very favourable time to take active steps to secure his object.

The Irish Parliament met in January, 1799. Leading members spoke against the Union and a violent discussion was carried on for two and twenty hours. When the votes were taken, the numbers were equal. Government stooped to base measures and bought the vote of one member and persuaded another to refrain from voting on the absurd pretence that he had resigned his seat. After another discussion the Government was defeated, but when the scheme was brought forward in the English Parliament hardly a disapproving voice was heard.

Government then set to work to secure a majority in favour of the Union by a shameful system of bribery. They paid money to members willing to resign their seats in favour of men who would support English wishes. Pensions and honours of every kind were offered lavishly, according to the value of a man's influence. Struggling barristers were promised high places in the legal profession, ambitious commoners were raised to the peerage, and men of rank offered still nobler titles. Bishoprics and baronetcies rewarded such Irish members as would change their views to assume new dignities. There had been three hundred members in the Parliament at Dublin and only one hundred Irish members were to take their seats at Westminster. Heavy compensation had to buy out the two hundred for whom Government had no use. Lord Ely received £45,000 for retiring from political life, and Lord Downshire 52,500. The English Government paid out the money readily, adding to the National Debt. The Press was corrupted so lavishly that it only published one side of the question at issue—the side supporting the English Government.

All through 1799 Castlereagh and Cornwallis, the chief Government officials, did their work for Pitt. Cornwallis was an honourable man by nature and hated the task, though he did

it very thoroughly indeed. He stayed at the different country houses of the Irish nobility, and surely guest never had to make such efforts to win over the support of host. In the intervals, Cornwallis wrote peevish letters to his friends complaining of the life he was obliged to lead for Pitt's sake.

On the 15th of January, 1800, the Irish Parliament met for the last time in Dublin. During the debate a guard of cavalry paraded round the house in case of a disturbance. The crowd was kept in check by an army brought into the capital for this purpose. The Government knew well the discontent of the nation most affected by the Union. Members of Parliament had obtained petitions against it from twenty-six counties. Grattan rose from a sick-bed to utter a last protest. All was useless now that gold had bought men of hitherto unblemished character. The Bill was carried after a hard struggle, and the Speaker left the House amidst a strange hush that had fallen on the streets of Dublin. Members escorted him to his own house with bared heads, and a knot of onlookers went with them. But there was no riot, no demonstration. When the Speaker entered his house after bowing to the crowd, silence was still observed as, with reluctance, men parted from their national independence.

The Bill was passed in the English House of Lords by a majority of nearly three to one. The king gave his royal assent on the 1st of August, and the Act of Union came into force on the first day of 1901.

The two kingdoms of England and Ireland were henceforward to be one. This meant that Irish members came to sit in the English Parliament one hundred members in the House of Commons and thirty-two in the House of Lords. The Irish were to have the same laws of trade as the English, and the Irish Established Church was to be united to that of England.

The Great Seal of the English Chancellor was defaced, and a new Seal made as the Seal of the Empire. The English King, George III., dropped the title of King of France and

introduced a change into his royal coat-of-arms. In London, Edinburgh, and Dublin the national standard was now raised, depicting the order of St. Patrick with the orders of St. Andrew and St. George. The Bank of Ireland bought the old building of the Irish Parliament in Dublin.

CHAPTER XXIV

DANIEL O'CONNELL, LIBERATOR

One of the Irishmen most opposed to the Act of Union was Daniel O'Connell, the greatest upholder of liberty that the world has ever seen.

He was born in 1775, the year when America was freed from dependence on the mother-country. Thus, in the first days of his memory, the spirit of revolt had begun to pass across the seas to Ireland. The Catholics of that country had now reached the furthest limits of degradation, banned in their own land as lower than slaves, unable to hold property like other men, denied the common privilege of self-defence. O'Connell himself was not allowed to enter Trinity College, Dublin, to complete his education, but was sent by his uncle, known as Old Hunting-Cap, to the Jesuit College of St. Omer. Those were such stirring years in France that few students could pursue their studies quietly with the horrors of the French Revolution passing to its most dreadful phase of bloodshed. O'Connell had to leave France in haste, travelling from Calais to Dover with one John Sheares, who produced from his pocket; on the way, a handkerchief steeped in the blood of Louis XVI.

O'Connell never sympathized with violent attempts for liberty that were regardless of the sacrifice of human life. As soon as the boat left the shores of France, he flung into the sea the tricolour cockade he had been obliged to wear on his hat as a protection from the Republican mob. Yet the French Revolution helped the Irish Catholics to gain some great privileges at this time. The right of voting for members of Parliament was given to them in 1793, and through another law, passed soon after, O'Connell was able to become a barrister in 1798.

He read hard and won many cases for his clients as he built up that fame as an orator, which was so important in after life. His first public speech was made at a meeting held in Dublin to protest against the Act of Union and to deny the statement that the Catholics approved of it. The dream of his life was to bring about the repeal of the Act, but he was content to wait till freedom had been granted to men of his religion.

