

FITZPATRICK WILLIAM JOHN

SECRET SERVICE UNDER
PITT

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William John Fitzpatrick

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PREFACE

These rough notes – begun long ago and continued at slow intervals – were put aside during the onerous task of editing for Mr. Murray the O'Connell Correspondence. The recent publication of Mr. Lecky's final volumes, awakening by their grasp a fixed interest in pre-Union times, and confirming much that by circumstantial evidence I had sought to establish, affords a reason, perhaps, that my later researches in the same field ought not to be wholly lost. Mr. Lecky's kindness in frequently quoting me¹ merits grateful acknowledgment, not less than his recognition of some things that I brought to light as explanatory of points to which the State Papers afford no clue. This and other circumstances encourage me in offering more.

My sole purpose at the outset was to expose a well-cloaked case of long-continued betrayal by one of whom Mr. Froude confesses that all efforts to identify had failed;² but afterwards it seemed desirable to disclose to the reader a wider knowledge

¹ Vide *England in the Eighteenth Century*, vii. 211; viii. 42-44, 45, 191, 240, etc.

² See Froude's *English in Ireland*, vol. iii. sec. vi.

of an exciting time.³ In various instances a veil will be found lifted, or a visor unlocked, revealing features which may prove a surprise. Nor is the story without a moral. The organisers of illegal societies will see that, in spite of the apparent secrecy and ingenuity of their system, informers sit with them at the same council-board and dinner-table, ready at any moment to sell their blood; and that the wider the ramifications of conspiracy, the greater becomes the certainty of detection.

It may be that some of these researches are more likely to interest and assist students of the history of the time than to prove pleasant reading for those who take up a book merely for enjoyment. Yet if there is truth in the axiom that men who write with ease are read with difficulty, and *vice versâ*, these chapters ought to find readers. Every page had its hard work. Tantalising delays attended at times the search for some missing – but finally discovered – link. Indeed, volumes of popular reading, written *currente calamo*, might have been thrown off for a tithe of the trouble.

'If the power to do hard work is not talent,' writes Garfield, 'it is the best possible substitute for it. Things don't turn up in this world until somebody turns them up.' Readers who, thanks to Froude and Lecky, have been interested by glimpses of men in startling attitudes, would naturally like to learn the curious

³ I have been further encouraged by the very favourable judgment of an acute critic, the late Mr. Hepworth Dixon, regarding a book of mine, written on the same lines as the present. See *Athenæum*, No. 1649, pp. 744 *et seq.*

sequel of their subsequent history. This I have done my best to furnish. The present volume is humbly offered as a companion to the two great works just alluded to. But it will also prove useful to readers of the Wellington, Castlereagh, Cornwallis, and Colchester Correspondence. These books abound in passages which, without explanation, are unintelligible. The matter now presented forms but a small part of the notes I have made with the same end.

A word as regards some of the later sources of my information. The Pelham MSS. were not accessible when Mr. Froude wrote. Thomas Pelham, second Earl of Chichester, was Irish Secretary from 1795 to 1798, but his correspondence until 1826 deals largely with Ireland, and I have read as much of it as would load a float. Another mine was found in the papers, ranging from 1795 to 1805, which filled two iron-clamped chests in Dublin Castle, guarded with the Government seal and bearing the words 'Secret and Confidential: Not to be Opened.' These chests were for a long time familiar objects exteriorly, and when it was at last permitted to disturb the rust of lock and hinge, peculiar interest attended the exploration. Among the contents were 136 letters from Francis Higgins, substantially supporting all that I had ventured to say twenty years before in the book which claimed to portray his career. But neither the Pelham Papers in London nor the archives at Dublin Castle reveal the great secret to which Mr. Froude points.

That so many documents have been preserved is fortunate.

Mr. Ross, in his preface to the Cornwallis Correspondence, laments that 'the Duke of Portland, Lord Chancellor Clare, Mr. Wickham, Mr. King, Sir H. Taylor, Sir E. Littlehales, Mr. Marsden, and indeed almost all the persons officially concerned, appear to have destroyed the whole of their papers.' He adds: 'The destruction of so many valuable documents respecting important transactions cannot but be regarded as a serious loss to the political history of these times.'

I have freely used the Registry of Deeds Office, Dublin – a department peculiar to Ireland. Originating in penal times, its object was to trace any property acquired by Papists – such being liable to 'discovery and forfeiture.' This office served as a valuable curb in the hands of the oppressor, and ought to prove a not less useful aid to historic inquirers; but, hitherto, it has been unconsulted for such purposes. Few unless legal men can pursue the complicated references and searches, and – unlike the Record Office – fees attend almost every stage of the inquiry. Here things stranger than fiction nestle; while the genealogist will find it an inexhaustible store.

I have to thank the Right Hon. the O'Connor Don, D.L.; Sir William H. Cope, Bart.; Mrs. John Philpot Curran; Daniel O'Connell, Esq., D.L.; D. Coffey, Esq.; Jeremiah Leyne, Esq.; the late Lord Donoughmore, and the late Mr. Justice Hayes for the communication of manuscripts from the archives of their respective houses. The Rev. Samuel Haughton, F.T.C.D., kindly copied for me some memoranda made in 1798 by the Rev.

John Barrett, Vice-Provost T.C.D., regarding students of alleged rebel leanings. Sir Charles Russell, when member for Dundalk, obligingly made inquiries concerning Samuel Turner; Mr. Lecky transcribed for me a curious paper concerning Aherne, the rebel envoy in France, and has been otherwise kind. My indebtedness to Sir Bernard Burke, Keeper of the Records, Dublin Castle, dates from the year 1855.

The late Brother Luke Cullen, a Carmelite monk, left at his death a vast quantity of papers throwing light on the period of the Rebellion. No writer but myself has ever had the use of these papers, and I beg to thank the Superior of the Order to which Mr. Cullen belonged for having, some years ago, placed them in my hands.

The array of notes and authorities on every page is not the best way to please an artistic eye; but in a book of this sort they are indispensable and would be certainly expected from the oldest living contributor to 'Notes and Queries.'

While there are many persons who enjoy a fox hunt, there are others would vote it a bore; and readers of this mind had better, perhaps, pass over the various stages of my chase after Samuel Turner, and come to something that may suit them better.

49 Fitzwilliam Square, Dublin:

New Year's Day, 1892.

CHAPTER I

A MYSTERIOUS VISITOR

It is now some years since Mr. Froude invested with new interest the Romance of Rebellion. Perhaps the most curious of the episodes disclosed by him is that where, after describing the plans and organisation of the United Irishmen, he proceeds to notice a sensational case of betrayal.⁴

An instance has now to be related [he writes] remarkable for the ingenious perfidy with which it was attended, for the mystery which still attaches to the principal performer, and for his connection with the fortunes and fate of Lord Edward Fitzgerald.

Lord Edward's movements had for some time been observed with anxiety, as much from general uneasiness as from regret that a brother of the Duke of Leinster should be connecting himself with conspiracy and treason. His proceedings in Paris in 1792 had cost him his commission in the army. In the Irish Parliament he had been undistinguished by talent, but conspicuous for the violence of his language. His meeting with Hoche on the Swiss frontier was a secret known only to a very few persons; Hoche himself had not revealed it even to Tone; but Lord Edward was known to be intimate with

⁴ *The English in Ireland* (Nov. 1797), iii. 278.

McNevin. He had been watched in London, and had been traced to the lodgings of a suspected agent of the French Directory; and among other papers which had been forwarded by spies to the Government, there was one in French, containing an allusion to some female friend of Lady Edward, through whom a correspondence was maintained between Ireland and Paris. Lady Edward's house at Hamburg was notoriously the resort of Irish refugees. Lord Edward himself was frequently there, and the Government suspected, though they were unable to prove, that he was seriously committed with the United Irishmen. One night, early in October, 1797,⁵ a person came to the house of Lord Downshire in London, and desired to see him immediately. Lord Downshire went into the hall and found a man muffled in a cloak, with a hat slouched over his face, who requested a private interview. The Duke (*sic*) took him into his Library, and when he threw off his disguise recognised in his visitor the son of a gentleman of good fortune in the North of Ireland, with whom he was slightly acquainted. Lord Downshire's 'friend' (the title under which he was always subsequently described) had been a member of the Ulster Revolutionary Committee. From his acquaintance with the details of what had taken place it may be inferred that he had accompanied the Northern delegacy to Dublin and had been present at the discussion of the propriety of an immediate insurrection. The cowardice or the prudence of the Dublin faction had disgusted him. He considered now that the conspiracy was

⁵ It was October 8, 1797.

likely to fail, or that, if it succeeded, it would take a form which he disapproved; and he had come over to sell his services and his information to Pitt. In telling his story to Lord Downshire he painted his own conduct in colours least discreditable to himself. Like many of his friends, he had at first, he said, wished only for a reform in parliament and a change in the constitution. He had since taken many desperate steps and connected himself with desperate men. He had discovered that the object of the Papists was the ruin and destruction of the country, and the establishment of a tyranny worse than that which was complained of by the reformers; that proscriptions, seizures of property, murders, and assassinations were the certain consequences to be apprehended from their machinations; that he had determined to separate himself from the conspiracy.⁶ He was in England to make every discovery in his power, and if Lord Downshire had not been in London he had meant to address himself to Portland or Pitt. He stipulated only, as usual, that he should never be called on to appear in a court of justice to prosecute any one who might be taken up in consequence of his discoveries.

Lord Downshire agreed to his conditions; but, as it was then late, he desired him to return and complete his story in the morning. He said that his life was in danger even in London. He could not venture a second time to Lord Downshire, or run the risk of being observed by his servants. Downshire appointed the empty residence of a friend in the neighbourhood. Thither he went the next

⁶ But it will appear that he continued to the end to play the part of a flaming patriot.

day in a hackney coach. The door was left unlocked, and he entered unseen by anyone. Lord Downshire then took down from his lips a list of the principal members of the Executive Committee by whom the whole movement was at that time directed. He next related at considerable length the proceedings of the United Irishmen during the two past years, the division of opinion, the narrow chance by which a rising had been escaped in Dublin in the spring, and his own subsequent adventures. He had fled with others from Belfast in the general dispersion of the leaders. Lady Edward Fitzgerald had given him shelter at Hamburg, and had sent him on to Paris with a letter to her brother-in-law, General Valence.⁷ By General Valence he had been introduced to Hoche and De la Croix. He had seen Talleyrand, and had talked at length with him on the condition of Ireland. He had been naturally intimate with the other Irish refugees. Napper Tandy⁸ was strolling about the streets in uniform and calling himself a major. Hamilton Rowan⁹ had been

⁷ Cyrus Marie Valence, Count de Timbrune, born 1757, died 1822. His exploits as a general officer are largely commemorated in the memoirs of his friend, Dumouriez. After having been severely wounded, he resided for some time in London; but was expelled by order of Pitt on June 6, 1793. He then took up his residence in a retired outlet of Hamburg, which our spy soon penetrated; and he at last wormed himself into the confidence of Valence. The General afterwards resumed active military service, and fought with distinction in Spain and Russia. – Vide *Discours du Comte de Ségur à l'occasion des Obsèques de M. Valence; Souvenirs de Madame Genlis, &c.*; Alison's *Hist. Europe, 1789-1815*, x. 189.

⁸ The strange career of Tandy – who was made a general by Bonaparte – is traced in chapter viii. *infra*.

⁹ Some notice of Hamilton Rowan's adventurous courses will be found in chapter

pressed to return, but preferred safety in America, and professed himself *sick of politics*. After this, 'the person' – as Lord Downshire called his visitor, keeping even the Cabinet in ignorance of his name – came to the immediate object of his visit to England.

He had discovered that all important negotiations between the Revolutionary Committee in Dublin and their Paris agents passed through Lady Edward's hands. The Paris letters were transmitted first to her at Hamburg. By her they were forwarded to Lady Lucy Fitzgerald¹⁰ in London. From London Lady Lucy was able to send them on unsuspected. Being himself implicitly trusted, both by Lady Edward and by Lady Lucy, he believed he could give the Government information which would enable them to detect and examine these letters in their transit through the post.

Pitt was out of town. He returned, however, in a few days. Downshire immediately saw him, and Pitt consented that 'the person's' services should be accepted. There was some little delay. 'The person' took alarm, disappeared, and they supposed that they had lost him. Three weeks later, however, he wrote to Downshire from Hamburg, saying that he had returned to his old quarters, for fear he might be falling into a trap. It was fortunate, he added, that he had done so, for a letter was on the point of going over

xv. *infra*.

¹⁰ Lady Lucy Fitzgerald, sister of Lord Edward, married in 1802 Admiral Sir Thos. Foley, K.C.B., died 1851.

from Barclay Teeling¹¹ to Arthur O'Connor,¹² and he gave Downshire directions which would enable him to intercept, read, and send it on.

Such an evidence of 'the person's' power and will to be useful made Pitt extremely anxious to secure his permanent help. An arrangement was concluded. He continued at Hamburg as Lady Edward's guest and most trusted friend, saw everyone who came to her house, kept watch over her letter-bag, was admitted to close and secret conversations upon the prospect of French interference in Ireland with Reinhard, the Minister of the Directory there, and he regularly kept Lord Downshire informed of everything which would enable Pitt to watch the conspiracy. One of his letters, dated November 19, 1797, is preserved: —

'A. Lowry writes from Paris, August 11, in great despondency on account of Hoche's death, and says that all hopes of invading Ireland were given over.

'I then saw Reinhard, the French Minister, who begged me to stay here, as the only mode in which I could serve my country and the Republic. I instantly acquiesced, and told him I had arranged matters with Lord Edward Fitzgerald in London for that purpose. I showed him Lowry's¹³ letter.

¹¹ Bartholomew Teeling was his correct name. In 1798 he was hanged in Dublin.

¹² Arthur O'Connor, nephew and heir of Lord Longueville, sat in Parliament for Philipstown, and spoke so ably on Indian affairs that Pitt is said to have offered him office. In November 1796 he joined the United Irishmen, and from that date his life is one of much activity and vicissitude. Excitement and worry failed to shorten it. He became a general in the French service, and died, aged eighty-eight, April 25, '52.

¹³ Alexander Lowry was the treasurer for Down. Tone describes Lowry and Tennant

He said that things were changed. Buonaparte would not listen to the idea of peace, and had some plan which I do not know. I told him the spirit of republicanism was losing ground in Ireland, for the Catholics and Protestants could not be brought to unite. I mentioned then what Fitzgerald told me in London, viz., that after I left Ireland they had thoughts of bringing matters to a crisis without the French. Arthur O'Connor was to have had a command in the North, he himself in Leinster, Robert Simms¹⁴ at Belfast; that the Catholics got jealous of this, and Richard McCormick,¹⁵ of Dublin, went among the societies of United Men and denounced the three as traitors to the cause, and dangerous on account of their ambition. All letters to or from Lady Lucy Fitzgerald ought to be inspected.

'She, Mrs. Matthieson, of this place, and Pamela¹⁶ carry

as 'a couple of fine lads, whom I like extremely.' —*Life*, ii. 433. Aug. 1797. Their youth and ingenuousness would make them easy prey.

¹⁴ Robert Simms had been appointed to the chief command of the United Irishmen of Antrim; but he is said to have wanted nerve. James Hope, in a narrative he gave Dr. Madden, said that Hughes, the Belfast informer, once proposed to him to get rid of Simms by assassination. Hope pulled a pistol from his breast and told Hughes that if ever he repeated that proposal he would shoot him.

¹⁵ Richard McCormick, originally secretary of the Catholic Committee, and afterwards an active 'United Irishman,' and styled by Tone, in his *Diary*, 'Magog.'

¹⁶ The wife of Lord Edward Fitzgerald. Moore's *Life of Lord Edward Fitzgerald* says that she was the daughter of Mde. de Genlis by Philippe Egalité, Duke of Orleans; but a letter appears in Moore's *Memoirs* from King Louis Philippe denying it, and Mde. de Genlis calls her a child by adoption. Pamela was a person of surpassing beauty; her portrait arrests attention in the gallery of Versailles. R. B. Sheridan proposed for her, but she rejected him in favour of Lord Edward. Died 1831; her remains were followed to Père la Chaise by Talleyrand.

on a correspondence. Lewins, Teeling, Tennant, Lowry, Orr, and Colonel Tandy are at Paris. Tone expects to stay the winter there, which does not look like invasion. Oliver Bond is treasurer. He pays Lewins and McNevin in London. Now for myself. In order to carry into effect the scheme which you and Mr. Pitt had planned, it was requisite for me to see my countrymen. I called on Maitland,¹⁷ where I found A. J. Stuart,¹⁸ of Acton, both of them heartily *sick of politics*. Edward Fitzgerald had been inquiring of them for me. I went to Harley Street, where Fitz told me of the conduct of the Catholics to him and his friends. He said he would prevail on O'Connor, or some such, to go to Paris. If not, he would go himself in order to have Lewins removed. Mrs. Matthieson¹⁹ has just heard from Lady Lucy that O'Connor is to come. I supped last night with Valence, who mentioned his having introduced Lord Edward and O'Connor to the Minister here in the summer, before the French attempted to invade Ireland. They both went to Switzerland, whence O'Connor passed into France, had an interview with Hoche,

¹⁷ The allusion may be to Captain Maitland – afterwards General Sir Thomas Maitland, Governor of Ceylon, a son of Lord Lauderdale. He was in Parliament from 1774 to 1779, and from 1790 to 1796, when he sat for the last time in the House – a circumstance which may, perhaps, explain the remark that he was sick of politics. Died 1824. In 1800 he was Colonel Maitland, and in the confidence of Lord Cornwallis.

