

BAGWELL RICHARD

IRELAND UNDER THE
TUDORS, WITH A
SUCCINCT ACCOUNT OF
THE EARLIER HISTORY.
VOL. 1 (OF 3)

Richard Bagwell
Ireland under the Tudors,
with a Succinct Account of the
Earlier History. Vol. 1 (of 3)

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Richard Bagwell

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PREFACE

‘Irish policy,’ said Mr. Disraeli in the House of Commons, ‘is Irish history, and I have no faith in any statesman, who attempts to remedy the evils of Ireland, who is either ignorant of the past or who will not take lessons from it.’ This is most true, and history, if it is to be of any use, should be written for instruction, and not merely for the confirmation of existing prejudices. This is especially so in the present case, for, as Sir George Stanley told Cecil in 1565, ‘the practises of Ireland be great, and not understood to all men that seem to have knowledge thereof.’ The writer who enters the arena as an advocate may produce an interesting party pamphlet, but he will hardly make the world either wiser or better. The historian’s true office is that of the judge, whose duty it is to marshal all the material facts with just

so much of comment as may enable his hearers to give them their due weight. The reading public is the jury.

Starting with this conception of the task before me, I have not attempted to please any party or school. The history of Ireland is at the best a sad one; but its study, if it be really studied for the truth's sake, can hardly fail to make men more tolerant. In Ireland, as in other countries, a purely Celtic population was unable to resist the impact of the Teutonic race. First came the pagan Northmen, with power to ruin, but without power to reconstruct. Then followed the Anglo-Normans, seeking for lands and lordships, but seeking them under the patronage of the Catholic Church. For a time it seemed as though the conquest would be complete; but the colony proved too weak for its work, and the mail-clad knights failed almost as completely as the Scandinavian corsairs.

The main cause of this second failure was the neglect or jealousy of the kings. They feared the growth of an independent power within sight of the English shore, and they had neither means nor inclination to do the work of government themselves. Little gain and less glory were to be had in Ireland, and Scotch, Welsh, or Continental politics engrossed their attention in turn. They weakened the colony, partly of set purpose, and partly by drawing men and supplies from thence. In short, they were absentees; and, to use an expression which has gained currency in modern times, they were generally content to look upon Ireland as a mere drawfarm.

The Wars of the Roses almost completed the ruin of the work which Henry II. had begun. For a moment it seemed as if the colony was about to assert its independence. But this could not have been done without an understanding with the native race, and it does not appear that any such understanding was possible. The upshot was that Yorkist and Lancastrian parties were formed in Ireland, that the colony was thus still further weakened, and that the English language and power seemed on the point of disappearing altogether.

The throne of Henry VIII. was erected on the ruins of mediæval feudalism, and guarded by a nation which longed for rest, and which saw no hope but in a strong monarchy. The King saw that he had duties in Ireland. Utterly unscrupulous where his own passions were concerned, the idea of a patriot King was not altogether strange to him. Irish chiefs were encouraged to visit his court, and were allowed to bask in the sunshine of royal favour; and it is conceivable that the 'Defender of the Faith,' had he continued to defend it in the original sense, might have ended by attaching the native Irish to the Crown. By respecting for a time their tribal laws, by making one chief an earl and another a knight, by mediating in their quarrels, and by attending to their physical and spiritual wants, a Catholic Tudor might possibly have succeeded where Anglican and Plantagenet had failed. The revolution in religion changed everything, and out of it grew what many regard as the insoluble Irish question.

Henry II. had found Ireland in the hands of a Celtic people,

for the intermixture of Scandinavian blood was slight and partial. Henry VIII. found it inhabited by a mixed race. From the beginning there had been rivalry and ill-feeling between men of English blood born in Ireland, and those of English birth who were sent over as officials or who went over as adventurers. During the fifteenth century England did nothing to preserve the ties of kinship, and the Celtic reaction tended to swallow up the interlopers. The degenerate English proverbially became more Irish than the Irish themselves, but the distinction would scarcely have been so nearly obliterated had it not been for the change in religion. The nobles of the Pale, the burghers of the walled towns, and the lawyers in Dublin were equally disinclined to accept the new model. Neither Irish chieftains nor Anglo-Irish lords found much difficulty in acknowledging Henry's supremacy both in Church and State; but further than that they would not go. The people did not go so far, and, in the words of the annalists, regarded the Reformation simply as a 'heresy and new error.'

Religion itself was at an extremely low ebb, and only the friars preserved the memory of better days. Henry may have imagined that he could lead the people through the bishops and other dignitaries: if so, he was entirely mistaken. The friars defied his power, and the hearts of the poor were with them. In Ireland, at least, it was Rome that undertook the work of popular reformation. The Franciscans and Jesuits endured cold and hunger, bonds and death, while courtly prelates neglected their duties or were distinguished from lay magnates only by the

more systematic nature of their oppressions. And thus, as the hatred of England daily deepened, the attachment of the Irish to Rome became daily closer. Every effort of Henry to conciliate them was frustrated by their spiritual guides, who urged with perfect truth that he was an adulterer, a tyrant, and a man of blood. Holding such cards as these, the friars could hardly lose the game, and they had little difficulty in proving to willing ears that the King's ancestors received Ireland from the Pope, and that his apostasy had placed him in the position of a defaulting vassal.

Henry's vacillations and the early deaths of Edward and Mary for a time obscured the true nature of the contest, but it became apparent in Elizabeth's time. She was an excommunicated Queen. From a Catholic point of view she was clearly illegitimate. Many English Catholics ignored all this and served her well and truly, but those who carried dogmas to their logical conclusions flocked to the enemy's camp. Spain, Belgium, and Italy were filled with English refugees, who were willing enough that the Queen should be hurt in Ireland, since England was beyond their reach. But even here national antipathies were visible, and Irish suitors for Spanish help came constantly into collision with Englishmen bent upon the same errand.

Desmond, Shane O'Neill, and Hugh O'Neill seem to have cared very little for religion themselves. The first was a tool of Rome; the two latter rather made the Church subservient to their own ambition. But in these cases, and in a hundred others of less importance, the religious feeling of the people

was always steadily opposed to the English Crown. Elizabeth was by nature no persecutor, yet she persecuted. Her advisers always maintained, and her apologists may still maintain, that in hanging a Campion or torturing an O'Hurley she did not meddle with freedom of conscience, but only punished those who were plotting against her crown. The Catholics, on the other hand, could plead that they had done nothing worthy of death or of bonds, nor against lawful authority, and that they suffered for conscience' sake. And the Continental nations, who were mainly Catholic, sided on the whole with the refugees. Ireland, it is true, was only a pawn in their game, and Philip II. was probably wrong in not making her much more. At Cork or Galway the Armada might have met with scarcely any resistance, and a successful descent would have taxed Elizabeth's resources to the utmost.

The poverty of the Crown is the key to many problems of the Elizabethan age. The Queen had to keep Scotland quiet, to hold Spain at bay, and to maintain tolerable relations with France. She saw what ought to be done in Ireland, but very often could not afford to do it. The tendency to temporise was perhaps constitutional, but it was certainly much increased by want of money. Her vacillating policy did much harm, but it was caused less by changes of opinion than by circumstances. When the pressure at other points slackened she could attend to her troublesome kingdom; when it increased she was often forced to postpone her Irish plans. Ireland has always suffered, and still suffers sorely, from want of firmness. In modern times party

exigencies work mischief analogous to that formerly caused by the sovereign's necessities.

The dissolution of the monasteries was followed by no proper provision for education. In the total absence of universities and grammar-schools, certain monks and nuns had striven nobly to keep the lamp of knowledge burning, but they were ruthlessly driven from house and home. Elizabeth was alive to all this, but she could not give Ireland her undivided attention, and such remedies as were applied came too late. The oppressed friars kept possession of the popular ear, and the Jesuits found the crop ready for their sickle. Denied education at home, many sons of good families sought it abroad, and the natural leaders of the Irish acquired habits of thought very different from those of English gentlemen. Archbishop Fitzgibbon, one of the most important champions of Catholic Ireland, saw clearly that his country could not stand alone. He would have preferred the sovereignty of England, but she had become aggressively Protestant, and he turned to Spain, to France, to Rome, anywhere rather than to the land whence his own ancestors had sprung. The lineage of the United Irishmen and their numerous progeny may be easily traced back to Tudor times.

A few words now to the critics whom every writer hopes to have. The spelling both of Irish names and English documents has throughout been modernised, from regard to the feelings of the public. Irish history is already sufficiently repulsive to that great unknown quantity the general reader, and it would be

cruel to add to its horrors. Etymologists will always go for their materials to originals, and not to modern compositions. When, therefore, such names as Clandeboye or Roderic O'Connor are met with in the text, it is not to be supposed that I have never heard of Clann-Aedha-Buidhe or Ruaidhri O'Conchobair.

Of the first 123 pages of this book, I need only say that original authorities have as much as possible been consulted. In the third and four following chapters, much use has been made of Mr. Gilbert's 'Viceroys,' a debt which I desire to acknowledge once for all. In so succinct a review of more than three centuries, it has not been thought necessary to quote the authority for every fact.

For the reign of Henry VIII. I have chiefly relied on the second and third volumes of the 'State Papers,' published in 1834. They are sometimes cited as 'S. P.' or 'State Papers,' and when only the date of a letter or report is given it must be understood that this collection is referred to. The great calendar of letters and papers begun by Dr. Brewer and continued by Mr. Gairdner contains some items not included in the older publication; it is referred to as *Brewer*. Other sources of information have not been neglected, and are indicated in the footnotes.

The account of the reigns of Edward VI., Mary, and Elizabeth is chiefly drawn from the 'State Papers, *Ireland*' – all documents preserved in the Public Record Office and calendared by Mr. Hans Claude Hamilton. How excellently the editor has done his work can only be appreciated by one who has entered into his

labours as closely as I have done. Except where a document has already been printed, I have nearly always referred to the original MS. All documents cited by date or number without further description must be understood as being in this collection. The late Dr. Brewer's calendar of the Carew MSS. at Lambeth often fills up gaps in the greater series; it is referred to as *Carew*. Many papers, both in Fetter Lane and at Lambeth, are copies; but their authenticity is not disputed. The Carew calendar is on so full a plan that it has not been thought necessary to consult the manuscripts; indeed, except for local purposes, it is not likely that they will be much consulted in the future. Other collections are referred to in their places, but it may be well to mention specially the journal of the Irish (Kilkenny) Archæological Society, whose editor, the Rev. James Graves, has done as much as any man to lay a broad foundation for Irish history.

O'Donovan's splendid edition of the 'Four Masters' has generally been consulted for the Irish version of every important fact. O'Clery and his fellow-compilers wrote under Charles I., and are not therefore strictly contemporary for the Tudor period. They appear to have faithfully transcribed original annals, but to this one important exception must be made. The old writers never hesitated to record facts disagreeable to the Church; the later compilers were under the influence of the counter-reformation which produced Jesuitism. Making some allowance for this, the 'Four Masters' must be considered fair men. Michael O'Clery spent much time at Louvain, but he wrote

in Ireland, and had native assistants. Philip O'Sullivan, on the other hand, was a Spanish officer, and published his useful but untrustworthy 'Compendium' at Lisbon. The 'Annals of Lough Cé' are preferable in some ways to the 'Four Masters,' but they do not cover so much ground. All the native annalists are jejune to an exasperating degree. Genealogy seems to have been the really important thing with them, and they throw extremely little light on the condition of the people. We are forced therefore to rely on the accounts, often prejudiced and nearly always ill-informed, of English travellers and officials.

The Anglo-Irish chronicles in 'Holinshed' were written by Richard Stanihurst, who dedicated his work to Sir Henry Sidney, for the reign of Henry VIII., and after that by John Hooker. Stanihurst, a native of Dublin, was not born till 1545. He has been thought an unpatriotic writer, and excited the violent antipathy of O'Donovan; but he appears to have been pretty well informed. The speeches which he puts into the mouths of his characters must be considered apocryphal, but as much may be said of like compositions in all ages. Hooker was an actor in many of the events he describes. He was a Protestant and an Englishman, prejudiced no doubt, but not untruthful, and his statements are often borne out by independent documents. Edmund Campion, the Jesuit, wrote in Ireland under Sidney's protection; his very interesting work is less a history than a collection of notes.

Other books, ancient and modern, are referred to in the

footnotes. Among living scholars, I desire to thank Dr. W. K. Sullivan, of Cork, who had the great kindness to correct the first chapter, and to furnish some valuable notes. Hearty thanks are also due to the gentlemen at the Public Record Office, and especially to Mr. W. D. Selby and Mr. J. M. Thompson.

In making the index a few errors were discovered in the text, and these have been noted as errata. Some mistakes may still remain uncorrected, but I am not without hope that they are neither many nor of much importance.

Marlfield, Clonmel:

August 13, 1885.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTORY

Scope of the work

The main object of this book is to describe in some detail, and as impartially as possible, the dealings of England with Ireland during the reigns of Henry VIII. and his three children. As an introduction to the study of that period, it seemed desirable to give some account of the course of government during those 340 years which had elapsed since the first Anglo-Norman set foot upon the Irish shore. And, seeing that Teutonic invaders had effected a lodgment about three centuries and a half before Henry II.'s accession, it was hardly possible to avoid saying something about the men who built the towns which enabled his subjects to keep a firm grip upon the island. Lastly, it seemed well at the very outset to touch lightly upon the peculiarities of that Celtic system with which the King of England found himself suddenly confronted.

The Roman period

Agricola took military possession of south-western Scotland

partly in the hope of being able to invade Ireland. He had heard that the climate and people did not differ much from those of Britain, and he knew that the harbours were much frequented by merchants. He believed that annexation would tend to consolidate the Roman power in Britain, Gaul, and Spain, and kept by him for some time a petty Irish king who had been expelled by his own tribe, and to whom he professed friendship on the chance of turning him to account. Agricola thought there would be no great difficulty in conquering the island, which he rightly conjectured to be smaller than Britain and larger than Sicily or Sardinia.

‘I have often,’ says Tacitus, ‘heard him say that Ireland could be conquered and occupied with a single legion and a few auxiliaries, and that the work in Britain would be easier if the Roman arms could be made visible on all sides, and liberty, as it were, removed out of sight.’ Agricola, like many great men after him, might have found the task harder than his barbarous guest had led him to suppose; and in any case fate had not ordained that Ireland should ever know the Roman Peace. It was reserved for another petty king, after the lapse of nearly 1,100 years, to introduce an organised foreign power into Ireland, and to attach the island to an empire whose possessions were destined to be far greater than those of Imperial Rome.

The Celtic polity

Setting aside all ethnological speculations as foreign to the scope of this work, it may be sufficient to say that the inhabitants of Ireland at the dawn of authentic history were Celts, of the same grand division as the bulk of the Scots Highlanders, but differing considerably from the people of Wales. Their organisation in the twelfth century had not passed beyond the tribal stage.¹

¹ As to the divisions and sub-divisions of the ancient Irish people, I prefer to give the following statement of Dr. Sullivan: – ‘The unit territory was the *Tuath*, each of which had a *Ri*, or chief. Three, four, or even more *Tuatha* were connected together for military and other purposes as a *Mór Tuath*; the king or chief of the confederacy, who acted as Commander-in-Chief, was the *Ri Mór Tuatha*, or great chief. This group corresponded to the Gothic *Thiuda*, old Norse *Thjoth*. The Irish unit *Tuath* corresponded to the Norse *Fylk*, the Teutonic *Gavi* or *Gau*, the Greek *Phyle*, and the old Latin *Tribus*; it was at first genealogical, but acquired a geographical and political signification. The tribe or *Tuath* consisted in some cases of a *Clann*, the progeny or descendants of a chief. Sometimes a *Clann* embraced several *Tuatha*. *Clann* was strictly genealogical, *Tuath* both genealogical and geographical. The *Clann* consisted of families or houses called *Fine*, equivalent to *Cognatio*– the Anglo-Saxon *Maegth*. The head of a *Fine* was the *Cendfinne* or chieftain. The *Fine* was a sept. The *Clann* therefore consisted of several septs, and the land of the tribe or *Tuath* was divided between the septs or *Fine* composing it. The *Fine* or sept is one of the most important parts of the Irish organisation, but the word is used in several senses: thus, the relatives of a chief or other tribesman to the fifth degree constituted the true *Cognatio* or *Geilfine*, i.e. Hand-*fine*. The *Fine* or sept was in fact an independent unit, which paid *Eric*s for all its members, and received *Eric*s or fines for the killing of one of its own members, and also took possession of the *Dibad* or property of its deceased members. But when the

The Irish Monarchy or Pentarchy

There was a monarch of all Ireland, who had Meath – the Middle – as his official appanage, and who reigned originally at Tara. There were provincial kings of Ulster, Munster, Leinster, and Connaught. A primacy was given to the race of Niall, who lived presumably in the fourth and fifth centuries, and from whom the O’Neills, O’Donnells, and others trace their descent. The theory is thought to have been pretty closely adhered to until the desertion of Tara in the sixth century of our era. After that the over-king lived in his own territory; but his authority was often disputed, especially by Munster, the revolt of which province finally broke up the old order.²

sept did not fulfil its obligations, the *Ri* of the *Tuath* was bound to enforce justice. So when the *Tuath* itself failed in its obligations and duties, the *Ri Mór Tuatha* or superior chief was bound to enforce justice in the recalcitrant tribe. The *Ri Mór Tuatha*, or *Ri buiden*, or king of companies, corresponded to the Anglo-Saxon *Heretoga* or Dux. The King of the Great Tribe received hostages from the sub-reguli of his territory for their *Ceilsine* or fealty, and he might call upon them to support him with a levy of their tribes.’

² ‘The existence of the Irish Pentarchy,’ says Dr. Sullivan, ‘was as real as that of any similar confederacy among nations in a tribal stage, and the means of enforcing the orders of the over-king were not very different or less effective than in many federal states – ancient, mediæval, and modern.’

Weakness of the Brehon law

Wars were frequent, and Irish Brehons, who were rather legal experts than judges, exerted themselves to define rights and liabilities, and to establish a peaceful polity. Perhaps in laying down the law they sometimes rather stated their own conception of what it ought to be than described the actual state of things; much as Brahminical writers propounded a theory of caste which cannot be reconciled with historical truth. Neither the Church nor the Law had always original power sufficient to enforce steady obedience. The Law might be clear enough, but the central government was often too weak to secure respect for the opinion of experts. Portia might have argued like a very Daniel, but she could have done nothing without the Duke behind her. In the absence of such an overpowering authority, the decisions of the Brehons were little more than arbitrations which might be, and probably often were, accepted as final, but on which neither party could be compelled to act.³

³ 'It is quite true,' says Dr. Sullivan, 'that the central power was not always strong enough to enforce rights, and in many instances was defeated in its attempt to do so. But in what does this differ from other federal states, ancient and modern? The Emperors of Germany were not always able to subdue and to enforce their decrees against the princes and nobles of the Empire, and in numerous instances the decisions of the imperial chancery might be regarded in precisely the same light – as mere arbitrations. To say there was no law, properly speaking, seems to me wholly irreconcilable with actual facts, and *especially with the existence of a rich and elaborate nomenclature of*

Ireland was outside the imperial system

In the treatise called the ‘Senchus Mór’ there is a passage which may be as old as the fourteenth century, in which it is allowed that the nature of Irish royalty varied considerably from time to time. ‘The King of Erin without opposition,’ says the writer or interpolator, ‘received stock from the King of the Romans; or it was by the successor of Patrick the stock is given to the King of Erin, that is, when the seaports of Dublin, and Waterford, and Limerick, and the seaports in general, are subject to him.’ There is here an attempt at once to bring Ireland within the pale of the Empire, and to show that the Irish Church was independent. It was natural that the Brehons should seek to introduce their country into the circle of nations, but we know as a matter of fact that the Empire never had anything to do with Ireland. The passage quoted may have been inspired by a

native terms not borrowed from Roman law. This nomenclature implies an equally elaborate machinery. It was the existence of this legal system which kept out the canon law, which never, for instance, succeeded in suppressing or even modifying the marriage customs. In discussing the laws and institutions of early nations we are liable to go to one or other of two extremes: – (1) We represent the laws, &c., in terms of modern law, by which we make inchoate institutions full-grown, while the germs of a legal system are represented as a fully developed code; or (2) we deny the existence of all law and legislation. You are right I think as regards the Church; for owing to the organisation of the old Celtic Church it was perfectly acephalous. Whatever influence it did exert was individual and never official, and, therefore, not continuous – it might be described in fact as sporadic influence.’

wish to deny English supremacy by attorning, as it were, to the superior lord. It is a tribute to the greatness of the Empire more than anything else, and it was not thought of until the Brehon law schools had fallen from their high estate.

The tribal system. The chief

It was by giving stock that an Irish chief showed his power and added to his wealth. There were lands attached to his office, but his capital consisted of kine, and he extracted a sort of rent by obliging his inferiors to give them pasture. The number of cattle which he 'grazed without loss' upon other people's ground was the measure of his power and popularity. There were free tribesmen the amount of whose obligation to their chief was strictly laid down, though a greater quantity of stock might be voluntarily taken under certain restrictions. But there were also servile or semi-servile classes whose comparatively unprotected condition placed them more or less in the power of the chief to whose sept they were attached. An ambitious chief would always have opportunities of aggrandisement, and his wealth enabled him to support a mercenary force, and to grow strong at the expense of his own and other tribes. Broken men who had lost their own tribal position would always flock to an ambitious chief, and the disturbing influence of such retainers was often too strong for Brehons or priests. But the growth of power by means of mercenaries was not peculiar to Ireland, and was perhaps less

frequent than is commonly supposed.⁴

Frequency of war

Whatever the advantages of a pure Celtic system, it did not secure general peace. There is no period of which Celtic Ireland

⁴ 'All through the laws,' says Dr. Sullivan, 'there is ample evidence to prove that the tribesmen, or *Aires*, were bound to take stock from the *Ri*, or chief, only. The amount of this stock, called *Saer*, or free-stock, is strictly laid down, and the amount of the tribute payable for this stock, called *Bestigi*, or house-refection, or tribute, is also strictly laid down. But if the *Ri* were wealthy he might offer more stock to his *Ceiles*, clients or vassals, on condition of paying him certain dues, called *Biatad*. The stock so given was called *Daer*, or base-stock; and its acceptance by a tribesman made a *Daer-ceilé* of him, and placed him very much in the power of the *Ri*, or chief. No tribesman could accept *Daer-stock* without the consent of his *Fine*, or sept, which would be bound by the acts of its members. A tribesman, with the consent of his *Fine*, might accept *Daer-stock* from any *Flath*, or lord, in his own *Tuath*, or tribe. All the above applies to the tribesmen, or *Aires*, who alone constituted the free class. But besides the *Ceiles*, or clients, or free tribesmen, or *Aires*, there was another class, called *Fuidirs*. The markland of the tribe and the land held in severalty of the *Ri*, and the similar land of the *Cendfinne*, or chieftain (or captain, as he is called in the Scottish Highlands) of a sept was let out to various classes of *Fuidirs*. Some were *Saer*, or free *Fuidirs*, and others *Daer*, or base *Fuidirs*. The *Saer-fuidirs*, again, were of two sorts – broken tribesmen who went into another *Tuath* and got stock as well as land from a *Ri*, or *Flath*, and *Saer-fuidirs* who possessed some stock of their own which they grazed on land of a chief or of a *Flath*. Some of these free *Fuidirs* entered into *daer*, or servitude, by accepting stock under certain conditions. The *Fuidir* classes were the true tenants at will. The *Aires* were of the clan, the *Fuidirs*, *Bottachs*, or cottiers, and other servile classes, belonged to the clan. The giving and taking of *Daer-stock* depended upon the impoverishment of a sept through cattle murrain, the levying of blood-fines on account of the misconduct of some of its members, &c. But the whole thing was voluntary, and depended on the poverty of a sept and the wealth and ability of the *Ri*, or *Flath*.'

may be more justly proud than that between the death of St. Columba in 597 and the death of St. Gall about 640. It was the age in which the Irish saint Columbanus bearded Thierri and Brunehaut, in which Ireland herself was a noted seat of learning, and in which the monasteries of Luxueil, of St. Gall, and of Bobbio were founded by Irishmen. Yet, under thirty years out of forty-four either battle or murder is recorded in the *Chronicon Scotorum*. In some years there were several battles and several murders.

In 628 Leinster was devastated. Quarrels between near relations were frequent, and often ended in murder. When we consider that the deaths of important people only are recorded, we cannot pronounce the Ireland which sent forth Aidan, and Adamnan, and Columbanus to have been at all a peaceful country. Christianity was then established, and no Scandinavian irruption had yet hindered the development of purely native ideas. But Irish chroniclers, perhaps owing to their genealogical turn, give a disproportionate space to deaths; and it may be admitted that the number of homicides was not greater in Ireland than in some parts of Germany in feudal times.⁵

⁵ Dr. Sullivan does not think Christianity was fully established by the middle of the seventh century. 'The Irish Church organisation,' he says, 'was ill calculated to influence the social habits and the political life of the people; unlike the diocesan and centralised system of the Latin Church. Hence a high spiritual life and intellectual cultivation within the numerous cœnobiums was quite compatible with practical paganism and disorder outside.'