In 1815, O'Connell fought a duel with D'Esterre, who represented the Guild of Merchants at the council of the Dublin corporation. He had to account for some bitter words at a public meeting when he referred to the "beggarly" corporation of Dublin. The quarrel roused public attention, and D'Esterre's followers evidently expected a regular battle for no less than thirty-six pairs of pistols were counted among them. D'Esterre, mortally wounded, died two days later, and this tragedy is said to have embittered O'Connell's whole life. Nevertheless, he engaged in many other quarrels and fought other duels. Splendid speaker as he was, he seldom weighed his words, and, in moments of excitement, was too often abusive to his opponents.

In 1821, Wellesley became Viceroy of Ireland, and, as the first Irishman to fill that post for centuries, caused new hopes to rise in the breasts of Irish Catholics. He declared to their disappointment that he came "to administer the laws and not to alter them." So insulting were the demonstrations of the Orange party, while he was in office, that O'Connell called upon him to suppress them.

Robert Peel, once Chief Secretary for Ireland and known as Orange-Peel on account of his sympathies with the Orange-party, had organized the Royal Irish Constabulary, but this body of men could not restore order under Wellesley. It was too generally believed that the Viceroy looked with no favour upon the Catholics.

In 1823, when the hopes of the party "hung as wet osiers," O'Connell founded the Catholic Association. At first,

few people attended their meetings, but, through the wonderful influence of the leader, it became a powerful body that won the rights of Catholics from the Government. O'Connell would not allow any of the members to commit acts of violence, for he believed in peaceful agitation. He made the ignorant masses see that they must work for what they wanted, and must never damage their cause by going against the law. O'Connell and Richard Lalor Sheil, who was almost as great a speaker, visited England in 1825 to appeal against a Bill passed to suppress the Catholic Association. They attracted much notice on their journey, O'Connell sitting on the box of the landau, in which they drove, wrapped in a cloak like an ancient Irish mantle. At Wolverhampton they were hungry enough to be tempted by "an unhallowed round of beef," but might not touch it since the season was Lent. They contented themselves with the poor substitute of dry toast and creamless tea.

The Bill for Catholic Emancipation passed a second reading in 1825, but was thrown out after the Duke of York's speech in the House of Lords. O'Connell complained bitterly that a government which had given freedom to the Portuguese and the Catholics in far-off South America was content to leave seven millions of Irish Catholics in bondage. Wild excitement had been evoked by the visit of George IV. to Ireland in 1821, but he disliked O'Connell, who had then placed on his head a laurel crown, and was found in tears when the Duke of Wellington came to tell him that the Catholics must be freed!

O'Connell struggled bravely for five years, attracting millions to hear him and drawing the O'Connell Tribute like a king. The money was freely given by the Irish Catholics for the expenses of their cause, and O'Connell had to consider a serious diminution in the enormous income he had earned at the bar when he was free to devote all his time to legal practice. Yet there were enemies who found fault with him for using this annual Rent, as though he had wrung it from a reluctant nation. He taught the people to use the right of voting

they had obtained, and by his endeavours at length vanquished the conqueror of Waterloo. He was elected for Clare in 1828, and the Bill for Emancipation received the royal assent in 1829. John Keogh is said to have prophesied that the Bill would be carried when an Irish Catholic was sent to Parliament. Attempts were made to prevent O'Connell from taking his seat, and the oath had to be altered that had once made it impossible for a Catholic to comply with the usual formalities.

After 1829, O'Connell enjoyed a wide fame in Europe as the victorious revolutionist, who had changed the destiny of Ireland and yet had shed no blood. His voice was always raised in the demand for freedom; he advocated the liberation of American slaves and certain privileges, then denied to both Jews and Dissenters; and he fought for free commerce in the struggle of the Corn Laws.

The Repeal of the Union became O'Connell's chief aim in life. In 1840, he founded the Repeal Association, and in 1843, began to hold monster meetings, to which men flocked in thousands, eager to hear his magnificent orations. Too much cannot be said of O'Connell's power as a speaker. His brain and tongue were the best weapons that a man could have. He had a stately presence and a voice of surpassing melody, which added to the effects of his clear directness of speech. Few could hear him unmoved, even if they had come with violent prejudice against his views. In Edinburgh he roused a meeting of hostile Scots to a frenzy of enthusiasm.

In answer to O'Connell's summons, 750,000 men assembled at Tara, where ancient kings of Ireland once sat in council. There he rashly pledged himself that within twelve months an Irish Parliament would be established on College Green. The next meeting to be held at Clontarf was forbidden by Government, and in 1844, O'Connell was put upon his trial on a charge of conspiracy. The verdict of guilty was returned, and for several months the great Liberator lay in prison.

After a struggle against the unfair trial, O'Connell was released to the joy of the Irish nation. A change had taken place in him, for he left prison a strangely broken man. He knew that his credit had been damaged by imprisonment, for his followers saw that his reforms could be stopped by the power of the law. With a last appeal for Ireland, suffering from disease and famine, O'Connell set out on a pilgrimage to Rome. He died at Genoa in 1847, and, in accordance with his wishes, his heart was carried to the Eternal City, while his body was brought back to Ireland and buried at Glasnevin.