¹⁸ Who Stuart was, see p. [36](#) *infra*; also Lord Cloncurry's *Memoirs*, p. [63](#).

¹⁹ Madame de Genlis states in her memoirs that her niece, Henriette de Sercey, married M. Matthiessen, a rich banker of Hamburg. The General Count Valence married a daughter of Madame de Genlis, and resided near Hamburg on a farm where the latter wrote several of her works.

and everything was planned.²⁰

'I feared lest Government might not choose to ratify our contract, and, being in their power, would give me my choice either to come forward as an evidence or suffer martyrdom myself. Having no taste for an exit of this sort, I set out and arrived here safe, and now beg you'll let me know if anything was wrong in my statements, or if I have given offence. If you approve my present mode of life, and encourage me so to do, with all deference I think Mr. Pitt may let me have a cool five hundred,²¹ which shall last me for six months to come. To get the information here has cost me three times the sum, and to keep up the acquaintance and connections I have here, so as to get information, I cannot live on less.'²²

The betrayer, before his interview with Downshire closed, supplied him with a list of the Executive Committee of United Irishmen. This list, duly given by Mr. Froude, includes —

Jackson and his son; Oliver Bond; John Chambers; James Dickson; Casey, a red-faced Dublin priest; Thomas Addis Emmet; Dr. McNevin, a physician who had great weight with the papists;²³ Braughall, John Keogh and R.

²⁰ The expedition of Hoche to Bantry Bay in December, 1796.

²¹ 'I just made a couple of betts with him, and took up a *cool* hundred.' — *The Provoked Husband*, by Vanbrugh and Cibber, ii. i. 311, ed. 1730. See also Smollett's *Don Quixote*, bk. iii. c. viii.

²² Froude, iii. 277 *et seq.*

²³ Alexander Knox, in his *History of Down*, errs in saying (p. 26) that 'Dr. McNevin was an influential member of the Established Church.'

McCormick, who belonged to the committee, though they did not attend; Samuel Turner; Lord Edward Fitzgerald; Arthur O'Connor; Alexander Stewart; two Orrs, one an attorney and a dangerous person, the other of Derry, described as a clever, sensible, strong-minded man; B. Teeling; Tenants, of Belfast; Agnew, of Larne; Lawless, Lord Cloncurry's son; Hamill, of Dominick Street²⁴; Inishry,²⁵ a priest, a canting, designing man, who swore in Lord Edward Fitzgerald and Lawless.²⁶

Lord Downshire, who negotiated in this affair, had weight with Pitt. The husband of an English peeress, and the son of Lord North's Secretary of State, he was a familiar figure at Court. He had sat for two English constituencies; and in the Irish Parliament as senator, borough proprietor, governor of his county, and one of the Privy Council, he wielded potent sway. His later history and fall belong to chapter ix.

²⁴ All these men, unless Hamill and Inishry, are to be found in books which treat of 1798. The first is noticed in the *Dublin Penny Journal*, March 1, 1834 (p. 274). In 1797 Mr. Hamill was indicted for defenderism and acquitted, 'and the witnesses for the Crown were so flagrantly perjured that the judge, I have heard, ordered a prosecution' (Speech of Henry Grattan in Parliament, May 13, 1805 —*Hansard*, ii. 925).

²⁵ As regards 'Inishry,' no such cognomen is to be found in the pedigrees of MacFirbis or O'Clery, or any name to which it might be traced. The name that the spy gave was probably Hennessy – which Downshire, in writing from dictation, may have mistaken for 'Inishry.'

²⁶ Long before the publication of Mr. Froude's book, Arthur O'Connor, in a letter to Dr. Madden, states that 'Lord Edward took no oath on joining the United Irishmen.' – Vide their *Lives and Times*, ii. 393.

CHAPTER II

ARRESTS MULTIPLY

It was not easy to separate the threads of the tangled skein which Mr. Froude found hidden away in the dust of the past. But, lest the process of unravelling should tax the reader's patience, I have transferred to an Appendix some points of circumstantial evidence which led me, at first, to suspect, and finally to feel convinced, that 'the person' was no other than Samuel Turner, Esq., LL.D., barrister-at-law, of Turner's Glen, Newry – one of the shrewdest heads of the Northern executive of United Irishmen.²⁷ Pitt made a good stroke by encouraging his overtures, but, like an expert angler, ample line was given ere securing fast the precious prey.

One can trace, through the public journals of the time, that the betrayer's disclosures to Downshire were followed by a decided activity on the part of the Irish Government. The more important of the marked men were suffered to continue at large, but the names having been noted Lord Camden was able, at the threatened outburst of the rebellion, to seize them at once. Meanwhile an influential London paper, the 'Courier'

²⁷ In chapter vii. my contention will be found established on conclusive testimony, which had failed to present itself until years had been given to a slow process of logical deduction. *Vide* also Appendix to this volume.

of November 24, 1797, gave a glimpse of the system that then prevailed by announcing the departure from Dublin for England of Dr. Atkinson, High Constable of Belfast, charged, it is said, with full powers from Government to arrest such persons as have left Ireland, and against whom there are charges of a treasonable or seditious nature.

The former gentleman is well known, and will be long remembered by the inhabitants of Belfast, for the active part he took in assisting a *Northern Marquis*,²⁸ and the young apostate of the County Down, to arrest seven of their fellow-citizens on September 16, 1796; since which period these unfortunate men have been closely confined without being allowed to see their friends, and now remain without hope of trial or liberation.

'The young apostate of Down' – thus indicated for English readers ninety years ago – was Lord Castlereagh, afterwards Minister for Foreign Affairs, and well twitted by Byron for his Toryism; but who, in 1790, had been elected, after a struggle of two months' duration and an outlay of 60,000*l.*, Whig Member for Down. Like Pitt, he began as a reformer; like Disraeli, he avowed himself a Radical; and presided at a banquet where toasts were drunk such as 'Our Sovereign Lord the People.' Ere long his policy changed, and his memory is described as having the faint sickening smell of hot blood about it.

Mr. Froude's work has been several years before the world; it

²⁸ 'The Northern Marquis' was, of course, Lord Downshire.

has passed through various editions. Thousands of readers have been interested by his picture of the muffled figure gliding at dark to breathe in Downshire's ear most startling disclosures, but no attempt to solve the mystery enshrouding it has until now been made.²⁹

The name of Samuel Turner obtains no place on the list of Secret Service moneys³⁰ expended by the Irish Government in 1798 – thus bearing out the statement of Mr. Froude that the name of the mysterious 'person' was not revealed in the most secret correspondence between the Home Office and Dublin Castle. At the termination of the troubles, however, when the need of secrecy became less urgent, and it was desirable to bestow pensions on 'persons who had rendered important service during the rebellion,' the name of Samuel Turner is found in the Cornwallis Papers as entitled to 300*l.* a year. But a foot-note from the indefatigable editor – Mr. Ross – who spared no labour to acquire minute information, confesses that it has been found impossible to procure any particulars of Turner.

For years I have investigated the relations of the informers with the Government, and Samuel Turner is the only large recipient of 'blood-money' whose services remain to be

²⁹ 'A Lanthorn through some Dark Passages, with a Key to Secret Chambers,' was the title originally chosen for the present book, but I finally laid it aside as being too much in the style of old Parson Fry's 'Pair of Bellows to Blow away the Dust.'

³⁰ How this book got out of the Castle and was sold for waste paper by a man named Fagan is a curious story in itself. The volume is now preserved in the Royal Irish Academy.

accounted for. Turner's name never appeared in any printed pension list. Mr. Ross found the name at Dublin Castle, with some others, in a 'confidential memorandum,' written for the perusal of the Lord Lieutenant, whose fiat became necessary. The money was 'given by a warrant dated December 20, 1800,' but the names were kept secret – the payments being confidentially made by the Under-Secretary.

At this distance of time it is not easy to trace a life of which Mr. Ross, thirty years earlier, failed to catch the haziest glimpse; but I hope to make the case clear, and Turner's history readable.

Previous to 1798 he is found posing in the double *rôle* of martyr and hero – winning alternately the sympathy and admiration of the people. Mr. Patrick O'Byrne, an aged native of Newry, long connected with an eminent publishing firm in Dublin, has replied to a letter of inquiry by supplying some anecdotes in Turner's life. It is a remarkable proof of the completeness with which Turner's perfidy was cloaked that Mr. O'Byrne never heard his honesty questioned.³¹

In 1836 there was a tradition current in Newry of a gentleman named Turner, who in the previous generation had resided in a large red brick house situated in the centre of a fine walled-in park called Turner's Glen, on the western side of Newry, in the County Armagh. Mr. Turner had been in 1796 a member of the great confederacy

³¹ A prisoner named Turner, Christian name not given, indicted for high treason, is announced as discharged in December 1795, owing to the flight of a Crown witness. – Vide *Irish State Trials* (Dublin: Exshaw, 1796); Lib. R. I. Academy.

of United Irishmen, one of the leaders who, for self and fellows, 'pledged his life, his fortune, and his honour' to put an end to British supremacy in Ireland. About the date mentioned the notorious Luttrell, Lord Carhampton, who was commander of the forces in Ireland at the time, and was then making a tour of inspection of the army, had to pass through Newry. The chief hotel in Newry at that time adjoined the post-office. The gentry and merchants of Newry generally went to the post-office shortly after the arrival of the mails to get their letters, and while waiting for the mail to be assorted promenaded in front of the hotel, or rested in the coffee-room. Mr. Turner wore the colours he affected – a large green necktie. Lord Carhampton, while his horses were being changed, was looking out of the coffee-room windows of the hotel, and his eye lighted on the rebel 'stock:' here was a fine opportunity to cow a rebel and assert his own courage – a quality for which he was not noted. Accordingly he swaggered up to Mr. Turner and, confronting him, asked 'Whose man are you, who dares to wear that rebellious emblem?' Mr. Turner sternly replied, 'I am my own man. Whose man are you, who dares to speak so insolently to an Irish gentleman?' 'I am one who will make you wear a hempen necktie, instead of your flaunting French silk, if you do not instantly remove it!' retorted Lord Carhampton. 'I wear this colour,' replied Mr. Turner courageously, 'because I like it. As it is obnoxious to you, come and take it off.' Carhampton, finding that his bluster did not frighten the North Erin rebel, turned to leave; but Turner, by a rapid movement, got between him and the

door, and, presenting his card to the general, demanded his address. Carhampton told him he would learn it sooner than he should like. Turner thereupon said, 'I *must* know your name; until now I have never had the misfortune to be engaged in a quarrel with aught but gentlemen, who knew how to make themselves responsible for their acts. You cannot insult me with impunity, whatever your name may be. I will yet find it out, and post you in every court as a coward.' The Commander of the Forces withdrew from Newry, having come off second best in the quarrel he had provoked. Mr. Turner, for reasons connected with the cause in which he had embarked, was obliged to lie *perdu* soon after, and so Carhampton escaped the 'posting' he would, under other circumstances, have got from the Northern fire-eater.

The general accuracy of Mr. O'Byrne's impressions is shown by the 'Life and Confessions of Newell the Informer,' printed for the author at London in 1798.³² Newell travelled with the staff of Lord Carhampton, and in April, 1797, witnessed the scene between Turner and him.

Newell's pamphlet, which created much noise at the time and had a large circulation, did not tend to weaken popular confidence in Turner. It appeared soon after the time that he had begun to play false; but Newell, with all his cunning, had no suspicion of Turner.

³² Vide pp. 21-2. Newell's pamphlet will be found in the Halliday Collection, vol. 743, Royal Irish Academy.

The late Mr. J. Mathews, of Dundalk, collected curious details regarding the rebel organisation of Ulster in 1797. With these details the name of Samuel Turner is interwoven, but, although the object of Mathews was to expose the treachery of some false brothers, he assigns to Turner the rank of a patriot and a hero. How the authorities, by a *coup*, made a number of arrests, is described; and how Turner, after some exciting adventures, got safely to France.³³

The spy on this occasion was Mr. Conlan, a medical practitioner in Dundalk. A sworn information, signed by Conlan, is preserved among the Sirr MSS. in Trinity College, Dublin. It is dated 1798, when Turner himself was betraying his own colleagues to Pitt! Conlan states that one evening, after Turner had left his house at Newry to attend a meeting of United Irishmen at Dundalk, the officer in command at the barracks of Newry got orders to march on Dundalk and arrest the leaders. An officer's servant apprised Corcoran, who was an adherent of Turner's. Corcoran mounted a horse and galloped to Dundalk, where he arrived in time to warn Turner. Conlan recollected Turner and Teeling travelling through Ulster and holding meetings for organisation at Dundalk, Newry, Ballinahinch (the site of the subsequent battle), Ronaldstown, Glanary, and in Dublin at Kearn's, Kildare Street,³⁴ where the principal meetings

³³ Vide Mr. Matthew's narrative in *The Sham Squire*, sixth edition, pp. [355](#)-363.

³⁴ This place of rendezvous was, doubtless, chosen because of its proximity to Leinster House, where Lord Edward mainly lived.

were held.³⁵

I find in the Pelham MSS. the examination of Dr. John Macara, one of the Northern State prisoners of 1797. It supplies details of the plan of attack which had been foiled by the arrests. 'Newry was to be attacked by Samuel Turner, of Newry aforesaid, with the men from Newry and Mourn.'³⁶

It was not Conlan alone who reported Turner's movements to the Crown. Francis Higgins, the ablest secret agent of Under-Secretary Cooke, announces that Turner had sent 'letters from Portsmouth for the purpose of upholding and misleading the mutinous seamen into avowed rebellion';³⁷ and some weeks later he states that 'Turner had returned from Hamburg with an answer to the Secret Committee of United Irishmen.'³⁸

³⁵ Major Sirr's Papers (MS.), Trinity College, Dublin. Conlan's information makes no mention of a remarkable man, the Rev. William Steel Dickson, D.D., a Presbyterian pastor of Down, and described by the historians of his Church as ready to take the field. Dr. Dickson, in his *Narrative*, admits (p. 193) that he had been 'frequently in the company of Lowry, Turner, and Teeling.' Turner was a Presbyterian and possibly wished to spare a pastor of his Church.

³⁶ The Pelham MSS. Examination dated September 6, 1797. Pelham, afterwards Lord Chichester, was Chief Secretary for Ireland at that time, and his papers are a useful help in throwing light upon it. A large portion of them are occupied by a correspondence with Generals Lake and Nugent regarding Dr. Macara; he offered to inform if let out on bail. Lake hoped that he would prove a valuable informer; and, as he was far from rich, could not afford to reject pecuniary reward; but, although Macara at first seemed to consent, his replies were finally found to be evasive.

³⁷ Higgins to Cooke, MS. letter, Dublin Castle, June 7, 1797.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, August 29, 1797. Five weeks later Turner makes his disclosure to Downshire.

We know on the authority of James Hope, who wrote down his 'Recollections' of this time at the request of a friend, that Turner, having fled from Ireland, filled the office of resident agent at Hamburg of the United Irishmen. The Irish envoys and refugees, finding themselves in a place hardly less strange than Tierra del Fuego, ignorant of its language, its rules and its ways, sought on arrival the accredited agent of their brotherhood, hailed him with joy, and regarded the spot on which he dwelt as a bit of Irish soil sacred to the Shamrock. The hardship which some of the refugees went through was trying enough. James Hope, writing in 1846, says that Palmer, one of Lord Edward's bodyguard in Dublin, travelled, 'mostly barefooted, from Paris to Hamburg, where he put himself into communication with Samuel Turner.' The object of Palmer's mission was to expose one Bureaud, then employed as a spy by Holland. 'Palmer,' writes Hope, 'gave Turner a gold watch to keep for him.' He enlisted in a Dutch regiment, and was found drowned in the Scheldt. 'When Turner,' adds Hope, 'was applied to for the watch by Palmer's sister, he replied that he forgot what became of it.'

Hamburg in troubled times was a place of great importance for the maintenance of intercourse between England and France. Here, as Mr. Froude states, 'Lord Downshire's friend' had vast facilities for getting at the inmost secrets of the United Irishmen. Hope's casual statement serves to show how it was that this 'person' could have had access to Lady Edward Fitzgerald's confidence, and that of her political friends at Hamburg.