Celtic law of succession

Primogeniture, which is practically incompatible with the tribal stage of political organisation, was perhaps formally acknowledged at a very remote period, but was unknown as a rule of succession to Irish chiefries in the ages with which this book chiefly deals. In those comparatively modern times a vacancy was filled from the same family, but the person chosen was generally a brother or a cousin of the deceased. It seldom happened, perhaps, that an Irish chief, who was necessarily a warrior, attained threescore and ten years, and on an average a son would be less likely to make an able leader than one of an older generation. To avoid disputed successions, an heir-apparent, called the tanist, was chosen before a vacancy actually occurred, and sometimes probably against the wish of the reigning chief. Very often the sons refused to accept the tanist, and bloody quarrels followed. This system stank in the nostrils of the Tudor lawyers; but in the twelfth century the true principle of hereditary succession was not fully understood. It was, perhaps, a suspicion that his eldest son might not succeed him quietly that induced Henry II. to crown him in his lifetime. A later and much stronger analogy may be found in the history of the Empire. Charles V. procured the election of his brother Ferdinand as king of the Romans, and he was actually crowned. Many years later Charles wished to substitute his son Philip; but

Ferdinand refused to yield, and he was sustained by the electors, who had no mind to see the Empire become an appendage of the Spanish monarchy. The influence of the Irish Brehons probably tended to prevent chiefries from becoming hereditary. In such cases as the earldom of Desmond we have a mixture of the two systems; the earls were chiefs as regarded the Irish; but their succession to the honour, and through it to the quasi-chiefry, was regulated by feudal rules.

Tudor view of the Celtic land law

As the chief was elected by his tribe from among a limited number, so was the land distributed among the tribesmen within certain fixed limits. As it is with England's treatment of Ireland that we have to do, it may be as well to let Sir John Davies himself say how the matter appeared to the Tudor lawyers: —

Septs

‘First be it known that the lands possessed by the mere Irish in this realm were divided into several territories or countries; and the inhabitants of each Irish country were divided into several septs or lineages.’

Lord and tanist

‘Secondly, in every Irish territory there was a lord or chieftain, and a tanist who was his successor apparent. And of every Irish sept or lineage there was also a chief, who was called Canfinny, or head of a “cognatio.”’

Tanistry and gavelkind

‘Thirdly, all possessions in these Irish territories (before the common law of England was established through all the realm as it now is) ran at all times⁶ in course of tanistry, or in course of gavelkind. Every lordship or chiefry, with the portion of land that passed with it, went without partition to the tanist, who always came in by election, or by the strong hand, and never by descent.⁷ But all the inferior tenancies were partible among the males in gavelkind.’⁸

⁶ ‘At all times’ must be understood to refer only to those comparatively modern ages above mentioned.

⁷ ‘The election,’ says Dr. Sullivan, ‘was always from the *Geilfine*, or relatives within the fifth degree. Should the *Geilfine* fail, or be all killed in battle, the *Derbfine*, or relatives from the fifth to the ninth degree, came in.’

⁸ ‘This,’ says Dr. Sullivan, ‘is not right. There was the “joint undivided family” formed by the *Bo-aire* class, or freemen possessed of cattle. The poorer *Flaths*, or heads of septs, did not gavel their possessions, but either elected a tanist or formed a “joint undivided family.” When the property of an *Aire* was not sufficient to gavel, so as to

No estate of inheritance

‘Again, the estate which the lord had in the chiefry, or that the inferior tenants had in gavelkind, was no estate of inheritance, but a temporary or transitory possession. For just as the next heir of the lord or chieftain would not inherit the chiefry, but the eldest and worthiest of the sept (as was before shown in the case of tanistry), who was often removed and expelled by another who was more active or stronger than he: so lands in the nature of gavelkind were not partible among the next heirs male of him who died seised, but among all the males of his sept, in this manner: —

Partitions of tribal land

‘The Canfinny, or chief of a sept (who was commonly the most ancient of the sept) made all the partitions at his discretion. This Canfinny, after the death of each tenant holding a competent portion of land, assembled all the sept, placed all

qualify one or more *Aires*, the division of the inheritance did not take place, but the parties agreed to form a “*joint undivided family*.” In such a family one was head, and as such was an *Aire*. *Bo-aires* of this class, to avoid the gavelling of their property, elected a *Tanist*— the *Tanaise Bo-aire*. Poor and broken tribesmen, not having sufficient wealth to qualify them as *Aires*, formed a “*joint-family*,” or *Congilda*. Every *Flath*, or head of a sept, had a tanist also. The Irish “*joint-family*” was an institution of great importance and of surpassing interest in the comparative history of the Aryan family.’

their possessions in hotchpotch, and made a new partition of the whole; in which partition he did not assign to the sons of the deceased the portion which their father held, but allotted the better or larger part to each one of the sept according to his antiquity.⁹

Effect of frequent partitions

‘These portions being thus allotted and assigned were possessed and enjoyed accordingly until the next partition, which, at the discretion or will of the Canfinny, might be made at the death of each inferior tenant. And thus by these frequent partitions and the removals or translations of the tenants of one portion or another, all the possessions were uncertain, and the uncertainty of possession was the very cause that no civil habitations were erected, and no enclosure or improvement of lands made, in the Irish countries where that custom of gavelkind was in use; especially in Ulster, which seemed everywhere a wilderness before this new plantation made there by the English undertakers. And this was the fruit of this Irish gavelkind.’

⁹ ‘This account of Davies,’ says Dr. Sullivan, ‘is entirely wrong. The law of the distribution of the property of a deceased tribesman was most carefully laid down. No doubt then as now, and naturally more frequently then than now, a chief, or head of a sept, or of a *Treb* (homestead) might usurp power he did not possess, and do wrong.’

Position of daughters and of bastard sons

‘Also by this Irish custom of gavelkind bastards took their shares with the legitimate, and wives, on the other hand, were quite excluded from dower, and daughters took nothing, even if their father died without issue male. So that this custom differed from Kentish gavelkind in four points.’¹⁰

Four points peculiar to Irish gavelkind

The four points were the certainty of estate in each share, the exclusion of bastards, the admission of a widow to one moiety, and the admission of females in default of issue male. For which reasons, says Sir John, the Kentish custom was always held good and lawful by the law of England. He admits, however, that the Irish custom had a counterpart in North Wales, which had been totally abolished by Henry VIII., along with other usages

¹⁰ ‘Marriages in Ireland,’ says Dr. Sullivan, ‘were not regulated by canon law. The Irish marriage customs were in full force long after the Norman conquest. According to these customs, which appear to have been wholly uninfluenced by the canon law, bastardy was entirely different from what that term implied in countries under canon law, and in modern times. The Irish marriage customs should consequently be taken into account here, as they sanctioned a kind of polygamy, divorce, &c. See also the excommunication in 1282, by the Archbishop of Canterbury against Llewellyn, Prince of Wales, at the request of Edward I., in which the marriage customs of the Welsh, identical with those of the Irish, constitute one of the charges.’

resembling those of Ireland. Edward I. had only ventured to exclude bastards, and to give widows their dowry.¹¹

Sir John Davies did not exhaust the subject

Notwithstanding the above decision, it is probable that a description of tanistry and gavelkind does not exhaust the subject. The theoretical division among all the males of a sept is not at all likely to have been carried out, except in very early times. Human nature was against it. From the twelfth century the example of the Anglo-Normans, which cannot have been altogether without weight, was against it. The interest of the chief was everywhere against it, because it would deprive him of the means of rewarding his friends, and because he was always tempted to seize lands to his own use. The tendency to private property would be always asserting itself, but the exact historical truth can never be known. Before the close of the mediæval period, a great part of Ireland had been reconquered by the tribes from Anglo-Norman hands. Is it possible that the Irish land system can have been anywhere restored in its integrity? On the whole, it is at least probable that English statesmen in the sixteenth century made as many mistakes about tenures in Ireland as their representatives in the eighteenth and part of the nineteenth made about tenures in India. Good faith may be

¹¹ *Le Résolution des justices touchant le Irish custome de gavelkind*. Reported by Sir John Davies, A.G., 3 Jac. i.

generally granted in both cases, but the blunders made were no less disastrous. It is at all events clear that primogeniture was no Celtic usage, that it is no part of the law of nature, and that the Tudor lawyers treated it as an end in itself, and almost as a necessary element in the eternal fitness of things. In the twelfth century Irish practice may have come much nearer to theory than in the sixteenth; at all events, Henry II.'s grants to individuals were absolutely opposed to Celtic notions of justice.

Composition for murder

Celtic usages part of the common Aryan stock

The conflict of laws is the key to Anglo-Irish history

The Irish admitted composition for murder. This blood-fine, called an *eric*, was an utter abomination to the English of the sixteenth century, who had quite forgotten the laws and customs of their own Teutonic ancestors. To men long used to a strong central government such a custom seemed impious. It was nevertheless part of the common heritage of the Aryan race, and had been in vogue among the peoples from whom the later English sprung. The Njal Saga illustrates its use among the

Icelanders by many famous cases strictly in point. The feudal system and the canon law had caused the Teutonic nations to abandon a usage which they once had in common with the Irish. Celtic Ireland had never had a very strong central government, and such as it was it had sustained serious damage. Homicide was still considered a personal injury. The rule was not a life for a life, but adequate damages for the loss sustained. The idea of public justice, irrespective of private interests, was far in advance of the stage which had been reached by the Irish Celts. Irish history cannot be understood unless the fact is clearly grasped, that the development of the tribal system was violently interrupted by a feudal half-conquest. The Angevin and Plantagenet kings were strong enough to shake and discredit the native polity; but they had neither the power nor the inclination to feudalise a people which had never gone through the preliminary stages. When the Tudors brought a more steadfast purpose and better machinery to the task, they found how hard it was to evolve order out of the shattered remnants of two systems which had the same origin, but which had been so brought together as to make complete fusion impossible. From the first the subjects of England and the natives of Ireland had been on entirely different planes. Even for us it is extremely difficult to avoid confusion by applying modern terms to ancient things. The Tudor lawyers and statesmen could hardly even attempt to look at jarring systems from the outside. They saw that the common law was more advanced than that of the Brehons, but they could not see that they were really the

same thing at different stages. In fact, plain Englishmen in the sixteenth century could not do what only the most enlightened Anglo-Indians can do in the nineteenth. They were more civilised than the Irish, but they were not educated enough to recognise the common ancestor. That there was a common ancestor, and that neither party could recognise him, is the key to Anglo-Irish history both before and after the Tudor times.

Origin of the Irish Church. Patrick and Columba

Exile of Columba

Saint Bridget

The early history of the native Irish Church is shrouded in much obscurity. The best authorities are disposed to accept St. Patrick as the apostle of Ireland, the fifth century as the period of his labours, and Armagh as his chief seat. He was not a native of Ireland; so much seems certain. A more interesting, because a more clearly defined figure, is that of Columba or Columkille, who was born in Donegal in 521. The churches of Derry, Durrow, Kells, Swords, Raphoe, Tory Island, and Drumcliff, claim him as their founder; but it is as the apostle

of North Britain that he is best known. He was religious from his youth, but a peculiarly serious tinge was given to his mind by a feeling of remorse for bloodshed which he had partly caused. He had surreptitiously transcribed a psalter belonging to another saint, who complained of this primitive infringement of copyright. A royal decision that 'to every cow belongs her calf' was given, and was followed by an appeal to arms. Exile was then imposed as a penance on Columba, whose act had been the original cause of offence. Such was long the received legend, but perhaps the exile was voluntary.¹² Whether his departure was a penance or the result of a vow, tradition says that he was bound never to see Ireland again, that he landed first on Oronsay, but found that Erin was visible from thence, and refused to rest until he had reached Iona. His supposed feelings are recorded in a very ancient poem: —

'My vision o'er the brine I stretch
From the ample oaken planks;
Large is the tear of my soft grey eye
When I look back upon Erin.
Upon Erin my attention is fixed.'

Columba was the Paul of Celtic Christianity. By him and his disciples a great part of Scotland was evangelised, and it was to him that the British Church looked as a founder when

¹² Dr. Sullivan believes the story of the decision against Columba to be a mere myth.

the time came to decide between the relative pretensions of the Celtic and the Norman type of religion. St. Bridget or Bride, who died four years after Columba's birth, is scarcely less celebrated. She was born near Dundalk, and her chief seat was at Kildare. She was the mother of Irish female monachism, and in popular estimation is not less famous than Patrick, and perhaps more so than Columba.¹³

The Irish Church was originally monastic

Irish Christianity was at first monastic. A saint obtained a grant of land from a chief. A church was built, and a settlement sprung up round it. The family, as it was called, consisted partly of monks and partly of dependents, and the abbot ruled over all as chief of a pseudo-tribe. Like a lay chiefry the abbacy was elective, and the abbots wielded considerable power. These ecclesiastical clans even made war with each other. Thus, it is recorded that in 763 the family of St. Ciaran of Clonmacnoise fought with the family of St. Columba of Durrow, and that 200 of the Columbides fell. The head of such a confraternity was called coarb, or successor of the founder, and Irish writers sometimes called the Pope 'coarb of Peter.' In course of time the coarb

¹³ 'The Irish Church,' says Dr. Sullivan, 'had undoubtedly two distinct phases of monasticism: one that of the Patrician period – an obscure but highly important and interesting phase; the other, that of the sixth and subsequent centuries, to which the Irish missionaries belonged.'

of Patrick crystallised into the Archbishop of Armagh, and the coarb of Columba into the Bishop of Derry. Other saints were revered as the founders of other sees. Very often at least the abbot was chosen from among the founder's kin.

The early Church was episcopal, but not territorially so

Episcopal orders were acknowledged from the first, but it was long before the notion of a territorial bishop prevailed. In early days there were many bishops, wanderers sometimes, and at other times retained by the abbot as a necessary appendage to his monastery. The bishop was treated with great respect, but was manifestly inferior to the head of a religious house. St. Patrick was said to have consecrated 350 bishops, founded 700 churches, and ordained 5,000 priests; a mere legend, but perhaps tending to show that the episcopal order was very numerous in Ireland. Travelling bishops without definite duties, and with orders of doubtful validity, became a scandal to more regularly organised churches, and drew down a rebuke from Anselm as late as the beginning of the twelfth century. At an earlier period impostors pretending to be Irish bishops were not uncommon.¹⁴

¹⁴ 'Besides,' says Dr. Sullivan, 'the monastic bishop proper, who furnished the wandering Scotie bishops of the Middle Ages, there is a later development of a higher church organisation in the tribal bishop, who was a close approximation to a diocesan bishop. The tribal bishop was a bishop who had jurisdiction over the whole of a

Ireland gradually conformed to Roman usage

The Irish Church long continued to keep Easter on a different day from that sanctioned by Rome, and to use a different form of tonsure. But the inconvenience of such dissidence from the general body of Western Christendom was soon felt. About 630 Pope Honorius I. addressed a letter to the Irish Church, in which he reminded the clergy that they were a scanty company inhabiting a remote region, and that it could not be for their interest to remain isolated. Cummian, afterwards seventh abbot of Iona, warmly espoused the papal cause. 'Rome errs,' he said with great scorn, 'Jerusalem errs, Alexandria errs, Antioch errs, the whole world errs – the Britons and Irish are the only right-minded people.' The southern Irish followed Cummian, but the northern rejected his advice, and some even called him a heretic; yet this did not prevent his being elected to fill Columba's chair. Adamnan, ninth abbot of Iona, and biographer of the great founder, was no less earnest on the Roman side than Cummian had been. At the Synod of Whitby in 664 Wilfred discomfited Colman of Lindisfarne, and settled the question

Tuath, and sometimes even a *Mór Tuath*. The growth of territorial jurisdiction is well marked by the prestige attached to the office – the bishop ranked in fact almost on a level with the chief, and was entitled to the same legal retinue. Many of the ancient dioceses, and some of the existing ones, *e. g.* Ross, Kilmacduagh, Kilfenora, represent ancient *Tuaths*, or tribe territories. Several deaneries were former dioceses, and are co-extensive with ancient *Tuatha*.

so far as England was concerned. Adamnan lived till 704, and succeeded in converting nearly all the Irish churches, except those subject to his own monastery.

Close of the Paschal controversy, 716

In 716, under Duncadh, the eleventh abbot, Iona conformed, and the Paschal controversy came to an end, after lasting 150 years. The coronal tonsure was adopted three years later. The supremacy of Rome was thus acknowledged, but circumstances long prevented the Irish from adopting the Roman plan of Church organisation.

Influence of the Scandinavian invasions on the Church

The Eugenian Constitution, 1151

The Scandinavian inroads began towards the close of the century which witnessed the submission of Iona. It is probable that the influx of pagan Northmen kept Ireland apart from the rest of Christendom. The ninth century produced Erigena and other eminent Irishmen, but a country in which Christianity was fighting for bare life was not a promising field for Church

reformers or systematisers. It was not until Clontarf had finally decided the cause in favour of Christianity that Ireland had again leisure to think of ecclesiastical polity. Gillebert of Limerick, an Ostman, was the first papal legate, and as such presided at the synod of Rathbreasil in or about 1118, where the first serious attempt was made to divide all Ireland into dioceses. The great influence of Malachi of Armagh was exerted in the same direction. He was the friend of Bernard of Clairvaux, and he introduced the Cistercian order into Ireland. Pope Eugenius III., himself a Cistercian, finished the work, and in 1151 Ireland accepted four archiepiscopal palls from Rome. From that date the Irish Church must be held to have fully accepted not only papal supremacy but Roman organisation. That she had not done so long before seems due to accident more than anything else. From mere remoteness of position Ireland had escaped the dominion of Imperial Rome. From the same remoteness she was comparatively slow to feel the influence of Papal Rome. Still, it can scarcely be doubted that had it not been for the Scandinavian intrusion, the Ireland which adopted the Roman Easter and the Roman tonsure before the middle of the eighth century, would have gladly accepted the palls long before the middle of the twelfth.¹⁵

¹⁵ Dr. Sullivan warns me not to attribute too much influence to the Danish Church. 'The tribe-bishop,' he says, 'was a much earlier development, and proves the growth of diocesan jurisdiction and the consequent merging of the Irish Church in the Latin Church. The acceptance of the Roman time for celebrating Easter by the Irish Church and the constant intercourse between Ireland and the Continent had brought the Irish

Church fully under Roman supremacy three and a half centuries earlier. What really took place in the early part of the twelfth century was the more complete adoption of the organisation of the Western Church, and of the principles of the canon law; and especially the granting of lands and charters to the Church in the same way as in feudal lands. The marriage of Irish princes with Saxon and other foreign princesses, and the growth of towns which helped to relax its rigid tribal system, did more than the Danish Church.' The chief towns were, however, of Danish origin.

CHAPTER II.

THE SCANDINAVIAN ELEMENT

First appearance of the Northmen, 795

Norwegian ships began to appear on the Irish coast in 795, one year after the destruction of the church at Lindisfarne. The islands were harried, Lambay being perhaps the first to suffer; everything of value was taken, and the hermits and anchorites were killed or carried away. Iona, where the greatest of Irish saints had founded a new Church, was burned or plundered in 802 and 806. About twelve years after their first visit the Scandinavians began to venture inland, sacking the monasteries, which contained such wealth as Ireland then possessed, and slaughtering the monks. The famous religious community at Bangor, in Down, was thus destroyed about 824. The first permanent settlement of the northern invaders was perhaps in the neighbourhood of Limerick. They had a fort at Cork before 848, and at Dublin before 852. There were also forts on Lough Foyle and at Waterford. The flat coast between Dublin and the borders of Meath lay open to a floating enemy, and early obtained the name of Fingal, or the land of the stranger.

Turgesius, 830

In or about 830 a chief arrived who pursued a more ambitious policy. He is called Turgeis or Turgesius by the Irish, and by the Irish only: this may be a form of Thorkils or Trygve, and may perhaps be a name applied to the mysterious hero whom the Scandinavians call Ragnar Lodbrok. Turgesius landed in Ulster, and planned the complete subjugation of Ireland. He burned Armagh and drove out St. Patrick's successor, and then took up a central position near Athlone, whence his flotillas could act on Lough Ree and Lough Dearg. We know that the Northmen dragged ships or boats overland to Loch Lomond, and similar feats may have been performed in Ireland. There was another plundering station on Lough Neagh about the same time.

Turgeis mastered the northern half of Ireland, and made frequent incursions into the other half. Against the Church he showed peculiar animosity, and his wife used the high altar at Clonmacnoise as a throne when she gave audience; perhaps she uttered oracular responses from it. In the south Turgeis was less powerful, for the dispossessed abbot of Armagh took refuge at Emly in Tipperary. But the whole coast was attacked by innumerable corsairs, who sometimes made raids far into the central districts. Dublin was fortified by the Norwegians about 840, and became the chief seat of the Scandinavian power. Turgeis did not live to unite the various bands, but fell into the

hands of Malachi, King of Meath, in 845, and was drowned in Lough Owel. The Northmen of Limerick were defeated in the same year at Roscrea, and their earl, Olfin, was slain.¹⁶

A.D. 852

The Black and White Gentiles

Seven years after the death of Turgeis came the Black Gentiles, who are generally supposed to have been Danes, as the White Gentiles were certainly Norwegians. Whether the colour of their armour or their complexion was referred to is doubtful. The new-comers made themselves masters of Dublin, and of the plunder which the first invaders had accumulated from all the Irish churches. Before one of the battles fought to decide whether Black or White Pagans were to enjoy this property, Horm, or Gorm, the Danish chief, is said to have invoked St. Patrick, a singular confusion of ideas, which may have resulted from intercourse with Christians in England. Victory followed. The Black Gentiles seem to have retained their supremacy; but the distinction becomes partly obliterated, and the Danes, of whom we read later, were probably intermingled with Norwegians. It is recorded that Amlaf, son of the King of Norway, came to

¹⁶ The account which Giraldus gives of Turgesius is funny, but worthless.

Ireland in 852 or 853, that all the foreigners of Erin submitted to him, and that the Irish also paid tribute. The name of the Black Gentiles is believed to be preserved in the little town of Baldoyle.

Forty years' peace

Amlaf and his sons were not satisfied with the spoils of thrice plundered churches, but everywhere violated tombs in search of gold ornaments. Another great chief was Ivar, who appears to have been Ivar Beinlaus, son of Ragnar Lodbrok, and founder of the Northumbrian kingdom, which was afterwards closely connected with the Irish Danes. To the Norwegians who fled to Ireland from the iron rule of Harold Harfager, the King of Dublin was one of the chief sovereigns on earth. Carrol, lord of Ossory, was in alliance with Amlaf and Ivar, and ruled Dublin after their deaths; but he died about 885, and a Norse dynasty was then re-established by force. A dozen years later another Carrol drove the foreigners across the Channel, but Sitric, king of Northumberland, regained the fortress in 919, and the Celts do not appear to have recaptured it. For a period of some forty years, ending about 916, Ireland is said to have had a little rest. The enemy may have had enough to do elsewhere, but their predatory expeditions did not entirely cease. There were perhaps no fresh invasions in force, but former settlers held their own against the Irish, with whom they were generally at war.