By Ireland O'Connell must ever be honoured as the Liberator of his countrymen, while other nations owe to him the upholding of all liberty. Europe had watched his actions with the tensest interest, the oppressed hoping for a champion, the tyrannical fearing for their own downfall. His speeches were translated into all languages, and read by slaves and bondmen with a trembling eagerness.

CHAPTER XXV

THE GREAT HUNGER

The peasants of Ireland had come to live almost entirely on the potato, which had been first introduced into the country by Walter Raleigh. In better times, they could afford to keep the farm produce, but this had to be shipped off to England to pay the master, when times were bad.

People who lived on the cheaper variety of the potato were not very thriving specimens of humanity. The regular harvest crowd of Irishmen crossing to England in the month of August were pitiably undersized, and in their odd, ragged garments, often fastened together by wisps of straw, they gave the prosperous English farmers an impression that all the Irish nation were inferior to themselves. Most of these harvesters came from the western counties, where the land was dry and barren. Potatoes did not often last out till the end of the year, and with wages as low as 4d. a day, anything else was too dear for the scanty meals of a labourer. Famine was known to the Irish peasant only too well before the first rumours spread in 1845, that a blight had fallen on the potato-crop of Ireland.

The same blight fell on other countries—on Holland and Hungary, on Belgium and Canada—but the danger was most serious to Ireland because the poorest class there depended entirely on the root, which had been destroyed. After a famine there was

always the risk of fever, which would spread to all classes, and therefore caused more terror to the country as a whole. The Government were slow to notice the first omens of disaster, and did not adopt the suggestions which O'Connell made for the benefit of his nation. He thought brewing and distilling should be stopped in order that all the grain could be used as food, that no tax should be imposed on corn brought

into Irish ports, and that every grain of corn in Ireland should be kept there. He wanted land-owners to pay

tax so that there might be a fund for the peasantry when dire want came upon them.

Government did not approve of O'Connell's measures, and it is possible that they would have been fruitless. Yet the harvest of 1846 was particularly abundant, and it seemed foolish to send away the farm produce to England while there was hunger to be satisfied at home.

Famine came to the peasant, like some evil spirit, tempting him to crimes that he would have loathed in seasons of prosperity. Men saw their children crying for food and went out insanely to burn and plunder, too often to take life. In country neighbourhoods the wealthy lived in a state of panic, and the humble labourer can hardly be said to have lived at all. They were used to such extreme poverty that bread was accounted a luxury to be bought only on such festivals as Christmas and Easter. Many cottars with large families were able to have a new coat only once in five years, and their wives wore cloaks and gowns even longer since their work was less exposed to the weather. A cabin bedstead could be purchased for five shillings, but there were few homes where some members did not lie all night on the ground. The cabins had often damp floors and leaky roofs that made such economies very dangerous to health. Wages were uncertain and farmers could hire men in plenty to work for them without any other wages than their usual meals of potatoes every day.

The summer of 1846 was very warm and wet. In one night a general blight fell on the potato-crop all through the land. As cattle, corn, and butter were still sent away to raise money to pay the rent, many deaths from starvation followed both in the North and the South.

Switzerland and Germany, in a like case, opened public granaries for the people, and there was certainly enough food in Ireland to feed the whole country, but English officials

thought to meet the distress by finding work for labourers. They decided to extend the highways of Ireland. Millions of money were squandered on making new roads, where they were no manner of use, and good roads were torn up in order to be made again. New lines were planned where traffic never passed, and strange highways, known as Famine Roads, can still be seen in Ireland, lying in the middle of bogs or on the edge of precipices. The men employed soon grew too feeble for their tasks. Disease came after want and carried off 2 00,0.00 people.

Other efforts were made to help the country, but all was too late. Gold was given lavishly by other countries, and stores of Indian corn were sent to Ireland to be served out to the people, while their own corn was still exported. The state of the nation became more pitiable from day to day. In 1847 a young Englishman, travelling through Ireland, describes the town of Westport:

"The town of Westport was in itself a strange and fearful sight, like what we read of in beleaguered cities, streets crowded with gaunt wanderers, sauntering to and fro, with hopeless air and hunger-stricken look

a mob of starved, almost naked women around the poor-house, clamouring for soup tickets, and our inn, the headquarters of the road-engineers and pay-clerks, beset by a crowd of beggars for work."

The same traveller describes another district: "As we went along our wonder was not that the people died, but that they lived, and I have no doubt whatever that in any other country the mortality would have been far greater: that many lives have been prolonged, perhaps, by the long apprenticeship to want, in which the Irish peasant has been trained, and by that lovely, touching charity, which prompts him to share his scanty meal with his starving neighbour."

Fishermen had to pledge their nets and tackle to buy food, while workmen often tramped so far to get employment

that they fell over their tools in sheer exhaustion as they worked.

After the famine, other terrors came upon the Irish peasant. Thousands were driven from their cabins because they could not pay their rents. In despair, great numbers left the country, hoping for better fortune across the sea, but disease and death still pursued them as they embarked on crowded and unseaworthy vessels, and many were drowned before they reached American shores.