CHAPTER III

FATHER O'COIGLY HANGED

Mr. Froude, after a perusal of the letters of Downshire's friend, and other documents, states that a priest named O'Coigly or Quigley 'had visited Paris in 1797, returned to Dublin, and had been with Lord Edward Fitzgerald at Leinster House; that he was now going back to Paris, and Arthur O'Connor determined to go in his company.³⁹ Their mission, though ostensibly for presenting an address from the London corresponding society of United Irishmen to the French Government, was really for the double purpose of urging upon it the prompt despatch of an invading fleet to Ireland, and of deposing the Irish envoy, Lewins, who, instead of Turner, had begun to be suspected. Mr. Lawless, afterwards Lord Cloncurry, invited O'Coigly to dinner in London; and it was on this occasion that O'Connor met the priest for the first time. O'Coigly, under the name of Captain Jones, with Allen⁴⁰ seemingly as his servant, and Leary, left London for Margate, on their mission of mystery. O'Connor travelled by another route to Margate, took the name of Colonel Morris, and was accompanied by Binns. On the following day, at the King's Head Inn, Margate, all the party were

³⁹ *The English in Ireland*, iii. 312.

⁴⁰ Allen, a draper's assistant in Dublin, afterwards a colonel in the service of France.

arrested by two Bow Street officers. O'Coigly and O'Connor had dined at Lawless's lodgings more than once; and here, though not necessarily with his knowledge, the travelling arrangements seem to have been made. Whether Turner was a guest does not appear; but he was certainly in London at this time, and as one of the Executive Committee is likely to have been invited. Presently it will be shown that from this quarter came all the information which enabled Pitt to seize O'Connor and O'Coigly at Margate *en route* to France, although, to elude observation, they had journeyed by different roads. The prisoners, meanwhile, were removed to London, examined before the Privy Council, and then transmitted to Maidstone Jail to await their trial. The source of the information which caused these historic arrests on February 27, 1798, has hitherto remained a mystery. Father O'Coigly, while in jail, wrote some letters, in which he failed to avow his share in the conspiracy, but admitted to have made a previous visit to Cuxhaven. This was part of the city of Hamburg. Turner, in addition to being the official agent of the United Irishmen at Hamburg, was an old Dundalk acquaintance of O'Coigly's, and no doubt was promptly hailed by the country priest.

Turner and O'Coigly are mentioned in Hughes's information. They belonged to the same district organisation. After describing Teeling, Turner and Lowry working in concert in 1797, Hughes adds that priest Quigly or O'Coigly introduced him at that time

to Bailly and Binns.⁴¹ The paper revealed by Mr. Froude, now shown to be Turner's, and other letters from the same hand in the 'Castlereagh Papers,' show that the writer always felt a strong dislike to work with the 'Papists,' especially priests. 'Casey, the red-faced, designing Dublin priest,' was one of the leading men he met in Dublin, and whose 'prudence or cowardice' disgusted him. Immediately after O'Coigly's return to London we find the authorities on his track. The priest himself refers to an abortive attempt to arrest him by night at Piccadilly.⁴² Mr. Froude, dealing with this case, does not seem to have suspected that the arrival in London of Downshire's friend, at the time of the arrests at Margate, was other than accidental. Yet clearly it was business of no ordinary moment which brought him back to London at this time. It will be remembered that, panic-stricken and fearing death from the assassin's knife, he had returned to Hamburg in October 1797, ere an answer came from Pitt to the proposition of betrayal conveyed by Lord Downshire.

It happened that at this particular time [writes Mr. Froude] that Downshire's friend was in London, and Pelham (the Irish Secretary) knew it. If the 'friend' could be brought over, and could be induced to give evidence, a case could then be established against all the United Irish leaders. They could be prosecuted with certainty of conviction, and the secrets of the plot could be revealed so fully that the reality

⁴¹ *Report of the Secret Committee*, p. [31](#). (Dublin, 1798.)

⁴² *Life of the Reverend James Coigly*, p. [28](#). (London, 1798.) Halliday Collection, R.I.A., vol. 743.

of it could no longer be doubted.

Most earnestly Camden⁴³ begged Portland⁴⁴ to impress on the 'friend' the necessity of compliance. 'Patriotism might induce him to overcome his natural prejudice.' If patriotism was insufficient, there was no reward which he ought not to receive.⁴⁵ Portland's answer was not encouraging: 'The friend,' he said, 'shall be detained. As to his coming over to you, I have reason to believe that there is not any consideration on earth which would tempt him to undertake it. He is convinced that he would go to utter destruction. Better he should stay here and open a correspondence with some of the principal conspirators, by which means you may be apprised of their intentions. If I could be satisfied, or if you would give it as your positive opinion that this person's testimony or presence would crush the conspiracy, or bring any principal traitor to justice, I should not, and Lord Downshire would not, hesitate to use any influence to prevail on his friend to run any risk for such an object. But if he should fail and escape with his life, he could render no further service. Weigh well, therefore, the consequence of such a sacrifice.'⁴⁶

After describing the arrest at Margate of Father O'Coigly, O'Connor, and Binns, Mr. Froude writes: —

O'Connor wrote a hurried note to Lord Edward,

⁴³ The Lord Lieutenant of Ireland.

⁴⁴ The Home Secretary.

⁴⁵ Camden to Portland, March 1, 1798. *English in Ireland*, iii. 310.

⁴⁶ Portland to Camden, March 7, 1798.

telling him not to be alarmed, nothing having been taken upon them which compromised any individual.⁴⁷ The messenger to whom the note was entrusted was unfortunate or treacherous, for it fell into the hands of the Government. *Had O'Connor known the connection between the Government and Lord Downshire's friend, he would have felt less confident.* There was evidence, if it could only be produced, which would send both Lord Edward and himself to the scaffold.

It may be observed here —*en parenthèse*— that Downshire must have felt conflicting emotions when called upon to communicate information which might bring Lord Edward to the block. His father had married the sister of James, Duke of Leinster; Lord Edward was, therefore, the first cousin of Lord Downshire.

One of the most truthful chapters of the laudatory life of Reynolds, the informer,⁴⁸ is that aiming to show that he could not have been the spy who caused the arrests at Margate. But the biographer is unable to offer any suggestion as to who that agent was – so carefully veiled from Reynolds, one of their own confidential prompters, was the part played by Turner in that episode.

The information which led to the arrest of O'Connor, O'Coigly, and his companion cannot have come from Ireland,

⁴⁷ In O'Connor's valise were found 900*l.*, a military uniform, and some papers relating to Lord Edward Fitzgerald. – W. J. F.

⁴⁸ *Life of Thomas Reynolds*, by his Son. (London, 1839.)

because in the 'Book of Secret Service Monies expended in the Detection of Treasonable Conspiracies' no entry appears connected with the above incident, unless 'Dutton's Expenses going to England to attend Quigly's Trial,' and where he had merely to swear to the priest's handwriting. For his courage in doing this – having once seen him sign a lottery ticket at Dundalk – 50*l.* is paid to 'Dutton on June 12, 1798.' The names of Newell and Murdoch certainly appear in the 'Secret Service Money' book about that time; but it is clear from Newell's narrative – doubtless a genuine and frank confession – that neither he nor Murdoch had any hand in tracing the movements of O'Coigly and O'Connor.

Lord Castlereagh was now acting for Pelham as Chief Secretary for Ireland. On July 25, 1798, a secret letter – printed in the 'Castlereagh Papers' – is addressed to him from the Home Office: —

I am directed by the Duke of Portland to inform your Lordship that I have received intelligence from *a person very much in the confidence of [Reinhard] the French Minister at Hamburg*,⁴⁹ that several French officers and soldiers have lately arrived at that place, where they have purchased sailor's dresses, clothed themselves in them, and gone on to Denmark and Sweden, from whence it is intended that they should embark for the North of Ireland.⁵⁰

⁴⁹ For proofs of the intimacy between Reinhard and Turner at Hamburg, see *Castlereagh Papers*, i. 277 *et seq.*; and my chapter on McNevin, *infra*.

⁵⁰ In August, 1798, Humbert and 900 Frenchmen arrived in Killala Bay.

I know not what credit is to be given to this information, which must be received with caution, as it does not appear to have reached his Majesty's Minister at Hamburg.

It comes, however, from a person⁵¹ whose reports while he was in this country⁵² were known to his Excellency as singularly accurate and faithful —*the same who gave such an accurate account of the proceedings of O'Connor and Coigly* whilst they were in this country, and on whose authority those persons were apprehended.⁵³

Some of the letters of 'Lord Downshire's friend,' not being forthcoming in the official archives, Mr. Froude assumed that they had been destroyed; but, however masked, they are recognisable in the 'Castlereagh Correspondence.' Several anonymous papers, furnishing information of the movements of the United Irishmen about Hamburg and elsewhere, crop up in that book, having been enclosed from Whitehall for the guidance of Dublin Castle. One of these letters makes special reference to information already sent to Lord Downshire.⁵⁴

Another long letter of the same batch will be found the

⁵¹ 'The person' is the name by which Downshire's friend, the betrayer, is usually styled in the letters from the Home Office to Dublin Castle. The words, 'while he was in this country,' show that he had left England, as Downshire's friend admittedly did, in panic.

⁵² 'I.e. in October 1797, when he called upon Downshire; and again in March 1798, when Portland offered him large sums if he would openly prosecute.'

⁵³ Mr. Lecky describes this arrest, and rather suggests that it may have been due to Higgins in Dublin (*vide* viii. 55). The above evidence points surely to the Hamburg spy.

⁵⁴ See *Castlereagh Papers*, i. 231-6.

first placed in the second volume of Castlereagh, though an examination of it shows that it belongs to the middle of the previous volume. Detailed reference is made to Father O'Coigly's mission and movements, both in France and in London. One is struck by the accuracy of its information regarding the Ulster United Irishmen, of whom Turner was one. Of MacMahon, who travelled to Paris with O'Coigly, we learn that, '*tired of politics*, especially those of France, he is to write to Citoyen Jean Thomas,⁵⁵ *à la poste restante à Hamburg*, whom he looks on as a good patriot.'⁵⁶ It will be remembered that a similar phrase occurs in the letter of Downshire's friend, printed by Froude, *i. e.* Rowan had 'professed himself sick of politics.' Again, 'I found Maitland and Stewart, of Acton, both heartily sick of politics.'

How to hang O'Coigly was now the difficulty. The Government knew – from somebody who had worked with him – that he was deep in the treason; but nothing could persuade the informer to prosecute him openly.

On April 11, 1798, Wickham writes from Whitehall: —

It is most exceedingly to be lamented that no person can be sent over from Ireland to prove Coigly's handwriting. Proof of that kind would be so extremely material, that I have no doubt that the law officers would think it right to put off the trial if they could have any hope of any person being found, in a short time, who could speak distinctly to

⁵⁵ Of course one of Turner's many aliases. See p. [97](#), *infra*.

⁵⁶ *Castlereagh Correspondence*, ii. 1-7.

his handwriting.⁵⁷

The secret adviser who, as Portland said, 'should be detained,' worked his brain until at length a man, hailing from a place suspiciously familiar to Turner, is sent for to swear to the point. Samuel Turner, formerly of Newry, had intimate knowledge of every man in the place. One Frederick Dutton, described as 'of Newry,' was now subpoenaed by the Crown to swear to O'Coigly's handwriting in a letter addressed to Lord Edward Fitzgerald. 'He claimed to have seen Coigly write his name for the purpose of getting a watch raffled which belonged to a poor man under sentence of death.' Dutton had been a dismissed servant and had kept a public-house at Newry without a licence.⁵⁸

Turner – it seems absurd to doubt the identity – got back to London on Tuesday, May 15, 1798. What secret help he gave to the law officers can only be inferred, for they pledged themselves that he should never be asked to come forward publicly. Though O'Connor, O'Coigly, and Binns⁵⁹ were arrested on March 1, their trials did not take place till late in May 1798. The Duke of Norfolk, Lords Moira, Suffolk, Oxford, John Russell, and Thanet, Fox, Sheridan, Whitbread, Erskine, Grattan, all testified

⁵⁷ *Ibid.* i. 178.

⁵⁸ Dutton, on his examination, said that he had sworn in Ireland against one 'Lowry.' This is the man whom Turner, in his letters, constantly points to. Dutton admitted that he had previously sworn secrecy to the Society of United Irishmen, but the oath had been sworn only on a spelling-book.

⁵⁹ Trial of Arthur O'Connor and James Quigley at Maidstone. Howell's *State Trials*, vols. xxvi. and xxvii.

to O'Connor's character. All the prisoners were acquitted, except the priest, notwithstanding that Lord Cloncurry paid a counsel to defend him. He was hanged on Penenden Heath, June 7, 1798. Judge Buller had leant heavily on O'Coigly in his charge.

O'Coigly [writes Lord Holland] was condemned on false and contradictory evidence. I do not mean to aver, as Lord Chancellor Thurlow assured me he did to Judge Buller, who tried him, that '*if ever a poor man was murdered it was O'Coigly,*' but simply to allude to a circumstance which, in the case of a common felon, would probably have saved his life. The Bow Street officer who swore to finding the fatal paper in his pocket-book, and remarked in court the folding of the paper as fitting that pocket-book, had sworn before the Privy Council that the same paper *was found loose in O'Coigly's great-coat, and, I think, had added that he himself had put it into the pocket-book.* An attorney of the name of Foulkes⁶⁰ gave me this information, and I went with it to Mr. Wickham, who assured me that the circumstance should be carefully and anxiously investigated before the execution. But the order had gone down, and while we were conversing the sentence was probably executed.⁶¹

Lord Holland adds that when the Judge was descanting on the mildness and clemency of the Administration, O'Coigly quietly

⁶⁰ Foulkes was the attorney whom Lawless engaged to defend O'Coigly. Lord Cloncurry, in his *Memoirs*, writes very inaccurately of the facts. He says that the arrests took place at Whitstable, instead of Margate, and that O'Coigly was hanged on May 7, whereas he should have written June. See p. [67](#).

⁶¹ *Memoirs of the Whig Party*. By Lord Holland, afterwards a Cabinet Minister.

took a pinch of snuff and said 'Ahem!'

When no evidence was produced in court which could legally ensure a verdict against O'Coigly, it seems reasonable to assume from the tone of the law officers and the Judge that they possessed some secret knowledge of his guilt, for in point of fact, though O'Coigly declared his innocence, he was deeply pledged to the conspiracy.

'O'Connor was leaving the court in triumph,' writes Mr. Froude, 'but the Government knew their man too well to let him go so easily. He was at once re-arrested on another charge, and was restored to his old quarters in Dublin Castle.'⁶² From whom the fatal whisper came does not appear, but the sequel seems to leave no doubt that to Turner it was due. MacMahon and other prominent rebels were Presbyterian clergymen of Ulster. It was an object now with those who desired the collapse of the conspiracy to detach the Presbyterian party from the 'Papists.' Binns was a staunch Presbyterian rebel, a colleague of O'Coigly. In a letter dated Philadelphia, 1843, Binns, addressing Dr. Madden, states that great efforts were used to try and persuade O'Coigly to implicate him, 'offering Mr. Coigly his life if he would criminate me agreeable to the instructions of the Government, which proposal he indignantly refused to accede to. Though heavily ironed, he pushed the gentlemen out of his cell, when he there lay under sentence of death.'

We have seen that when severely tried he resorted to snuff.

⁶² Froude's *English in Ireland*, iii. 321.

He had other small consolations. Even in his irons he talked irony. One of several letters of protest addressed by the priest to Portland, shortly before his death, tells him that he is 'one of his Grace's envoys to the other world, charged with tidings of his mild and merciful administration.'

As O'Coigly's memory has been all but beatified as a martyr's, it is due to the interests of historic truth to add – especially after the remarks of Lord Holland – the following from a letter written by Arthur O'Connor in 1842: —

Though there was not legal evidence to prove that the paper found in Coigly's coat-pocket was Coigly's, yet, the fact is, it was his, and was found in his riding-coat; for when the five prisoners were brought to Bow Street, a report was spread that the papers taken on the prisoners were lost; for the first time Coigly said it was fortunate the papers were lost, for that there was one in his pocket that would hang them all. He never made a secret to his fellow-prisoners that he got that paper from a London society. In my memoirs I will clear up this point.

O'Connor's promised work, however, never appeared.

As regards Dutton, the witness who swore to O'Coigly's handwriting, his subsequent career was cast on a spot also frequented by Turner.⁶³ He is found at Cuxhaven, not very far from Hamburg, and, until 1840, holding office in its postal and diplomatic departments, and the husband of a lady well

⁶³ See p. [31](#), *infra*.

connected.⁶⁴ Cuxhaven, as gazetteers record, was from 1795 a place of the utmost importance for the maintenance of intercourse between England and the Continent.

⁶⁴ In the Pelham MSS. is a letter signed Frederick Dutton, regarding his Vice-Consulate, and dated Dec. 19, 1825.

CHAPTER IV

THE BETRAYER'S INTERVIEW WITH TALLEYRAND

The letters of secret information in the well-known 'Castlereagh Correspondence' being mostly without date are inserted regardless of chronological sequence, and are often, from dearth of explanation, wholly unintelligible. One of these secret reports follows a letter of Portland's⁶⁵ – to be found later on – regarding the intercepted memorial which Dr. McNevin had addressed to the French Government. The particular references to Lord Downshire, to Hamburg, to Fitzgerald, and to the North of Ireland, of which Turner was a native – not to speak of his 'tone of injured innocence,' 'the dread of those from whom I come as to the ascendancy of the Papists' – all point to him as the writer.