Renewed invasions, 916

Severe treatment of the natives

Whatever may have caused the period of comparative rest, the Danish incursions began again with renewed vigour. A great host came to Waterford in 916, defeated the men of Leinster, and harried all the south of Ireland; churches, as usual, attracting their special attention. Ragnal, Ivar's grandson, represented by the Ulster annalists as king of all the Irish Scandinavians, was the chief leader, and he afterwards led his men to Scotland, where the great but indecisive battle of Tynemoor was fought.¹⁷ Sitric, Ragnal's brother, took Dublin from the Irish, who had, perhaps, held it since 902, and on Ragnal's death succeeded to the royal title. The natives had occasional successes, but on the whole they were conspicuously inferior in the field, and Nial Glundubh, King of Ireland, who headed a great confederacy, fell in the attempt to recover Dublin. Twelve chiefs or kings of northern and central tribes are said to have died at the same time. After this reverse all serious attempt to check the invaders seems to have been given up, and fleet after fleet brought hordes of oppressors to the ill-fated island. Munster suffered especially,

¹⁷ Reeves's Adamnan, p. 332 n.

and the general nature of a Danish invasion cannot be better apprehended than by transcribing the chronicler's words: – 'And assuredly the evil which Erin had hitherto suffered was as nothing compared to the evil inflicted by these parties. All Munster was plundered by them on all sides and devastated, and they spread themselves over Munster and built earth-works and towers and landing-places over all Erin, so that there was no place in Erin without numerous fleets of Danes and pirates; so that they made spoil-land and sword-land and conquered-land of her throughout her breadth and generally; and they ravaged her chieftainries, privileged churches, and sanctuaries, and demolished her shrines, reliquaries, and books. They wrecked her beautiful ornamental temples: for neither veneration, nor honour, nor mercy for holy ground, nor protection for church or sanctuary, for God or man, was felt by this furious, ferocious, pagan, ruthless, wrathful people. In short, until the sand of the sea, the grass of the field, or the stars of heaven are counted it will not be easy to recount or enumerate or relate what the Gaedhil, all, without distinction, suffered from; whether men or women, boys or girls, laics or clerics, freemen or serfs, young or old; indignity, outrage, injury, and oppression. In a word, they killed the kings and the chieftains, the heirs to the crown, and the royal princes of Erin. They killed the brave and the valiant, the stout knights, champions, soldiers, and young lords, and most of the heroes and warriors of all Ireland; they brought them under tribute and reduced them to bondage and slavery. Many were the blooming,

lively women; the modest, mild, comely maidens; the pleasant, noble, stately, blue-eyed young women; the gentle, well-brought-up youths; and the intelligent, valiant champions, whom they carried to oppression and bondage over the broad green sea. Alas! many and frequent were the bright eyes that were suffused with tears and dimmed with grief and despair at the separation of son from father, and daughter from mother, and brother from brother, and relatives from their race and from their tribe.’¹⁸

The Northmen fail to found a permanent kingdom

The Irish Danes became strong enough to interfere with effect in English politics, and Olaf Cuaran, or Sitricson, King of Dublin, was a general of the great Scandinavian army which Athelstane overthrew at Brunanburgh. The Danes were much fewer than the Irish, but their general superiority during the tenth century was incontestable; and had the invaded people been of kin to them the kingdom of Canute might have had a counterpart in Ireland. Irish Celts were only too ready to call in Scandinavian allies in their internal quarrels, but they could never amalgamate with them. Occasionally a confederation of tribes would gain a great success, as at the battle of Tara, where King Malachi defeated the Dublin Danes under Athelstane’s old opponent, Olaf Cuaran. After great slaughter on both sides the Dublin men had

¹⁸ *Wars of the Gaedhill with the Gaill*, chap. xxxvi.

the worst, and were forced to release Donnell, King of Leinster, who was then in their hands. A great part of Ireland was at this time subject to the Danes, and the battle of Tara has been called the end of the 'Babylonish captivity of Ireland, inferior only to the captivity of hell.' King Olaf went on a pilgrimage to Iona, where he died in the following year. Thirty-seven years had passed since his acceptance of Christianity, at least in name; yet the Danes plundered the sacred isle only five years later, in 986, and killed the abbot and fifteen of his monks. It is to be noted that the Scandinavian treatment of churches reacted on the Irish, and that many native warriors came to regard saints and sanctuaries with as little respect as Turgesius himself.

Their strongest power in Munster

Munster seems to have been more completely subdued than any other part of Ireland. The Danish stations at Waterford, Cork, and Limerick made invasion at all times easy, and the sons of Ivar bid fair to found a lasting dynasty at the latter place. There was a tax-gatherer in every petty district, a receiver to intercept the dues of every church, a soldier billeted in every house, 'so that none of the men of Erin ... had power to give even the milk of his cow, nor as much as the clutch of eggs of one hen in succour or in kindness to an aged man, or to a friend, but was forced to preserve them for the foreign steward, or bailiff, or soldier. And though there were but one milk-giving cow in the house she durst

not be milked for an infant of one night, nor for a sick person, but must be kept for the steward, or bailiff, or soldier of the foreigners. And however long he might be absent from his house, his share or his supply durst not be lessened; although there was in the house but one cow, it must be killed for the meal of the night, if the means of a supply could not be otherwise procured.’¹⁹

Succession to the kingdom of Cashel

At last a deliverer arose. According to the will of Olioll Olum, King of Munster in the third century – such is the theory – the sovereignty of Cashel, that is of Munster, was to belong alternately to the races of his two sons, Eoghan Mor and Cormac Cas. The Eoghanachts and Dal Cais are generally Anglicised as the Eugenians and Dalcassians; the strength of the former and much stronger tribe being in Cork, Limerick, and Kerry – that of the latter in Clare. The Eugenio Fergraidh was king in 967, when he was murdered by his own people. Mahon the Dalcassian then became king, in compliance with the constitutional theory, but not without a struggle. Urged on by his brother Brian, he attacked the Danish settlements up and down the country, and became master of Cashel, when Ivar, finding his supremacy threatened, summoned all that would obey him to root out utterly the whole Dalcassian race.

¹⁹ *Wars of the Gaedhill with the Gaill*, chap. xl.

Molloy, Mahon, and Brian

The tribes of Western Munster generally were disposed to follow Mahon, but Molloy, King of Desmond, and some others, adhered to the Dane rather than admit the supremacy of a local rival. A pitched battle took place at Solloghead, near Tipperary, in which the foreigners and their allies were totally defeated. Molloy and other chiefs who had taken the losing side were forced to give hostages to the victor. Mahon burned Limerick and drove away Ivar, who returned after a year with a great fleet, and fixed his head-quarters on Scatterry Island, where St. Senanus had so sternly resisted the blandishments of a female saint.

Murder of Mahon. Brian succeeds him

For some years Mahon reigned undisputed King of Munster, but his successes only stimulated the jealousies of Molloy and the other Eugenic chiefs, who saw their race reduced to play an inferior part. They accordingly conspired with Ivar, and Molloy procured the treacherous murder of Mahon. The crime was useless, for Brian was left, and he immediately succeeded both to the leadership of his own tribe and to the kingdom of Munster, Molloy having certainly forfeited all moral claim to the alternate succession. Brian pursued the Danes to their strongholds, slew

Ivar and his sons, and carried off the women and the treasure. There was, however, still a Scandinavian settlement at Limerick, and we find a grandson of Ivar afterwards in Brian's service as one of the ten Danish stewards whom he employed. He was ambitious, and he had experience of the skill of such officers in extorting contributions from unwilling subjects. Molloy and his chief allies were slain; and Brian, having reduced the Limerick Danes to insignificance, turned his arm against those of Waterford, whose territory he ravaged, and whose Celtic allies, inhabiting the modern county of Waterford, he easily subdued. Brian was acknowledged as supreme in Munster, and took security from the principal churches not to give sanctuary to thieves or rebels. As the consequence of further expeditions Leinster also became tributary; and thus, in eight years after his brother's death, Brian was admitted to be supreme in the southern half of Ireland.

Brian aims at being King of all Ireland

In his further expeditions, undertaken with a view of becoming King of all Ireland, the Danes of Waterford sometimes accompanied Brian; but his progress towards the desired goal was arrested for a while by a prudent treaty with Malachi II., head King of Ireland, whom he acknowledged as undisputed sovereign of the northern half, and by a revolt of the Leinster men, who were allied with the Danes of Dublin, the united forces

of Brian and Malachi having overthrown the Leinster Danes at Glenmama, near Dunlavin, Dublin fell an easy prey. The spoils taken are represented as enormous, and the mention of carbuncles and other precious stones, of buffalo-horns, goblets, and many-coloured vestures, betoken some degree of luxury and much commercial activity among the Danes. It is to be observed that Brian and his followers, though Christians, had no scruple about making slaves. His panegyrists simply say that the Danes by their cruelty and oppression had deserved no better treatment. Threshing and other rough work was done by the male prisoners. Menial work, including the severe labour of the hand-mill, was done by the women. 'There was not,' we are told, 'a winnowing sheet from Howth to the furthest point of Kerry that had not a foreigner in bondage on it, nor was there a quern without a foreign woman.' The fairer and more accomplished of the Danish women of course underwent the fate of Chryseis.

Brian and the Danes, Gormflaith

Having in vain sought a refuge with the northern Irish, Sitric was forced to submit to Brian, who reinstated him at Dublin as a tributary king. Sitric's mother, Gormflaith, or Kormlada, was sister to Maelmordha, King of Leinster, and her husband, King Olaf, having been dead many years, she was free to marry Brian, which she did soon after, while Brian's daughter married Sitric. Wielding thus the whole force of southern Ireland, Brian

called upon Malachi to acknowledge his supremacy. The King of Ireland sought aid in vain from his kinsmen, the northern Hy Neill, whose king Aedh, or Hugh, sarcastically remarked that when his clan had held the chief kingship they had known how to defend their own. No help coming from Connaught either, Malachi was forced to submit to Brian's power, and though no formal cession took place the King of Ireland quietly subsided into King of Meath.

Brian, King of all Ireland, 1002

Brian was henceforth reckoned as monarch of Ireland. He invaded Connaught with a flotilla on the Shannon and an army marching on land, and the chiefs of the western province were glad to give hostages. The Ulster potentates falling out among themselves, the north also was easily subdued, and Brian became the actual lord paramount of Ireland. After this he made a tour round the island, starting from the Shannon and marching through Roscommon and over the Curlew mountains into Sligo. Hugging the coast by Ballyshannon to Donegal, he crossed Barnesmore Gap into Tyrone, and then passing the Foyle, near Lifford, he went through Londonderry, Antrim, Down, and Louth, to the neighbourhood of Kells. In a previous expedition he had visited Armagh and laid twenty ounces of gold on the altar. A fleet, manned by the Danes of Dublin, Limerick, and Waterford, seems to have circumnavigated Ireland while he was

making the circuit by land.

Brian's supremacy a loose one

Gormflaith's intrigues

The supremacy of Brian was no doubt an extremely loose one. He had made no real impression on the northern tribes, and they only waited a favourable opportunity to cast off the nominal yet galling yoke. But for about seven years there seems to have been no serious attempt against him, and he was able to turn his attention to the building of churches and bridges. It was during this period that a lone woman is said to have walked unmolested from the Bloody Foreland to Glandore with a gold ring at the end of a wand. Peace, however, there was not; for Brian was engaged in at least two warlike expeditions to Ulster, and there was a fair amount of murder and private war among the minor chiefs. Brian had repudiated Gormflaith, Maelmordha's sister and Sitric's mother, and probably not without good reason, for her moral character was by no means on a par with her beauty and talents, since she had been married successively to Olaf Cuaran and to Malachi II., and had been repudiated by both. 'She was,' says the Saga, 'the fairest of all women, and best gifted in everything that was not in her power, but it was the talk of men

that she did all things ill over which she had any power.’ Brian afterwards married a daughter of the King of Connaught, and when she died, Gormflaith may have sought to be reinstated. At all events she was at Kincora when her brother arrived, bringing with him the tribute of Leinster. Her taunts, and a quarrel which he had with Murrough, Brian’s eldest son, provoked Maelmordha to leave Kincora in anger, and to raise the standard of revolt. ‘Gormflaith,’ says the Saga, ‘was so grim against King Brian after their parting, that she would gladly have him dead, and egged on her son Sitric very much to kill him.’ Sitric readily agreed to Maelmordha’s proposal, and so did the northern Hy Neill, who had never been really conquered, and who at once invaded Meath. After a gallant struggle against Leinster and Ulster, Malachi was overpowered, and called upon Brian for help. The King of Ireland, to whom the men of Connaught remained faithful, accordingly ravaged the country between his own district and Dublin, but was obliged to retire from before its walls for want of provisions.²⁰

Alliance of Sitric and Gormflaith against Brian

Sitric and Gormflaith made use of the breathing space allowed them to organise a powerful confederacy against Brian. Sitric himself went to Sigurd, Earl of Orkney, who, after many refusals,

²⁰ The quotations are from *Burnt Njal*, chap. cliii.

at last agreed to join, on condition of receiving the Crown of Ireland and Gormflaith's land. 'All his men,' says the Saga, 'besought Earl Sigurd not to go into the war, but it was all to no good.' Gormflaith was well pleased at the prospect before her, and advised large preparations for the inevitable struggle.

Sitric's allies. Sigurd. Brodir

Sigurd was nominally a Christian, but he reposed his chief trust in the raven banner which his mother had woven with mighty spells; and many Scandinavian warriors were still fanatically attached to Thor and Woden. The Vikings, Ospak and Brodir, were lying off Man, and to them Sitric next addressed himself in person. The Norsemen do not seem to have insisted on youth in their wives, for Brodir was induced to join by the same promises which had been made to Sigurd, and Gormflaith's first husband had been dead thirty-three years. 'Brodir,' says the Icelandic account, 'had been a Christian man and a mass deacon, but he had thrown off his faith and become God's dastard, and now worshipped heathen fiends, and was of all men most skilled in sorcery. He had the coat of mail on which no steel would bite. He was both tall and strong, and had such long locks that he tucked them under his belt. His hair was black.'²¹

²¹ *Burnt Njal*, chap. cliv.

Conflict between Christianity and Paganism

Ospak, who had leanings towards Christianity, refused to attack Brian; indeed, he went over to him, and, according to Norse accounts, was baptized. An immense force was, however, gradually collected, and Scandinavian contingents are mentioned from Northumbria, under two Earls, from Norway, from Orkney and Shetland, Skye and Lewis, from Cantire, Argyle, and Galloway. Welshmen from Pembrokeshire and Cornwall, Frenchmen, that is in all probability French Normans, under Karl and Ebric, and some Flemings under a knight are also spoken of. Romans even are mentioned, but this may be mere magniloquence. To oppose this motley host Brian had the men of Munster, Meath, and South-eastern Connaught, and the Danes of Limerick and probably of Waterford. He may have had the numerical superiority, for Sigurd told his mother, the wise woman, that he expected to be outnumbered seven to one. The eve of the battle of Clontarf was signalised, according to the annalists, by various supernatural occurrences. A messenger from St. Senanus appeared to the king, and prophesied his death as the penalty due for violating the sanctuary on Scatterry Island thirty-seven years before. The interests and prejudices of monastic chroniclers may account for this story, but it is not so easy to explain the firm belief in pagan deities, in fairies, in demons, and in satyrs shown by two independent historians.

It is evident that the oracles of heathenism were not supposed to have been dumb more than 500 years after the death of Patrick, and 400 after that of Columba. Nor was there any lack of marvels on the Danish side. Brodir, who had already been plagued by showers of boiling blood, by supernatural noises, by deaths among his men, and by ravens with beaks and claws of iron, ‘tried by sorcery how the fight would go. And the answer ran, that if the fight were on Good Friday, King Brian would fall but win the day; but if they fought before, they would all fall that were against him.’²²

Battle of Clontarf, 1014

The battle was fought upon the fateful Friday, and Brian refused to take part in it because the day was holy. He remained in the rear protected by a ring of soldiers with their shields locked together. It was observed that the successive bearers of the raven banner all fell, and Hrafn the red, who was called by Sigurd to the dangerous duty, refused, saying, ‘Bear thine own devil thyself.’ ‘Tis fittest that the beggar should bear the bag,’ answered the Earl, and put the banner under his cloak. Sigurd fell, and Sitric had to retire before Ospak. Hrafn the red flew to a river into which the devils wished to drag him, but a spoken spell dispersed them. ‘Thy dog,’ he cried, ‘Apostle Peter, hath run twice to Rome,

²² *Ibid.*, chap. clvi. *Wars of the Gaedhill with the Gaill*, chaps. xcvi. and xcix. *Annals of Lough Cé*, pp. 7-13.

and he would run the third time if thou gavest him leave.’ Of Thorstein we are told that he interrupted his flight to tie his shoe. Kerthialfad, Brian’s foster son, asked him why he lingered at such a critical moment, and the Northman returned an answer worthy of Sparta’s best days – ‘Because I can’t get home to-night, since I am at home out in Iceland.’²³

Death of Brian

In the moment of victory Brian was left behind, and Brodir, who had lingered for a time in a thicket, broke through the line of shields and hewed off the king’s head. The Viking was taken and disembowelled alive, according to the Norse account, but the Irish writers say that he fell by Brian’s hands. Sigurd being already dead, Gormflaith lost all chance of a royal husband, and it is only further recorded of her that she died sixteen years later. Many other chiefs fell, including Maelmordha, and Murrough, Brian’s favourite son, and the fight was followed, as it had been heralded, by many signs and wonders both in the Celtic and in the Scandinavian world.

The Danes were not expelled

The popular delusion that the battle of Clontarf caused

²³ *Burnt Njal*, chap. clvi.

the expulsion of the Danes from Ireland must be pretty well dissipated by this time. Sitric remained with reserves within the fortress, and thus saved his kingdom; nor do the annalists cease to make frequent mention of the foreigners. But the defeat was great, and may have had considerable influence in deciding those who were already hovering between Woden and Jesus. Fourteen years after Clontarf we find Sitric going to Rome, and his son Olaf was killed in England when attempting the same pilgrimage. These facts lend some countenance to the legend that Sitric founded Christ Church in 1038; for the Roman court well knew how to impress the rude northern warriors, and to profit in various ways by their simple faith. We are told that Flosi the Iclander went to Rome to cleanse himself from the stain of blood-guiltiness, 'where,' says the Njal-Saga, 'he gat so great honour that he took absolution from the Pope himself, and for that he gave a great sum of money.'

But they soon accepted Christianity

Without actually amalgamating, the Danes seem to have drawn gradually closer to the native Irish. A royal heir of Ulster received the name of Ragnal less than half a century after Clontarf, and in 1121 a bishop seems to have been temporarily appointed at Dublin by the joint election of Irish and Danes. But quarrels were frequent even after the Danes had become fully Christianised; and when the men of Munster invaded Fingal in

1133, they burned the church of Lusk when it was full of people and treasures. Nor did fresh invasions quite cease, for Magnus, King of Norway, made two expeditions to Ireland, in the latter of which, in 1103, he lost his life. The separate history of the Irish Ostmen was drawing to a close, even at the date of the Anglo-Norman invasion; but they have left indelible traces upon the map of Ireland and on the traditional lore of her people.

The Danes were traders

Giraldus informs us that the Scandinavians who settled at Dublin, Waterford, and Limerick, came under pretence of peaceful trading. The Irish, he says, were prevented by their innate sloth from going down to the sea in ships, but were ready to welcome those who would trade for them, and thus allowed the fierce strangers to get a strong footing. However this may be, it is certain that the Irish are deficient in maritime enterprise, and equally certain that the Northmen had a constant eye to trade as well as to war and plunder. Unerring instinct pointed out the best stations, and on the sites thus chosen the chief cities of Ireland were reared. The Kaupmannaeyjar or merchant isles, probably those now called the Copelands, may have been a rendezvous for passing vessels. Arabic coins, of which more than 20,000 pieces from more than 1,000 different dies are preserved at Stockholm, have been found in Ireland, and the Irish Northmen certainly had a coinage of their own, when the native princes had none.

Pieces have been found which were struck by, or at least for, a Scandinavian king of Dublin as early as the ninth century, and all coins minted in Ireland up to the Anglo-Norman invasion were perhaps of similar origin. Many such pieces have been found in the Isle of Man, and some as far off as Denmark.²⁴

They were superior to the Irish in peaceful arts

The Irish annalists constantly dwell on the superiority of Norse arms and armour as a reason for their success in war. Ringmail in particular shows a high degree of manufacturing skill, and they wore it at Clontarf both in brass and iron, while none is mentioned in the pompous Irish catalogue of the arms worn by Brian's troops. Nor was this costly harness worn only by the Scandinavian leaders, for they are said to have had 1,000 coats of mail in that one battle. Danish swords which have survived from Brian's days are of superior workmanship to Irish blades of the same date; and the Northmen had perhaps a superiority in bows also, though on this point the annalists are less explicit. The turgid verbosity of these writers makes it doubtful whether the Danes used poisoned arrows, but no such thing is mentioned in the Saga.

²⁴ Many details about the Hiberno-Norse coins are to be found in Worsaae.

They built the first cities. Dublin, Waterford

The flotillas which Brian maintained on inland waters, and the sea-going vessels which attended his army in the North, were all manned by Danes, and a mercantile marine has in every age been the best nursery of naval power. No doubt the Irish felt the advantage of having commercial emporiums on their coast, as other shore-going people profited by Greek and Phœnician colonies. The analogy might easily be carried further, and Dublin and Waterford might be represented as standing between the Anglo-Normans and Celts of Ireland, as Massilia stood between the Romans and Celts of Gaul. It is at all events clear that the Scandinavians built the first cities and coined the first money in Ireland.

Brian's monarchy soon fell to pieces

High as Brian towers above other mediæval Celts – one annalist calls him the Charlemagne of North-western Europe – it cannot be said that he laid the foundation of an Irish monarchy. He lived to be eighty, yet none of his work lasted. Malachi received the honorary office of chief king, from which his rival's personal prowess had driven him, and the years of his reign are counted by some annalists without noticing Brian's intervention,

as in the modern case of Charles II. Brian was indeed doubly a usurper, in wresting Munster from the race of Eoghan, and in wresting Ireland from the race of Nial, in whom royalty had been vested for centuries. With all his ceaseless exertions he was little more than a levier of black mail, who left intact the internal government of weaker princes. Borumha, or the tribute-taker, if that be really the meaning of the term, describes his position with sufficient accuracy. When he died Donnchadh, or Donogh, his son by Gormflaith, became head of his tribe, and claimed the succession to the Irish monarchy. The Eugenians repudiated his claim, alleging that their turn, which had been wrongfully passed over, had now come to reign in Munster. Not satisfied with this, their two principal chiefs fell out among themselves. The Ossorian followed suit, and thus Brian's creation crumbled at once into dust.

More than 150 years elapsed between the battle of Clontarf and the landing of the first Anglo-Norman, and they were years of almost constant war and confusion. Had Ireland been left to herself a prince might in time have arisen strong enough to establish such a monarchy as Brian failed to found. The Danes had ceased to be a seriously disturbing influence, but there is no evidence that any such process of consolidation was going on, and a feudal system, which had lost none of its vigour, was at last confronted with a tribal system which had lost none of its inherent weakness.

Progress of Christianity

It is impossible to fix the exact date when Christianity began to make head against the Irish Ostmen. When St. Anschar obtained from the Swedes a place for his God in the northern pantheon, and when Guthrum and his officers submitted to baptism in Wessex, a foundation had been laid for a general Scandinavian conversion. But neither Norway nor the Norwegian colonies in Iceland, Shetland, Orkney, or the Hebrides, yielded so soon. Irish anchorites spent some time in Iceland about 795, and when Ingulf and Lief landed in 870 they found that Irish priests had lately been there, and had left behind them books, bells, and croziers. The second batch had probably fled from Ingulf's congeners in Ireland. Olaf Trygvesson, the first Christian king of Norway, was educated at Athelstane's court, and the nominal conversion of Norway may date from the year of his accession. Five years later, in 1000, Christianity was established by law in Iceland. Removed as she was from English or Roman influences, Ireland remained a stronghold of paganism after the Danes of England had been generally converted; and the Irish being on the whole weaker in war, were scarcely in a position to prove that Woden and Thor had nothing to say for themselves. Olaf Cuaran was baptized in England. It is clear that the Irish Danes remained generally pagan throughout the tenth century, and that the confederacy which failed at Clontarf had to a great extent

been formed against Christianity. The story of Ospak and Brodir shows that some of the fiercest Danes were beginning to waver, the question at issue being the relative power of two deities, rather than the relative merit of two systems. After Clontarf Woden seems to have been looked upon as beaten. He had been tried and found wanting, like Baal on Mount Carmel, and the defeated party went over to the stronger side.