The years of hunger brought to an end that long struggle of the Irish against their national poverty. The weak seemed to decline into idle acceptance of inherited misfortune and scarcely made any attempt to do their best with what they had. The promising refused to be satisfied with their own barren land. They set off to the United States, where they could nearly always earn higher wages, and a new homeland was thus created in a foreign country. By and by the vast continent of America knew another Ireland formed by the emigrants who succeeded in town-life far more often than on farms. The decreasing population of the old Ireland saw their prosperity with wonder, but did not try to emulate it. They continued to follow the ancient callings of the pastures. Long stretches of land separated one cabin from another, so that the tenant-farmer lived in isolation that had no good effect on his labour.

Between 1847 and 1851, the census showed that the population of Ireland had been reduced by no less than two million souls. In the following years, the tide of emigration flowed with steady and all too fatal impulse towards the United States.

CHAPTER XXVI

THOMAS MOORE, "THE POET OF THE PEOPLE OF IRELAND"

Beautiful words set to beautiful music appealed to many who had not been roused to sympathy with Ireland by the greatest orator of modern times.

Thomas Moore, born about four years later than O'Connell, not only stirred millions of apathetic Irish to remember their own nation and its needs, but also furthered their cause among the aristocracy of England, whom political agitation had left cold.

Set to the harp, that once famed instrument of Erin, his words recalled the pride of his race, the sadness and the genius that were part of it. They broke through a long silence to express emotions that evoked generous sympathy by the surpassing sweetness with which they voiced their appeal." The bards of Ireland, formerly so powerful in their influence on politics, had become mere strolling entertainers, glad to accept the shelter of the humblest inn or cabin. They had fallen with the great houses, that had honoured them as guests, and their music was no longer heard at national assemblies. It was held suitable now for weddings, wakes and patterns or "patrons," which celebrated the festivals of saints. Even the national airs were dying out when Thomas Moore was born. He seemed unlikely to influence the destiny of a nation in the humble surroundings, where he first saw the light. His parents were struggling trades-people of Dublin, by no means able to provide for their children's education without great efforts. The mother, however, was ambitious, and sent Thomas to the best school she could afford, for he was a brilliant boy and far outshone Richard Brinsley Sheridan, the great dramatist, who was his schoolfellow for some years. When he was thirteen,

the affairs of Ireland had reached a dangerous pitch of excitement. Several of the United Irishmen were his friends, and he remembered sitting at a public dinner on the knee of Napper Tandy, one of the heroes of '98. The toast "May the breezes of France blow our Irish Oak into verdure," especially delighted his youthful imagination.

Moore's family were Catholics, and blessed the law which removed the prohibition against Catholic barristers. They sent Thomas to the University of Dublin, where he could not, however, compete for a scholarship on account of his religion. There was some discussion whether it would not be prudent to enter the young student as a Protestant, but the mother refused to consent.

Moore spent the early time of his career at college in the study of classics and verse-writing, The days passed pleasantly for him, till the troubled spirit of the age found its way to the university. Moore belonged to a debating society, of which the ill-fated Robert Emmet was chief orator. When the conspiracy of the United Irishmen was discovered, many of Moore's friends were found to be concerned in it, and he was called upon to give evidence against them. Though only seventeen or eighteen, he acted with sturdy independence, refusing to say anything that was likely to injure his companions, even when threatened with suspension from the university. He came through this ordeal favourably at last, and was able to enter himself as a student at the Middle Temple, London, as soon as his mother had saved enough for his expenses.

It was usual in those days for a poet to find a patron, who would help him either by money or influence, and Moore was introduced to Lord Moira for this purpose. He obtained permission to dedicate a translation of "Anacreon" to the Prince of Wales and was presented to him personally. This honour launched him on his career as a man of letters. A revival of ancient Irish airs, which were published in 1796, awakened Moore's genius for music, really greater than his

talent for verse. He had begun by practising on an old harpsichord, which his father had taken in payment for some debt. He improved his knowledge, gathered together fragments of old melodies and wrote the songs for them, which came to be associated with the music as if written in days of long ago. He owed his success in society less to his promise as a poet than to his remarkable gifts as a musician. The doors of great English houses opened to him for the sake of his songs. He began to publish his "Irish Melodies" in 1807 and his "National Airs" in 1815.

Moore's popularity became unbounded, but in the very heyday of success he was never forgetful of his humble family. He worked for them unceasingly, and at the same time was unflagging in his devotion to Ireland. For the cause of Catholic emancipation he used all his gifts of wit, satire and eloquence without fear. His own sympathy was so deep that he won the sympathy of other3, and it coloured his writings with a passion that reawakened the long past power of the bards of a former age.

Moore's "Poems of the East" had equal music and pathos. "Lalla Rookh" indeed, won a success that rivaled the fame of Scott and of Byron. Three thousand guineas were offered for the poem before it was written—a sum that must have been very acceptable to a poet in needy circumstances! Moore accepted neither bounty nor bribery and all his life had to struggle for the means of subsistence. He took the burden of his family when his mother died, refusing all offers of help from his friends. The people of Limerick offered to provide him with the necessary estate if he would enter Parliament, as O'Connell entreated, but he was afraid of binding himself to a certain course of action, and refused the seat. Thomas Moore in public life would hold no man master.