His tone as usual is hostile to Lewins, a Roman Catholic envoy of great honesty, whose reputation he is ever seeking to injure; and the intrigue, it may be added, very nearly succeeded in getting Lewins superseded. Mr. Froude, it will be remembered, when describing his unmasked informer writes:

Lady Edward Fitzgerald had sent him on to Paris with

⁶⁵ See *Castlereagh Papers*, i. 251. See also chapter vii. of the present volume.

a letter to her brother-in-law, General Valence. By Valence he had been introduced to Hoche and De la Croix. He had seen Talleyrand and had *talked* at length with him on the condition of Ireland.

It was in February, 1798, that Mr. Froude's spy reappeared in London.⁶⁶ He had interviews at the Home Office, where he received some instructions, which are not stated. Camden urged Portland to beg of him to give evidence publicly, and to offer reward to any amount. But all to no effect. At last it was decided, as the next best thing to do, 'that he should open a correspondence with the principal conspirators, by which means you may be apprised of their intentions.' This is exactly what he is now found doing. On April 17 he goes to Paris, no doubt sent by the Home Office, to ascertain what arrangement had been made by O'Coigly and O'Connor as regards the long-sought French expedition to Ireland.

De la Croix will be chiefly remembered as the Minister for Foreign Affairs with whom Tone had to do. But he had been personally offensive to Lord Malmesbury, the English Minister, and M. Talleyrand was appointed to succeed La Croix on July 15, 1797.⁶⁷

The following letter is to be found in the 'Castlereagh Papers' (i. 231-6), and derives additional importance from its

⁶⁶ Froude, iii. 301.

⁶⁷ See *M. de Talleyrand*, par M. de Villemarest, ch. viii.; *Hist. du Directoire*, par M. de Barante, liv. iv.

close connection with Talleyrand: —

Secret Intelligence

April 17th [1798], arrived in Paris.

On the 19th waited on the Minister for Foreign Affairs; it being Décadi, he was gone to the country. Left my name, and called next day, at eleven; instantly admitted; *talked* over the purport of my visit, which I had brought in writing, as follows: —

'Citizen Minister, — Since I had the honor of seeing you in September last, I understand attempts have been made to injure my character here by some persons equally despicable as malicious (I mean Lewines and his associates), from whom, though United Irishmen, I pride myself in differing, both in sentiment and conduct; nor should I condescend to answer their infamous charges.⁶⁸

'I, however, take great pleasure in acquainting you with what I have been about, viz., trying to bring over to the side of the United Irish what is called the Independent Interest, *alias* the Country Gentlemen, all of whom have commands either in the Yeomanry or *Militia*,⁶⁹ and to whom

⁶⁸ Of infidelity to the rebel cause.

⁶⁹ Mr. Froude, speaking of 'the second arrest of two of the leading committees of Belfast,' says (iii. 237) that 'Lake seized papers which revealed the correspondence with France, the extent of the revolutionary armament, and the measures taken for the seduction of the army and militia. The papers were sent to Dublin and were laid before a secret committee.' See also correspondence *in re* McNevin's Memorial, ch. vii. *infra*.

the safety of the interior will be entrusted, whilst the regular troops march against the enemy. These gentlemen have always been much against the Government, but feared, in a revolution, the loss of their property, especially such as held their estates by grants of Oliver Cromwell. For some time past a union has been formed among this body for the purpose of forcing England into whatever measures they choose as soon as an invasion takes place; all of my most particular friends are of this association, and they have infused into the minds of the rest the idea that English faith is not to be relied on. In consequence, they are all now completely up to the formation of a Republic and a separation from Britain, provided the French Directory will give, under their seal, the terms and conditions Ireland has a right to expect and demands. I took upon me to say France never meant to treat Ireland as a conquered country; that, certainly, they would expect a contribution towards defraying the great expense incurred in supporting the cause of liberty; but what the sum would be, I could not take upon me to mention. They insist upon having that specified, and any other conditions for this purpose.

'Citizen Minister, I now apply to you; to none other have I hinted my business, and the most profound secrecy will be requisite in order to completely deceive the English Government. I shall mention to you the channel of correspondence, &c., with the ciphers I'll make use of, if it is requisite to write, but which I sha'n't do without your permission, and giving you the letter to enclose to

Hamburg.⁷⁰

'I have the honour to remain,' &c.

Thus far the letter of Turner to Talleyrand – for Turner it assuredly is. It does not follow that the Minister believed all he was told. The quondam Bishop of Autun could read a soul. He was a diplomat, however, and showed to his visitor that cautious courtesy which he had learned when a bishop. He who said that speech is given to conceal thoughts,⁷¹ was not the man to be at once swayed by words. The despatch now before us had been addressed to the Home Office, and must be one of the papers Mr. Froude thought destroyed. The copy of his letter to Talleyrand having been submitted to Portland, the spy thus resumes: —

The Minister then said it was a matter extremely interesting, that other things were on the *tapis* at present, but desired I would call again on the second uneven day from that, and he'd⁷² enter into particulars. I did so, and gave him

⁷⁰ The spy sought to deceive the French Government in this report. The Cromwellian Settlers never thought of joining the United Irishmen. One of Turner's objects seems to have been to get a written undertaking from Talleyrand that the estates of these Settlers should be left intact, and money sent to promote an alleged treasonable conspiracy of Cromwellian Settlers against England, but which, in point of fact, did not exist. The Ulster Presbyterians were, no doubt, rebels; but these men were the descendants, not of the Cromwellian adventurers, but of King James's Planters.

⁷¹ This phrase is assigned to Talleyrand by Harel in the *Nain Jaune*; but the thought had been previously expressed by another bishop, *i. e.* Jeremy Taylor.

⁷² The contractions 'he'd' and 'sha'n't' are entirely consistent with Turner's 'you'll' in the letter to Downshire, transcribed by me from the Pelham MSS. See p. [50](#), *infra*; also Turner's acknowledged letter to Cooke, p. [97](#).

the following letter. He said he had laid my first before the Directory; that their opinions coincided with his, but that they could not give anything under their hands or seal, nor he either; that I had perfectly expressed their intentions. I told him this was perfectly satisfactory to me, but I feared it would not be so to them. 'Surely,' says he, 'they have a confidence in you, and you shall have it from the Directory, if you choose.' I said I hoped that would be sufficiently satisfactory to my friends, and begged to know when I could see him again – the 1st of the next decade, as they were still very busy on other matters.

Copy of the Letter to Talleyrand

'Citizen Minister, – Wishing to give the Government every satisfaction on the point of my mission, I now have the honour of laying before you every particular. I am extremely glad to find it appears to you interesting, which induces me to hope as little delay will be given as possible. I think it incumbent on me to state to you that the spirit of the North is completely broken, and I fear shortly the rest of Ireland will be in the same predicament.⁷³ A vast number of the

⁷³ This alternate blowing of hot and cold worked its end. A long letter from the Home Office furnishing secret items to Dublin Castle goes on to say (*Castlereagh*, ii. 361): 'Lewins had often complained that the conduct of the French Government had been hitherto so indecisive with respect to Ireland that all their projects had naturally failed.' However, it was admitted by Talleyrand that 'Ireland was the only vulnerable part of the British Empire.'

persons concerned in persecuting the United Irish are those from whom I come; for at present they dread, and with good reason, the ascendancy of this body. As soon as you set these gentlemen's minds at ease in regard to their property, the business of revolution will get leave to go on, and the British Government will find themselves clogged in their system of terror, without knowing why. The enclosed paper contains the mode in which I am to act, &c., &c. I have the honour, &c.'

Turner then adds: —⁷⁴

Enclosure, containing the ciphers I sent to the Marquess of Downshire, and the following postscript: —

'The intention of the ciphers was, if I thought it requisite to write from Paris, to say who I had had communication with and as a channel of conveying any intelligence you might allow me to send during my stay. The letter to be addressed to Charles Ranken,⁷⁵ Esq., at Mr. Elliot's, Pimlico, London, to be put in the common post-office at Hamburg, and sealed with a particular seal I have for the purpose. As soon as I receive the proper paper or document, in order to save time, I am to get, if possible, into England; if that can't be done with safety, I'm to go to either Bremen or

⁷⁴ The Cabinet, Mr. Froude says, was kept in utter ignorance of his name, and in the most secret despatches of the Home Office he is known only as 'Lord Downshire's friend.' These precautions will remind us of the cipher of the Louvais despatches, which has hitherto baffled all efforts to identify the Man in the Iron Mask.

⁷⁵ The narrative of Edward J. Newell – the spy who turned against his employers – states (London, 1798, p. [59](#)) that he was asked to give information 'against Charles Rankin and others for high treason.'

Hamburg, write thence to Ranken, who comes over before him. I attest the business on oath, and he goes instantly for Ireland. Ranken,⁷⁶ having been a banker at Belfast, a man of good property, and looked on by Government as a friend, can pass and repass as if to settle accounts at Hamburg.

'I beg leave once more to inform you that delay will be looked on, I fear, as non-compliance; and, if there's any particular point on which you wish for accurate information, I think I can undertake to obtain it.'

The spy's letter then proceeds: —

He (Talleyrand) seemed to disapprove of my venturing to Ireland or England; asked me if I knew anything of Fitzgerald.⁷⁷

Waited on him the first of the following decade; he said nothing was resolved on. I asked if the Irish were to wait for their coming or not. He said by all means to wait, and not to risk or expose themselves. 'May I assure them you'll come in the course of three months?' 'No, we cannot fix a time; it may be more, or not so long. I shall depend on you to obtain for me as accurate a statement, with as much information as you can collect.' I desired to know on what particular point, otherwise I should be at a loss; he said he could not mention any particular. I then promised as much

⁷⁶ Our spy often refers to Rankin and others of Belfast: 'He [the betrayer] had fled with others from Belfast at the general dispersion of the leaders,' writes Mr. Froude, iii. 280.

⁷⁷ Whatever he knew of Lord Edward Fitzgerald is told in the first letter. See pp. 5, 6, *ante*.

as I could collect in general, with a particular and accurate one of Ireland. I then asked if I might venture to assert that the French Government would be content with being paid the expense of their former expedition, and of that which will be sent; that they will leave the Irish to choose a constitution for themselves as soon as English influence is destroyed; guaranteeing to every individual their property, without respect to old Catholic claims and to their political conduct prior to the time of actual invasion. 'You may venture to assure them that the property of no individual will be seized upon, but the reverse. On the other points we cannot give an answer.' – 'When shall I see the Directory?' – 'On the ninth of this decade I shall speak to the President, and you may bring to me one of your acquaintance that is known to him, who will introduce you;' or that I might go alone, as my name was sufficiently known to him. Between that and the 9th I spoke to Abbé Grégoire⁷⁸ to accompany me; but he declined it, as did Stone;⁷⁹ upon which I wrote, on the 8th, to the Minister, to say that these two had refused, and that they thought he himself ought to do it, or give me a note of introduction to the President; but that, if it was disagreeable, I would not press the matter further, as

⁷⁸ This was Henri Grégoire, the celebrated Bishop of Blois – a most influential member of the National Convention, and afterwards of the Council of Five Hundred. The *aplomb* of our spy in hailing such men as friends will be appreciated. Grégoire was a cautious man, who voted against the divorce of Napoleon and Joséphine, and opposed the Emperor's marriage with Marie-Thérèse. During the 'Reign of Terror,' when urged to follow the Archbishop of Paris and abjure his priestly duties, he refused. B. 1750, d. 1831.

⁷⁹ Stone, see p. [33](#) *infra*.

I looked on his word as that of the Directory, and that I would call next day at the Directory, when, if I could get an audience, so much the better; if not, I thought it imprudent to wait longer.

Next day I called at the Directory and sent in my name. I there met Duckett,⁸⁰ who told me it would be impossible to see any of them that day; for a letter, which he had just brought them, which came from Leonard Bourdon,⁸¹ would give them, he believed, work enough, as he understood it contained some very interesting matter. I was to have seen some of them that day likewise; an answer came to us both that they were too much occupied. I then went to the Minister, and sent in my name, as did, at the same time, Colonel La Harpe and the Swiss Deputies. We were all sent off, as he was very busy. I left a note with his Secretary, saying I would set out next day, which I did, the 20 Floreal, alias Wednesday, the 9th May; arrived at Cuxhaven the Wednesday following; sailed the next day, landed at Lowestoff on Tuesday morning, got to town [London] that night, accompanied by one Jeffrey,⁸² who passes himself off for a Scotchman, was coming to Yarmouth as an American,

⁸⁰ Duckett, an Irish rebel agent, falsely suspected by Tone of being a spy, will figure in chapter x.

⁸¹ See p. [110](#) *infra*.

⁸² Possibly John Jeffrey, brother of Francis. He was a Scotchman, and usually resided in America (*Life of Jeffrey*, by Lord Cockburn, i. 50). How completely a Republican spirit possessed him is shown by his brother's letters to him in 1797, beginning 'My dear Citizen' (ii. 30 *et seq.*). The subsequent Lord Jeffrey was also a democrat, and his movements may have been shadowed, as those of Coleridge notoriously were.

was in Paris last September, speaks French as a Frenchman, looks extremely like one, and lodges at the New Hummums, Covent Garden.

It is quite clear that the above letter was written by the same nameless spy who poses in Froude's book as 'Lord Downshire's friend.' 'One of his letters, dated November 19, 1797, is preserved,' writes Mr. Froude; but, no doubt, a few others are preserved too, and may be found in the correspondence of Lord Castlereagh. How they escaped destruction is a marvel. Wickham, on January 11, 1799, writes, regarding 'United Irishmen' at Hamburg: 'The enclosed very curious papers the Duke of Portland desires may be laid before the Lord Lieutenant, *and afterwards destroyed.*'

So careful was the spy of his reputation that he vouchsafes not a signature. Internal evidence, however, shows that he was the man who made his disclosure to Downshire, and was by him put in correspondence with Portland.

From the letter just quoted it appears that, after his efforts to pick news from Talleyrand and fish in Irish channels at Paris, he returned, *viâ* Cuxhaven, to London, where he arrived on Tuesday night, May 15, 1798. This date is worthy of note. The spy feared to show himself in London and felt that his life was unsafe. What brings him back to London on May 15, 1798? His favourite post was Cuxhaven or Hamburg. O'Coigly, Binns, and Leary, though arrested in March *en route* to France, were not put on their trial until Monday, May 21, 1798. This case

is reported at extraordinary length in Howell's 'State Trials' and would fill a volume. Scott, afterwards Lord Eldon, prosecuted. The mass of secret information which the Crown contrived to acquire strikes very forcibly. Letters written in cipher by O'Coigly to Lord Edward Fitzgerald and others are translated and expounded by Scott. All the parties concerned in the conspiracy had false names. Mrs. Mathiessen⁸³ is called 'Marks;' 'a man going to William's,' means 'going to France,' etc. It was largely on evidence of this sort that O'Coigly was convicted and hanged.⁸⁴

The betrayer tells Talleyrand that 'the spirit of the North was completely broken.' In point of fact, however, it was in the North that the real martial spirit of the United Irishmen blazed, and there the best battles were afterwards fought under the leadership of Orr and Monroe. Turner was anxious to make the French turn their thoughts of invasion to other points on the Irish coast, and he so far succeeded that in August, 1798, Humbert's expedition, embracing not 1,000 men, landed at Killala, among the starved and unarmed peasantry of Connaught. He calculated on meeting enthusiastic support; but, as Mr. Lecky says, it soon became apparent how fatally he had been deceived. After winning one battle, and losing another, Humbert surrendered to Cornwallis.

'May I assure them that you'll come in three months?' Talleyrand is asked. The object of this and other questions, which, to a casual reader, seem hardly consistent with Turner's

⁸³ See Froude, iii. 283, or *ante*.

⁸⁴ Compare letter from 'Castlereagh to Wickham,' p. [44](#) *ante*.

treachery to his friends, is now pretty plain. Great doubt prevailed as to whether an invasion of Ireland was really to be attempted. The First Consul blew hot and cold upon it. If the spy, as an envoy of the United Irishmen, could only extort from Talleyrand an explicit reply in writing avowing the intention to invade, and telling the exact time on which the descent on Ireland was to be made, England would thus be well prepared, and her fleet able to destroy the French armament as she had already destroyed that of De Winter. Why Bonaparte, at first so anxious for invasion, should have changed his mind, is explained, in the recently published Memoirs of Gouverneur Morris, as due to the conflicting reports of Irish envoys. At St. Helena he told Las Cases that his mistake in '98 was to have gone to Egypt and not to Ireland.⁸⁵

Mr. Froude states that the betrayer had discovered one of the objects of the Papists to be the seizure of property, and had determined to separate himself from the conspiracy. Attention is requested to that part of the foregoing letter⁸⁶ where the writer refers to the Cromwellian holders of estates in Ireland, and asks that every individual be guaranteed his property without respect to old Catholic claims and to their political conduct prior to the time of actual invasion. Samuel Turner represented some of the Cromwellian Settlers, and 'his most particular friends,' as he calls them, were amongst those who held grants of land in

⁸⁵ *Mémoires de Sainte-Hélène.*

⁸⁶ The precise and careful wording is that of a lawyer, which Turner was.

succession to the old Papist proprietary. The descendants of these men viewed invasion with alarm, lest their lands should go, just as the property of the Papists had already gone.⁸⁷

Talleyrand's caution in talking with Turner contrasts with the freedom with which he opened his mind on the same subject to his *confrères*. A very important book was published in 1890 at Paris by M. Pallain, 'Talleyrand sous le Directoire.' It depicts his diplomatic life, and gives the pith of his despatches. From Turner and Duckett he probably derived some impressions regarding Great Britain and Ireland. He augurs well from the Irish rebellion, which has been 'cemented,' adds Talleyrand, 'by the blood of celebrated victims.' The first victim was the Rev. William Jackson, in 1794. Talleyrand urges the invasion of Ireland and the establishment of an Irish Republic 'for the instruction or chastisement of England.' 'Nelson's fleet,' he says, 'is manned almost exclusively by Irishmen,' and that their patriotism 'will teach them to see in the English their oppressors and enemies.' Talleyrand's sketch of 'Irish Landed Proprietors' is full and curious.