The Danish church of Dublin

The connection of the Dublin Danes with their brethren in England had long been very close, and it was to Canterbury and Rome rather than to Armagh that they naturally turned. Sitric and Canute were perhaps in the Eternal City together; their visit was at least almost simultaneous, and we cannot doubt that every means were taken to prejudice the powerful neophyte against the pretensions of St. Patrick's successor. An Ostman named Dunan or Donat is reckoned the first Bishop of Dublin, and is credited with the foundation of Christ Church. A tradition which may be true, but which is not supported by contemporary evidence, makes Sitric the joint founder. From an expression in the celebrated letter of the Dublin burgesses to Archbishop Ralph d'Eures it may be fairly inferred that Donat had his succession from Canterbury, and he certainly corresponded with Lanfranc on the subject of infant baptism. He was succeeded by Patrick or Gillapatrik, an Ostman, who was consecrated by Lanfranc in

St. Paul's at the instance of Godred Crovan, king of Man, who was then supreme at Dublin. Godred's reign is rather shadowy, but Lanfranc's letter to him has always been considered genuine, and it addresses him as king not only of Dublin, but of Ireland. Lanfranc also wrote to Tirlogh, who had acquired the supreme kingship, like his father, Brian Borumha. It is not unlikely that the curious poem which represents St. Patrick as blessing Dublin and its Danish inhabitants, and cursing the Hy Neill, was forged at this time, partly in the Munster interest and partly to prove that Dublin was not subject to Armagh.²⁵

Dublin acknowledges Canterbury and repudiates Armagh

In his letters Lanfranc insists much upon Catholic unity. According to modern ideas, the heaviest of the charges which he brings against the Irish Church is the levity with which they regarded the marriage tie. It appears that men even exchanged wives. Bishop Patrick promised ecclesiastical fealty to the Archbishop of Canterbury, as Primate of the British Isles. Lanfranc had obeyed the order of his old pupil Alexander II., who was prompted by the deacon Hildebrand, and had gone to Rome to receive his pall. But in his dealings with Dublin he acted independently, and he was ready to give advice to Irish

²⁵ *Book of Rights*, pp. 225 *sqq.*, and O'Donovan's preface.

prelates, though without claiming direct jurisdiction over them. In doctrinal matters he was an ally of Rome. Himself an Italian, he espoused the dogma of transubstantiation in opposition to the Irishman Erigena, and the Frenchman Berengarius; and on the great question of clerical celibacy he was a follower, though not an extreme one, of the uncompromising Hildebrand. The ever-watchful Roman Court probably espied the germ of a Western patriarchate, and was thus moved to annex Armagh as a counterpoise to the dangerous primacy claimed under a grant of Gregory the Great by the successors of Augustine. Gregory VII., in addressing the kings, nobles, and prelates of Ireland, took care to claim absolute sovereignty by divine right; and here he ran little risk of such a rebuff as William the Conqueror administered.²⁶

Lanfranc and Anselm

Patrick's successor was Donat O'Haingly, an Irishman, but a Benedictine monk of Canterbury, who was consecrated by Lanfranc, to whom he had been recommended by King Tirlogh. He was succeeded by his nephew Samuel, a Benedictine of St. Albans, who was consecrated by Anselm. That great archbishop was not altogether pleased with his Irish brother, whom he chid

²⁶ See Hook's *Lives of Lanfranc, Anselm, and Ralph d'Eures*. Translations of the letters mentioned in the text may be found in King's *Primer of the Irish Church*; most of the originals are printed in Ussher's *Sylloge*.

for alienating vestments bestowed on the Church of Dublin by Lanfranc, and for having the cross borne before him, although he had never received the pall. A further element of confusion was introduced, probably in 1118, by the Irish synod of Rathbreasil, which declared Dublin to be in the diocese of Glendalough; and it seems that the Irish inhabitants submitted, while those of Danish origin refused to do so.

Ralph of Canterbury consecrates Gregory, who receives the pall from Pope Eugenius

On the death of Bishop Samuel O’Haingly, the Irish annals inform us that ‘Cellach, comarb of Patrick, assumed the bishopric of Ath-cliath,²⁷ by the choice of foreigners and Gaeidhil.’ If there be any truth in this it was a bold stroke on the part of Armagh to exercise jurisdiction in Dublin, and was probably the act of the Irish as opposed to the Danish party. In the same year, or the next, the burgesses and clergy of Dublin wrote to Ralph of Canterbury, begging him to consecrate their nominee Gregory. They reminded him that their bishops originally derived their dignity from his predecessors, and that the bishops of Ireland were very jealous of them; and especially he of Armagh, because they preferred the rule of Canterbury. Ralph consecrated Gregory, and he governed the

²⁷ The Irish always called Dublin Ath-cliath, or the Ford of Hurdles.

see for forty years. To his lot it fell to receive the pall sent by Pope Eugenius, who was too politic to insist on a visit to Rome. For the moment it was enough to assert the necessity of the pallium and its papal origin. The legate Paparo ignored the pretensions of the bishop whose church in the mountains had the name of city, and divided the diocese into two parts: the bishop with the Cantuarian succession being made Metropolitan, and the Irishman at Glendalough being reduced to the position of a suffragan. St. Lawrence O'Toole, who was the second Archbishop of Dublin, derived his succession from Armagh, and the Scandinavian Church of Dublin ceases to have a separate history.

See of Waterford

Of far less importance than that of Dublin, the early history of the see of Waterford is proportionately obscure. Malchus, a Benedictine of Winchester, who seems to have been the first bishop elected by the Ostmen, was consecrated by Anselm; to whom he promised canonical obedience, and with whom he corresponded. It seems likely that he was afterwards translated to Lismore, or he may have held both sees together, as they were held in after years. It is probable that the great Malachi of Armagh studied under him. Maelisa O'Hanmire appears next in succession, but we know nothing of him. He may have represented a reaction against the dominion of Canterbury. The

next name preserved is that of Tosti, who was, of course, a Dane, and who assisted in the establishment of the papal or Eugenian constitution. Tosti's successor, Augustine O'Sealbhaigh, was practically appointed by Henry II., and he attended the Lateran Council in 1179.

See of Limerick. Gillebert

The tradition which connects St. Patrick with Limerick is of the vaguest kind: practically, the first recorded bishop is Gillebert. He was an Irishman. Cellach of Armagh acted with the Bishop of Limerick on this occasion; but while both were anxious to parcel out Ireland into dioceses, neither ventured to interfere with Dublin, which was under the powerful patronage of Canterbury. Gillebert resigned both the legatine authority and his own bishopric before his death, which took place in or about 1145. His successor Patrick, having been elected by the Ostmen, was consecrated in England by Theobald, Archbishop of Canterbury, to whom he promised canonical obedience. The three following bishops, Harold, Turgeis, and Briccius, who may be Elbric or Eric, were doubtless all Ostmen. Very little is known of them, except that the last named attended the Lateran Council in 1179 and 1180.

See of Cork

Cork was often plundered by the Northmen, and they settled there permanently early in the eleventh century. But they found themselves confronted by a strong monastic organisation, under the successor of St. Finbar, whereas at Dublin, Waterford, and Limerick the field had been clear. Around the abbey a native town had sprung up, which was strong enough to maintain itself by the side of the Scandinavian garrison. Once, with the help of a force from Carbery, they defeated a confederacy of Danes belonging to Cork, Waterford, and Wexford. The Ostmen were in quiet possession of Cork for a period long preceding the Anglo-Norman invasion, but they were probably content to take their Christianity from their neighbours, for we do not find that any bishop of this see sought consecration at Canterbury.²⁸

²⁸ The great mine of knowledge about the Irish Scandinavians is Todd's *Wars of the Gaedhill with the Gaill*, in the Record series. I have also used Dasent's *Story of Burnt Njal*, and Anderson's *Orkneyinga Saga*. Haliday's *Scandinavian Kingdom of Dublin*, edited by Mr. J. P. Prendergast, is a good modern book. Worsaae's *Danes and Norwegians* is said to be somewhat fanciful, but it contains information not readily accessible elsewhere.

CHAPTER III.

THE REIGN OF HENRY II

England lays claim to Ireland, 1155

The claims of the Kings of England to Ireland were very vague. They sometimes acted as patrons of the Irish Ostmen, who were not unwilling to follow the example of their Northumbrian kinsmen, but they performed no real function of sovereignty. William the Conqueror and his sons had not time to attend to Ireland, and this applies in an even greater degree to Stephen. Henry II. ascended an undisputed throne, and in the first year of his reign turned his thoughts to the fertile island of the West. Being badly in want of a title, he sent John of Salisbury to Rome for leave to conquer Ireland, to root up the saplings of vice there, and to bring the wild Irish into the way of the true faith. The Pope was Nicholas Breakspeare, known in history as Adrian IV., the only Englishman who ever filled the papal chair. The popes were usually ready to grant boons to kings, if by so doing they could extend their own power, and an English pope must have felt a double pride in conferring favours on a king of England. The mission of John of Salisbury was successful. He brought back the Bull *Laudabiliter* and a gold ring containing a very fine

emerald, intended to be used in Henry's investiture. Empress Maude objected to an Irish expedition, and nothing was done until long after Adrian's death. Henry took the precaution of having the grant confirmed by Alexander III., and there is ample evidence that he annexed Ireland with the entire approbation of that Pope.²⁹

Adrian IV grants Ireland to Henry II

Irish scholars, torn asunder by their love of Rome and their love of Ireland, formerly attempted to prove that Adrian's bull was not genuine; but its authenticity is no longer disputed. The momentous document runs as follows: —

Adrian's bull

‘Hadrian the bishop, servant of the servants of God, to his very dear son in Christ, the illustrious King of the English, health and apostolic benediction:

‘Your magnificence praiseworthily and profitably takes thought how to increase a glorious name on earth and how to lay up a reward of everlasting happiness in heaven, while you are intent, like a Catholic prince, on enlarging the bounds of the Church, on declaring the truth to unlearned and rude peoples,

²⁹ Matthew Paris calls the Irish ‘bestiales.’

and on uprooting the seedlings of vice from the Lord's field. The better to attain that end you have asked counsel and favour of the apostolic see. In which action we are sure that, with God's help, you will make happy progress in proportion to the high design and great discretion of your proceedings, inasmuch as undertakings which grow out of ardour for the faith and love of religion are accustomed always to have a good end and upshot. There is no doubt and your nobility acknowledges that Ireland, and all islands upon which Christ the sun of justice has shone, and which have received the teachings of the Christian faith, rightfully belong to the blessed Peter and the most holy Roman Church. We have, therefore, the more willingly made a faithful plantation among them, and inserted a bud pleasing to God, in that we foresee that it will require a careful internal watch at our hands. However, you have signified to us, my dear son in Christ, that you wish to enter the island of Ireland, in order to reduce that people to law, and to uproot the seedlings of vice there, and to make a yearly payment of a denarius to the blessed Peter out of each house, and to preserve the rights of the churches of that land whole and undiminished.

'We, therefore, seconding your pious and laudable desire with suitable favour, and giving a kindly assent to your petition, do hold it for a thing good and acceptable that you should enter that island for the extension of the Church's borders, for the correction of manners, for the propagation of virtue, and for increase of the Christian religion; and that you should perform

that which you intend for the honour of God and for the salvation of that land; and let the people of that land receive you honourably and venerate you as their lord; the ecclesiastical law remaining whole and untouched, and an annual payment of one denarius being reserved to the blessed Peter and to the most holy Roman Church. But if you shall complete the work which you have conceived in your mind, study to mould that race to good morals, and exert yourself personally and by such of your agents as you shall find fit in faith, word, and living, to honour the Church there, and to plant and increase the Christian faith, and strive to ordain what is for the honour of God and the safety of souls in such a manner that you may deserve at God's hands a heap of everlasting treasure, and on earth gain a glorious name for ages yet to come.'

The papal title

The right of the Pope to dispose of islands rested upon the donation of Constantine, which is now admitted to be as certainly spurious as Adrian's bull is certainly genuine. Adrian may have believed the donation authentic, but in any case, as Irish scholars point out, Constantine could not give what he had never possessed. It is true that Ireland never really formed part of the Roman Empire, but so strong was the idea of an œcumenical sovereignty that Celtic lawyers imagined a state of things in which Ireland would be tributary to the King of the Romans.

This was a mere fiction, but it was one of which Rome would readily take advantage, and the Pope who insisted so sturdily on Barbarossa holding his stirrup was not the one in whose hands any available weapon would be allowed to rust.³⁰

Henry II. finds a pretext for interference

Henry II. was the most powerful prince in Europe, and sooner or later he was almost sure to have a reason for interfering in Ireland. The opportunity was at last afforded by Dermot MacMurrough, King of Leinster, who aspired to reign over all Ireland with the help of Anglo-Norman arms. As early as 1152 Dervorgil O'Melaghlin, wife of Tiernan O'Rourke, Prince of Brefny, being ill-treated by her husband, left him, and placed herself, her cattle, and her furniture under the protection of Dermot. Dervorgil was forty-four and Dermot sixty-two, so that the affair, in spite of a beautiful poem on the subject, was not what would be commonly called romantic. Yet Cleopatra was thirty-nine, when Antonius, at the age of fifty-three, refused to survive her. O'Rourke felt the insult and the loss of the lady, or, at least, of her property, and appealed to Tirlogh O'Connor, King of Connaught and titular King of Ireland. Dermot was compelled to abandon Dervorgil, who survived her husband eleven years, and died as late as 1193, during a pilgrimage to Mellifont Abbey.

³⁰ See the *Senchus Mór*, ii. 225.

On the death of Tirlogh O'Connor his son Roderic became a candidate for the chief sovereignty, but Dermot espoused the cause of the O'Neill candidate, who was successful. The flight or abduction of Dervorgil was certainly not the proximate cause of the Norman invasion, but by placing Dermot in permanent opposition to O'Connor and O'Rourke, it probably contributed to bring it about.

Dermot MacMurrough

In 1166 Dermot, who had made himself odious by his tyranny, was expelled from Leinster by O'Connor and O'Rourke, who demolished his stronghold at Ferns, and transferred his kingship to the next-of-kin. The clergy appear to have been generally favourable to Dermot; and as Adrian's bull, even if not published, could hardly be a secret, it may have been their advice which induced him to go to Henry II. Dermot, though seventy-seven years old, was still active and enterprising, and he sought the king in Aquitaine or Guienne. Henry was too busy to think of going to Ireland himself, but he gave the suppliant a kind of letter of marque in the following terms: – 'Henry, King of England, Duke of Normandy and Aquitaine, and Count of Anjou, to all his faithful English, Norman, Welsh, and Scots, and to all nations subject to his jurisdiction, greeting: When these present letters reach you you will know that we have received into the bosom of our grace and favour Dermot, prince of the Leinstermen. If

anyone, therefore, within the bounds of our power wishes to help his restoration as our man and liege subject, let him know that he has our licence and favour for the purpose.’³¹

Dermod seeks allies in England

Thus armed, Dermod returned to Bristol, which was much frequented by ships from Leinster, and he appears to have been supplied with money by his partisans there. His promise of gold and land at first attracted little attention, but after two or three weeks he was visited by Richard Fitz-Gilbert de Clare, Earl of Chepstow. Earl Richard, whose father had lost most of his lands, lent a favourable ear to Dermod, and undertook to bring an army to Ireland in the spring of 1169. The Irishman promised to give him his daughter Eva, his only legitimate child. According to Norman law Eva would bring the kingdom of Leinster to her husband and children. According to Celtic law the lands belonged to the tribe, and the royal dignity was elective. In this singular contract between MacMurrough and Fitz-Gilbert, we have the key to most of the problems which have made Ireland the despair of statesmen.

³¹ Giraldus, *Ex. Hib.* lib. i. cap. 2.

Earl Richard and his friends

Dermot, however, did not rest his hopes of success upon Earl Richard alone. He went to St. David's, so as to be as near Ireland as possible, and made friends with the bishop, who had two brothers admirably suited for the work in hand. Nesta, the beautiful daughter of Rice ap Tudor, Prince of South Wales, is reported to have been the mistress of Henry I., and to have had two sons by him. The younger of these had also two sons, the Robert and Meiler Fitz-Henry who played a prominent part in the conquest of Ireland. Nesta afterwards married Gerald of Windsor, by whom she had three sons and one or two daughters, and from one or other of her children all the Fitzgeralds, Barrys, Carews, and Cogans are descended. After the death of Gerald, Nesta married Stephen, the castellan of Abertivy, and by him had one son, the famous Robert Fitz-Stephen. Giraldus, who must have known, twice states expressly that Fitz-Stephen had no legitimate child. The historian himself was Nesta's grandson, through her daughter Angareta, who married William de Barry. Robert Fitz-Stephen, and his half-brother, Maurice Fitzgerald, listened readily to MacMurrough, who promised them Wexford and two cantreds of land, if they would help him conquer Leinster.³²

³² In Webb's *Compendium of Irish Biography* is a carefully compiled catalogue of Nesta's children and grandchildren. I have generally followed it, noting, however,

Fitz-Stephen and others land in Ireland, 1169

Robert Fitz-Stephen was a desperate man. Betrayed by his own followers, he had suffered three years' imprisonment among the Welsh, had been released on promising to serve Rice Fitz-Griffith against Henry II., and had agreed to hold Abertivy for the Cambrian and not for the Angevin. Dermot now offered him a loophole to escape from, and he agreed to accept his offers and to invade Ireland. His half-brother, Maurice Fitzgerald, consented to accompany him. Dermot then slipped over to Ireland and sought a refuge among the clergy of Ferns, who entertained him, as the Archdeacon of St. David's carefully notes, to the best of their small ability. It was in the winter of 1168 that MacMurrough returned to Ireland, and in May 1169 Fitz-Stephen and his brother followed with thirty knights of their own kinfolk, sixty men-at-arms, and 300 archers, picked, as Giraldus says, from among the youth of Wales. Three ships carried them all, and they landed safely in Bannow Bay, a shallow inlet which they had probably mistaken either for Waterford or Wexford. The brothers were accompanied by Hervey de Montmorency, who was sent by his nephew, Earl Richard, rather as a spy than as a soldier. On the following day Maurice de Prendergast, whose name still lives at Haverfordwest, brought ten knights

that Fitz-Stephen's children cannot be held legitimate in the face of Giraldus' distinct statement.

and a number of archers from Milford, and landed not far from the same place. As soon as Dermot heard of the adventurers' arrival he sent his son Donald with 500 men to welcome them, and soon followed himself. Donald, surnamed Kavanagh, from having been fostered at Kilcavan, was illegitimate; but that was a matter little considered among the old Irish, and he became the ancestor of those Kavanaghs or MacMurroughs who afterwards claimed the kingship of Leinster and even of Ireland, and who baffled Richard II. and his great army.

They win Wexford

After a smart conflict Fitz-Stephen and MacMurrough mastered Wexford, which was a Danish town. The Irishman's readiness to grant Wexford to the adventurers was very probably caused by the fact that the town had never been really in his power. Perhaps he hoped to get rid of the Normans when he had used them to subdue his enemies. It was evident that Fitz-Stephen and his company could do little more than hold Wexford. If Leinster was to be conquered it could only be by a much larger force. Nevertheless, Fitz-Stephen decided to advance into the country, and was joined by the Wexford Danes, who probably were not slow to learn that the Normans were their kinsmen. With a heterogeneous army of 3,000 men, Dermot and his allies marched towards Ossory. There was a battle in open ground with the Ossorians, and the mail-clad stranger had an easy victory.

Among the slain was a personal enemy of Dermot, and we are told that that savage, 'lifting up the dead man's head by hair and ears, cruelly and inhumanly tore away the nostrils and lips with his teeth.' In the meantime King Roderic had set his army in motion against the invaders, and easily penetrated to the neighbourhood of Ferns. The monastery was surrounded by woods and bogs, and Fitz-Stephen, who was an adept in Welsh warfare, taught the Leinstermen how to make it impregnable with ditches and abattis. Neither party were very anxious to fight, and Dermot made a treaty with Roderic, in which he acknowledged him as chief king, in consideration of being allowed to enjoy Leinster in peace. Giraldus says there was a secret understanding that the adventurers should be sent home as soon as they had pacified Leinster, and that no reinforcements should be brought over.

Earl Richard hesitates. His friends take Waterford

Whatever understanding he might have with O'Connor, Dermot did not soon abandon the hope of more help from Wales. 'We have,' he wrote to Earl Richard, 'observed the storks and swallows; the summer birds have come, and with this west wind have returned. Neither Favonius nor Eurus has brought us your much-desired and long-expected presence.' The Earl had waited for the return of Hervey de Montmorency, and when he brought a favourable report it was still necessary to make at least

some show of consulting Henry II. The King had forbidden him to go to Ireland, but he now sought an audience and begged either the restoration of his estates or leave to carve out a new one for himself. Henry gave an ambiguous answer, which the Earl chose to interpret in his own favour. In May 1170 he sent out Hervey again, accompanied by Raymond Fitzgerald, called Le Gros, a creature of Fitz-Stephen and Maurice, with twenty knights and seventy archers. Raymond landed at the south-eastern angle of the modern county of Kilkenny, just at the point where the united Nore and Barrow flow into the Suir. He intrenched himself at once, and was soon attacked by the Waterford Danes. If Giraldus is to be believed, a panic seized the assailants, of whom 500 were killed, and many taken. Among Raymond's followers was a leper named William Ferrand, who performed prodigies of valour, 'choosing rather to die gloriously than to endure the burden of his disease.' A question arose as to the disposal of the prisoners. Raymond was for sparing, Hervey for slaying. 'The opinion of the latter,' says Giraldus, 'prevailed; the citizens were condemned, and, their limbs having been broken, they were cast headlong into the sea.'

Earl Richard lands, 1170

Earl Richard landed near Waterford on August 23, 1170. The city was taken soon afterwards, and Reginald's tower is particularly mentioned as forming part of the defences. That

tower still stands with one of Cromwell's cannon balls sticking in the wall – a monument of three distinct invaders: the Pagan Northman, the Catholic Anglo-Norman, and the Puritan Englishman. 'Earl Strongbow,' say the Lough Cé annalists with pathetic brevity, 'came into Erin to Dermot MacMurrough to avenge his expulsion by Roderic, son of Tirlogh O'Connor; and Dermot gave him his own daughter and a part of his patrimony; and Saxon foreigners have been in Erin since then.'

The adventurers take Dublin

Waterford and Wexford having fallen, and his daughter Eva having been married to Earl Richard, Dermot, who now aspired to the crown of all Ireland, felt himself strong enough to attack Dublin. The Earl had brought 200 knights and 1,000 other soldiers, so that the allied force was a considerable one. MacMurrough led the army safely through the Wicklow mountains, which were the scene of more than one disaster to Elizabeth's officers. Dermot's auxiliaries had been trained in Wales; and probably understood mountain warfare much better than those who had served in the Netherlands, or even on the Scottish border. Lawrence O'Toole, Archbishop of Dublin, a man revered both by Danes and Irishmen, attempted to make peace between the citizens and their assailants; but Raymond and Milo de Cogan, while their elders parleyed, led a chosen band to the assault. They soon mastered the place; and Hasculph,

with a number of followers and some treasure, escaped to the Orkneys, whence he went to Norway for help. Meath, which for some unexplained reason was in O'Rourke's possession, was next invaded, and Roderic then wrote to upbraid Dermot with having broken his oath by interfering outside the bounds of Leinster. MacMurrough shortly answered that he meant to be monarch of Ireland, and Roderic then killed his son, who was with him as a hostage. The clergy of Armagh assembled in their synod saw or suspected that the invasion was different from all former invasions. They agreed that Ireland had brought a curse on herself by keeping Englishmen in slavery, and they ordered the liberation of all such bondsmen. Henry II. also saw that something extraordinary had happened. He had no fancy for having an independent Norman principality within sight of Snowdon, and he ordered the adventurers to return, strictly forbidding all communication with them in the meantime. Fitz-Gilbert wrote to the King, who was in Aquitaine, protesting that he believed he had the royal licence for what he had done, and that he was ready to be his vassal for all he might gain in Ireland. Raymond was sent with the letter, but Henry kept him a long time in suspense.

The Danes vainly attempt to retake Dublin

At Whitsuntide, 1171, while Earl Richard was waiting for the King's answer, Hasculph returned with sixty ships, containing

a well-armed force, under a berserker called John the Mad. Milo de Cogan had been left governor of Dublin, and he and his brother Richard succeeded after a short fight in routing their assailants. John the Mad was killed, and Hasculph taken while trying to escape across the slob to his ships. The prisoner annoying him by threats of another and more formidable attempt, Milo ordered him to be beheaded. He had, however, spoken truth, for Godred, King of Man, soon appeared with thirty ships, and blocked the mouth of the Liffey, while Roderic, having collected a great army from all parts of Ireland, except the extreme north and south, besieged the city by land. The Earl and his followers being thus shut up in Dublin, Dermot's local enemies besieged Fitz-Stephen in the castle which he had built at Wexford. No help, as the Irish well knew, could be expected from England while Henry II. frowned, and the Normans at Dublin resolved on a great effort to relieve Fitz-Stephen. A sally was arranged, and Roderic's army was dispersed. The Irish had trusted entirely to their numbers, and kept no watch and no order. Such stores of provisions fell into the victors' hands that there was no need to victual Dublin for a year afterwards. Fitz-Stephen, however, was not relieved. By force or stratagem, Giraldus says it was by perjury, the Wexford people obtained possession of his person, and killed or captured his men. Hearing of the disaster at Dublin, the victors burned their town and withdrew with their prisoners to an island in the middle of the harbour. Earl Richard arrived too late for his immediate purpose, and continued his

journey to Waterford, whence he made his way to the King, whom he met near Gloucester. Henry was at first obdurate, but it was finally agreed that Dublin and all other port towns, with the lands adjoining, should be handed over to the King, and that the Earl and his heirs should hold all their other conquests of him and his heirs. While preparations were being made for a royal expedition, O'Rourke once more attacked Dublin, but the Cogans again surprised the Irish camp, and the city was never again seriously threatened by the natives.