Sentiments of patriotism and martyrdom inspire the four long books of "Lalla Rookh," as they inspire the "National Melodies." Ireland was in the poet's heart when he wrote of the East, and the tragedy of a fierce and hopeless

struggle. Moore gained some renown for a "Life of Byron" but he lives by the glory of his "National Melodies." Burns in Scotland and Beranger in Provence are the only modern song-writers to be compared with him. Shiel and O'Connell, the greatest of his countrymen were accustomed to quote the lyrics of Moore, for they well knew their effect upon an audience. Irishmen, who listened to Moore's verses, were not only encouraged in new patriotism—they also turned to wild adoration of the poet himself. Sir Walter Scott was delighted by a reception given to Moore in a theatre at Edinburgh. "The house," he says, "received him with rapture. I could have hugged them for it."

As a poet or musician little fault can be found with Moore. As a man he was, perhaps, tarnished somewhat by vanity and worldliness. Yet he worked faithfully to the end of his life, bearing much sorrow and loss. He married in early youth a wife almost as penniless as himself. The two had several children, but lost them one by one. The gaiety of the poet vanished before this affliction.

Moore died in England in 1852, and it is said that his love of music never left him but with life itself, for he sang a favourite air on the day before he died.

CHAPTER XXVII

THE FENIAN BROTHERHOOD

The years of famine had seen the growth of a party in Ireland, which went much further than O'Connell in demanding freedom. While he would not defend the rights of the nation by physical force, they held that sheer violence was sometimes necessary. They held the view that actions were more potent than words, though they numbered many eloquent orators and used the "Nation" newspaper as the means of spreading their opinions through the country.

The Young Ireland party was headed by William Smith O'Brien, member for County Limerick and a descendant of Brian Boromna. It led to the formation of a still more violent party, headed by Mitchell, a man who held the same ideas as Wolfe Tone and Emmet, and aimed at the independence of Ireland. Steps were taken by both parties to prepare for revolution, but, before the time was ripe, the plot was discovered by government, and all the leaders punished.

Discontent had not died down with the emigration of Irishmen to America. Landlords still continued to evict tenants from their huts, often removing the roof in order to prevent return. Food was scarce and rents hard to pay. The Irish peasant began to believe that only the landlord had any rights, or was benefited by laws. He was tempted to take vengeance on his oppressor, and societies known as Ribbon Lodges encouraged attacks on proprietors of land, which ended in murder and other crimes. Nobody has ever discovered the real aims of these Ribbon societies, but they were thought to exist as a protection for the serf from the landlord. In 1850, a less formidable society was founded for the same purposes. This was known as the Tenant League.

In 1852, certain members were elected to Parliament, that they might look after the interests of tenants. Among them were honourable and patriotic men, such as Charles Gavan Duffy, who suffered for his cause. Unfortunately, there were four men of the most desperate character in the league—James and John Sadleir, William Keogh and O'Flaherty. From their loud demands and bold speeches, these were known as the Brass Band.

The Brass Band started a newspaper for their party, pretending to consult the good of the Irish peasant in everything. In reality they were swindlers, and suffered exposure when they had received high offices under government. Half Ireland had been ruined by John Sadleir's fraudulent bank. He had also converted public money to private uses, taking advantage of his position as Lord of the Treasury. He is said to have taken his life when the frauds were discovered, but some people whispered strange stories of his adventures in other countries, after a body was found on Hampstead Heath and secretly buried as John Sadleir. His brother James suffered the disgrace of formal expulsion from the House of Commons. Keogh managed to evade justice and was even made a judge, while O'Flaherty fled to New York, and became quite famous, under another name, as a witty society man.

The rising of the Young Ireland party had failed, the Brass Band was silenced, yet the Irish were still determined to achieve reform. From the ashes of the Young Ireland Society another rose, which was appropriately named the Phoenix. It met under a leader known as the Hawk, in reality one James Stephens, a man of great ability. In December 1858, the government issued a proclamation, which showed what serious alarm had been caused by the Phoenix Society. Raids were made on suspected houses and several prisoners were taken, but very little was discovered of the true nature of the society's proceedings. The Phoenix conspiracy was not

important in itself. It is chiefly of note because it gave the first warning of the Fenian Brotherhood.

Stephens, or the Hawk, went on with his efforts for Ireland, and in America a similar leader, O'Mahony, was also plotting to rise against the English government. In olden times there had been a band of heroes—warriors and poets—the legendary Feni or companions of Fion, son of Coul. The exploits of these heroes had never died to Ireland. They were the pride and glory of the nation's history, and their very name roused a thrill of patriotism. Some of the first Fenians were poets—their name soon became as widely known as that of the original Feni.

The Fenian movement was not of rapid development. It was helped by the death of a patriot M'Manus, banished for political offences, and much beloved by his countrymen. The remains of M'Manus were brought from America to Ireland and carried in state through the streets of Dublin. The procession stopped solemnly at various places on the route which had some association with national leaders,—Lord Edward Fitzgerald, Robert Emmet, Wolfe Tone—and a vengeful spirit was excited in the people by the memory of the exiled M'Manus, thus brought before them. Americans had come over to act as an escort to the funeral procession. They were able to join the Irish Fenians in new schemes that were then made.