Another man who, besides Talleyrand and Grégoire, dealt cautiously with Turner was Stone, as Turner in his secret letter

⁸⁷ Mr. J. P. Prendergast, in his *Cromwellian Settlement of Ireland*, prints, from original MSS., a 'list of adventurers for land in Ireland' (p. 417). Among them we find: 'Samuel Turner of London, merchant taylor, £200.' 'Richard Turner, senior and junior, taylor, £200.' These persons are also found subscribing the same sum, he adds, as 'adventurers, for the sea-service' (p. 417). The hereditary feelings and predilections of a Cromwellian Settler can be traced in the letter to Talleyrand.

to the Home Office admits. Stone had been tried in England for high treason and sent into exile.⁸⁸ At Hamburg and at Paris he belonged to the set mentioned by Mr. Froude's cloaked spy⁸⁹ as including Lady Edward Fitzgerald (Pamela), Lady Lucy Fitzgerald, Mrs. Matthiessen, and General Count Valence. Madame de Genlis in her 'Memoirs' mentions Stone conjointly with her daughter Madame de Valence and her 'niece' Pamela.⁹⁰

⁸⁸ I find in the contents of the long-sealed chest at Dublin Castle, 'The Examination of Samuel Rogers, of Cornhill, Banker,' regarding his relations with Stone, dated May 10, 1794. With it is preserved an autograph statement by Richard Brinsley Sheridan, technically called his examination, embracing ten folios, dated May 9, 1794, and explaining his intercourse with Stone.

⁸⁹ *Vide* p. [5](#), *ante*.

⁹⁰ *Memoirs of Madame de Genlis*, iv. 130-36.

CHAPTER V

LORD CLONCURRY SHADOWED

Discoveries and arrests now multiplied, despite the care with which Reinhard and Lady Edward persuaded themselves that all negotiations had been fenced.

Lord Cloncurry in his Memoirs writes of his 'dear friend Lord Edward Fitzgerald,' and readers of that book will remember the touching narrative given of the writer's arrest and long confinement in the Tower. This peer seeks to show that he himself was innocent of treason, but Mr. Froude states, after studying the letters of Lord Downshire's friend, that 'Lord Cloncurry was a sworn member of the Revolutionary Committee.'⁹¹ The betrayer's first interview with Downshire took place on October 8, 1797. In that interview he ranked among the marked men, Lawless, afterwards Lord Cloncurry. During the next month we find his movements narrowly watched. One of Mr. Froude's sensational surprises is a statement in reference to this subsequent British Peer and Privy Councillor. Pelham, Chief Secretary for Ireland, writing to the Home Office on November 7, 1797, refers to the fact – if fact it is – that

'Mr. Lawless, Lord Cloncurry's eldest son, is going to England this night, charged with an answer to a

⁹¹ Froude, iii. 287.

message lately received from France. I have sent Captain D'Auvergne in the packet with Mr. Lawless, with directions to find where he means to go in London, and to give you immediate information.'⁹²

A story never loses in its carriage; and Portland was perturbed by the news. The Hamburg spy, who was the first to mention Lawless's name, was now consulted.

Two secret letters from the Home Office, dated June 8, 1798, and printed in Lord Castlereagh's 'Correspondence,' speak of a communication received from '*a person in Hamburg*,' and how

'His Majesty's confidential servants have found it necessary to take into custody and detain several natives of Ireland, now resident here, of whose intimate connection and correspondence with the leaders and inciters of the present rebellion in Ireland there was no room whatever to doubt... Communicate this information to the Lord Lieutenant, that the Honourable Mr. L – , Mr. S., of Acton,⁹³ and Messrs. T., A., and C.,⁹⁴ of the Temple,

⁹² This announcement had its origin in one of the secret letters of McNally (MSS. Dublin Castle). Lawless was to sail for London 'to-morrow night,' he wrote, 'and ought to be watched every hour'; but nothing is said of the answer to France, of which Pelham declares he was the bearer. McNally lived in Dublin, was a United Irishman, and confidential lawyer of the body, but had been bought over. The strange story of his life is told in a succeeding chapter. This man was now asked to find out all he could about Lawless.

⁹³ Lord Castlereagh, in a letter addressed to Colonel Lord William Bentinck, dated, Dublin Castle, June 24, 1798, and given to me by Mr. Huband Smith, states that, according to the information received, 'Mr. Stewart had accepted the post of Adjutant-General for Armagh in the rebel army. Bentinck, writing to General Nugent three

have been apprehended here, and Messrs. McG – and D – at Liverpool;⁹⁵ and that warrants for apprehending the following have been granted: Dr. O'K – , C —⁹⁶ of Abbey Street, Dublin, and Mr. H – .⁹⁷

Lord Cloncurry states that the Duke of Leinster, Curran, and Grattan, who happened to be visiting him, were also taken into custody; but this statement is not wholly borne out by contemporary accounts.

Wickham's second letter of June 8, 1798, recurs to the arrests and speaks of 'most secret, though accurate, intelligence received from Hamburg,' adding: —

There are some papers found in Mr. Lawless's possession that tend directly to show his connection with some of the most desperate of the Republican party here,

days later, says that Stewart, when his prisoner, 'confessed to me privately that he was a United Irishman.' This tends to show how generally accurate was the information communicated through Downshire.

⁹⁴ Trenor, Agar, and Curran. Trenor was the secretary of Lawless. Cloncurry's Memoirs state (p. 68) that the hardships to which Trenor was exposed brought on illness and caused his death.

⁹⁵ It appears from a letter of Wickham's (*Castlereagh*, i. 313) that the two men arrested at Liverpool were McGuckin and Dowdall.

⁹⁶ The *Dublin Directory* for 1798 records the name of 'John Chambers, 5, Abbey Street.' Here again the handiwork of Downshire's 'friend' is traceable. The private list of the executive, which he gave him, includes Chambers's name. Mr. Chambers, grandson of the above, tells me that when the warrant was issued, a judge of unpopular antecedents hid the rebel in his house.

⁹⁷ The imprisonment of Hamilton, the nephew of Russell, is noticed in the letter from Hamburg. *Castlereagh Papers*, ii. 5.

as well as with those who are in habitual communication with the French agents at *Hamburgh*, and his Grace is in daily expectation of some material evidence *from that place*, tending more directly to implicate that gentleman in a treasonable correspondence with the enemy.⁹⁸

'Braughall' was another name which will be found in the list written out by Downshire from his visitor's dictation. Lord Cloncurry, in his Memoirs, describes Braughall as 'his business agent and confidential friend;' while Tone constantly refers to him in cordial terms. The newspapers of the day record his arrest and how 'papers of a very seditious nature were found in his house.'⁹⁹ Among them was a letter from Lawless urging him to contribute to the defence of unfortunate O'Coigly, and mentioning that 'Little Henry' had munificently subscribed. This passage, Lord Cloncurry states, was interpreted at Dublin Castle

⁹⁸ Wickham to Castlereagh, Whitehall, June 8, 1798.

⁹⁹ McNally's secret letters, scores of which I have read in MS., make frequent mention of Braughall as a man with whom he was intimate; and it is likely that the news of Lawless's intended journey to England came from Braughall innocently. McNally, while incriminating others, uniformly seeks to exculpate Braughall, whose counsel he was (MS. letter of May 25, 1798). On June 13, 1798, he expresses his opinion that 'Braughall is an enemy to force'; and a characteristic hint drops: 'If Braughall could be made a friend – and I do believe he is not disinclined to be one, for I know he always reprobates tumult – his influence is great, and his exertions would go far to restore peace.' Braughall had been secretary to the Catholic Committee, and is repeatedly mentioned by Tone in his Journal. A fine portrait of Braughall, in oils, may be seen in the boardroom of the Royal Dublin Society, of which he was secretary. After his arrest, this picture was relegated to a cellar of the institution; but, thanks to Lord J. Butler, it has been recently unearthed and restored. He died in 1803.

as referring to Henry Grattan, though the writer meant Mr. Henry of Straffan, brother-in-law to Lord Edward Fitzgerald, and as the result of this mistake Grattan was placed under arrest, but speedily liberated.

A memoir of O'Coigly is furnished by Dr. Madden in the first edition of his 'United Irishmen,' and embodies information derived from Cloncurry. Deferring to the Hon. Mr. Lawless, when in London, he says: 'Every Irishman who frequented his house was vigilantly watched by *agents of a higher department than the police.*' Pelham says that he sent Captain D'Auvergne on board the packet with Lawless, charged to find out where he went to in London; and it would seem that during the tedious journey of those days, Lawless suspected D'Auvergne's mission. 'The agent of a higher department than the police' would also apply to Turner, who was in London at this time. Who was the detective who had his berth next to young Lawless on board the boat, sat and chatted with him in the coach to London, and afterwards dogged his steps? Letters furnishing secret information, and signed 'Captain D'Auvergne, Prince of Bouillon,' may be found in the 'Castlereagh Papers.'¹⁰⁰ This personage represented an old and illustrious French family. The Prince, finding his patrimony sequestered during the Revolution, looked out for a livelihood, and seems to have been not fastidious as to the sort. Cloncurry states that when bidding good night at the house of a friend, he would say, 'I haven't the conscience to keep my poor spy

¹⁰⁰ *Castlereagh*, i. 250, 373, 382; ii. 104, 162, &c.

shivering longer in the cold.' After 1798, D'Auvergne's usual post was Jersey, whence his letters in the 'Castlereagh Papers' are dated, and furnish the fruit of espionage, including all warlike preparations made by the French at Brest.¹⁰¹

Mr. Froude quotes a letter from Portland, part of which is to the same effect as that already given, and announcing the discovery of important papers 'in Mr. Lawless's [Cloncurry's] possession that tend directly to show his connection with some of the most desperate of the Republican party in England, as well as with those who are in habitual communication with the French agents at Hamburg; and yet,' he continued, 'under present circumstances, and with evidence of the nature of that of which the Government here is in possession, strong and decisive as it is, none of those persons can be brought to trial without exposing secrets of the last importance to the State, the revealing of which

¹⁰¹ He obtained the rank of Post-Captain, R.N., in 1784; and at the time that he was with Lord Camden at Dublin Castle he commanded the 'Bravo' gunboat. In 1805 he was gazetted 'Rear-Admiral of the Blue.' His name crops up now and then in the Wellington Correspondence. Thus, on November 15, 1814, when the Bourbons had been restored, this gentleman, now signing himself 'D'Auvergne, Duke of Bouillon, &c.' writes from 'Bagatelle, Jersey,' thanking his Grace for the condescending interest he had shown in recovering for him the small sovereignty of Bouillon. *Vide* also a piquant memoir of His Serene Highness Philip d'Auvergne, Prince de Bouillon, in *Public Characters* for 1800-1, pp. 545, 561. His father, though of ancient lineage, embarked in commercial pursuits; and it is added that at Jersey 'a multitude of spies were kept in constant pay.' A love of epistolary intrigue seems to have been hereditary with Captain d'Auvergne, Prince of Bouillon. History records that Cardinal d'Auvergne Bouillon, 'during the War of the Succession, held a culpable correspondence with the enemy, *i. e.* Marlborough, Orrery, and Galloway.

may implicate the safety of the two kingdoms.'¹⁰² But although the leading men could not be brought to trial, it was fit to hold them fast, that thus the teeth of the conspiracy might be drawn. One important man – Stewart of Acton – was certainly let out on bail; but he was a cousin of Lord Castlereagh's.

These rough notes ought not to close without some notice of a reply to Portland's criminary remarks, which the late Lord Cloncurry has placed on record. When the 'Castlereagh Papers' appeared he was an octogenarian and enjoying, it is to be hoped, an unimpaired memory; but it is an open secret that the book known as 'Lord Cloncurry's Personal Memoirs' was fully prepared for publication, and its style strengthened throughout, by a practised writer connected with the Tory press of Dublin, and who believed that Cloncurry had been wrongly judged in 1798.

As to the papers alleged by Mr. Wickham to have been found in my possession, [Lord Cloncurry is supposed to write] and tending directly to show my connection with some of the most desperate of the Republican party in London and Hamburgh, I now solemnly declare that I believe the statement to be *a pure fiction*, and that no papers were found, as I am most certain that, with my knowledge, no papers existed which could have had any such tendency, more directly or indirectly than, perhaps, a visiting ticket of Arthur O'Connor's, or a note from O'Coigly in acceptance

¹⁰² Portland to Camden, June 8. – S. P. O.

of my invitation to dinner.¹⁰³

On the other hand, it is stated in a letter to the Home Office, dated July 24, 1799, that rebel despatches had been regularly addressed to Mr. Lawless in the Temple, 'whose fate,' it is added, 'is much lamented at Paris.'¹⁰⁴ Lord Cloncurry himself admits that in the autumn of 1797 he was elected – but without his desire or knowledge – a member of the Executive Directory of the United Irishmen, 'when, for the first and only time, I attended a meeting held at Jackson's in Church Street.'¹⁰⁵ This date furnished fresh proof of the promptitude and accuracy of Turner's information to Downshire (supplied also in the autumn of 1797) – information which revealed the adherence of Lawless, afterwards Lord Cloncurry, to the Executive Directory. Jackson's name is also to be found in the list as dictated by Turner. Of course Lawless must have been already a United Irishman, or he could not be eligible for election to a seat in the Directory. Binns, who was arrested with O'Connor and O'Coigly at Margate, says: 'Coigly was no stranger to Lawless; he made him a United Irishman in his father's house, in Merrion Street, Dublin.'¹⁰⁶ Cloncurry's Memoirs state merely that O'Coigly, who was the

¹⁰³ *Personal Recollections of Lord Cloncurry*.

¹⁰⁴ *Castlereagh Papers*, ii. 361.

¹⁰⁵ *Personal Recollections of Lord Cloncurry*, p. [38](#).

¹⁰⁶ Purchased by the father of Lord Cloncurry from Lord Mornington (Cloncurry's *Recollections*, p. [8](#)). In this house the Duke of Wellington was most certainly born in 1769, though his Grace was himself ignorant of the fact, as his Census return, in 1850, shows. It is now the headquarters of the Land Commission.

finest-looking man he had ever seen, presented to him a letter of introduction, descriptive of Orange persecution, which it was alleged he had suffered.

Lawless and O'Coigly had opinions in common; and both were much together in London. The former never forgave O'Connor for having – as he said – unfairly sacrificed O'Coigly during the trials at Maidstone.¹⁰⁷ In collecting evidence to hang the priest, renewed attention fell upon Lawless. His first imprisonment lasted for six weeks. On April 14, 1799, on the eve of his marriage with Miss Ryall, who at last died of a 'broken heart,' he was again arrested on Portland's warrant and committed to the Tower, where he remained two years. Lord Cloncurry states that his father, in dread of confiscation following his son, left away from him 65,000*l*. However, the Irish rebel lived to become a British peer, a Privy Councillor, and the adviser of successive Viceroys. Dr. Madden, who received much help from Cloncurry when compiling his 'Lives of the United Irishmen,' states that Robert Emmet dined with this peer in Paris, previous to leaving France on his ill-fated enterprise; and Madden, in his second edition (ii. 137), says he knows not how to reconcile the account of the interview, as supplied in 'Cloncurry's Personal Memoirs,' with a verbal account of the same given by his lordship to himself.

The list noted by Downshire from the dictation of his visitor, though complete as regards the Rebel Executive of 1797, far

¹⁰⁷ Statement of Lord Cloncurry to Mr. O'Neill Daunt.

from embraced all the names which more careful thought must have brought to the recollection of the informer. It had now become second nature to him to discharge, almost daily, letters of fatal aim, jeopardising the lives and reputations of men who implicitly trusted him. He also, as it appears, 'opened a correspondence' with leading United Irishmen. It is not sought to be conveyed that all the information came from Turner; but the following remarks of Mr. Froude, although they repeat a few names already mentioned, are important, as connecting 'Lord Downshire's friend' with the harvest of captures in midsummer 1798: —

Every day was bringing to the private knowledge of the Cabinet how widely the mischief had spread, *as the correspondence which continued with Lord Downshire's friend added to the list of accomplices*. Lord Cloncurry's son was no sooner arrested, than Stewart of Acton, a young Agar, a young Tennent, young Curran, McGuckin, Dowdall, and twenty others,¹⁰⁸ whose names never came before the public, were found to be as deeply compromised as he.¹⁰⁹

The question was even mooted as to whether he and others should not be excepted by name from the Bill of Indemnity, or even specially attainted by a Bill of Pains and Penalties, in

¹⁰⁸ Stewart of Acton, Tennent, McGuckin, Hamilton, and many of the twenty others, were all, like Turner, belonging to the Ulster branch of the organisation.