Henry II. lands in Ireland, 1171

The last attack on Dublin was about September 1, 1171, and on October 16 the King sailed from Milford Haven with 400 ships, containing 4,000 men, of whom 400 or 500 were knights. He landed next day at Crook, on the right bank of the Suir, some miles below Waterford, which he entered on the 18th. The Wexford men saw that the game was up, and brought Fitz-Stephen to the King, expecting thanks for surrendering the man who had dared to make war without the royal licence. Henry spoke sharply to the prisoner, and ordered him to be kept safely in Reginald's tower. Dermot MacCarthy, chief of Desmond and Cork, did homage at Waterford. Thence Henry went to Lismore, where he stayed two days. From Lismore he went to Cashel, where Donald O'Brien, chief of Thomond and Limerick, followed MacCarthy's example. The minor chiefs of

Munster also made their submission, the only one mentioned by Giraldus being O'Phelan, who ruled a great part of the county of Waterford. Dermod's old antagonist, Donald of Ossory, also did homage. Henry placed governors both in Cork and Limerick, but it is not clear that he visited either of those cities. He then returned along the Suir to Waterford, where he took Fitz-Stephen into favour, and restored Wexford to him. During this progress the King selected three sites for fortresses, which were afterwards built by his son John – Lismore on the Blackwater, and Ardfinnan and Tibraghny on the Suir. The first and last were intended to command the upper tidal waters of the Blackwater and Suir; Ardfinnan secured a passage from the southern sea-board into Central Ireland, and Cromwell recognised its importance nearly five hundred years afterwards.

Henry II. winters at Dublin

Leaving a governor in Waterford, Henry then led the bulk of his army to Dublin, where he received the submissions of O'Rourke and of the chiefs of Leinster and Uriel. Hugo de Lacy and William Fitz-Adelm were sent to meet Roderic at the Shannon, and the monarch of Ireland acknowledged himself a tributary and vassal of the King of England. Ulster still held out; for the submission of the nominal head king can in no way be held to bind the chiefs, much less the people, of his own province, and certainly not those of all Ireland. Giraldus does not venture

to advance any such theory, and yet Hooker, who translated his work in Elizabeth's time, coolly interpolates the statement that 'by him and his submission all the residue of the whole land became the King's subjects, and submitted themselves.' The synod which met at Cashel under the legate's presidency did what was possible for the Church to do in strengthening Henry's pretensions. The King held a court at Dublin during the winter of 1171 and 1172. His temporary palace, erected outside the walls on the ground now occupied by the southern side of Dame Street, was built of polished wicker-work, after the manner of the country. Here he kept Christmas in state, and invited the Irish chiefs to share his feast. They admired the King's grandeur, and were by him persuaded to eat crane's flesh, which the Normans thought a delicacy, but which the Irish had hitherto loathed. The winter was so stormy that there was scarcely any communication with England, and Henry's pleasure in his new acquisition must have been darkened by the sense of impending retribution for the recent murder of Becket.

Henry's warlike preparations. He distrusts the adventurers

From the preparation which he made for the invasion of Ireland, it seems clear that the King profoundly distrusted the adventurers who had insisted on winning him a new realm. Vast stores of provisions, a great number of hand-mills, artisans for

building bridges, horses, and tools for building or trenching, might indeed have been required for a war against the natives. But the Irish had no fortresses, and wooden castles, of which we also read, can only have been intended for attacking the port-towns which Earl Richard had promised to give the King, and which were already in Norman hands. Henry saw enough of Ireland to know that he had really nothing to fear from the adventurers. Dermot MacMurrough was dead before his arrival, and it was clear that Earl Richard would have enough to do in maintaining his wife's monstrous claim without doing anything to offend his own sovereign.

When, therefore, shortly before Easter, 1172, news came from Aquitaine and Normandy that the legates were on their way to inquire into the Canterbury tragedy, Henry lost no time in appointing Hugo de Lacy his representative at Dublin, and in arranging for the safe keeping of Waterford and Wexford. He sailed from the latter port on Easter Monday 1172, having been in Ireland exactly six months.³³

Henry leaves Ireland. He grants Meath to De Lacy

Before leaving the country Henry granted to Hugo de Lacy all the territory of Meath, by the service of fifty knights. This included Westmeath, with parts of King's County and Longford,

³³ The details of Henry's preparations may be studied in Sweetman's *Calendar of Documents*.

and was about 800,000 acres in extent. De Lacy, to whom Hoveden gives the title of justiciar, must be considered as the first Viceroy of Ireland, and he lost no time in advancing a claim which, if successful, would make him one of the most important vassals of the Crown. Tiernan O'Rourke, the one-eyed King of Meath, consented to meet the Pretender at the Hill of Ward. The conference ended in a quarrel, and O'Rourke was killed. Giraldus charges treason upon the Irishman, and the Irish annalists charge it upon the Norman. The important point is that De Lacy was able to make head against the Irish, and that a powerful Norman colony was established by him in the fertile central tract of Ireland. Earl Richard was rather less successfully engaged in fighting for Leinster, which Henry had granted him by the service of one hundred knights, when he was summoned to Normandy, where he did such good service that the King made him Viceroy in De Lacy's room. This was in 1173. It was in the next year, or perhaps in 1175, that Henry had the bulls or privileges of Adrian IV. and Alexander III. promulgated in Ireland. We can hardly suppose that they were previously unknown to the clergy, who so manifestly favoured the Anglo-Normans all through. Perhaps the King's main object in publishing them at this time was to make his own peace with Rome, by ostentatiously announcing that he held Ireland of the tiara, and not in right of his own sword.

Difficulties of the adventurers

When Earl Richard returned to Ireland he found that he had lost ground. The Irish were beginning to recover confidence, and Hervey and Raymond were quarrelling bitterly. The latter was the favourite of the soldiers, who insisted on having him for leader, and he gained some successes over the Danes of Cork and over the MacCarthys. Believing himself worthy of the highest rewards, Raymond asked for the Constablership of Leinster, and for the hand of Basilia, the earl's sister. The new Viceroy was disinclined to grant these terms, and Raymond, whose father had just died, went over to Wales to look after his old inheritance. Hervey thus became second in command, and planned a campaign in concert with the Dublin garrison. Earl Richard accompanied him to Cashel, but the intended junction was not effected. Donald O'Brien's homage to Henry II. did not prevent him from hindering his representative, and at Thurles he surprised and totally defeated the Dublin division. No less than 400 Danes are said by Giraldus to have fallen, which shows that a portion of that nation had accepted the alliance of their Teutonic kindred. The O'Briens were aided by a large contingent from Connaught, but it does not appear that Roderic was himself present. The immediate result of this defeat was the recall of Raymond and his marriage to Basilia. He easily put down a partial revolt of the Waterford and Wexford Danes; and, finding

himself indispensable, remained at Wexford until his bride was brought to him. The honeymoon was scarcely begun when news came that Roderic was wasting Meath, and had penetrated nearly to Dublin. Raymond hastened thither, and the Connaught men retired before him. Castles, according to Giraldus, were already built at Trim and Duleek; but they had not proved strong enough to resist Roderic, and Raymond's first care was to restore and strengthen them. The adventurers, most of whom were already nearly related, were still more closely united by the marriage of Hervey to Raymond's sister Nesta, and of Earl Richard's daughter Aline to William Fitzgerald.

**The adventurers fail to hold Limerick.
William Fitz-Adelm made Viceroy**

Death of Strongbow, 1176

Donald O'Brien was not left long to enjoy his victory. Limerick was taken by a sudden onslaught under Raymond, and the bounds of the colony were advanced as far as they had yet been. Raymond still lingered on the Shannon, where he received a loving letter from his wife, in which she informed him 'that the great molar tooth, which had been hurting her so much, had now fallen out.' He could not read, but his chaplain secretly imparted

the contents of the paper, and he guessed that Basilia alluded to the death of her brother, who had been for some time ill. He hurried to Dublin, and found that Earl Richard was indeed dead. Deprived of their leader, and probably hard pressed by the Irish, the Normans thought it prudent to evacuate Limerick. It was surrendered to Donald O'Brien, who set fire to the city in four places as soon as they were gone. When the King heard of this he remarked that the abandonment of Limerick was the only wise thing that had been done concerning it. The Normans chose Raymond their governor in Earl Richard's room; but he was quickly superseded by William Fitz-Adelm de Burgh, whom Henry sent over as Viceroy with large powers.

Fitz-Adelm depresses the adventurers

According to Giraldus, the new governor did all in his power to depress the adventurers of Nesta's stock. Raymond came to meet him with a chosen band of his relations and friends finely mounted and armed. Instead of being conciliated, the Viceroy muttered to his suite, 'I will soon cut short this pride and disperse these shields.' According to the same authority, he took advantage of the death of Maurice Fitzgerald to defraud that leader's children. Giraldus is partial, but it is easy to see that official governors were from the first jealous of the local magnates, and were disposed to engross all influence. Fitz-Adelm did little or nothing to increase the Norman power in

Ireland, and he was recalled in 1177.

Treaty between Henry II. and Roderic O'Connor

In October 1175, not long before the death of Earl Richard, Henry II. made a treaty with Roderic O'Connor, which must be understood as a kind of declaration of policy. The commissaries who attended at Windsor on Roderic's part were Catholicus, or Keyly O'Duffy, Archbishop of Tuam, the Abbot of Ardfert, and the King of Connaught's Brehon, whom Giraldus calls his Chancellor. The Archbishop of Dublin, St. Lawrence O'Toole, was among the witnesses to the instrument by which Henry granted 'to his liege man Roderic, King of Connaught, as long as he should serve faithfully, to be King under him, ready to serve him as his man, and to hold his land well and peacefully, as he held it before the King of England's entry into Ireland, paying him tribute.' Should he be unable to maintain his authority, the King's forces were to help him. The tribute was to be one in every ten marketable hides. Roderic was not to meddle with those lands which the King held in his own hands, or in those of his barons: that is to say, Dublin with its appurtenances; Meath with its appurtenances, in as ample a manner as Murchat O'Melaghlin had held it; Wexford with its appurtenances, and all Leinster; Waterford and Dungarvan with its appurtenances, and all the lands between the two places. Irish fugitives willing to return into the King's land were to have peace on paying the aforesaid

tribute, 'or by performing the ancient accustomed services for their lands.' Those who would not return were to be coerced by the King of Connaught, who was to take hostages from all whom the King granted to him, and to give hostages on his own part wherever the King required him. No refugees from the King's lands were to be entertained by Irishmen under any pretence. At the same time, as if to mark the fact that Irishmen were his own subjects as well as Normans, Henry appointed Augustine O'Sealbhaigh to the bishopric of Waterford, and sent him, in charge of the Archbishop of Dublin, to be consecrated by the Archbishop of Cashel. This was a confirmation of the Eugenian constitution, and put an end to the succession of the Danish bishops through Canterbury. Henry had no wish to have future Becketts interfering in Ireland. Canterbury was near and Rome was far.

Henry's original policy frustrated by De Courcy

The treaty with Roderic, if we accept it as Hoveden and Benedict have handed it down, shows that a full conquest of Ireland was not intended by Henry II. The possession of the port-towns gave him the command of St. George's Channel, and a control over the trade of the island. He had seen enough to know that a permanent conquest was beyond the power of a feudal army, and his policy was to balance the adventurers, his own creation De Lacy, and the native princes against each other.

Fitz-Adelm, a subtle intriguer with an eye for money, probably seemed a fitter instrument for his purpose than any enterprising soldier. But Fitz-Adelm brought with him to Ireland one of those restless and unscrupulous men of action, who sometimes disconcert the best laid plans of statesmen. John De Courcy is represented by Giraldus as a tall, fair man, of immense strength and extraordinary audacity, an experienced warrior, though often more of a partisan than a general; but religious in his way, and ever ready to ascribe to God the glory of any successful exploit. He was the patron of the monk Jocelin, who wove such a tangled web about St. Patrick, and he carried with him everywhere a tract of St. Columba, which was supposed to point him out as the destined conqueror of Ulster. Seeing that neither gain nor glory could be had under the Viceroy, De Courcy, in January 1177, boldly marched into Ulster with twenty-two knights and 300 chosen men. Among the knights were Almaric St. Lawrence, ancestor of the Howth family, and Roger le Poer, apparently a collateral ancestor of the Powers and Eustaces. In the course of a year or two, though by no means always successful in battle, De Courcy made himself supreme in eastern Ulster. Where they had the advantage of the ground, the natives were too much for the adventurers; but in a fair field a hundred Normans, at least under such a leader as De Courcy, were more than a match for 1,000 Irish. Discipline and steadiness soon gave them the coast, and the castles which they built everywhere enabled them to make war or peace as they pleased. Downpatrick was John de Courcy's

capital.

De Courcy and De Lacy. Castle-building

O'Donlevy, chief king of Uladh, or that part of Ulster now comprised in Antrim and Down, had done homage to Henry II., and imagined that he would be thus secured from invasion. But the King evidently understood the matter differently, for De Courcy had a grant from him of such northern lands as he could conquer. Fitz-Adelm having failed as a Viceroy, Henry now fell back upon Hugo de Lacy, who perhaps dreamed of making himself independent. He distinguished himself by good government from 1177 to 1181, and by showing favour to the Irish; and he married a daughter of Roderic O'Connor without the King's consent. Henry accordingly sent for De Lacy to England, and gave the viceregal authority to John, Constable of Chester. The Lord of Meath succeeded in making his peace, and was soon restored to the government; Robert of Salisbury, a priest, being sent as a spy upon him. De Lacy covered his own district with castles, Trim being his capital. Delvin he granted to William Nugent, his sister Rose's husband, who became the ancestor of the Earls of Westmeath. Other estates he gave to his friends and followers, who founded many of the families of the Pale. The Flemings, Lords of Slane, became the most important of these. Other barons followed the example of De Lacy; and Giraldus mentions that by the year 1182 castles were built at

or near Newtown Barry, Castle Dermot, Leighlin, Timahoe, Athy, Narragh, and other places. The Meath castles, says the chronicler, were too many to mention by name.

John designated as King of Ireland

As early as 1177 Henry had nominated his son John King of Ireland. For this he had the leave of Alexander III., and in 1186 Urban III. actually sent a crown of peacock's feathers set in gold for the King to crown one of his sons, the choice being left to him. The intervening Pope, Lucius III., had opposed the plan, and this may have been the reason why it was never carried out. Or the King may have hesitated to repeat even in John's favour an experiment which had succeeded so ill in the case of his eldest son. The Oxford nomination of 1177 was allowed to take effect only so as to constitute John Lord of Ireland, and this title was afterwards assumed by the Kings of England. In the sixteenth century it was by some taken as evidence that the crown in Ireland was subject to the popes. But the idea of a separate, though subordinate, kingdom was very nearly realised. The acts of the colony were from the date of the Oxford Council executed in the name of 'John, Lord of Ireland, son of the King of England,' and the first Anglo-Norman coinage bore his face.

John sent to Ireland as Viceroy

On March 31, 1185, the King knighted John at Windsor, and on April 24 the latter, who was in his nineteenth year, sailed from Milford Haven, with 300 knights and a large body of troops. The expedition reached Waterford in safety next day, and the neighbouring chiefs flocked to do honour to the King's son, and to give him the kiss of peace. The Anglo-Norman courtiers – young men mostly – pulled their long beards, and they at once departed to the hostile chiefs, Roderic O'Connor, Donnell O'Brien, and Dermod MacCarthy. All chance of conciliating the more powerful and distant potentates was thus taken away. Giraldus Cambrensis was present at Waterford, and he likens John to Rehoboam. The Irish, who had adhered to the invaders since Fitz-Stephen's first landing, were deprived of their lands; the castles were given up to favourites, who did nothing but eat, drink, and plunder; the worst officers were put in the best places, and the men, as a natural consequence, were as bad as their masters, devoted to Venus and Bacchus, but neglectful of Mars. Hoveden adds that John put all the profits of government into his own pocket, and that his soldiers being unpaid were useless in war. The three castles projected by his father were built; but he lost many to the Irish, and De Lacy was suspected of intriguing against him. It is clear that there could be no confidence in a prince whose chief care was to rob and displace the men who had

won his principality for him. The disastrous experiment lasted only eight months, when John returned to England, leaving the government to John de Courcy, who retained power until the death of Henry II. The Lough Cé annalists, who wrote beyond the Shannon, give the following account of John's expedition: – 'The son of the King of the Saxons came to assume the sovereignty of Erin ... afterwards he went across to complain of Hugo de Lacy to his father; for it was Hugo de Lacy that was King of Erin when the son of the King of the Saxons came, and he permitted not the men of Erin to give tribute or hostages to him.' To the Irish bordering on Meath no doubt De Lacy seemed a veritable king. The Four Masters, who were better acquainted with the English theory of government, repeat this; but soften Hugo's title of king into that of the King of England's deputy.

Murder of Hugh de Lacy. The colony continues to extend

In or out of office, De Lacy continued to increase his dominion in Meath, but his career was cut short not long after John's departure. Having encroached upon the lands of the O'Caharneys, he was murdered while building a castle at Durrow by a foster-relation of the injured clan. His death was a great blow to the colonists, but his son Hugo succeeded to scarcely diminished power, and is accused by Giraldus of systematically thwarting De Courcy. Fitz-Stephen meanwhile was carving out

a principality in Munster, where he would be tolerably free from official interference. He and Milo de Cogan were joint grantees of Cork, and the latter married his daughter Catherine to Maurice, son of Raymond le Gros, to whom Dermot MacCarthy had given a portion of North Kerry. From this alliance the Fitzmaurices sprung. It is probable that in granting the land of the O'Connors to a stranger, Dermot gave that over which he had no real authority. The territory immediately round the city of Cork was divided between Fitz-Stephen and Cogan, the former taking that lying to the east, and the latter that lying to the west. Fitz-Stephen's share passed to his sister's son, Philip de Barry. Before the death of Henry II. the country about Cork was studded with castles, but it is impossible to say how far it was really conquered. Intermarriages with the Irish were no doubt common from the first. The example set by Strongbow and by Hugo de Lacy was not likely to want imitators.

No conquest of Ireland under Henry II

The conquest of Ireland by Henry II., as it used to be called, amounts on the whole to this. The coast from Larne to Cork harbour was, at the date of the King's death, strongly held by the invaders, all the ports being in their hands, and the principal points being defended by castles. They were also pretty firmly established on the south side of the Shannon estuary. The rivers of Leinster were in their hands, and the central plain

almost, if not quite as far west as the Shannon. De Courcy had begun to assert his dominion over Monaghan and Armagh. All the Danish towns except Limerick were fully possessed by the conquerors. On the other hand, the Irish were not expelled from any part of the island. The mountains which extend almost uninterruptedly from Dublin to Waterford still sheltered the O'Tooles, the O'Byrnes, the MacMurroughs, the O'Nolans, and other clans. Fitz-Stephen had begun the conquest of what is now the county of Cork, but the Irish were still in force on all sides of the city. The natives generally had recovered in some degree from their first alarm. The first invaders had been trained in mountain warfare, but those who succeeded them were often quite unfit to dispute the possession of hills and woods with the light-armed natives. And there were jealousies between Normans, English, and Welsh, which went far to neutralise the strength of the colony. Had it not been for the dissensions of the Irish themselves, it is probable that they would have confined the invaders to the east coast. It was a quarrel between Dermot MacCarthy and his son which brought the Geraldines to Kerry; disputes among the O'Connors introduced De Cogan, De Lacy, and De Courcy into Connaught; and, though they effected nothing, they paved the way for the De Burgos, to whose founder, William Fitz-Adelm, Henry granted the whole of the western province. The King's troubles with his own sons, with the Holy See, and with France, prevented him from attending to Ireland. It would have been better for the peace of mankind had he made

a real conquest, instead of leaving it to barons, who lost much of their old civilisation, and who disdained to learn anything from the weaker people whom they oppressed.³⁴

³⁴ In narrating the events of Henry II.'s reign, I have generally followed Giraldus Cambrensis, checking him by references to Hoveden and Regan. The *Expugnatio* may be considered a fanciful book in some ways. But if we eliminate everything supernatural, and make some allowance for the writer's prejudices, I see no reason to question his good faith. Of the native Irish he knew little, but the invaders were his neighbours, friends, and relations. Fitz-Stephen and the other descendants of Nesta may be unduly praised, Fitz-Adelm perhaps unduly blamed; but, after all, this is no more than may be said against most historians of their own times. Giraldus was undoubtedly an observer of first-rate power.

CHAPTER IV.

FROM JOHN'S VISIT IN 1210 TILL THE INVASION BY THE BRUCES IN 1315

**John acts as lord of Ireland
under his father and brother**

Richard I. did not interfere with his brother's jurisdiction over Ireland, and this may be the reason why the records of the colony during his reign are so scanty. The invaders, though they fought a good deal among themselves, continued to extend their power, and gained a firm footing in Connaught. Some years before the death of Henry II., Roderic's sons had invited the Anglo-Normans into his kingdom, and in 1183 the last monarch of Ireland retired to the abbey of Cong, where he died in 1198. His brother Cathal Croidéarg, or Charles of the Red Hand, about whom many marvellous stories are told, ultimately made himself supreme; but not without the help of William Fitz-Adelm, who lost no opportunity of advancing the claim given him by Henry's thoroughly unjustifiable grant. Fitz-Adelm, who had made himself master of Limerick, at first opposed

Cathal Croidhearg, but joined him in 1201 and enabled him to triumph over all competitors. The accession of John to the crown of England put an end to the separate lordship of Ireland, but his successors, until the time of Henry VIII., continued to call themselves only lords of Ireland. If Berengaria had had children, it is possible, and even probable, that Ireland would have passed to John's issue as a separate, or at the most a tributary kingdom. The early years of John's reign were much disturbed by a violent feud between the De Lacies and De Courcy. The King favoured the former party, and in 1205 created the younger Hugo Earl of Ulster and Viceroy. He proved an oppressive governor, over-taxing the King's subjects to provide means for his foreign enterprises. The southern colonists, in alliance with some of the natives, defeated the Viceroy near Thurles, and the King began to fear that he had given too much power to one family; for Walter de Lacy continued to rule Meath, while his brother was all-powerful in the north and east. A royal army was accordingly levied, and John prepared to revisit the lordship where he had so signally failed twenty-five years before.

King John visits Ireland

The excommunicated King sailed from Milford Haven with a motley army of mercenaries, under command of Fair Rosamond's son, William Long-sword, and landed on June 20, 1210, at the same place as his father had done. Among his train

were John de Grey, Bishop of Norwich, whom Innocent III. had refused to make Archbishop of Canterbury, and John de Courcy, who had been captured and given up by the De Lacies, and who had suffered a rigorous imprisonment, but was now again in favour with the King. John did not let the grass grow under his feet. On the eighth day after his arrival he was at Dublin, having travelled by Ross, Thomastown, Kilkenny, and Naas. The first effect of his presence was to separate the two De Lacies, and the Lord of Meath sent him the following message: – ‘Walter salutes the King as his liege lord, of whom he holds all he possesses; and prays the King to relax his ire, and suffer Walter to approach his presence; Walter will not plead against the King, but places all his castles and lands in the hands of the King as his lord, to retain or restore as he pleases.’ The messenger added that Walter had lost much by his brother Hugo, and that he left him to the King’s pleasure. It is possible that this was said in consequence of an arrangement between the two brothers. John was not pacified, and prepared to invade both Meath and Ulster. Trim was reached by July 2, and Kells by the 4th, and the Kings of Connaught and Thomond were summoned to take part in the expedition to Ulster. Cathal Croidéarg and Donough O’Brien both obeyed the King’s order, and the royal army proceeded by Dundalk, Carlingford, and Downpatrick to Carrickfergus. The latter place was taken and garrisoned. Hugo de Lacy had already fled into Scotland. The King stayed eight or nine days at Carrickfergus, where he was visited by Hugh O’Neill, who does not appear to

have made any real submission, and then marched by Holywood, Downpatrick, Banbridge, and Carlingford to Drogheda. From Drogheda he again entered Meath, visited Duleek and Kells, and seems to have penetrated as far west as Granard. He was in Dublin by August 18, and back to England before the end of the month, having spent sixty-six days in Ireland. On his return from Ulster he had summoned Cathal Croidéarg a second time, bidding him bring his son 'to receive a charter for the third part of Connaught.' Over-persuaded by his wife, Cathal went to the King alone. John's object may have been to make a hostage of the boy, and he seized instead MacDermot of Moylurg, O'Hara of Sligo, and two other men of importance in Connaught. Carrying these chiefs with him to England, the King left the government of Ireland to Bishop de Grey, who signalled his advent to power by building a castle and bridge at Athlone. William de Braose, who had enormous estates in Ireland, was driven into exile by John, who starved his wife and son to death, and gave his castle of Carrigogunnel on the Shannon to Donough O'Brien.