Thousands of Irishmen fought in the American civil war, in the ranks of North and South. Once two regiments were drawn up in battle-line with Irishmen on either side, who recognized each other and refused to fight, passing onwards to the cry of "God save Ireland." Irish soldiers in America were trained for warfare and Irish-American officers went over to Ireland to head the Fenian rebellion. They found nothing ready, and the rising was a failure because government suspicions were aroused too soon.

In 1865, the Fenians' best opportunity was lost. A spy betrayed the plans of the Fenian leaders, and this led to a raid

on the offices of the "Irish People," a newspaper of the brotherhood. All the chief men were captured except Stephens, who lived in disguise near Dublin for some time. This arrest caused wild excitement through Ireland. Still greater excitement was caused when he escaped from Richmond prison within a fortnight of his capture. The way of his escape was mysterious, for he was strongly guarded, but in all likelihood two of his warders sympathized with the Fenian rising, though they were in the service of government. Stephens was never recaptured, in spite of the hue and cry. He made his way to France, and it was considered a triumph for his party that he was still free.

The scare was still at its height in England when the Fenians invaded Canada a year later. This was only successful for a few hours. The Fenians captured a government fort and ran up their own green banner, but the United States then interfered and arrested many prominent Fenians.

An attempt was made to capture Chester Castle, to take possession of the steamboats plying from Holyhead, and to cut off telegraphic communication before invading Ireland. An informer betrayed this plan and the rising was a failure.

In 1867, the great rebellion was to take place in Ireland, but heavy falls of snow "practically buried the rising in its white shrouds." The last struggle of the Fenians had at least the good effect of drawing public attention to the grievances of Ireland.

Two members of the Brotherhood were being conveyed from the police court at Manchester to the prison; other members had resolved to set them free, and, therefore, came to surround the van in a body. The police-sergeant, who refused to unlock the door of the van, was injured fatally when the Fenian leader blew off the lock. The prisoners escaped, but the arrests of five men followed, three of whom were hanged for the accidental death of the police-officer. Many efforts were made to win mercy for the condemned. John Bright and John Stuart Mill pleaded for them eloquently, the poet

Swinburne made an appeal in verse. The English had suffered such alarm that they were not inclined to be lenient, and there was a general outcry for the death of the Fenian ringleaders.

The three men suffered the utmost penalty, yet the general attention roused was of future advantage to Ireland. Statesmen, such as William Ewart Gladstone, began to examine the conditions of their country more narrowly. They saw that wrongs must be serious, to lead men to suffer death boldly, rather than submit to oppressive conditions of life,

CHAPTER XXVIII

THE CASE OF CAPTAIN BOYCOTT

When the flourishing trade of Ireland was destroyed, and skilled artificers became unknown in a country where they had once taken rank with the learned in mind and the noble of blood, the Irishman turned to the land for occupation, and from the land had, of necessity, to gain his scanty livelihood. How precarious were his means of subsistence can be read in the awful story of the Famine. Many a man turned his back on Ireland when his opportunity arrived, but the emigrant always said farewell to his country with a heavy heart, and many would face any privation rather than leave the homes where they had been reared.

The Irish peasant loved his land, though it was perhaps nothing but a narrow strip of barren pasture, where his own cow grazed, or his herd of goats. He always looked upon himself as the real possessor, if he seldom knew the pride of actual ownership. He paid his rent grudgingly from the poor farm produce he could raise, and it always seemed a large sum to him, be it never so paltry in the eyes of landlord and agent. The small farmer had reason to dread rent-days since there was the danger that he might have to pay more next year than the amount he had scraped together with hard toil. The thriftier peasant was discouraged from making improvements in his cabin when he found that he was liable to have his rent raised, if he made too fine a home. It seemed, under these circumstances, better to have a leaky roof than to have no roof at all. The terror of eviction was ever present to the man who held his land from a careless landlord. He might pay his rent punctually, and then be told on quarter-day that the master wanted his plot of ground for some special purpose and intended to pull down the cottages upon it. Many of the landlords responsible for wholesale evictions were absentees

and knew nothing of the actual cruelty that their orders entailed. During the famine, Irish property had changed hands owing to the general distress, which fell heavily on landholders as well as tenants. Some owners had died from the disease that raged through Ireland, others from poverty caused sometimes by too lavish generosity, and others again died from sheer pain at the sights that met their eyes. The new landlords were not knit to their tenants by old ties of family affection, and without warm sympathy, landlord and peasant in Ireland must stand very far apart.

Evictions were always resented. When they were the results of hunger and misery, men of peaceful nature were driven to exercise the only power they had, which lay entirely in brute force. Agents coming to serve writs of eviction found what a dangerous errand it could be. They were lucky, indeed, if they escaped with nothing worse than a ducking in the nearest pond. The lawless peasantry were often driven to fierce acts of vengeance, taking the lives of master or agent in the blind wrath that came upon them after periods of starvation. The Irish leaders in the Parliament at Westminster knew that this dangerous spirit was abroad in agricultural districts, whence came reports of crimes that were generally put down to the long-standing grievance of the land. They knew that a different system prevailed in England, where there was more justice for the tenant, and they urged as strongly as possible, that the land-tenure in Ireland should be made a subject for reform.