¹⁰⁹ Froude, iii. 418; see also p. [20](#), *ante*.

consideration of the impossibility of convicting them by the ordinary course of the law.¹¹⁰

Turner's knowledge and duties as a United Irishman having been mainly confined to Ulster, it seemed strange that one of the Northern Committee could be so intimate with O'Connor and Lord Edward. Even in the betrayer's first interview with Downshire he reveals much intimate acquaintance with both. All this can be readily understood now. In November, 1796, O'Connor took a house near Belfast, preparatory to offering himself for the representation of Antrim. Dr. Madden states that Lord Edward and O'Connor lived together for some months, and during their stay maintained friendly intercourse with the Northern leaders.¹¹¹ Soon after we find the command in Ulster assigned to O'Connor. 'Arthur O'Connor,' resumes Mr. Froude, describing the events of December, 1797, 'after spending a few months in the Castle,'¹¹² had been released on bail, Thomas Addis Emmet and Lord Edward Fitzgerald being his securities. "*The person*" who had come to Lord Downshire had revealed the secret of the visit to Switzerland; but without betraying his authority Camden could not again order O'Connor's arrest.¹¹³ After an interval, however, and at a critical moment, O'Connor

¹¹⁰ *Castlereagh Papers*, i. 163.

¹¹¹ *Lives and Times of the United Irishmen*, ii. 13.

¹¹² Birmingham Tower, Dublin Castle.

¹¹³ *The English in Ireland*, iii. 288. The above passage serves to show that the important arrests made by the Lord-Lieutenant in Ireland were largely due to 'the person' who whispered in Downshire's ear.

was apprehended anew, and he remained a State prisoner until 1802.

At an early stage of this chase I met with the seeming difficulty that the name of Samuel Turner appears in the list of leading rebels which '*the person*' gave to Lord Downshire.¹¹⁴ In undertaking to give a complete list of the Executive Committee, he could not well omit his own name. No doubt to invest it with increased importance, he puts it next after those of Lord Edward and Arthur O'Connor (the nephew of Lord Longueville), and before Stewart of Acton and the future Lord Cloncurry. The act is consistent with the usual swagger of the man, and shows the ingenuity by which he hoped to baffle all subsequent evidence of his treachery.

Lord Camden writes: 'The intelligence with which we are furnished would, if certain persons could be brought forward, be sufficient to bring the conspiracy to light, defeat its ill consequences, and make a salutary impression on the minds of the people.'¹¹⁵ 'Unfortunately,' comments Mr. Froude, "'certain persons" declined to be brought forward. Pelham, when in London, made *large offers to Lord Downshire's friend*, but without effect.'

¹¹⁴ See this list, p. [7](#), *ante*.

¹¹⁵ Camden to Portland, December 2, 1797.

CHAPTER VI

THE MASK TORN OFF AT LAST

Mr. Froude, quoting from the betrayer's letter to Downshire, writes: – 'I went to Harley Street, where Fitz¹¹⁶ told me of the conduct of the Catholics to him and his friends. He said he would prevail on O'Connor, or some such,¹¹⁷ to go to Paris; if not, he would go himself, in order to have Lewins removed.'

Lord Edward came to this decision obviously on the representations made by his false friend regarding Lewins. The false friend will be found impugning Lewins on every opportunity. Turner and Lewins, it may be repeated, clashed as rival envoys; Lewins, a Catholic, represented the Leinster Directory, while Turner claimed to represent the Northern. Turner worked his pen and tongue to such purpose that he at last succeeded in convincing Lord Edward of Lewins's treachery. Binns, in his narrative, states that 'O'Coigly had been commissioned by the Executive to supersede Lewins in Paris, *whom some suspected of betraying the interests of Ireland.*'¹¹⁸

¹¹⁶ Edward J. Lewins was an attorney, and with the astuteness of that craft he had early suspected Turner, as appears from the letter to 'Citizen Minister Talleyrand' (p. [24](#), *ante*).

¹¹⁷ The 'some such' proved to be Father O'Coigly, arrested *en route*, and hanged in 1798.

¹¹⁸ Lewins, Mr. Lecky shows, proved thoroughly faithful to his party.

The letter from Hamburg (first revealed by Mr. Froude) continues: —

Mrs. Matthieson¹¹⁹ has just heard from Lady Lucy that O'Connor is come. I supped last night with Valence, who mentioned his having introduced Lord Edward¹²⁰ and O'Connor to the Minister here¹²¹ in the summer before the French attempted to invade Ireland.¹²² They both went to Switzerland, whence O'Connor passed into France, had an interview with Hoche, and everything was planned.

I feared lest Government might not choose to ratify our contract, and, being in their power, would give me my choice either to come forward as an evidence or suffer martyrdom myself. Having no taste for an exit of this sort, I set out and arrived here safe, and now beg you will let me know if anything was wrong in my statements, or if I have given offence...

One of the many unexplained letters in the Castlereagh Correspondence finds its keynote here. In August, 1798, Wickham, of the Home Office, writes as follows to Castlereagh,

¹¹⁹ Henriette de Sercy, the niece of Madame de Genlis, and the companion of Pamela in childhood, who married Mr. Matthiessen, the banker of Hamburg.

¹²⁰ Lord Edward Fitzgerald.

¹²¹ Reinhard.

¹²² At Bantry Bay in 1796. By many, Tone was regarded somewhat as a clever adventurer; but when the French authorities saw a nobleman — brother of the Duke of Leinster — as well as O'Connor, nephew and heir of Viscount Longueville, acting in a way which meant business, their hesitancy ceased.

who then held O'Connor a prisoner in Dublin.¹²³ Wickham's object, though shrouded in mystery, was no doubt to check the accuracy of 'Lord Downshire's friend,' and to weigh the marketable value of his services: —

It would be a great satisfaction to me, personally, were O'Connor to be questioned on the object of his journey to Switzerland with Lord Edward Fitzgerald in 1796, and whether they, or either of them, were in France at that time, and what French agents they saw besides M. Barthélemy. I was absent with the Austrian army at the time of their arrival, so that I lost the opportunity of observing their motions.¹²⁴ If either of them went into France, which I am persuaded they did, I should be curious, for very particular reasons, to know whether they went in by way of Basle, and whether their passports were given in their own names. Should there be no impropriety in questioning O'Connor on these points, as I have said before, it would be a great satisfaction to me that it should be done.¹²⁵

Fifty pages may be turned ere the answer to this letter comes. It is headed '*Secret*,' and bears date 'Dublin Castle, August 17, 1798.' All my circumstantial evidence, aiming to show that

¹²³ After the arrest and death of Lord Edward Fitzgerald, and the collapse of the rebellion, the State prisoners consented to give some general information which would not compromise men by name.

¹²⁴ Wickham's correspondence illustrative of his secret mission to Switzerland, when he debauched the French minister, Barthélemy, with 'saint-seducing gold,' was published by Bentley in 1870.

¹²⁵ *Castlereagh Papers*, i. 259-60.

Turner is the man whom Mr. Froude could not identify, is crowned by this letter. Castlereagh thus replies to Wickham: —

'Secret. 'Dublin Castle: August 17, 1798.

'I have endeavoured to obey your commands in examining Mr. O'Connor as to the object of his journey to Switzerland with Lord Edward Fitzgerald. At first he declined answering to this point, considering himself as only bound to state the facts which came to his knowledge after he became a United Irishman, of which body he was not then a member. Upon being pressed, without mentioning names, he stated it thus: — In the summer of 1796, as set forth in the Memoir, an agent was sent to France to arrange with the Directory the plan of invasion. This person went to Hamburg; from thence, accompanied by his friend, to Switzerland; neither went to Paris, but the person employed *had an interview* near the French frontier with a person high in the confidence of the Directory; upon a communication with whom everything was settled.¹²⁶ The reason neither proceeded to Paris was lest the English Government, in whose pay most of the officers in Paris were supposed¹²⁷ to be, should suspect the design, and arrest the persons on their return.

'This perfectly agrees with Richardson's information,

¹²⁶ 'Everything was planned,' are the words in the betrayer's letter to Lord Downshire.

¹²⁷ In this suspicion, Lord Edward and O'Connor were not far astray. *The Confidential Letters of the Right Hon. William Wickham* reveal that Pichegru and other French generals were paid by Pitt to allow themselves to be beaten in battle.

which states that Lord Edward and O'Connor met Hoche, and arranged the invasion. '*R – states that O'Connor went into France*'; if he did, it was only a short distance merely to meet Hoche, and, from what O'Connor said, Lord E. seemed to be the principal.'

The above paragraph is one of much importance. Richardson I have discovered to be another alias of the hydra-headed Turner. Distinct proof of this will be found presently. Castlereagh continues: —

'Should I succeed in drawing from him any further information on this point, I shall have great pleasure in transmitting it. He further stated that, when taken in Kent,¹²⁸ although he had not authorised any person to hire a vessel direct for France, but rather looked to reach a Dutch port, yet his real object was to pass through Switzerland into France, and fairly confessed that, had he reached Paris, he should not have been idle, as, though not charged with any special commission, he did believe the Directory would have considered him as an accredited agent.'¹²⁹

Ordinary students of history are not free to search the papers of the Home Office, London after the date 1760; and the present writer ventured to ask Mr. Lecky whether he had met the name of Turner in his inquiries. The object of Mr. Lecky's history is distinct from mine, and his researches have taken a different

¹²⁸ At Margate with Father O'Coigly.

¹²⁹ *Castlereagh Papers*, i. 309-10.

direction; but he could not fail to observe, he said, that the Government correspondence threw not much light on questions of espionage, 'for names of informers,' he adds, 'are nearly always concealed.' However, on referring to his notes, it appeared that '*Richardson*' was the pseudonym of Samuel Turner. While thanking my correspondent, I thought it well to remind him that in the '*Castlereagh Papers*'¹³⁰ '*Furnes*' is stated to be the alias for this man. And I added, in order to guard against mistake, that one Thomas Richardson, a Liberal magistrate for Tyrone, was confined, in 1797, with Neilson and Teeling. The historian's reply is very satisfactory:¹³¹ 'Samuel Turner wrote his letters to the British Government under the name of Richardson. This,' adds Mr. Lecky, 'is not a matter of inference, but of distinct proof.'

Once only '*Richardson*' is mentioned in '*Castlereagh*.' It was the false name by which the Home Office, when obliged

¹³⁰ General index to the *Correspondence of Lord Castlereagh*. '*Furness*' is the name under which Reinhard, the French minister, refers to him when writing to his Government.

¹³¹ Letter of W. E. H. Lecky, Esq., to W. J. F., Athenæum Club, London, July 5, 1888. Richardson, the popular author of '*Pamela*,' was then a specially familiar name, and one which would readily occur to a well-read man who divulged the secrets of a real Pamela. The plot in the stories of Samuel Richardson is developed by letters, a branch of composition in which Samuel Turner was *au fait*. There seems a strange irony in this spy describing, under the *nom de plume* of Richardson, a new '*History of Pamela*' and her struggles. Dr. Madden says that, after the death of her husband, Pamela returned in painfully straitened circumstances to Hamburg, the only place to which she could with prudence go. Madden little dreamt that the fugitive's retreat was the serpent's lair.

to communicate with Dublin Castle, masked Samuel Turner, LL.D., of the Irish Bar. Lord Castlereagh's letter to the Home Office confirms the intimate knowledge possessed by Turner of the doings of O'Connor and Lord Edward Fitzgerald. O'Connor was now – August, 1798 – in an Irish dungeon; and Lord Castlereagh having, as he says, pressed him to answer certain questions, adds: *'This perfectly agrees with Richardson's information, which states that Lord Edward and O'Connor met Hoche and arranged the invasion.'*

Besides his horror of martyrdom by the knife, Turner had a lively dread of the martyrdom of exposure and social ostracism. Jackson's trial in 1794 had the effect of deterring approvers. Curran's skill in torturing such persons was marvellous; and Mr. Froude declares that he stretched Cockayne as painfully as ever the rack-master of the Tower stretched a Jesuit. 'He made him confess that he had been employed by Pitt, and showed that, if Jackson was a traitor to the State, Cockayne was a far blacker traitor to the friend who trusted him.'¹³²

'Richardson' is now shown to be the same man as he who gave his information to Downshire; and that 'Richardson' was an assumed name for Samuel Turner.¹³³ Thus the question of

¹³² The Rev. William Jackson, an Anglican clergyman, came to Dublin on a treasonable mission, accompanied, as his friend and legal adviser, by Cockayne, a London attorney. The latter was deputed by Pitt to entrap the National leaders. Cockayne prosecuted Jackson to conviction. In Ireland, unlike England, one witness then sufficed to convict for high treason.

¹³³ In a letter dated June 8, 1798, Wickham speaks of the source from which

identity is established without appealing to further evidence. But inasmuch as my efforts to track Turner open up facts long forgotten, and others new to the historian, some readers may not object to follow.

As regards Lord Edward's meeting with Hoche, more than once referred to in Turner's letter to Lord Downshire and in the correspondence of the Home Office, M. Guillon, a recent investigator,¹³⁴ could find no trace of it in the French official archives. Special efforts were made at the time to veil this historic interview. No wonder, therefore, that Mr. Froude, in introducing the information furnished by Downshire's mysterious visitor, points specially to the secret meeting with Hoche, and how Hoche himself had not revealed it even to Tone.

Wickham was but carrying out Portland's behest in signifying to Castlereagh that O'Connor, then a prisoner, should be questioned on points of which the Home Office had acquired private knowledge. On August 23, 1798, the same polite pumping of O'Connor is urged – a task fraught with no great labour to a man of Castlereagh's tact and powers of persuasion. 'A *private* communication,' Wickham writes, 'of the names of the persons with whom Mr. O'Connor corresponded abroad, would

'R' procured 'all the information that he has communicated to us' – meaning what concerned Lady Edward Fitzgerald, Valence, Mrs. Matthiessen, Reinhard, and other ingenuous friends at Hamburg, who told Turner all they knew. Dr. Madden and others mistook this 'R' for the incorruptible Reinhard, as M. Mignet styles him. See folio 102, *infra*.

¹³⁴ *France et Irlande* (Paris, 1888).

answer *the particular purpose* required by the Duke of Portland.' The 'particular' object is not explained. It was probably that the spy might, as previously suggested, cultivate epistolary relations with the men whom O'Connor¹³⁵ would admit to have been his correspondents.¹³⁶

Teeling, one of the Northern leaders, who had been closely associated with Turner, gives a curious glimpse of the easy intercourse which Castlereagh would maintain with his captives. Sometimes he made the arrests himself in the first instance, and afterwards could charm his prisoners by drawing silken bonds around them. Teeling was accompanied by his father on horseback, when 'we met,' he writes, 'Lord Castlereagh, who

¹³⁵ *Vide* Appendix for some revelations of fratricidal betrayal by O'Connor's brother.

¹³⁶ One letter only, from Richardson (Turner) to Lord Downshire, I have found in the Pelham MSS.; it bears date 'Hamburg, December 1, 1797': —'My Lord, — I cannot contrive any mode of seeing Mr. Fraser without running a very considerable risque of a discovery. For this reason I now intrude to request you'll be so kind as to favour me with a few lines. I wrote to you on November 17, by post. Since that I have sent you two letters by Captain Gunter, of the *Nautilus*: the first contains seven and a half pages of letter paper; the second, a single letter with such information as I could collect, which I hope will be material. Gunter promised to put them in the Yarmouth office himself. 'It will be requisite for your lordship to lay aside every emblem of noblesse, and adopt the style of an Irish sans-culotte, for fear of accidents. If I appear worthy the further notice of your lordship, no pains on my part shall be spared to merit the honour of being ranked among your lordship's most sincere, 'J. Richardson.' December 1, 1797, Hamburg (under cover to the master of the post-office, Yarmouth).' — Pelham MSS. Placed far apart from Richardson's letter is found the despatch of Cooke, wherein it had been enclosed. 'The letters by the "*Nautilus*" have not been received,' he writes, 'and we know not how to direct to him.' The Pelham MSS. are pyramids in bulk, but no other letter from Richardson, alias Turner, is entombed within them.

accosted us with his usual courtesy. We had proceeded up the street of Lisburn together, when, having reached the house of his uncle, the Marquis of Hertford, we were about to take leave of his lordship. "I regret," said he, addressing my father, "that your son cannot accompany you," conducting me at the same moment through the outer gate, which, to my inexpressible astonishment, was instantly closed, and I found myself surrounded by a military guard.' Teeling, later on, describes a visit paid by Castlereagh to him when a prisoner: —

Fatigued, and apparently much dispirited, Lord Castlereagh entered the room. He possessed the most fascinating manner and engaging address, with a personal appearance peculiarly attractive, and certainly not in character with the office he had that day assumed. For though national pride was extinct in his soul, the graces of nature were not effaced from the form, nor the polished manners of the gentleman forgotten in the uncourteous garb of the officer of police. He regretted that in his absence I had been subjected to the painful restraint of an additional guard. It was not his desire that they should have been placed within my room. A slight repast had been prepared for him, of which he pressed me to partake. The wine was generous, his lordship was polite, and the prisoner of State seemed for a moment forgotten in the kinder feelings of the earlier friend. [Lord Castlereagh then informed Teeling that they had that day arrested Neilson and Russell.] 'Russell!'¹³⁷

¹³⁷ Neilson, Russell, Teeling, and Turner belonged to the Ulster branch of the

said I. 'Then the soul of honour is captive! Is Russell a prisoner?' Lord Castlereagh was silent. He filled his glass – he passed me the wine. Our conversation had become embarrassing...¹³⁸

organisation. Russell, who had been a captain in the 64th Regiment, and a J. P. for co. Tyrone, remained a prisoner until 1802, and, on connecting himself with Emmet's scheme, was beheaded October 30, 1803. Samuel Neilson, son of a Presbyterian minister, died, after many exciting vicissitudes, on August 29 in the same year.