The Anglo-Normans flock to the King. He erects twelve shires

The Anglo-Norman barons of Ireland flocked to Dublin while John was there, and swore to obey the laws of England. The King divided their country into twelve counties: Dublin, Kildare, Meath, Uriel or Louth, Carlow, Kilkenny, and Wexford in

Leinster; and Waterford, Cork, Kerry, Limerick, and Tipperary in Munster. Every knight's fee was bound to supply a well-armed horseman, and inferior tenants were bound to provide foot-soldiers. The Viceroy was to give a notice of forty days when the feudal array was to muster at Dublin, and serve against the King's enemies for forty days in each year. Ulster and Connaught were not shired, but were afterwards sometimes regarded as counties. Perhaps the nobles of these provinces were supposed to be constantly employed against the Irish. The native chiefs were considered as tributary subjects, but not as tenants. In 1215 John ordered the Archbishop of Dublin to buy enough scarlet cloth to make robes for the Kings of Ireland; and it is clear that they were expected to serve, though the exact measure of the aid rendered may have been left to themselves.

Leinster is divided after Earl Richard's death

When Strongbow died without a son the principality of Leinster fell to his eldest daughter Isabel, who became a ward of the Crown. In 1189 the minor was given in marriage to William Earl Marshal, who thus became Earl of Pembroke and Strigul, and lord of a territory in Ireland, corresponding nearly to the counties of Wexford, Kildare, Carlow, Kilkenny, and part of the Queen's County. He built a castle and incorporated a town at Kilkenny, and died in 1219, transmitting his honours and great power to his son William. The younger William was Viceroy

in 1224, and depressed the De Lacies, allying himself generally with Cathal Croidéarg O'Connor. He died in 1231, leaving all to his brother Richard, who made good his position, although Henry III.'s foreign advisers plotted his destruction. Strongbow's grandson was killed in 1234 by the feudatories who were bound to defend him, and the colony never recovered the blow.

The De Burgos in Connaught

Fitz-Adelm's son, Richard de Burgo, generally called MacWilliam by the Irish, married Una, Cathal Croidéarg's grand-daughter, and procured from Henry III. a grant of all Connaught, except five cantreds reserved for the support of the post at Athlone. From the first the position of the Anglo-Normans in Connaught differed from their position in other parts of Ireland. They were there rather as allies of the native chiefs than as conquerors, and the easy lapse of their descendants into Irish habits is the less to be wondered at. Richard de Burgo obtained a confirmation of his grant in 1226, through the favour of his kinsman, the great justiciar, Hubert, and he soon afterwards made himself master of Galway, which he fortified strongly, and made the chief place of Connaught. After his time the O'Connors never regained possession of it, and the importance of the royal tribe steadily diminished during the whole of the thirteenth century. Richard de Burgo's eldest son Walter married Maud, daughter and heiress of the younger Hugo

de Lacy, who died in 1243, and he thus became Earl of Ulster as well as Lord of Connaught. His son Richard, commonly called the Red Earl, advanced the power of the Anglo-Norman state to the furthest point which it ever attained.

Poverty of the colony under Henry III

Constant war is not favourable to the production of wealth, and it seems probable that no very considerable progress was made in the arts of peace. Tallage was first imposed on Ireland in 1217, in the name of Henry III., but it seems to have yielded little, and a generation later there was equal difficulty in collecting a tithe for the Pope. Innocent IV. ordered that a sum should be so raised for the liberation of the Holy Land, and very stringent letters were sent to Ireland in 1254; but collector Lawrence Sumercote declared that the difficulties were insuperable. The Irish, he explained, never saved anything, but lived riotously and gave liberally to all, and he professed that he would 'rather be imprisoned than crucified any longer in Ireland for the business of the Cross.' The plan of drawing upon Ireland for English or Continental wars was, however, largely practised during the reign of Henry III., and it tended to sap the strength of the colony. Ready money might be scarce, but there were men, and they could be ill-spared from the work of defending their lands against a native race who were ever on the watch to take advantage of their absence or neglect.

Edward I. had not time to attend to Ireland personally

A vast number of documents remain to show that Edward I. took great pains about Ireland. Phelim O'Connor, who died in 1265, may be regarded as the last King of Connaught. His son Hugh did indeed assume the title, and, according to the annalists, 'executed his royal depredations on the men of Offaly, where he committed many burnings and killings;' but his kingship does not appear to have been officially recognised, and the De Burgos were the true rulers. The Red Earl was supreme in the northern half of Ireland; but O'Neill was recognised as King of Tyrone, while his claim to be head of all the Irish in Ireland was denied. O'Cahan was also sometimes given the title of king. O'Donnell was treated with less respect, and a price was set upon his head, which appears to have been actually brought to Dublin in 1283. In 1281 Hugh Boy O'Neill, whom the annalists call 'royal heir of all Erin, head of the hospitality and valour of the Gael,' sided with the English against Donnell Oge O'Donnell, who is called 'King of the north, the best Gael for hospitality and dignity; the general guardian of the west of Europe, and the knitting-needle of the arch sovereignty, and the rivetting hammer of every good law, and the top-nut of the Gael in valour.' A battle was fought near Dungannon, and O'Donnell, who had under him the O'Rourkes and MacMahons, and 'nearly the majority of the Irish

of Connaught and Ulster,' was defeated and slain. Two years later Hugh Boy was killed by the MacMahons. The story of this contest is a good illustration of the hopeless incapacity of the natives for anything like a national combination. If Edward I. had been able to attend to Ireland personally, it is at least probable that he would have conquered the country as completely as Wales.

Frequency of quarrels among the colonists

In 1275, Edward granted the whole of Thomond to Thomas de Clare, who took advantage of the dissensions among the O'Briens, and built the strong castle of Bunratty to dominate the district. The conquest of Thomond was, however, never completed, or nearly completed, nor did the De Clares succeed in establishing themselves like the De Burgos. They might have done so had they not come so late into the field, and their failure was certainly not owing to any exceptional power of combination shown by the Irish. It was rather due to quarrels among the colonists, whose strength was being constantly sapped by taking part in Edward's Scotch wars, and who were not recruited by any considerable immigration. In 1245, the male line of the Earl Marshal was finally extinguished, and the inheritance of Strongbow fell to five sisters, the great grand-daughters of Dermot MacMurrough. Matilda, the eldest, obtained Carlow and carried the hereditary office of Earl

Marshal to her husband, Hugh Bigot, Earl of Norfolk. Joan, the second, received Wexford. Isabella, the third, had Kilkenny, which her descendants sold to the Ormonde family. Sibilla, the fourth, had Kildare for her share. Eva, the youngest sister, married William De Braose; and through her daughter, who was married to Roger Mortimer, became ancestress of most of the royal houses of Europe. As the five daughters of William Earl Marshal were all married, and had all children, the history of Leinster becomes very confusing. Had it remained in one strong hand the Irish would hardly have recovered their ground. But, as Giraldus points out, the 'four great pillars of the conquest, Fitz-Stephen, Hervey, Raymond, and John de Courcy, by the hidden but never unjust judgment of God, were not blessed with any legitimate offspring.' A similar fatality attended many others, including Earl Richard, to whom, and not to Fitz-Stephen, common fame, more true in this case than contemporary history, has attributed the real leadership among the Anglo-Norman invaders of Ireland.

Edward I. weakens the colony by drawing men and supplies from it

In his great campaign of 1296 Edward had much help from Ireland. The Earl of Ulster was among those who led contingents to Scotland, and the names of Power, Butler, Fitzthomas, Wogan, Rocheford, Purcell, Cantoke, and Barry appear among the

leaders. The whole force from Ireland consisted of 310 men-at-arms, 266 hobelers or horsemen with unarmoured horses, and 2,576 foot, including many archers and cross-bowmen. All who went received pardons, but some refused or neglected to obey the royal summons. In 1298 Edward drew provisions from Ireland. His requisition included 8,000 quarters of wheat, chiefly fine flour in casks; 10,000 quarters of oats; much bran, bacon, salt beef, and salt fish; and 10,000 casks of wine. If so much wine could not be got in Ireland, then the Viceroy was to agree with some merchant to bring it from Gascony as quick as possible. Edward used Ireland as a base for operations, or as a recruiting ground, but he never had time to give it much of his personal care. First Wales, then Gascony, then Palestine, then Scotland engrossed his vast energies; but Ireland was left to herself. Without the means to keep order themselves, Viceroys found it necessary to preserve the colony by stirring up dissensions among the Irish. The justiciar, Robert d'Ufford, was sent for by Edward and charged with this evil policy. He answered, that to save the King's coffers, and to keep the peace, he thought it expedient to wink at one knave cutting off another. 'Whereat,' says an old author, 'the King smiled, and bade him return to Ireland.'

Disorders after the death of Edward I

John's imperfect partition of Ireland into shires was still more imperfectly carried out. At the death of Edward I. four out of

his grandfather's twelve counties – namely, Meath, Wexford, Carlow, and Kilkenny – were liberties or exempt jurisdictions in the hands of what Davies calls 'absolute palatines,' claiming and exercising almost every attribute of sovereignty. The Fitzgeralds had acquired similar authority over a portion of Desmond, and the De Clares over a portion of Thomond. Connaught and Ulster were under the De Burghs, in so far as they had been reduced at all, and Roscommon was a royal castle and the head of a separate county. At Randon on Lough Ree was another royal castle, and these were almost the only strongholds of the Crown in Connaught; for Galway was quite subject to the De Burghs. Within their palatinate jurisdictions, the great nobles made barons and knights, appointed sheriffs, and executed justice. The King's writ only ran in the Church lands, and was executed by a separate sheriff. So complete was the distinction, that in the mediæval parliaments knights were separately returned for the counties and for the 'crosses,' as the ecclesiastical jurisdictions were called. The inherent weakness of such a polity was probably aggravated by the suppression of the Templars, who always kept a strong armed force. In 1308 Edward II. called for an account of their lands and revenues, and the barons of the exchequer answered that they could make no proper inquisition. 'On account,' they wrote, 'of the long distances, and of the feuds between certain of the magnates of Ireland, we do not dare to visit the places named, and jurors of the country cannot come to us for the same reason.'

Reasons why the colony declined.

The Bruces invade Ireland

Dissensions among the barons, caused by the weakness and absence of the Crown, were one great cause of the decline of the colony. Another was the policy of Edward I., which left him little time to attend to Ireland, and tempted him constantly to draw supplies of men from thence. A third was the battle of Bannockburn, which allowed victorious Scotland to compete with England for the dominion of the neighbouring island; and the Irish themselves were not slow to adopt the principle that England's difficulty is Ireland's opportunity. In 1315 Edward Bruce landed near Larne with 6,000 men, including some of the best knights in Scotland. Having been joined by O'Neill and the chiefs depending on him, Bruce twice defeated the Red Earl of Ulster, occupied the strongholds of Down and Antrim, and wintered in Westmeath. In the spring he overthrew the Viceroy, Sir Edmund Butler, at Ardsclull, for the Earl of Ulster disdained to serve under the King's representative, and the English armies were therefore beaten in detail. Bruce gained another battle at Kells, wasted all northern Leinster, and then returned to Carrickfergus, where he was joined by King Robert with reinforcements. The Scots went almost where they liked, and Robert Bruce is said to have heard mass at Limerick on Palm Sunday, 1317. They did not cross the Shannon, and seem not to

have gone further south than Cashel. Dublin was not attacked, though the invaders came as near as Castleknock. On Easter Thursday, 1317, Roger Mortimer landed at Youghal with 15,000 men and full viceregal powers, and the Bruces retired before him into Ulster. They had devastated the country, and lost many men from the famine which they themselves had caused.

The Bruces fail to conquer Ireland

The Bruces were descended from Strongbow and from Dermot MacMurrough, and Robert's wife was descended from Roderic O'Connor. The true principles of hereditary succession were not fully accepted, and they might pretend some right to interfere in Ireland. They had been invited by the De Lacies of Meath, who for want of male heirs saw their territory divided between De Verdon and De Mortimer. In the first flush of his victorious advance from the south, Roger Mortimer called the De Lacies before him. They refused to appear, and were proclaimed traitors, but continued to adhere to Edward Bruce's fortunes. The invader, after his brother's departure, remained for more than a year at Carrickfergus, in hopes of being able to take the offensive again, and still retaining the title of King, which he had assumed after his first successes. He had been so often victorious in battle that he despised the colonists, and, against the advice of his Irish allies, resolved to fight once more without waiting for reinforcements from Scotland. John de Bermingham,

at the head of an army which greatly outnumbered the Scots, forced an engagement between Faughard and Dundalk, and Bruce and most of his officers were killed. The remnant of his army, with Walter and Hugo de Lacy, managed to escape to Scotland. The sovereignty of the English Crown in Ireland was never again seriously disputed; but the feudal organisation was shattered by Bruce's invasion, which did nothing to compose the differences already existing among the colonists. John de Bermingham received a grant of Louth with the title of earl, but his great services were soon forgotten, and eleven years after the battle of Dundalk he was murdered by the English of his own earldom.

Horrible cruelties of the Bruces

English and Irish are agreed as to the cruelty and ferocity of the Bruces. Clyn the Franciscan records, in terse and vigorous Latin, that 'Robert Bruce, who bore himself as King of the Scots, crossed Ireland from Ulster, where he landed, almost to Limerick, burning, killing, plundering, and spoiling towns, castles, and even churches, both going and returning.' Clyn was an English partisan, but the same cannot be said of the Lough Cé annalists, who record that 'Edward Bruce, the destroyer of all Erin in general, both foreigners and Gaels, was slain by the foreigners of Erin, through the power of battle and bravery at Dundalk; and MacRory, King of the Hebrides, and MacDonnell,

King of Argyll, together with the men of Scotland, were slain there along with him; and no better deed for the men of all Erin was performed since the beginning of the world, since the Formorian race was expelled from Erin, than this deed; for theft, and famine, and destruction of men occurred throughout Erin during his time for the space of three years and a half; and people used to eat one another, without doubt, throughout Erin.'

The Irish fail to give the Bruces effectual support

There can, however, be no doubt that Edward Bruce came to Ireland on the invitation of the Irish. Donnell O'Neill, claiming to be the true heir to the chief kingship, and the other chiefs, in the famous remonstrance which they addressed to John XXII., informed that Pope that they felt helpless for want of a leader, but were determined no longer to submit like women to Anglo-Norman oppression, and that they had therefore invited over 'the brother of the most illustrious Lord Robert, by the grace of God King of the Scots, and a descendant of the most noble of their own ancestors,' and that they had by letters patent constituted him king and lord. The blood of Roderic O'Connor and of Eva evidently went for something, but the chiefs also believed that Edward Bruce was 'a person of piety and prudence, of a chaste and modest disposition, of great sobriety, and altogether orderly and unassuming in his demeanour.' Scottish historians are not entirely of the same opinion. It is indeed probable that Bruce had

no other idea than to carve out a kingdom with his sword, like a genuine Norman as he was. He had the memory of Earl Richard, of Fitz-Stephen, and of De Courcy to guide him; and if a more modern instance was required, there could be none better than that of his brother Robert.



CHAPTER V.

FROM THE INVASION OF THE BRUCES TO THE YEAR 1346

**The Irish never united. The O'Connors
are almost destroyed by the De Burgos**

The Irish invited Bruce, but they made no regular or general effort in his favour. Their total incapacity for anything like national organisation had forbidden the idea of a native sovereign, and perhaps the majority of them thought one Norman baron no better than another. The year 1316, in which Bruce landed, witnessed the almost total destruction of the O'Connors, the tribe which had last held the chief kingship. Their relationship with the De Burgos, Berminghams, and other Anglo-Normans may be traced in great detail in the annalists. Felim O'Connor, whom the Connaught historiographers call undisputed heir presumptive to the sovereignty of Erin, formed one of those great confederacies which occur so frequently in Irish history, and which so seldom had any results. The O'Kellys, MacDermods, O'Maddens, O'Dowds, O'Haras, O'Kearneys, O'Farrells, MacMahons, and many others were represented; and

the Anglo-Normans, who also mustered in great force, were commanded by the Red Earl's brother, Sir William de Burgo, and by Richard Bermingham, fourth baron of Athenry, at the gate of which town the decisive struggle took place. The Irish were defeated with the loss of something like 10,000 men. Felim O'Connor fell, and his tribe never recovered its position in Connaught. In late times we have O'Connor Don and O'Connor Roe in Roscommon, O'Connor Sligo, O'Connor Kerry near the mouth of the Shannon, and O'Connor Faly in what is now the King's County, but the De Burgos became supreme in Connaught.

The Irish recover ground under Edward II. and his successors

In other parts of Ireland the Celts were more successful. In 1317 or 1318 the O'Carrolls gained a victory over Sir Edmund Butler, but Clyn places his loss at about two hundred only. More important was the battle of Disert O'Dea, in which Richard de Clare was defeated and slain. This fight destroyed the pretensions of the De Clares, and the O'Briens remained supreme in Thomond as long as such supremacies lasted anywhere. In Leinster, too, the Irish became more and more troublesome, and Clyn unwillingly records successes of the O'Nolans and O'Tooles over the Poers and other settlers. The dissensions of the colonists were yet more fatal than the prowess of the natives.

Eva's descendants were for ever fighting among themselves, and it was the Red Earl's jealousy of Sir Edmund Butler which prevented a united effort from being made against Bruce. 'After having violently expelled us,' wrote the Irish to John XXII., 'from our spacious habitations and patrimonial inheritances, they have compelled us to repair, in the hope of saving our lives, to mountains and woods, to bogs and barren wastes, and to the caves of the rocks, where, like the beasts, we have long been fain to dwell.' The close of Edward II.'s reign saw them everywhere ready to descend from their hills, and to emerge from their woods. For nearly two hundred years the history of Ireland is in the main a history of Celtic gains at the expense of Anglo-Normans and Englishmen; if, indeed, anarchy can rightly be accounted gain to any race or community of men.

The last Earl of Ulster is murdered, 1333. The De Burgos and other Anglo- Normans assume Irish names and habits

In 1326 the Red Earl of Ulster retired into the monastery of Athassel, where he died soon afterwards. His great power descended to his grandson William, who was murdered at or near Carrickfergus in 1333 by the Mandevilles and other Ulster colonists. By his wife, Maud Plantagenet, great-granddaughter of Henry III., he left one child, Elizabeth, who was only a few months old at the date of his murder. Twenty years

afterwards she married Lionel Duke of Clarence, and became ancestress of the Tudors and Stuarts. The Earldom of Ulster thus ultimately merged in the Crown. But the Irish De Burgos refused to acknowledge a baby, who, as a royal ward, would be brought up independently of them; and they preferred to follow the sons of Sir William, the Red Earl's brother. William the elder assumed the title of MacWilliam Uachtar, or the Upper, took all Galway for his portion, and became ancestor of the Clanricarde family. His brother, Sir Edmund, as MacWilliam Iochtar, or the Lower, took Mayo, and founded the family which bears that title. They threw off their allegiance to England, and became more Irish than the Irish. They reappear in the sixteenth century under the modern name of Burke. About the same time several other Anglo-Normans assumed Irish names. The Stauntons became MacAveelys; the Berminghams MacFeoris; the D'Exeters, MacJordans; the Barretts, MacAndrews, MacThomins, MacRoberts, and MacPaddins; the Nangles, MacCostelloes; the Mayo Prendergasts, MacMaurices. The De Burgos themselves had many subordinate branches, each with its peculiar Irish name, as MacDavid, MacPhilbin, MacShoneen, MacGibbon, MacWalter, and MacRaymond. Nor was the practice confined to Connaught. Some of the Leinster Fitzgeralds became MacThomases and MacBarons; and some of the same house in Munster were transfigured into MacGibbons, MacThomaisins, and MacEdmonds. Many other Anglo-Normans or English families were more or less

completely transformed in the same way. It is only necessary to mention that the Wesleys or Wellesleys, who gave England its greatest captain, were sometimes called MacFabrenes; and that the Bissetts of Antrim, whose connections in Scotland gave the Tudors such trouble, may still be traced as Makeons. In the district near Dublin, which got the name of the English Pale, some Irish residents took English names, and the practice was encouraged by a statute of Edward IV. There is probably no country in Europe where the population is so thoroughly mixed as it is in Ireland.

Edward III. creates three great earldoms: Kildare, Desmond, and Ormonde

As the Earls of Ulster disappear, other families attain prominence, and the earlier Tudor history is mainly occupied with the struggles of three earldoms, created in the first half of the fourteenth century. The name Geraldine, to which Giraldus Cambrensis gave a more extended signification, was in later times confined to the descendants of Maurice Fitzgerald, one of Nesta's many sons. One branch was firmly settled in Kildare before the death of Henry II., and in the reign of Edward I. the head of it was John Fitz-Thomas, whose dissensions with William de Vesci, Lord of Kildare, ended in an appeal to the King, and a challenge to the trial by combat. Fitz-Thomas was the challenger, and on his adversary failing to appear, he received

a royal grant of De Vesci's lands. In 1316 Edward II. created him Earl of Kildare, and the Duke of Leinster is descended from him. During most of the fifteenth century, and for the first third of the sixteenth, this was on the whole the most powerful family in Ireland. The Earls of Kildare commanded the whole strength of that county, and its proximity to Dublin often enabled them to control the government. Meath was too much divided for its proprietors to act as a counterpoise, and the strength of the rival house of Ormonde lay at a distance from the capital, and was exposed to attacks from another branch of the Geraldines, whose chief was created Earl of Desmond in 1329. The Desmonds first rose at the expense of the MacCarthy's in Kerry. A marriage with the heiress of Fitz-Anthony brought them the western half of the county Waterford and other large estates. This lady's son married the heiress of the Cogans, and her great property in Cork was added to the rest. The Desmonds never became quite so completely Hibernicised as the De Burgos; but they attained something very like independence, and more than once proved too strong for the government. The third great earldom was founded in the person of Edmund Butler, who was created Earl of Carrick in 1315; the better known title of Ormonde being conferred on his son James in 1328. The founder of the family was Theobald Fitz-Walter, who accompanied Henry II. to Ireland, and was by him made hereditary butler with a grant of the prisage of wines. The name of office was adopted by his descendants, who derived great advantage from the grant.

Ormonde is properly the northern part of Tipperary, but the earls became palatine lords of nearly all the county, and owners of vast estates in Kilkenny and Wexford. Their principal castles were Kilkenny, Gowran, Carrick-on-Suir, and Arklow. The possession of the latter place gave them ready access to England, and through all turns of weal and woe they ever remained faithful to the Crown. If regard be had to the length of time that it retained eminence, or to the average ability of its chiefs, or to its comparative civilisation in rude times, the House of Ormonde must be accounted the most distinguished of the Anglo-Norman families of Ireland.

Towns in Ireland: Dublin and Drogheda

The native Irish had no regular towns. The Anglo-Normans took possession of those founded by the Ostmen, which were all on the coast, and founded many others, of which only three or four, and those not the most important, were at a distance from navigable rivers. Athassel in Tipperary is sometimes called a town, but it never became a municipality, and can have been little more than an aggregation of poor houses about the great monastery, and there may have been other similar cases. Dublin obtained its first charter from Henry II. in 1171 or 1172, and Drogheda from Henry III. in 1229.

‘Dublin and Drogheda,’ says the historian of the Irish capital, ‘were neither distinctly English nor Irish. Their citizens, as tax-

contributing and acknowledged subjects of England, relied on her for protection against oppressive Anglo-Norman nobles and hostile natives. The Irish – unless Anglicised – had no legal part in these communities, but continuous mutual intercourse was sustained by the advantages derived from traffic.’ ‘In our documents,’ adds the same writer, ‘Scandinavians or Ostmans but rarely appear, although in 1215 the latter people were of sufficient importance to have been associated with the English of Dublin by King John as parties to an inquiry held there by his justiciary. The proportion of the various national elements cannot be absolutely determined by the forms of names;’ for many names originated in personal peculiarities, many were translated from one language to another, and many Irishmen became denizens, and adopted an English patronymic. The ‘Irish town’ which exists outside the old bounds of Dublin, Limerick, Kilkenny, Clonmel, and other places, doubtless perpetuates the memory of a time when the natives congregated in the neighbourhood of civic communities to which they did not belong.³⁵

Other towns: Limerick, Waterford, and Cork the chief

What has been said of Dublin and Drogheda applies to the

³⁵ The quotations are from Gilbert’s *Historic and Municipal Documents of Ireland*, pp. xxviii. and xxx.

other cities and towns of Ireland. Limerick received its first charter from John in 1197, Waterford from the same prince in 1206, and Cork from Henry III. in 1242. These were the chief centres of trade and of English law in the south of Ireland. The less important municipalities owed their origin generally to some great noble, the Crown afterwards adopting them and granting fresh privileges. Kilkenny received a charter from the Earl Marshal between 1202 and 1218. New Ross, well situated at the junction of the Nore and Barrow, belonged to the same great man, and excited the jealousy of Waterford at least as early as 1215. Clonmel was included in a grant made by Henry II. to Otho de Grandison. It passed into the hands of the De Burgos, who probably incorporated it, and who received a royal grant to hold a fair there in 1225. Fethard, Callan, Gowran, and other inland towns were of less consequence, but were still distinctly English in origin and character. Youghal and Kinsale were also corporate towns. The latter received a charter from Edward III. in 1333, and the former, which had been long identified with the Desmond family, seems not to have been regularly incorporated till 1462. The Kinsale charter recites that the town was surrounded by Irish enemies and English rebels, and that the burgesses were worn out in repelling the same. The mediæval kings commonly granted the customs and tolls of loyal towns to be expended by the inhabitants in repairing their walls.