The English Ministry waived the claim of the Irish members, proceeding to deal with other questions in Parliament. Men of note among the Irish party, exasperated by this indifference, then gave encouragement to a new plan of the Land League members, who refused to pay any rent till the landlords treated them fairly. All attempts at eviction were resisted, and the Land League grew so powerful that it threatened to rule the country. The members added considerably to their strength by a new way of punishing men

who defied their principles. The Leaguers regarded, with even greater enmity than the landlords, the class of farmers who took possession of farms from which their own men had been evicted because they refused to pay the rent. The first man to be punished by the special method of the League was Captain Boycott, an Englishman, and agent to Lord Earne.

Captain Boycott, in his capacity as agent, served writs on some tenants near Lough Mask, where he had a farm of his own. In return, all the people of the neighbourhood agreed to shun him as though he had some dreadful taint upon him. His servants left the house, his labourers flung down their implements and left the fields, though it was harvest-time. Captain Boycott was a man of energy and courage, and he resolved to brave the League. He worked in his own fields with his wife working at his side, but their task would have been impossible, had they not received help from the North. The Ulster tenants did not suffer from the same grievances as other Irish farmers, and were inclined to oppose the League. They sent men, therefore, to Captain Boycott's farm to gather in the harvest, but there was surely never a less joyous scene than the fields, where reapers worked under the guard of armed men, who followed them closely to see that they were not made the victims of a terrible vengeance. Captain Boycott himself had been protected by a Government force when he set about his work in solitude it was equally necessary to protect any men daring to band themselves against the formidable Land League.

Similar scenes were re-enacted year by year in different parts of Ireland. The League could not be compelled to give up their "boycotting" by law, because its power lay not in what they did to men but in what they left undone. If a man was marked by the League for punishment, all the members of his household fall under the same isolation. His children were placed apart from other children at school and made to feel like outcasts. Servants ran grave risks when they took service with "boycotted" masters, for it was a law of the League that

nobody should do a stroke of work for a farmer under the ban. To this day, indeed, such servants may be seen at chapel under the escort of armed policemen!

It was hard to sustain life sometimes on a "boycotted" farm. The master might be wealthy, but his gold was useless since it was not accepted for food. A shopkeeper would not sell his wares to a boycotted neighbour and all the necessaries of life had to be bought from a distance. The same difficulty attended the sale of farm produce, which might rot before a Land Leaguer would permit its purchase. The farmer usually tried to dispose of his eggs and butter in England, but in this case he suffered loss from the expense of carriage.

Laws of such extreme severity that they were known as Acts of Coercion were passed against the Land League but its policy never wavered. If a member committed any deed of violence, he could be punished by law, but he could not be sent to prison for simply refusing to hold intercourse with another man. Boycotting, however, was a form of revenge that did no better service to those who practised it than to draw the attention of the curious to Ireland. Evictions continued to take place frequently and blood was spilt whenever the police came into sharp conflict with the people.

The Land League struck fear into the hearts of Irish land-owners; it alarmed the Government, which had too long deferred the reforms it demanded. Captain Boycott and other farmers suffered from the League, and many members of that body suffered from sentences that often fell unjustly. The Prime Minister, who was later to strive for Home Rule in Ireland, was hardly more successful than his fellows in his attempt to grapple with the problem of the land.

CHAPTER XXIX

HOME RULE FOR IRELAND

The greatest movement of Irish history came from a very humble attempt to do something to better the state of affairs in Ireland. The Fenian Brotherhood had been crushed, its members scattered. A quiet interval was expected by the English Government, so lately visited by panic. In 1870, a meeting was held in Dublin attended by Irishmen of almost all classes, and, at that meeting, the claim for Home Rule was first uttered.

"Repeal" was the old cry of O'Connell, and his followers. The men, now considering the interests of Ireland, were unwilling to adopt this same cry, because they knew it would alarm the Government. Home Rule sounded so reasonable and innocent that it was used instead and soon became extremely well known in politics.

Isaac Butt, a Dublin barrister, made a brilliant speech at this meeting of 1870, urging all Irishmen to unite for the sake of winning self-government, for Ireland. He thought it was the only way to prevent perpetual rebellion, and could bring no harm to England. The proposals he made were certainly moderate. He did not want Ireland to break off all connection with England, but he thought that affairs strictly Irish should be left to Irish statesmen, who really understood them. There was still to be a loyal alliance between the two countries, and they were still to be regarded as one Empire. The English Parliament was to decide Imperial questions and to leave Ireland the control of her own domestic affairs. Ireland was to be governed, in fact, very much as if she were one of the United States of America, free to settle local business, but always under the control of a strong central government.

The resolution, passed unanimously at this meeting, came much before the public afterwards. Such a Government was carried on peacefully in Australia on a large scale and in the Isle of Man in miniature. Nobody had ever thought it was dangerous to let either of these nations manage their own concerns, but nearly everybody had some objection to the scheme of Home Rule for Ireland.