¹³⁸ *Personal Narrative*, by Charles Hamilton Teeling. His daughter became the first wife of Lord O'Hagan.

CHAPTER VII

DR. MACNEVIN'S

MEMORIAL INTERCEPTED

Although the spy did not confide to Lord Downshire until October 1797 his name and secrets, there is reason to believe that he had furnished information previously. To enhance his importance he probably said nothing of this. As Mr. Froude observes, he painted his own conduct in the colours he thought best. This man had long played fast and loose. So early as May 1797 Turner was viewed with suspicion. The Castlereagh Papers contain a bundle of intercepted letters addressed by Reinhard, the French Minister at Hamburg, to De la Croix, head of the Foreign Office, Paris, of whom Tone often speaks with affection.¹³⁹ These letters, as already stated, mention Turner under the name of Furnes, which we learn from the Castlereagh Papers was an *alias* of Turner.¹⁴⁰ He is praised for his zeal and patriotism; but in one letter Reinhard is found struggling with a painful misgiving. The suspicion is so dark that he does not like to write even the name of Furnes, but makes dots to tally with the letters composing it, and no name was better known to De la

¹³⁹ *Castlereagh*, i. 282-292.

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, General Index, iv. 504.

Croix. At last Reinhard tries to banish the thought as an unworthy suspicion; and a subsequent letter of his reinstates Turner in full prestige.

The letter which expresses suspicion bears date May 31, but is confusingly assigned, in the Castlereagh Papers, to the year 1798. Its reference to Hoche, however, shows that it was written during the previous year – his death having occurred on September 15, 1797.

You must have heard [writes Reinhard to De la Croix] of the apprehension of two committees of United Irishmen at Belfast, and the publication of the papers seized, made by the secret committee of the Parliament of Ireland.¹⁴¹ Among these papers is a letter from the provincial committee, informing those of Belfast that the executive committee having conducted itself in an improper manner, the provincial committee thought fit to dissolve it, retaining however, two-thirds of the former members. This letter has been printed in London in the *True Briton*, a ministerial paper. It is very remarkable that ... should never have mentioned that circumstance to me. Supposing, which is very probable, that this reorganisation of the executive took place before the departure of ... [from Ireland], it is natural enough to suppose that ... should find himself among the *excluded members*. The opinion that I have formed of him ... [adds Reinhard in words worthy of a true diplomat] is,

¹⁴¹ Further on will be seen Portland's caution to Castlereagh as to the means to be taken by the Secret Committee of the Irish Parliament in order to divert suspicion from their spy.

that he is a man of haughty and violent character, without, on that account, stooping to dissimulation and deceit; so, in order to revenge himself on his countrymen, he may have betrayed his cause to Mr. Pitt. [Reinhard goes on to say that] It was letters of Lord Edward Fitzgerald which certified that this man who called upon me was the person sent to me by Lady Fitzgerald on his arrival.¹⁴²

It seems needless to point out that this must be the 'person' whom Mr. Froude describes as being introduced by Lady Edward Fitzgerald, and having the ear of Reinhard at Hamburg; and there is hardly less doubt that the man thus noticed was the same who, having got into debt with his friends, addressed himself to Pelham as early as 1796. His secret letter to Pelham will be seen presently. Meanwhile the same sensitive pride and the same revengeful spirit when that pride was once wounded is also traceable in the details revealed to Lord Downshire next year. Judging from the slippery and impulsive character of the man, I cannot doubt that previous to his mission to London in

¹⁴² The letter, of which this is an extract, appears in the *Castlereagh Papers* (i. 275-6). It was the interest of the spy that this letter should not be seen at the Foreign Office, Paris. It could do him no harm in the eyes of Pitt. A second intercepted letter from Reinhard states that consistently with his duties he sent Samuel Turner [of Hamburg] to General Hoche (see *Castlereagh*, i. 285). Tone mentions in his diary that Hoche one day 'seemed struck when I mentioned Hamburg, and asked me again was I going hither. "Well then," said he, "perhaps we may find something for you to do there. There is a person there whom perhaps you may see."' Tone muses, 'Who is my lover that I am to see at Hamburg, in God's name?' (*Diary*, ii. 341.) His diary is relinquished, however, just as he gets there, and his death in an Irish prison occurred soon after.

October 1797, for the purpose of making a final bargain with Pitt, he had coquetted with Dublin Castle.

Lewins and Turner were rival envoys – Lewins represented the Leinster Directory; Turner claimed to speak for Ulster. Of Lewins, who stands above all suspicion, Reinhard writes to De la Croix in 1797: – 'I think L... incapable of treachery, but capable of imprudence. I should not answer thus concerning *the other*. What seems further to concur in the support of my hypothesis is, that Mr. L. before his departure made it a point of great importance to ascertain whether there was any other envoy from Ireland, who addressed himself to me, and that he begged me not to give my confidence to any other than to him alone. I refrained from giving these tidings to General Hoche, not only because my means of corresponding with him are uncertain, but because all the letters from Frankfort announce his departure for Paris.'

It may not have struck Mr. Froude, as it certainly strikes me, that the man he describes¹⁴³ as visiting Lord Downshire, and at the last moment offering to betray, was the same person whom the historian, one hundred pages previously, notices as an informer, 'in the closest confidence of the *Northern Leaders*, but whose name is still a mystery.'

It will be seen that Pelham's correspondent of 1796 had fallen into debt and difficulties. This at first seems not consistent with the statement of Mr. Froude that Downshire's visitor was the son of a gentleman of good fortune in the North. But it is easy to

¹⁴³ *English in Ireland*, iii. 278.

see that the son himself had got into pecuniary straits. He tells Downshire of the expenses he is under, and asks Pitt for a 'cool 500*l.*'¹⁴⁴ to begin with.

In addition to a judgment debt of 1,500*l.* which Jacob Turner in his will forgives his son Samuel,¹⁴⁵ I find, on examining the records of the three Law Courts, that another judgment debt of 800*l.* was marked against Samuel Turner on January 26, 1793.¹⁴⁶

Speaking of informers, Mr. Froude writes under date 1796:

One of these especially, whose name is still a mystery, was in the closest confidence of the Belfast leaders. He had been among the most enthusiastic of the original members of Tone's society, but he had fallen into debt to others of the confederates and had been expelled. In revenge he sold himself to the Government, satisfied his creditors with money which he received from Pelham, and was at once taken back into confidence. Among others, he became an intimate associate of William Orr, a Belfast tradesman, afterwards executed for treason, who at this time was a member of the Head Northern Committee.

Orr told him that everything was ready. Dublin, Cork, Limerick, were waiting only for orders to rise, and when the word was given the movement was to be universal and simultaneous. They had 200,000 men already officered in

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.* iii. 284.

¹⁴⁵ Irish Record Office.

¹⁴⁶ Judgment Registry, Four Courts, Dublin, No. 302.

regiments; they had pikes and muskets for 150,000, and more were on the way.

The militia were almost to a man United Irishmen, and in fact, according to Orr, they would have risen in the autumn but for some differences among themselves. For himself, the informer thought that nothing would be attempted till the arrival of the French.

The Belfast men, Neilson, Orr, the two Simms, the party who had taken the oath with Wolfe Tone on Cave Hill,¹⁴⁷ he described 'as wealthy, wily, avaricious, tenacious of their property, distrustful of one another, and if afraid of nothing else, desperately afraid of the Orangemen, who were five times stronger than people in general believed.¹⁴⁸ They had authentic news that Hoche might be expected in the fall of the year, and then undoubtedly an effort would be made. If Hoche came, they were perfectly confident that Ireland would be a republic before Christmas. The instant that the signal was given the whole Orange party were to be assassinated...

The Informer concludes with these words: —

Be assured that what I have told you is true. The original agitators have been kept concealed even from the knowledge of the common people. The medium of dissemination has been the priests, and they have concealed

¹⁴⁷ Tone's *Life* (i. 128) describes how, before leaving for America in 1795, he swore to his friends who surrounded him on Cave Hill never to desist from his efforts until Ireland was free.

¹⁴⁸ This is quite Turner's style.

from their congregations, on whom they have so effectively wrought, the names of those who have set them on, merely saying that there were men of influence, fortune, and power ready to come forward. The motive of the original agitators – and I mean by them the members of the Catholic Committee that sat in Dublin, and many of the Convention that were not on the Committee – was to carry the Catholic Bill through Parliament by the influence of terrorism.¹⁴⁹

So much for the informer who sought the ear of the Irish Secretary in 1796. His close connection with the Northern leaders, his air of mystery, his hatred of the priests and the Catholic Committee, even his style and tone, the reference to Hoche, the prediction that the Protestants would suffer if the rebels won – all point to him as the same person who made overtures to Pitt, through Downshire, in October 1797. The alleged disaffection of the militia and the danger which menaced the estates of the aristocracy again crop up in Turner's letter to Talleyrand.¹⁵⁰ In both cases the same stipulation is made that he should not be called upon to give evidence publicly – the same nervous temperament is revealed. Downshire's visitor expressed mortal terror lest his life should pay the forfeit of his startling whisper. The same fear – and I believe I may add, presentiment – pervades the letter to Pelham in 1796. 'Don't name it,' he writes; 'if it get out they will know whence it came, and my life will

¹⁴⁹ Froude, iii. 176. The original objects of the Society of United Irishmen were parliamentary reform and Roman Catholic emancipation.

¹⁵⁰ *Ante*, p. [25](#).

be the certain forfeit.'¹⁵¹ The 'secret' which the informer of '96 told Pelham was what Mr. Fronde describes as 'a curious story.' 'To show you that they tell me their secrets,' writes the informer to Pelham, 'here is the account told me of the death of Mr. McMurdoch of *Lurgan*.'¹⁵² From searches made in the Registry of Deeds Office, Dublin, I find that Samuel Turner was closely connected with Lurgan, and in a way which gave double facilities for acquiring its secrets.¹⁵³

The reader might glance once more at Mr. Froude's account of the visit to Lord Downshire on that dark October night in 1797. The betrayer's disguise and stealthy nervous gait as though some avenging power were on his track, are things worth noting. Why was he in such dread of assassination before he unfolded his story to Downshire? Surely he must have been conscious of having earned, for a long time before, the penalty of 'Ormond steel.'¹⁵⁴ This, according to Dr. Conlan's sworn testimony, was a specially

¹⁵¹ The Rev. Arthur McCartney, vicar of Belfast, stated that he had never heard of a Committee of Assassination existing in Belfast with the cognizance or sanction of the leaders of the United Irishmen.

¹⁵² Froude's *English in Ireland*, iii. 175.

¹⁵³ The following memorandum, though of no political import, is useful as an authentic record of facts: —'1791, February 13. Samuel Turner and Jacob Turner his father, both of Turner's Hill, co. Armagh, Esquires, to John McVeagh of Lurgan. Conveyance of Premises in Lurgan.' 1794, October 8. Samuel Turner of Newry, and Jane Turner, late of Lurgan, now of Newry, to Thompson and others. Premises in Lurgan. The Teelings, with whom Turner claims to be intimate, came from Lurgan.' See Webb's *Irish Biography*.

¹⁵⁴ See Conlan's sworn information, Appendix.

familiar dogma with Teeling and Turner when organising treason in Ulster. The visit to Downshire was clearly prompted by greed. This peer had got the name of having secret service money at his disposal. 'Bank notes were offered to me,' observes James Hope, the working weaver of Belfast, 'if I would implicate Will Tennant, Robert Simms and others, and it was admitted that the money came from Lord Downshire.' This was probably among the efforts which were made to induce minor conspirators to give evidence publicly against their leaders, of whose treason the Crown had private knowledge through Turner.¹⁵⁵ McDougall's 'Sketches of Irish Political Characters,' published in 1799, says of Lord Downshire (p. 20): 'His political conduct agrees very well with his motto, *Ne tentes, aut perfice*; he supports administration with all his might.' Downshire's visitor knew, therefore, that this peer, if he liked, could make good terms with Pitt. Much of the melodramatic character of the scene appears to have been designed to move Downshire. 'He saw Mr. Pitt' says Froude, 'who consented that "the person's" services should be accepted.'

The Cabinet, we are told, was kept in ignorance of his name. But Pelham, the Irish Secretary previous to Castlereagh, seems to have known something of him already, for, as we learn, 'Pelham, when in London, made large offers to Lord Downshire's friend.'¹⁵⁶ That information had been given by Downshire's

¹⁵⁵ James Hope to the late Mr. Hugh McCall, of Lisburn. See Webb's *Irish Biography* for an appreciative notice of Hope.

¹⁵⁶ Froude's *English in Ireland*, iii. 290.

visitor prior to the interview of October 1797, I cannot doubt.¹⁵⁷ Mr. Froude, describing Lord Edward's visit to Hoche on the Swiss frontier,¹⁵⁸ writes: 'Hoche himself had not revealed it even to Tone, but Lord Edward was known to be intimate with Macnevin. He had been watched in London, and traced to the lodgings of *a suspected agent of the French Directory*.' Downshire's visitor, it will be remembered, had interviews with Lord Edward in London.

When the betrayer threw back his disguise, Downshire, we are told, recognised him at once. This, I suspect, was not the first time that a communication reached Downshire from the same source. Dr. Madden quotes from the 'Northern Star' of September 16, 1796, a sensational account of the arrest at Belfast of Russell, Neilson, Sampson, and many others, and how the

¹⁵⁷ There were informers from the first, but not to the extent suggested; nor can it be fairly said that they were men 'deepest in the secret.' 'This and similar information,' writes Mr. Froude, 'came in to them (the Government) from a hundred quarters' (p. [177](#)). 'They had an army of informers' (p. [174](#)). The historian here writes of the year '96, and rather overrates the extent of the treachery. Dr. Macnevin, writing in 1807, says that the secrets of the United Irishmen were kept with wonderful fidelity. Their society existed from 1791; it was not until 1798, when ropes were round their necks, that Reynolds and McGuckin proved false; and the same remark applies to most of the others.

¹⁵⁸ As regards Pelham's correspondent in 1796, and Downshire's in 1797, does Mr. Froude mistake, for two distinct betrayers, the one Informer? His striking scenes, his dramatic situations, his fine painting and accessories, remind me of a stage where the movements of a few men convey the idea of an advancing 'army.' That 'Downshire's friend' had been previously known as an informer is proved by a letter from the Viceroy Camden to Portland, dated December 9, 1797.

whole garrison, with its artillery, took part in the stirring scene, and it appears that Downshire helped to direct the proceedings. That day Neilson and Russell surrendered to his lordship, and Tone in his 'Diary' deplores the arrest as the heaviest blow which could fall on their cause.¹⁵⁹

The name of the French agent in London is not mentioned by Mr. Froude. It is M. Jägerhorn, described by Reinhard, the French Minister at Hamburg, as 'that estimable Swede;' and concerning whom there is a mass of matter, often purposely misleading, in the Castlereagh Correspondence. Macnevin's memorial to the French Directory was betrayed to England in the summer of 1797. M. Jägerhorn was sent by France to treat with the Irish Directory. His mission, however, transpired, and means were taken to prevent him going farther than London, whereupon Lord Edward Fitzgerald was deputed to cross to England, and there confer with Jägerhorn.

Turner's *fracas* with the terrorist commander-in-chief, Carhampton, was supposed to have caused his retirement to Hamburg. But that scene, with its dialogue, may have been purely theatrical.¹⁶⁰

In June 1797 Turner attends several meetings of the Ulster delegates in Dublin.¹⁶¹ There it was that the 'prudence or the

¹⁵⁹ *Lives and Times of the United Irishmen*, iv. 22.

¹⁶⁰ *Ante*, p. [11](#).

¹⁶¹ Appendix No. 1 to Report of the Secret Committee of the House of Commons, 1798.

cowardice' of the Papist leaders in Dublin, as he says, disgusted him.¹⁶² Why should the notorious Turner be allowed to go on to Dublin, and Jägerhorn be refused?