Galway

Galway has a history of its own. The O'Connors had a fortified post there before the Anglo-Norman invasion, and it soon attracted the attention of the invaders. In 1232 it was for the first time taken by Richard de Burgo, who lost it once, but recovered it and made it the capital of his province. The building of the walls was begun about the beginning of the reign of Edward I., and murage charters were granted probably by that king, and certainly by Edward III. and Richard II. A charter of incorporation was granted in 1396, but the names of certain chief magistrates, provosts, portreeves, and sovereigns, are preserved from 1274 to 1485, when the first mayor took office. Fourteen English families, afterwards known as the tribes of Galway, engrossed civic power, and from 1485 to 1654 every mayor, with a single doubtful exception, was chosen from among them. When the De Burgos turned Irish and renounced their allegiance, the loyal citizens soon learned to treat them as enemies, and in 1518 the corporation resolved that no inhabitant should receive into his house 'at Christmas, Easter, nor no feast else, any of the Burkes, MacWilliams, the Kellys, nor no sept else, without licence of the mayor and council, on pain to forfeit 5*l.* that neither O nor Mac shall strut nor swagger through the streets of Galway.' Their great enemies were the O'Flaherties of Iar-Connaught, and it is said the prayer 'from the ferocious O'Flaherties, good Lord, deliver

us,' was once inscribed over the west gate of the town. Athenry, which was built by the Bermingham family, was long and closely connected with Galway. It received a murage charter in 1312.³⁶

Anglo-Norman families of importance

Besides the three great earldoms, there were several Anglo-Norman families who continued to have considerable importance in Tudor times. Robert le Poer, or De Poher, received a grant from Henry II., which made his descendants, now generally called Power, supreme in the eastern half of the county Waterford. In the middle ages they were often at war with the citizens of Waterford. Their chief seat was Curraghmore, and they are represented, through a lady, by the Marquis of Waterford. The western half of the same county, which came by marriage to the Desmonds, fell to the descendants of the seventh earl's second son, known as the Fitzgeralds, of Decies, and seated at Dromana. The Fitzmaurices, descended from Raymond le Gros, occupied that part of north Kerry which is still called Clanmaurice. They became Barons of Lixnaw, and are represented by the Marquis of Lansdowne. The family of the White Knight was descended from Gilbert, eldest son of

³⁶ Hardiman's *History of Galway* contains as much as most readers will care to know about that town. The following distich makes it possible to remember the tribes: —
Athy, Blake, Bodkin, Browne, Deane, Darcy, Lynch, Joyce, Kirwan, Martin, Morris,
Skerrett, French. To which Ffont or Faunt must be added

John More Fitzgerald by his second wife, Honora O'Connor; his half brother by Margery Fitz-Anthony being the first Earl of Desmond. The White Knights were called Macgibbon and Fitzgibbon, and their memory is preserved by the barony of Clangibbon, in the county of Cork. From John, the second of Honora O'Connor's sons, is descended the Knight of the Valley, or of Glin on the Shannon. Maurice, the third brother, was the first Knight of Kerry. Another branch of the Fitzgeralds, known as hereditary seneschals of Imokilly, were settled in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries at Castle Martyr. The Barrys, descendants of Nesta as well as the Geraldines, were settled in that part of the county of Cork called Barrymore; and the Roches were established soon after the first invasion about Castletown-Roche, and Fermoy. Of the families who obtained portions of De Lacy's great territory, the most important were the Nugents, Barons of Delvin, and the Flemings, Barons of Slane on the Boyne. The Plunkets, who are supposed to be of Danish origin, were in the middle ages settled chiefly in Meath; and there they are still. They became Barons of Killeen, Dunsany, and Louth. The Prestons, Viscounts of Gormanston, and the Barnewalls, Barons of Trimleston, may also be noticed; but all the families of the Pale were overshadowed by the House of Kildare.

The colony steadily declines under Edward III

So far as the English colony in Ireland is concerned, the long

reign of Edward III. must be regarded as a period of decay. The murder of the last Earl of Ulster in 1333, and the consequent secession of the De Burghs, hastened the destruction of a fabric which had always hung loosely together. The sons of Hugh Boy O'Neill, who was killed in 1283, established themselves firmly in Eastern Ulster, and undid nearly all the work of De Courcey and his successors. They gave to Antrim the name of Clan-Hugh-Boy, or Clandeboye, as it is now written. Only the Savages maintained themselves in Ardes; and the MacQuillins, a family of Welsh origin, between the Bush and the Bann, in the district afterwards called the Route. The three royal fortresses which bridled Connaught, Athlone, Roscommon, and Randon, all fell into the hands of the Irish. In Leinster also the natives rapidly gained ground. Lysaght O'More formed a confederacy of nearly all the midland tribes, and expelled the settlers from the district between the Barrow and the Shannon. His career was short, but his work was lasting. 'In 1342,' says Clyn, 'he was killed when drunk by his own servant. He was a rich and powerful man, and honoured among his own people. He expelled nearly all the English from his lands, and burned eight of their castles in one evening. He destroyed Roger Mortimer's noble fortress of Dunamase, and usurped the lordship of his own country. He was a servant, he became a lord; he was a subject, he became a prince.' Bunratty Castle in Clare was dismantled by the O'Briens and Macnamaras, and a branch of the former established themselves in Tipperary. Of William Carragh

O'Brien, of Aherlow, one of the chiefs of this sept, Clyn gives a very unflattering account. 'He was,' he declares, 'a bad and perverse man who lived ill and died ill, passing all his time in waylayings, thefts, spoils, and murders.'

Dissension rife among the colonists

The constant quarrels of the colonists, and the corruption of their officials, laid them open to the attacks of the natives, and the state of Ireland attracted so much attention that the Parliament held at Westminster in 1331 advised the King to cross the Channel himself. Edward III. never had much time to attend to Ireland, but he seems to have been aware that he had duties in the matter. In 1338 he decreed that none but Englishmen born should fill legal offices; but this did not mend matters, and the administration of justice continued to be as corrupt as ever. The new comers married in Ireland, and were as ready to job for their children as if they had been descended from the first colonists. In 1341 the King ordered that Englishmen with estates in England should be preferred, but the supply of such men was necessarily limited. The main cause of the corruption prevalent was no doubt the poverty of the Crown. Officials were ill paid, or not paid at all, and they supported themselves by embezzling funds or by selling justice. An unjust proposal to increase the revenue by resuming royal grants naturally aggravated every evil, and the English by blood

were arrayed against the English by birth. Sir John Morris, the deputy who was ordered to carry out the new policy, summoned a Parliament to meet at Dublin in October, 1341. But Maurice Fitz-Thomas, first Earl of Desmond, persuaded a large section of the nobility to ignore the writs, to attend a rival assembly at Kilkenny, and to draw up a remonstrance addressed to the King. The malcontents wished to be informed how a governor without military skill could rule a land where war never ceased, how an official could become quickly rich, and how it came about that the King was never the richer for Ireland? Edward abandoned the intention of resuming the grants, but subsequent events show that he did not really forgive Desmond.

D'Ufford's futile attempts to recover the Earldom of Ulster

Ralph d'Ufford had married Maud Plantagenet, widow of the murdered Earl of Ulster, and in 1344 he was sent over as Viceroy with very large powers. One of his objects was to resume possession of Ulster for the benefit of his step-daughter, the royal ward; but he totally failed in obtaining rent out of the lands, or in ousting those who had seized them. After chastising the Irish in the neighbourhood of Dublin, d'Ufford resolved to invade Ulster with a regular army. The MacArtanes attacked him at the Moyrie Pass, and he narrowly escaped annihilation. Having cut his way through with the help of the settlers in Louth and

Monaghan, he made his way into the northern province, but no permanent results followed. Desmond and others having refused to attend his Parliament, the Viceroy went to Kerry, took Castle Island, and hanged its principal defenders. He imprisoned the Earl of Kildare and seized his estates, and then took action upon a bond executed in 1333, by which twenty-six of the chief men of the colony became bound for Desmond's good behaviour. Many of the sureties had aided the Viceroy, but he, nevertheless, seized their lands. The Earl of Ormonde and two more were the only exceptions. The ruin caused by this policy was out of all proportion to the good, and in the history of the English in Ireland no one has a worse name than Sir Ralph d'Ufford, except perhaps his high-born wife, whose resentments were supposed to guide him. His hand was as heavy against the Church as against the temporal nobles. The annalist Pembridge, who was a contemporary, declares that he brought bad weather to Ireland, and that it lasted all his time. 'On Palm Sunday,' says the same writer, 'which was on April 9, 1346, Ralph d'Ufford died, whose death was very much lamented by his wife and family; but the loyal subjects of Ireland rejoiced at it, and both the clergy and laity for joy celebrated a solemn feast at Easter. Upon his death the floods ceased, and the air again grew wholesome, and the common people thanked God for it.'

CHAPTER VI.

FROM THE YEAR 1346 TO THE ACCESSION OF HENRY VII

**Lionel, Duke of Clarence, is not
more successful than D'Ufford**

Lionel holds a Parliament at Kilkenny, 1367

The Crown did nothing for Ireland. Torn by intestine quarrels, and denied a just government, the colony grew yearly weaker. Many of the settlers found their position intolerable, and, in spite of severe ordinances, absenteeism constantly increased. In 1361 Edward summoned to Westminster no less than sixty-three non-resident landowners, including the heads of several great abbeys, who derived revenues from Ireland and gave nothing in return. They were ordered to provide an army suitable for the King's son Lionel, Duke of Clarence and Earl of Ulster by marriage, who proceeded to Ireland as Viceroy. He was accompanied by his wife, but failed, as D'Ufford had done, to obtain any profit from her lordship of Ulster, and was scarcely successful even

against the clans near Dublin. The O'Byrnes and O'Tooles cut off many of his English soldiers, and the Duke was obliged to seek aid from the more experienced colonists. Like many governors who have come to Ireland with great pretensions, Lionel found his position most humiliating, and he spent a great part of his time in England. His authority was delegated to deputies, and the feuds between English by blood and English by birth ran higher than ever. In 1367 he returned and summoned a Parliament, whose enactments gave legal sanction to the fact that the King was no longer lord of more than a comparatively small portion of Ireland.

The statute of Kilkenny contains a great many rather heterogeneous rules. What makes it of such great importance is its formal recognition of the existence of an English Pale, and of a hostile Irish people outside it. The word Pale may not have been in use for a century later, but the thing was fully established.

Composition of the Parliament of Kilkenny

The Parliament of Kilkenny did not, however, confine its attention to the narrow limits of the 'four obedient shires.' The distinction between English and Irish land was conceded, but it was still hoped that most of the shireland would be preserved to English law. The sheriffs or seneschals of ten counties or liberties, comprising all Leinster, except the modern King's and Queen's Counties, as well as Tipperary and Waterford, were

required to produce their accounts at Dublin; but those of Connaught, Kerry, Cork, and Limerick were excused on account of distance, and were required only to attend commissioners of the exchequer when they came to their bailiwicks, and to render an account to them. Ulster, the Duchess of Clarence's patrimony, is not even mentioned by her husband's Parliament. Of the composition of that assembly we have no record, but it was attended by the Archbishops of Dublin, Cashel, and Tuam, and by the Bishops of Waterford and Lismore, Killaloe, Ossory, Leighlin, and Cloyne. The Archbishops of Cashel and Tuam and the Bishop of Killaloe were Irishmen; the rest were of English race, and some of them born in England.

The Statute of Kilkenny endeavours to separate the two races

The statute begins by reciting that for a long time after the conquest the English in Ireland spoke English, and in general behaved like Englishmen; but that of late years many had fallen away and adopted the Irish language and habits, whereby the King's authority and the English interest were depressed, and the Irish enemy 'against reason' exalted. In order to remedy this marriage, fosterage, gossipred, and even concubinage with the Irish was declared high treason. Supplying horses and armour to Irishmen at any time was visited with like penalties, and so was furnishing them with provisions in time of war. Englishmen and

even Irishmen living among the English were to speak English, to bear English names only, and to ride and dress in the English fashion, on pain of forfeiture until they should submit and find security. If they had no lands they might lie in prison till security was forthcoming. Special penalties were provided for offenders who had 100*l.* a year in land. The English born in Ireland and in England were to be in all respects equal, and were not to call each other English hobbe or Irish dog, on pain of a year's imprisonment and a fine at the King's pleasure. War with the Irish was inculcated as a solemn duty, and the practice of buying off invasions was condemned. The end aimed at was that Irish enemies should be finally destroyed, and many minute rules were made for arming the colony properly. The rude Irish game of hurling was discountenanced, and the borderers were enjoined to make themselves fit for constant war by practising such gentlemanlike sports as archery and lance-play. Imprisonment and fine were to follow a neglect of these precepts. Provision was made to prevent the Irish from forestalling the markets by establishing fairs of their own, and from grazing their cattle in the settled districts. Very severe regulations were made against Irish hangers-on – pipers to wit, story-tellers, babblers, and rhymers, all of whom acted habitually as spies. The keeping of kerne and idlemen, armed or unarmed, at the expense of other people, was sternly forbidden, and qualified as open robbery. It became, nevertheless, the greatest and commonest of all abuses. Private war among the English was to be punished as high treason, and

so was the common practice of enticing friendly Irishmen to acts of violence.

The Statute of Kilkenny respects the Church, but makes distinctions

The rights and privileges of Holy Church were jealously guarded by the Parliament of Kilkenny. Persons excommunicated for infringing her franchises were to be imprisoned by the civil power until restitution was made. Tithes were specially protected, and the excommunicated were not to be countenanced by King or people. But the distinction between the hostile races was maintained in matters ecclesiastical. No Irishman was to be admitted by provision, collation, or presentation among the English. Such preferments were declared void, and the next presentation was to lapse to the Crown. Religious houses situated among the English were strictly forbidden to receive Irishmen, but Englishmen by birth and by blood were given equal rights. The Irish prelates present probably found no difficulty in accepting these principles, for they might, and did, retaliate by refusing to receive English clerks in Irish districts. The Archbishops and Bishops assembled at Kilkenny lent a special sanction to the statute by agreeing to excommunicate all who broke it, and they declared such offenders duly excommunicated in advance.

Effects of the Statute of Kilkenny

Sir John Davies, with less than his usual accuracy, has declared that 'the execution of these laws, together with the presence of the King's son, made a notable alteration in the state and manners of the people within the space of seven years, which was the term of this prince's lieutenancy.' Now, the Statute of Kilkenny was not passed till 1367, and Lionel died in 1368. The Act of Henry III., on which Davies chiefly founded his statement, says the land continued in prosperity and honour while the Kilkenny laws were executed, and fell to ruin and desolation upon their falling into abeyance. But the annalists tell a different story, and it is not easy to say what those fat years were. In 1370, only three years after the passing of the much vaunted statute, the Earl of Desmond and others were taken prisoners by the O'Briens and Macnamaras, and the deputy, Sir William de Windsor, was obliged to leave the O'Tooles unchastised in order to hurry to the defence of Munster. Newcastle, within a day's ride from Dublin, was taken and dismantled. The judges could not get as far as Carlow. In 1377 the O'Farrells gained a great advantage over the English of Meath. The general result of the fighting during the ten years which followed the Parliament of Kilkenny was that the Irish retained possession of at least all which they had previously won. What the statute really did was to separate the two races more completely.

Edward III. weakens the colony by drawing men from it

Edward III. repeated his grandfather's mistake, and drew away many of the colonists to his Scotch and Continental wars. An Anglo-Irish contingent fought at Halidon Hill, and it was while making preparations for that campaign that the Earl of Ulster lost his life. Ireland was also well represented at Crecy, and many brave men fell victims to disease at Calais. The Viceroy's sent over from time to time seem to have been regarded as licensed oppressors, and it is recorded of many that they left Dublin without paying their debts. Sir Thomas Rokeby, who was Deputy in 1349 and 1356, is praised by the contemporary chronicler Pembridge for beating the Irish well, and for paying his way honestly. 'I will,' he said, 'use wooden cups and platters, but give gold and silver for my food and clothes, and for the men in my pay.' That this golden saying, as Davies calls it, should have been thought worth recording shows what the general practice was. The three great pestilences which ravaged England ran their course in Ireland also. It was to the first of these visitations that the annalist Clyn succumbed. 'I have,' he records, 'well weighed what I have written, as befits a man who dwells among the dead in daily expectation of death; and lest the writer should perish with the writing, and the work with the workman, I leave parchment for a continuation, if by chance any of the race of Adam should

escape this plague and resume my unfinished task.' On the whole, the reign of Edward III. must be regarded as one of the most disastrous in the annals of the English in Ireland.

Richard II. determines to visit Ireland

His first visit, 1394

The reign of Richard II. is mainly remarkable for the King's two visits to Ireland. But that step was not taken until many others had failed. James Butler, third Earl of Ormonde, was Viceroy when the old King died. He continued in office, and held a Parliament at Castle Dermot, whose deliberations were interrupted by an invasion of Leinster on the western side. The O'Briens were bought off with 100 marks, but there were only nine in the treasury, and the residue was supplied by individuals who gave horses, a bed, or moderate sums of money. Ormonde resigned an office which there was no means of supporting properly, and the Earl of Kildare refused the post. In 1380 Edmund Mortimer, Earl of March, who claimed Ulster through his wife Philippa, the daughter of Duke Lionel, agreed to accept the burden for three years. He covenanted for 20,000 marks and for absolute control over the revenue of Ireland. The Irish scarcely ventured to oppose him openly; and he recovered

Athlone, built a bridge at Coleraine, put down rebels in southern Leinster, and might have extended his power still further had he not died of a chill, caught in fording a river near Cork. Ormonde and Desmond refused to accept the vacant government, and the Irish continued to enlarge their borders. In 1385 Robert de Vere, Earl of Oxford, the King's favourite and grandson of Ralph d'Ufford and the Countess of Ulster, was appointed Viceroy for life, and created first Marquis of Dublin, and then Duke of Ireland. All the attributes of royalty, such as the right to coin money and issue writs in his own name, were conferred on him, and he undertook to pay the King 5,000 marks a year, which the latter agreed to remit until the conquest of Ireland was complete. De Vere did not visit Ireland; but the government was carried on in his name for some years, during which the colony grew weaker and weaker. Nor did his disgrace make any more difference than his appointment had done. Limerick and Cork could scarcely defend themselves. Waterford was harassed by the Le Poers and their Irish allies. Towns in Kildare were burned, and the English Bishop of Leighlin was unable to approach his diocese. Galway threw off its allegiance, and sought the protection of MacWilliam. In 1391 the Earl of Ormonde was again persuaded to undertake the government with a salary of 3,000 marks; but he could do little more than temporise. Payments to the Irish were frequent, and as they constantly advanced the dispossessed settlers carried the story of their woes to England. Proclamations against absentees were of small effect, and at last the King

determined to go himself. He landed at Waterford on October 2, 1394, with 4,000 men at arms and 30,000 archers. As soon as Art MacMurrough, whom the Leinster Irish accepted as their king, heard of Richard's arrival, he attacked New Ross, 'burned its houses and castles, and carried away gold, silver, and hostages.'

Richard has but little success

Richard II.'s army, augmented as it was by the forces of the colony, was the largest seen in Ireland during the middle ages, and has hardly been exceeded in modern times. William III. had about 36,000 at the Boyne. Nothing was performed worthy of so great a host or of the King's presence. One division of the royal army was defeated with great loss by the O'Connors of Offaly, and another by the O'Carrolls. Richard saw that his troops were unfit for war in bogs and mountains, and could not but confess that the natives had many just causes of complaint. He adopted a conciliatory policy, and induced O'Neill, O'Connor, MacMurrough, and O'Brien, as representatives of the four royal Irish races, to do homage and to receive the honour of knighthood at his hands. These four, and a great number of other chiefs, bound themselves to the King by indenture; but no money was actually paid, and for all practical purposes Caligula's shells were quite as good a badge of conquest. The German princes had a right to say that Richard was not fit for empire, since he had been unable to subdue his rebellious subjects of Ireland. He

remained nine months in the island, and left the government to Roger Mortimer, Earl of March, heir-presumptive to the Crown, and claiming to be Earl of Ulster in right of his mother, the only child of Lionel, Duke of Clarence.

The Irish grow continually stronger. Richard's second visit, 1399

Besides the earldom of Ulster, Mortimer claimed enormous estates all over Ireland, but possession had been completely divorced from feudal ownership. He attacked the Wicklow clans, but was defeated with loss. In 1398 he made a final attempt to recover some portion of his Leinster inheritance, but was defeated and slain in Carlow by the O'Tooles, O'Nolans, and Kavanaghs. In the following year Richard again visited Ireland in person. His army was nearly as large as on the first occasion, and vast quantities of stores had been collected. The Crown jewels were carried with the King, as was a yet more precious flask of oil which had been transmitted straight from heaven to Archbishop Becket while praying at the shrine of Columba. But neither arms, nor gems, nor even the sacred chrism had any effect upon Art MacMurrough. The King again landed at Waterford, and after a few days' rest moved forward to meet the redoubtable Irishman, who was posted in a wood with 3,000 men. An open space having been secured by burning houses and villages, Richard knighted young Henry of Lancaster, the future

victor of Agincourt, and ordered a large number of labourers to fell the wood which sheltered the enemy. Aided by the ground, MacMurrough held the royal army in check for eleven days. The communications were cut, and the men at arms had nothing but green oats for their horses. It was early in July; but the weather was wet, and the whole army suffered from exposure and hunger. A convoy which arrived at Waterford rather added to the disaster. ‘Soldiers,’ says a contemporary chronicler, ‘rushed into the sea as if it were straw.’ Casks were broached, and more than 1,000 at a time were seen drunk with the Spanish wine. Abandoning the hope of attacking the Kavanaghs in their fastnesses, Richard made his way to Dublin, the Earl of Gloucester having failed to treat with MacMurrough.

Richard's failure

The Leinster chieftain had married an Anglo-Norman heiress, and through her claimed the barony of Narragh in Kildare. He demanded to be put in full possession of his wife's lands, and to be left unmolested to enjoy his chiefry. Otherwise he refused to come to any terms with the King. Richard threatened, but his Irish plans were interrupted by the news that Henry of Lancaster had landed in England. He lingered for some weeks in Ireland, and that delay was fatal to him. He reached Milford only to find that he had no longer a party, and thus Art MacMurrough may be said to have crowned the House of Lancaster. The Irish chief

continued irreconcilable, and defied the Government until his death in 1417.

Ireland neglected by Henry IV

With a bad title and an insecure throne Henry IV. could not be expected to pay much attention to Ireland. The strength of the colony continued to decline during his reign. He made his second son, Thomas, Viceroy, but a child in his twelfth year was not the sort of governor required. The treasury was empty, and the young prince's council had soon to announce that he had pawned his plate, and that not another penny could be borrowed. The soldiers had deserted, the household were about to disperse, and the country was so much impoverished that relief could scarcely be hoped for. The settlement was only preserved by paying black mail to the Irish. The towns defended themselves as they best could, and sometimes showed considerable martial enterprise. Thus Waterford was several times attacked by the O'Driscolls, a piratical clan in West Cork, who habitually allied themselves with the Le Poers. In 1413 the citizens assumed the offensive, and armed a ship, in which the mayor and bailiffs with a strong band sailed to Baltimore, where they arrived on Christmas Day. A messenger was sent to say that the Mayor of Waterford had brought a cargo of wine, and admission was thus gained to the chief's hall. 'The Mayor,' we are told, 'took up to dance O'Driscoll and his son, the prior of the Friary, O'Driscoll's

three brethren, his uncle, and his wife, and having them in their dance, the Mayor commanded every of his men to hold fast the said persons; and so, after singing a carol, came away bringing with them aboard the said ship the said O'Driscoll and his company, saying unto them they should go with him to Waterford to sing their carol and make merry that Christmas; and they being all aboard made sail presently, and arrived at Waterford, St. Stephen's day at night, where with great joy received they were with lights.'