Irish approval was shown by the return of Home Rule members in the General Election of 1874. Some sixty members, known as Home Rulers, took their seats in the new Parliament. They formed a party who intended to do all they could for their own nation. For the most part they were quiet and orderly till they were joined in 1875 by a member who did not object to violent methods as much as did the leader, Mr Isaac Butt.

Charles Stewart Parnell first entered politics as M.P. for Meath. He was described as "a nice gentlemanly fellow who would be an ornament but no use," and men who heard his first attempts at public speaking thought he would never be of much account in Parliament. By degrees, he began to make a change in the usual way of treating Irish questions. In 1877, he objected to the custom of bringing in important business late at night, or rather early in the morning, when members were too weary to give their minds to discussion. He had a steady way of sticking to his point, which was hard to baffle. The polite habit of howling down unpopular members of the House was tried most unsuccessfully with Mr Parnell. His party took up the policy of "obstruction." They hindered business in every possible way till attention was paid to their demands. On one occasion they kept the House sitting for no less than twenty-six hours, because they were determined to oppose a Bill on the South African question. In this case, the Bill was passed in spite of opposition, but more success crowned their efforts to improve a very important Bill on Prisons.

Mr Butt did not like the obstruction policy, which led to scenes of wild disorder. He died in 1879, and his place was supposed to be taken by a member known as "Sensible Shaw," but, in reality, Mr Parnell ruled the Irish party ever after. A wealthy Ulsterman, Mr Joseph Biggar, went even further than Mr Parnell in the same policy. He was neither learned nor eloquent, had scant respect for English constitutions, and was indeed "without manners and without fear," yet he managed to get what he wanted by exasperating his opponents till they gave way. Both Mr Parnell and Mr Biggar thought the position of Irish members humiliating to the last degree, because they had to beg for favours that should have been granted as rights.

In 1880, there was another General Election. Lord Beaconsfield had resolved to appeal to the country to discover if they approved of his policy, which was anti-Irish. He declared the Home Rule movement to be "scarcely less dangerous than pestilence or famine," and hinted that the Liberals, who approved of it, were trying "to destroy the Imperial character of England." The Irish naturally tried to throw the Tory party out of office and managed to secure the return of Liberals. Mr Parnell was offered three constituencies, but took his seat as M.P. for Cork. A split now followed between the parties of Mr Shaw and Mr Parnell. The latter refused to sit on the ministerial benches, and took their places among the opposition of the new Parliament. This meant that they would not support the Liberals, unless they thought it would be to the advantage of Ireland. Henceforward, they were fighting for their own land. In this party were many men destined to become well-known—Mr T. P. O'Connor, Mr Tim Healy, and Mr Justin M'Carthy.

Between 1880-5 there was a breach between the Liberals and the Nationalists. The latter thought that more attention should be paid to the Land Question of Ireland, for evictions were much on the increase. There were other points of disagreement also.

In 1886, the Liberals took office again under Mr Gladstone. They began by expressing strong sympathy with Ireland, whose claims had been treated so cavalierly by the late Conservative Government. It became known that a Bill for Home Rule was in preparation. On April 26th, the House met for the first reading of the Bill.

It was a time of vital importance to the whole Irish nation. Mr Gladstone was the foremost statesman of his age, and, by recognising the right of the Irish to rule Ireland, he drew more serious attention to their cause than it had ever before received. No member of the House, who was present on the occasion of the first reading of the Home Rule Bill, is ever likely to forget the day. People came as early as six o'clock in the morning to secure places. At the time the speech was to begin, there was not room for a single other person in the House. For the first time on record, chairs had to be brought into the House to seat members. Ambassadors and other dignitaries filled the lobbies.

Nobody had been suffered to learn the secrets of the Bill in preparation. When the Prime Minister entered to explain its clauses, it seemed as though the whole audience rose to greet that frail old man of seventy-six. Mr Gladstone's speech was one of the greatest speeches of the century—it occupied three hours and twenty-five minutes. There was not a trace of passion in the speaker's manner, though he was skilled in all the arts that move an audience. Clear steady argument set before the House the elaborate scheme of the Home Rule Bill.

The first reading passed without a division, but an amendment was moved to the second reading. The debate on the two stages occupied sixteen nights, while London was "hot with political passion."

On June 8th, 1886, Mr Parnell spoke eloquently for Home Rule, and then Mr Gladstone made the last of his five speeches. He appealed to English statesmen to make amends to Ireland for the grievous injury of centuries, to act at once in

such a way that the past might be forgotten. He pointed out that the Irish tradition was the only one that could reflect no glory on his nation. "What we want to do is to stand by the traditions of which we are the heirs in all matters, except our relations with Ireland, to make our relations with Ireland to conform to the other traditions of our country. So we treat our traditions, so we hail the demand of Ireland for what I call the blessed oblivion of the past. She asks also a boon for the future; and that boon for the future, unless we are much mistaken, will be a boon to us in respect of honour, no less than a boon to her in respect of happiness, prosperity, and peace. Such, sir, is her prayer. Think, I beseech you, think wisely, think not for the moment, but for the years that are to come, before you reject this Bill."

The eloquence of the grand old English statesman was not successful in its immediate results. The division was taken, and the Home Rule Bill rejected in the House of Commons by thirty votes.