This exploit seems to have tamed the O'Driscolls for a time, but they invaded Waterford in 1452 and 1461. On the first occasion the citizens had the worst, but on the second they gained the victory, and took the chief with six of his sons.³⁷

Henry V. makes Talbot Viceroy

In the first year of his reign Henry V. made the famous Sir John Talbot Viceroy. He was entitled to lands in Westmeath in right of his wife, and the lordship of Wexford had devolved upon his elder brother. He adopted the plan by which Bellingham and Sidney afterwards reconquered the greater part of Ireland. The array of the counties was called out under heavy penalties, and Talbot remained six days in Leix, which he so ravaged as to bring O'More to his senses. The bridge of Athy, which had been

³⁷ The quarrels of Waterford with the O'Driscolls are given in the *Calendar of Carew MSS.*, *Miscellaneous vol.* p. 470. Smith refers to a MS. in Trinity College.

of use to none but the assailants of the Pale, was rebuilt and fortified, so that the cattle of loyal people might graze in safety, which they had not done for thirty years. Passes were cut in the woods bordering on the settled districts, and there seemed some hope for the shrunken and shattered colony. But Talbot's salary of 4,000 marks fell into arrear, and his unpaid soldiers became a worse scourge than the Irish had been. The Viceroy and his brother, the Archbishop of Dublin, were constantly at daggers drawn with the White Earl of Ormonde, and the feud continued nearly till the Earl's death in 1450. It was, however, due both to Sir John Talbot and to Ormonde, his antagonist, that the Irish were kept at bay. Shakespeare's hero was the bugbear with which French mothers quieted naughty children, and he was no less feared in Ireland. With the colonists he was not popular, because the Crown refused him the means of paying his debts, and Irish writers stigmatise him as the worst man who had appeared in the world since the time of Herod.

Drain of colonists to the English civil wars

'France,' says Sir John Davies, 'was a fairer mark to shoot at than Ireland, and could better reward the conqueror.' The latter part of his statement is questionable, but such was the view taken by the kings of England from Henry II. to Henry VII. Thomas Butler, Prior of Kilmainham, who ought to have been engaged in the defence of the Pale, took 1,500 men to

help Henry V. at the siege of Rouen in 1418. The contemporary chronicler, Robert Redman, says they did excellent service with very sharp darts and crossbows. Trained in the irregular warfare of Ireland, they easily outran the Frenchmen, to whom they showed extraordinary animosity, but were less honourably distinguished by their practice of kidnapping children and selling them as slaves to the English. James, Earl of Ormonde and Wiltshire, also raised troops in Ireland for foreign service, and it is probable that many other contingents were furnished of which no record has been preserved. These forces consisted of Anglo-Irish, or at least of Irishmen settled in obedient districts, and their absence from home must have had a constant tendency to weaken the colony.

Richard of York made Lord-Lieutenant for ten years, 1449

In 1449 Richard of York visited Ireland as Viceroy. He accepted the office for ten years, in consideration of 4,000 marks for the first, and 2,000*l.* for each succeeding year, and of the whole local revenue. Richard was Earl of Ulster, but he preferred conciliation to any attempt at reconquest, and was, consequently, able to command the services of many Irish clans, including Magennis, MacArtane, MacMahon, and O'Reilly. The O'Byrnes were put down with the help of the Northern chiefs, O'Neill himself sent presents to the Duke, and most of the central

districts became tributary. The Anglo-Normans of Munster, who had partially degenerated, renewed their allegiance, and it was generally supposed that the task of making Ireland English would at last be accomplished. The Viceroy's son George, the 'false, fleeting, perjured Clarence,' of later years, was born in Dublin, and his sponsors were Ormonde and Desmond. But very soon the fair prospect was clouded. The stipulated salary was not paid. The Irish discovered that Richard had no greater force than his predecessors, and the MacGeohegans, who had submitted, openly defied his power. He left Ireland suddenly in the autumn of 1450, and did not return for nine years.

Richard is popular, and creates a Yorkist party. Ireland almost independent

Richard had not done much to increase the King's power in Ireland, but he created a Yorkist party there. At the time he was accused of prompting Cade's rebellion, and Jack himself was said to be a native of Ireland. The fact that both Simnel and Warbeck afterwards found their best support among the Anglo-Irish seems to show that the Kildare and Desmond partisans were already familiar with the notion of a Yorkist pretender. It is very probable that the adherents of the White Rose saw their opportunity in the fact that the Earldom of Ulster belonged to their chief, and Cade must have had an object in calling himself Mortimer. All this is plausible conjecture; but about

the significance of Richard's second viceroyalty there can be no reasonable doubt. In 1459, after Salisbury's defeat at Blore Heath, the Duke of York was forced to fly, and he took refuge in Ireland, where he seized the government in spite of the Coventry Parliament. The local independence of Ireland was now for the first time seriously attempted. Richard held a Parliament, which acknowledged the English Crown while repudiating the English Legislature and the English Courts of Law. The Duke of York's person was declared inviolable, and rebellion against him was made high treason. The royal privilege of coining money was also given to him. William Overy, a squire of the Earl of Ormonde, who was already acknowledged as head of the Irish Lancastrians, attempted to arrest the Duke as an attainted traitor and rebel; but he was seized, tried before Richard himself, and hanged, drawn, and quartered. After the victory of his friends at Northampton the Duke returned to England. He took with him a considerable body of Anglo-Irish partisans, and he committed the government to the Earl of Kildare.

The Yorkist faction headed by the Earl of Kildare

Richard of York fell at Sandal Hill, but the popularity which he had gained in Ireland descended to his son. In the bloody battle of Towton the flower of the Anglo-Irish Lancastrians fell, and their leader, the Earl of Ormonde, was taken and beheaded. His house suffered an eclipse from which it was destined to

emerge with greater brilliancy than ever, and the rival family of Kildare became for a time supreme in the Pale. The native Irish everywhere advanced, and English law rapidly shrunk within the narrowest limits. A Parliament, held by the Earl of Desmond in 1465, enacted that every Irishman dwelling among the English in Dublin, Meath, Louth, and Kildare, should dress in the English fashion, shave his moustache, take the oath of allegiance within a year, and assume as a surname the name of a town, of a colour, or of a trade. In the Parliament of 1480, held by the Earl of Kildare, all trade between the Pale and the Irish was forbidden by law. The Parliament of Drogheda in 1468 had already passed an Act which declared that the castle of Ballymore Eustace, 'lying between the counties of Dublin and Kildare, among the O'Byrnes and O'Tooles, Irish enemies,' should be garrisoned by Englishmen only. The Eustaces, it was explained, had given it in charge to 'one Lawrence O'Bogan, an Irishman both by father and mother, who by nature would discover the secrets of the English.' Other Acts to a similar effect might be cited, and it may be said that the main object of Edward IV.'s government in Ireland was to separate the two races more completely.

George, Duke of Clarence, twice Viceroy

Execution of Thomas, Earl of Desmond, 1467

George, Duke of Clarence, was Viceroy from 1461 to 1470, and again from 1472 till his mysterious death in 1478. Though born in Dublin, he never visited Ireland as a man, and the government was administered by a succession of Deputies. The fate of one of these Deputies, Thomas, eighth Earl of Desmond, deserves particular mention. John Tiptoft, Earl of Worcester, whose beautiful Latinity had moved Pope Æneas Sylvius to tears, was entrusted with the government in 1467, and he assembled a Parliament in which Desmond and Kildare were attainted. Kildare escaped to England, and procured a reversal of the attainder, but Desmond was enticed to Drogheda, and there beheaded. The ostensible cause for this severity is declared by an unpublished statute to have been ‘alliance, fosterage, and alterage with the King’s Irish enemies, and furnishing them with horses, harness, and arms, and supporting them against the King’s loyal subjects.’ The Anglo-Irish tradition attributes it to the vengeance of Queen Elizabeth Woodville, whose marriage Desmond had opposed. According to Russell, he told Edward that Sir John Grey’s widow was too mean a match for him, that he needed

allies sorely, and that he had better cast her off and link himself with some powerful prince. By this account the Queen stole the royal signet, and transmitted a secret order for the Earl's death to Ireland. Three years later Worcester was taken and beheaded during the short Lancastrian restoration; and this quite disposes of Russell's statement that King Edward 'struck his head from his neck to make satisfaction to the angry ghost of Desmond.' What is historically important in Desmond's execution is that it gave his successors an excuse for not attending Parliaments or entering walled towns. Their claim to legal exemption was not indeed allowed, but it may have had considerable effect on their conduct.³⁸

Under Edward IV. and Richard III. the House of Kildare is all-powerful. The Butlers overshadowed

After the death of Clarence, Edward made his sons, George and Richard, Viceroys, and Richard III. conferred the same office on his infant son Edward. The government was carried on by Deputies, and during the last twenty years of the Yorkist dynasty almost all real power centred in the House of Kildare. It was the seventh Earl who established the brotherhood of St. George for the defence of the Pale. The thirteen members of this fraternity were chosen from among the principal landowners of

³⁸ Besides those in the Statute Book many Irish Acts of Edward IV.'s reign may be studied in Hardiman's *Statute of Kilkenny*.

the four obedient shires, thus excluding the Butlers, who formed a small Pale of their own about Kilkenny. The brothers of St. George had rather more than 200 soldiers under them, who were paid out of the royal revenue; and that constituted the entire standing army. The cities and towns maintained a precarious existence by themselves. In the charter which Richard III. granted to Galway it was specially declared that the Clanricarde Burkes had no jurisdiction within the town which their ancestors had taken and fortified. An Act passed in 1485 declares that various benefices in the diocese of Dublin were situated among the Irish, that English clerks could not serve the churches because they could not be understood or because they refused to reside, and that it was therefore necessary to collate Irish clerks; and power was given to the Archbishop to do so for two years. The statute of Kilkenny and the Acts subsidiary to it had had their natural effect. The English, in trying to become perfectly English, had shrunk almost to nothing; and the Irish, by being held always at arm's length, had become more Irish and less civilised than ever.

CHAPTER VII.

THE IRISH PARLIAMENT

The Irish Parliament a close copy

The history of the Irish Parliament in the middle ages corresponds pretty closely with that of England. The idea of the three estates is plainly visible as early as 1204, when John asked an aid from the archbishops, bishops, abbots, priors, archdeacons, and clergy, the earls, barons, justices, sheriffs, knights, citizens, burgesses, and freeholders of Ireland. The Common Council of the King's faithful of Ireland is afterwards often mentioned, and in 1228 Henry III. ordered his justiciary to convoke the archbishops, bishops, abbots, priors, earls and barons, knights and freeholders, and the bailiffs of every county, and to read Magna Charta to them. 1254 has been fixed as the date at which two knights from each shire were regularly summoned to the English Parliament. In the confusion which followed, the precedent slept for a while, but in Simon de Montfort's famous Parliament in 1264 burgesses as well as knights had seats. The evidences of regular election in Ireland are scanty at this early period; but legislative enactments and pecuniary aids were more than once made by the whole

community of Ireland before the close of Henry III.'s reign. The germs of a Parliamentary constitution were not planted in purely Irish districts; but it is probable that ecclesiastics attended Parliament even from them, and that the natives were thus in some degree represented. In 1254 the King called by name upon the Kings O'Donnell, O'Neill, O'Reilly, and O'Flynn, upon MacCarthy of Desmond, O'Brien of Thomond, O'Phelan of Decies, and fourteen other Celtic chiefs, to help him against the Scots. He confides in their love for him to furnish such help, and promises them thanks; pointedly separating their case from that of his lieges of Ireland.³⁹

Growth of representative institutions

Accepting 1295 as the date at which English Parliamentary representation settled down into something like its modern shape, we find that the great Plantagenet was not unmindful of Ireland. In that same year the justiciary Wogan issued writs to the prelates and nobles, and also to the sheriffs of Dublin, Louth, Kildare, Waterford, Tipperary, Cork, Limerick, Kerry, Connaught, and Roscommon, and to the seneschals of the liberties of Meath, Wexford, Carlow, Kilkenny, and Ulster. The sheriffs and seneschals were ordered to proceed to the election of two good and discreet knights from each county or liberty,

³⁹ Stubbs's *Const. Hist.*, chap. xv.; Lynch's *Feudal Dignities*, chaps. iii. and xi.

who were to have full power to act for their districts. It does not appear that cities and boroughs were represented on this occasion; but in 1300, Wogan being still justiciary, writs were directed to counties for the election of three or four members, and to cities and boroughs for the election of two or three. The King's principal object was to get money for his Scotch war; and, with this view, Wogan visited Drogheda and other places and extorted benevolence before the Parliament met. A certain supremacy was not denied to the English Parliament, for in 1290 a vast number of petitions were made to the King in Parliament at Westminster. Among the petitioners was the Viceroy, John Sandford, Archbishop of Dublin, who begged the King to consider the state of Ireland, of which he had already advised him through Geoffrey de Joinville, a former Viceroy, who was sitting in Parliament with others of the King's Council in Ireland. Edward I. answered that he was very busy, but that he had the matter much at heart, and that he would attend to it as soon as he could.⁴⁰

Parliament of 1295

Of the Parliament of 1295 a particular record has fortunately been preserved. Each sheriff was ordered to make his election in the full county court, and each seneschal in the full court of

⁴⁰ Sweetman's *Calendar of Documents*, 1289; Lynch, *supra*.

the liberty, and they were to attend Parliament in their proper persons – to verify the returns no doubt. The personal attendance of the sheriffs was required in England until 1406. The magnates who were summoned to Wogan's Parliament behaved as we might expect to find them behave. The Bishops of the South and East came. The Archbishop of Armagh and his suffragans sent proctors with excuses for non-attendance. The Archbishop of Tuam and his suffragans neither came nor apologised. The absence of Hugo de Lacy, one of those elected by the county of Limerick, is particularly noted, whence we may infer that the other shires and liberties were duly represented. Richard, Earl of Ulster, was present. This Parliament principally occupied itself with making regulations as to the treatment of the Irish, and in devising means for checking their inroads upon the colonised districts. The descendants of the first conquerors were already beginning to adopt Celtic customs.⁴¹

Parliaments of Edward II. and Edward III

Under Edward II. Parliaments were frequent; and writs are extant which show that he, as well as Edward III., intended them to be held annually. Cases occur of bishops, priors, and temporal peers being fined for non-attendance in this reign, and there is good reason to believe that those who were summoned

⁴¹ The record is printed from the Black Book of Christ Church, in the *Miscellany* of the Irish Archæological Society.

to Parliament generally came. In 1311 writs for a Parliament to be held at Kilkenny were issued by the justiciary Wogan to Richard, Earl of Ulster, and eighty-seven other men of name, to the prelates and ecclesiastical magnates, and to the sheriffs. The sheriffs were ordered to summon two knights from every county, and two citizens or burgesses from every city or borough, who were to have full power to act for their several communities in conjunction with the magnates, lay and clerical. Owing probably to the shape which Bruce's invasion gave to the English colony, the Parliaments of Edward III. are more strictly confined to the districts where the King had real as well as nominal authority. The murder of the last Earl of Ulster in 1333, and the conversion of the De Burghs into Irishmen, almost completed the work of destruction which Bruce had only just failed to effect. To the Parliament of 1360, the Archbishops of Dublin and Cashel, the Bishops of Meath, Kildare, Lismore, Killaloe, Limerick, Emly, Cloyne, and Ferns, and the Abbots of St. Mary's and St. Thomas's at Dublin were the only prelates summoned. The Earls of Kildare and Desmond and eight knights were called up by name. Writs for the election of two knights were issued to the sheriffs of the counties of Dublin, Carlow, Louth, Kildare, Waterford, Limerick, and Cork, and of the crosses of Meath, Kilkenny, Wexford, and Tipperary; and to the seneschals of the liberties of Kilkenny, Meath, Tipperary, and Wexford. Writs for the election of citizens and burgesses were no longer directed to the sheriffs, but the mayor and bailiffs of Dublin, Drogheda,

Cork, Waterford, and Limerick, the sovereign and bailiffs of Kilkenny and Ross, and the provost and bailiffs of Clonmel and Wexford were ordered to return two members each. The sheriff of Kildare and the seneschal of the liberty of Kilkenny were told what individuals they were expected to see elected. The House of Commons was then supposed to consist of twenty-eight knights and twenty-four citizens and burgesses; but the counties of Dublin and Carlow were ‘justly excused’ on account of the war, and the members for Drogheda, who omitted to come, were summoned before the Council under a penalty of 40*l*.⁴²

Parliament of Kilkenny

The famous Parliament which Lionel, Duke of Clarence, held at Kilkenny in 1367 was probably attended by representatives from a very limited district; for there were but forty members of the House of Commons in March 1374, and of these four came from the county of Dublin. But in November 1374 the number was fifty-four; in 1377 it rose to sixty-two; and in 1380 and 1382 it was fifty-eight. We may, therefore, take the number of county and borough members at the close of the fourteenth century as about sixty. The counties generally represented were Dublin, Kildare, Carlow, Meath, Louth, Waterford, Cork, Limerick, and Wexford, the liberties of Ulster, Meath, Tipperary, Kerry,

⁴² Lynch, *ut supra*.

and Kilkenny, and the crosses of Ulster, Tipperary, Kilkenny, and Kerry. The cities were Dublin, Cork, Waterford, Kilkenny, and Limerick, and the towns were Drogheda, Youghal, Ross, Wexford, Galway, and Athenry. Longford was a county in 1377, but was not maintained as shire ground. Many Parliaments met during the fifteenth century, but their action was more and more confined to the district round Dublin, which about the middle of the century came to be called the Pale.⁴³

Hereditary peers

1295 will probably be accepted as the date when English barons who had once sat in Parliament claimed an hereditary right to their writs of summons. It would seem that the origin of the Irish peerage, using the word in its modern sense, must be referred to a somewhat later date; for eighty-seven persons, who were perhaps all tenants of the Crown, were summoned by name to the Kilkenny Parliament in 1311. The subject is not of great historical importance, because the period of transition coincides with that in which the encroachments of the natives reduced feudal Ireland to its lowest estate. In the sixteenth century the title of baron was still popularly given to the heads of some families who had formerly been barons by tenure, but who had lost all Parliamentary rights. As in England, the knights of the shire had

⁴³ Lynch, *ut supra*; Lodge's *Register*; Hardiman's *Statute of Kilkenny*.

become the proper representatives of the gentry, and peerage grew to be the special creation of the Crown. In the Parliament of 1560 there were twenty-three temporal peers, and of these eight had been created within the century. It will be safe to assume that the number of temporal peers sitting in the Irish Parliament at any time during the one hundred years preceding Elizabeth's accession was well under thirty.⁴⁴

Spiritual peers

The number of spiritual greatly exceeded the number of temporal peers. There were four archbishops from the first sending of the palls in 1151. If we take the year 1500, after some unions had been effected and before the great quarrel between King and Pope, we find that there were twenty-six bishops in Ireland. Some of the more distant ones were perhaps never summoned to Parliament, and long before the close of the fifteenth century we cannot doubt that many had ceased to attend the shrunken legislature of the Pale. In 1293 John, Bishop of Clonfert, an Italian and the Pope's nuncio, was fined for non-attendance; and similar penalties were imposed on Bishops of Ferns, Ossory, Cork, Ardfert, Limerick, Down, and Emly, during the reigns of Edward II., Edward III., and Richard II.

⁴⁴ The names of those summoned to the Parliament of 1311 are printed by Lynch, chap. ii.; the names of those who attended in 1560 are in *Tracts Relating to Ireland*, vol. ii., Appendix II.

There were thirteen mitred Abbots of the Cistercian order, ten mitred Priors of Augustinian canons; and the Grand Prior of Kilmainham, who represented the wealth and importance of the proscribed Templars as well as of the Hospitallers, had always a seat in Parliament. The Prior of Kilmainham was so important a person that upon the suppression of the order of St. John, Henry VIII. made its last chief a peer. The Abbot of St. Mary's and the Prior of St. Thomas's were always summoned, but it is clear that in earlier days all the mitred heads of houses were considered real as well as nominal spiritual peers. The Prior of Athassel was fined for non-attendance in 1323, the Abbot of Owney in 1325, and the Abbot of Jerpoint in 1377. Much obscurity hangs over the mediæval House of Lords in Ireland; but it must generally have rested with the Viceroy whether the temporal or spiritual peers should be most numerous in any particular Parliament.⁴⁵

The clergy as a separate estate. Proctors

The existence of the clergy as a separate estate in Ireland is less clear than in England; but they had the right of taxing themselves, for in 1538 the Lords Spiritual were thanked by Henry VIII. for granting him an annual twentieth of all their promotions, benefices, and possessions. Proctors of the clergy attended the Lower House, and when Henry VIII. undertook his

⁴⁵ Cotton's *Fasti*; Alemand's *Histoire Monastique*; Lynch, chaps. iii. and vii.

ecclesiastical innovations, they claimed the right to veto bills. It was, however, easily shown that their consent had not formerly been held necessary; and in 1537 an Act was passed declaring the proctors to be no members of Parliament. The preamble states that two proctors from each diocese had been usually summoned to attend Parliament; but that they had neither voice nor vote, and were only ‘counsellors and assistants upon such things of learning as should happen in controversy to declare their opinions, much like as the Convocation within the realm of England.’ Their pretensions to a veto were formally pronounced baseless, and it was declared once for all that the assent or dissent of the proctors could have no effect on the action of Parliament.⁴⁶

The Viceroy

The representative of the King in Ireland was generally styled justiciar for a long time after the first invasion. His powers were analogous to that of the great officer of State in England who had the same title, and who acted as regent during the frequent absences of the kings. The title of justiciar continued to be given to the Irish viceroys long after the English justiciarship changed its character – that is, about the close of Henry III.’s reign. The first person who had the title of Lord Lieutenant, if we except the early case of John de Courcy, appears to have been Lionel, Earl

⁴⁶ *Irish Statutes*, 28 Hen. VIII. cap. 12.

of Ulster and Duke of Clarence, who was sent to Ireland in 1361. Afterwards it became a common practice to make one of the royal family Lord Lieutenant, the duties being usually performed by a deputy. But the title of Lord Lieutenant, though considered higher than any other, was not confined to princes. In time the title of Deputy was given to Governors of Ireland, even when no Lord Lieutenant intervened between them and the King. Richard of York was the last Lord Lieutenant of royal blood who actually ruled at Dublin. After his time the real government was in the hands of the Earls of Kildare, who were Lords Deputy, with but brief intervals, from 1478 to 1526. During that period the title of Lord Lieutenant, but the title only, was enjoyed by Edward, Prince of Wales, by John de la Pole, Earl of Lincoln, by Jasper, Duke of Bedford, and by Henry VIII. before his accession to the Crown. In the meantime, the word justiciar, or Lord Justice, had come to mean a temporary substitute for the Deputy or Lieutenant. When a sovereign died, or when a viceroy suddenly left Ireland, it became the business of the Council to elect some one in his room. When giving leave to a governor to leave his post, the sovereign sometimes named the Lord Justice. Lord Capel, who was appointed in 1695, was the last chief governor who had the title of Deputy. Since the Revolution, the head of the Irish Government has always been a Lord Lieutenant, and during his absence one, or two, or three Lords Justices have been appointed by the Irish Privy Council.⁴⁷

⁴⁷ See the list of chief governors in Harris's *Ware*; Borlase's *Reduction of Ireland*;

CHAPTER VIII.

THE REIGN OF HENRY VII

Accession of Henry VII., 1485

Ireland was destined to give the victor of Bosworth much trouble, but his accession made little immediate difference to the Anglo-Irish community. Kildare continued to act as Chief Governor, and on the nomination of Jasper, Duke of Bedford, to the Lord Lieutenancy, he was formally appointed Deputy under him. His brother Thomas was allowed to retain the Great Seal. While thus leaving the administration of the island to the Yorkist Geraldines, Henry lost no time in restoring the rival House, which had suffered in defence of the Red Rose. Sir Thomas Butler was by Act of Parliament at once restored in blood, became seventh Earl of Ormonde, and was taken into high favour. The practical leadership of the Irish Butlers was, however, never held by him, and the disputes concerning it had no doubt great effect in consolidating Kildare's power.

The Ormonde family. Sir Piers Butler

John, sixth Earl of Ormonde, who never lived in Ireland,

appointed as his deputy his cousin, Sir Edmund Butler. Earl John dying in Palestine, his brother Thomas succeeded him, and continued Sir Edmund in the custody of the Irish estates. Sir Edmund by will granted to his son Piers the same power as he had himself held, but it does not appear that this curious bequest was acknowledged either by the Earl of Ormonde or by the people of Kilkenny and Tipperary. Sir James Ormonde, as he is called, a bastard son of the fifth Earl, became the real chief of the Butlers, and is often called Earl by Irish writers; the rules of legitimate descent being then very lightly regarded in Ireland. Sir James received a regular commission from Thomas, Earl of Ormonde, as his deputy, supervisor, ‘and general and special attorney’ in Kilkenny. Strong in the confidence of the rightful Earl and in the estimation of the people, Sir James became Kildare’s chief opponent; who to weaken him espoused the cause of Sir Piers, to whom he gave his daughter Lady Margaret in marriage. ‘By that means and policy,’ says the ‘Book of Howth,’ ‘the Earl of Wormond (*i. e.*

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