Samuel Turner saw a good deal of Lord Edward and Jägerhorn in London. We find traces of this knowledge in Mr. Froude's notes of 'the person's' interview with Downshire – how he called Lord Edward 'Fitz' and had confidential talk with him in Harley Street. The spy tells Downshire soon after that Reinhard begged him to stay at Hamburg, 'as the only mode in which I could serve my country and the republic. I instantly acquiesced, and told him I had arranged matters with Lord Edward Fitzgerald in London for that purpose.'

Turner played his cards so well, and personated an ardent patriot so completely, that the suspicions of his fidelity which Reinhard¹⁶³ expressed on May 31 are found removed soon after. Dr. Macnevin, of Dublin, a chief in the Executive Directory, was now coming to Paris to ask French aid. Reinhard reports progress to De la Croix: —

Hamburg: 25 Messidor [July 12].

While Mr. Lewins has suffered me to lose all traces of his journey, and Mr. Furnes¹⁶⁴ is gone to write to him, M. Jägerhorn has returned from London, and a new

¹⁶² See *ante*, p. 2; Froude, iii. 279.

¹⁶³ The French minister at Hamburg.

¹⁶⁴ The noble editor of the *Castlereagh Papers* says that this name is an alias for Samuel Turner.

Irish deputation has called upon me. All the efforts of M. Jägerhorn having failed against the obstinacy with which the Duke of Portland refused him a passport for proceeding to Dublin, he determined to call Lord Fitzgerald to London. The latter came upon pretext of accommodating his sister. The authenticity of the mission of Mr. Lewins was verified; important details respecting the state of Ireland were given; it was ascertained that there was no derangement in the plan, and in the resources of the united patriots. It is unnecessary for me to give you a circumstantial account of the information brought by Mr. F., since he enters fully into that which Mr. Macnevin has just given. The latter came surrounded by all the motives for confidence, and he did not leave Dublin till the 27th of June: his intelligence is of the latest date, and from the very source. The reports of Mr. Macnevin, who goes here by the name of Williams, and who would wish to appear always under that name, as Mr. Lewins under that of Thompson, appear to me to throw great light upon all that the Government can have an interest to know. Mr. Macnevin has been secretary of the executive committee, and all that he says proves him to be a man thoroughly acquainted with the ensemble of facts and combinations. In annexing to this despatch the Memorial¹⁶⁵ which he delivered to me, I shall add what I have reason to think of importance in his conference.

My first care was to clear up what the papers seized at Belfast said concerning a change made by the provincial

¹⁶⁵ Mr. Froude errs in stating (iii. 260) that Macnevin himself carried the Memorial to Paris.

committee in the organisation of the executive committee. It results from the answers of Mr. Macnevin, conjointly with those of *Mr. Furnes*, that it was of dilatoriness and indecision that several members of the committee were accused; that the northern province, feeling its oppression and its strength, was impatient to break forth,¹⁶⁶ while the committee strove to defer any explosion till the arrival of the French, and declined giving a full explanation of its relations with France; that, nevertheless, after the change of the committee, meetings were held in Dublin and in the North, at which it was resolved to wait; that the clandestine visitation of several depôts of arms, where the powder was found damp and the muskets rusty, contributed a good deal to that resolution; and that the desire for the assistance of the French had in consequence become more general than ever. It was, however, decided that a rising should take place when the prisoners were set at liberty. Macnevin and Lord Fitzgerald are of the moderate party. Furnes is for a speedy explosion; and it is some imprudences into which his ardent character has hurried him, that have obliged him to leave the country¹⁶⁷; whereas, the conduct of Mr. Macnevin has been so circumspect,¹⁶⁸ that there is nothing to oppose his return.

¹⁶⁶ All this is exactly what Downshire's visitor told him (see chap. i.).

¹⁶⁷ His challenge to the commander-in-chief, Lord Carhampton, was among the 'imprudences.'

¹⁶⁸ Instead of the words 'circumspect' and 'moderate,' 'prudence' and 'cowardice' are applied to Macnevin's party by Turner (*vide* chap. i.).

Reinhard's despatch is continued at very great length, and those who care to read it should consult the 'Castlereagh Papers' (i. 282-6). He thus ends: 'I have just received a memorial in which M. Jägerhorn gives me an account of his journey. I will send it to you by the next courier. That estimable Swede has again manifested great devotedness to the cause of liberty.'

By some marvellous sleight-of-hand Jägerhorn's secret report found its way to Whitehall, instead of to Paris, and may be read in the memoirs of Lord Castlereagh.¹⁶⁹ Two years later, the Swede will again be found tracked from Hamburg to London, and arrested on Portland's warrant.

Mr. Froude's allusion to the facilities of command exercised by 'the person' over Lady Fitzgerald's letter-bag, the hints he gave Downshire how secret letters from Hamburg were sealed and addressed, and how they might be intercepted, read, and then passed on,¹⁷⁰ are only those gleams of light that shine dimly in dark places, but enough, with present knowledge, to discern a good deal.

It will be remembered that Downshire's visitor, in his list of men marked out for doom, gave prominence to Dr. Macnevin, 'a Physician who had great weight with the Papists.' 'He (the

¹⁶⁹ *Castlereagh Papers*, i. 286-8.

¹⁷⁰ Among the letters headed 'Secret Information from Hamburg,' in the *Castlereagh Papers*, is one making allusion to the writer's previous communications with Downshire, whom he mentions by name, and stating that certain letters to Charles Rankin, of Belfast, were 'to be sealed with a particular seal I have for the purpose.' —*Ibid.* i. 234.

betrayed) had discovered,' writes Froude, 'that the object of the Papists was the ruin and destruction of the country, and the establishment of a tyranny worse than that which was complained of.'

The famous memorial of Dr. Macnevin, embracing a full report on the state of Ireland, and appealing to France for help, was written at this time.¹⁷¹ On arrival at Hamburg he entrusted it to Reinhard, the French minister there, by whom – as we learn from the 'Cornwallis Papers' – it was translated and forwarded to Paris. Mr. Froude thinks its betrayal to the English Cabinet a very remarkable circumstance, and the more strange because 'no suspicion has been suggested of Macnevin's treachery.' A hidden hand contrived to pass on to Pitt this document destined to become historic.¹⁷²

Wickham, writing to Castlereagh on August 15, 1798, states that the rebel executive committee directed Dr. Macnevin to proceed to Paris by the way of Hamburg; that the principal objects of his journey were to give additional weight and credit to the mission of Lewins, and to confirm the information that had already been transmitted.¹⁷³ Again the reader may be reminded

¹⁷¹ Mr. Lecky says, what previous writers do not, that Macnevin wrote the memorial at Hamburg.

¹⁷² Other intercepted letters addressed to the French Minister of War will appear later on. These unanswered appeals were well calculated to damp the ardour of the Irish refugees; but they tried to keep the machine of conspiracy moving – despite the subtle insertion of so many hidden obstacles tending to clog and destroy it.

¹⁷³ *Castlereagh Papers*, i. 271.

that Lewins and Turner were rival envoys. Each is found constantly trying to circumvent the other. Turner, therefore, had a special object in foiling and intercepting Macnevin's memorial.

Reinhard, in the betrayed despatch of July 12, 1797, tells De la Croix, at Paris, that every confidence might be reposed in Lewins. Lewins' usual post was at Paris, just as Turner's was at Hamburg, but both passed to and fro. Of Lewins, Reinhard takes care to say that Macnevin

not only attested that he possesses, and deserves, the utmost confidence, but that he is designated a minister at Paris in case of success. Mr. Macnevin wished much that his memorial should be communicated to him.¹⁷⁴

If it was Turner's interest to intercept Reinhard's letter establishing confidence in Lewins, it was still more his interest to keep back from Lewins a document which, while vindicating his name, would protect it from further attack; and this the 'Memorial' of Macnevin was designed to do.

Camden had now ceased to be Viceroy and was succeeded by Cornwallis.¹⁷⁵ The latter co-operates with the Home Secretary in screening from publicity the name of their informer. The report of the Secret Committee was now in progress. Cornwallis, writing to Portland, says: —

The same reason may not operate against the production of Dr. Macnevin's memoir, which might be supposed to

¹⁷⁴ *Ibid.* i. 284.

¹⁷⁵ How this appointment came about, see Appendix.

have fallen into our hands by various other means, and which, from its being produced, without connection with the other papers, might not create any alarm in the quarter where it is so necessary that the most implicit confidence in our prudence and secrecy should be preserved.

Your Grace will of course be aware that no account will be given, even to the Secret Committee, of the means by which these papers came into the hands of Government.¹⁷⁶

Portland duly acknowledged Lord Cornwallis's despatch,

in which you represent the advantages which might result from laying before the Committees of Secrecy of the two Houses of Parliament in Ireland the whole, or at least a part, of the very secret and authentic documents relating to the conspiracy in that kingdom, which I had the King's permission from time to time to transmit to the late Lord-Lieutenant [Lord Camden]. I lost no time in acquainting his Majesty's confidential servants with your Excellency's sentiments upon this very important and delicate question; and I am now to inform you that, after its having repeatedly undergone the most serious investigation and discussion, the result of our unanimous opinion is, that the communication of the whole of those papers cannot on any account, or in any situation of the country, be suffered to be made to a parliamentary committee, under whatever qualification or conditions it may be appointed, consistently with that secrecy which in certain cases the honour and safety of the State require to be observed.

¹⁷⁶ *Castlereagh Correspondence*, i. 228.

We agree, however, for the reasons you have stated, that the same objection does not exist to the production of the greater part of Dr. Macnevin's memoir, and I have therefore had an extract made of such parts of it as it appears to us may be laid before the public without inconvenience...

To prevent as much as possible any occasion being given which can tend to a discovery of the channels by which this intelligence has been obtained, I most earnestly recommend to your Excellency to do your utmost in procuring that the facts which are stated from it may not stand in the report of the committees in the exact order in which they are given here, but that they may be mixed with other information which has been derived from other sources.¹⁷⁷

The precautions taken to screen the betrayer were certainly very complete. Castlereagh tells Wickham (July 30, 1798): —

His Excellency authorised me to read the correspondence and memorial once over to the committee of the Commons, with a strict injunction that no person should note a single fact; and I can truly state that the individuals on that committee are altogether in the dark as to the manner in which that intelligence was obtained, and, from the mode in which it was gone through, can only have a very general impression of its contents. The same precaution was used in the Lords; and, I trust, although the Duke of Portland's despatch to his Excellency does not altogether sanction what has been done, yet that his Grace and the Ministers, who have so wisely enjoined the

¹⁷⁷ *Ibid.* i. 251.

greatest precaution to be observed in the use to be made of that most interesting and important correspondence, will be of opinion that the guarded manner in which the Lord-Lieutenant made the communication to the committees, not authorising the smallest extracts to be made, or any of the facts to be relied on in their report, without being fully authorised by his Excellency, will preclude any danger to the State from this valuable channel of intelligence being in any degree brought into suspicion.¹⁷⁸

In June 1798 Lord Edward was dead. The Sheares's had been executed. Macnevin, O'Connor, T. Addis Emmet, and Sampson lay in prison in Dublin. Blood flowed on every side. The city was like a shambles. The State prisoners, on the understanding that executions should cease, and that they might be allowed to leave Ireland, consented to reveal, but without implicating individuals, the scheme of the United Irishmen. A prolonged secret inquisition by the Secret Committee took place. As soon as their evidence appeared, Macnevin and his fellow-prisoners complained, by a public advertisement, that the Crown officials who drew up the report of the Secret Committee had garbled the facts and distorted their evidence. Into all this it is not necessary now to go, but it may be observed that, while everything inconvenient was left out, an innuendo was made that the betrayal of Dr. Macnevin's memoir may have been due to Reinhard, the French Minister. This – apart from M. Mignet's testimony

¹⁷⁸ *Castlereagh Correspondence*, i. 246-7.

to the incorruptibility of Reinhard – serves to exculpate him, and narrows the spot on which suspicion now rests. Reinhard, in his letter to De la Croix, thinks it strange that Turner had never spoken to him about certain revelations made by 'the Secret Committee of the Parliament of Ireland';¹⁷⁹ but the reason now seems intelligible enough.

Macnevin published his 'Pieces of Irish History'¹⁸⁰ at New York in 1807, and notices the betrayal of the memorial which he had addressed to the French Government. Up to that time, and until his death in 1840, he does not seem to suspect Turner. Had any such doubt occurred to him, he would have been the first to avow it. At p. [146](#) of his book Macnevin inveighs against a 'profligate informer,' 'a ruffian of the name of Reynolds;' but Reynolds' treachery was confined to the arrests at Bond's in Dublin, and did not take place until March 1798. Ten pages further on Macnevin speaks of the 'unparalleled fidelity of the United Irish Body.' Dr. Macnevin was struck by the knowledge the Government had acquired of the 'negotiations of the United Irishmen with foreign States,' and, he adds, 'at this time one of the deputies [*i. e.* himself] had personal evidence of its extent and accuracy. That knowledge was obtained from some person in the pay of England and in the confidence of France.' And Dr. Macnevin then proceeds to point to Reinhard by name!

¹⁷⁹ *Castlereagh Correspondence*, i. 275-6.

¹⁸⁰ Allibone erroneously assigns (p. 558) the authorship of this book to Thomas Addis Emmet.

This is just what the officials of the Home Office wished for all along. Wickham, referring to the publication of Macnevin's memorial by the Secret Committee of the House of Lords, writes: 'It may fairly be presumed that the copy has been obtained at [the Foreign Office] Paris, or from R.'s [Reinhard's] secretary at Hamburg. *This conjecture will be at least as probable as the real one.*'¹⁸¹

One circumstance struck Macnevin as 'confirmation strong' of his dark suspicion. Reinhard, as he tells us, made difficulties about giving him a passport to Paris. A most important despatch from Reinhard to De la Croix thus concludes: —

What I must particularly urge, Citizen Minister, in regard to this business, is, at least, that you will have the goodness to direct me as to Mr. Macnevin. I will not give another passport without your order.¹⁸²

This letter — possibly written at Lady Edward Fitzgerald's house at Hamburg, and put into her post-bag — was treacherously betrayed to Pitt. When De la Croix remained ominously silent in response to the above appeal, is it surprising that Reinhard should have made difficulties and delays in giving Macnevin a passport?¹⁸³

¹⁸¹ *Castlereagh Papers*, i. 237.

¹⁸² *Castlereagh Papers*, i. 281-6.

¹⁸³ Reinhard seems to have complained to the French Directory that his letters to De la Croix were not answered. The last intercepted letters are dated July 1797; and on the 15th of the same month Talleyrand was appointed to succeed De la Croix, who had

Macnevin's groundless distrust of Reinhard naturally influenced the views of a most painstaking investigator. Dr. Madden, who, when he at last saw, in the 'Castlereagh Papers,' Reinhard's letters to De la Croix, regarded the circumstance as damning proof of his treachery.¹⁸⁴ Subsequently Mignet, the great French historian and keeper of the ministerial archives at Paris, who had ample official means of knowing the character and acts of both Reinhard and De la Croix, assured Madden in writing that both men were incorruptible. This may be taken as conclusive, for, unlike Turner, there is not a line in any English State Paper tending to compromise Reinhard or De la Croix.¹⁸⁵

For the act of betrayal we must therefore look to Samuel Turner, agent at Hamburg of the United Irish Brotherhood; the man who had access to the most secret papers in Lady Fitzgerald's house, and who, we learn, 'was admitted to close and secret conversations upon the prospect of French interference in Ireland with Reinhard.' This, in fact, was the grand proof submitted by Downshire's visitor to show that he was in a position to spy to advantage – a fact sufficient in itself to demonstrate that Reinhard was himself no spy.

Dr. Madden's suspicion of Reinhard was doubtless

been unjustly suspected. De la Croix survived until 1805, when he died at Bordeaux, mortified by the desertion of some old friends.

¹⁸⁴ *Lives and Times of the United Irishmen*, ii. 290.

¹⁸⁵ Arthur O'Connor, at all times distrustful, seems to have suspected the upright Macnevin. They were never quite cordial afterwards, and it is certain that in 1804, when both served in the Irish Legion, a duel very nearly took place between them.

strengthened by a passage which for a long time puzzled myself, and occurs in Wickham's letter to Castlereagh of June 8, 1798. Wickham speaks of 'information confirmed by a person at Hamburg, who must necessarily have derived his intelligence from a very different source, and who could not but be ignorant of that from which R. had procured all that he has communicated to us.' The name thus masked is not Reinhard, but Richardson – an alias for Turner, as proved at p. 48 *ante*.

One thing greatly complicated this puzzle as regards 'R.' Wickham, in a subsequent letter, dated July 25, 1798, speaks of 'R.' – meaning not Richardson, but Reinhard, as the context shows.¹⁸⁶ But these blanks are due to the noble editor of the 'Castlereagh Papers,' the late Lord Londonderry; and in cloaking the name Richardson – it inadvertently peeps out in one place, like 'Capel' instead of 'Catesby' in 'Lothair' – he doubtless thought that it was a real name.

On February 18, 1798, Lord Moira addressed the House of Lords in favour of Catholic Emancipation, which, he declared, must be granted, as well as Parliamentary Reform. 'The greatest evil to be feared from it sinks to nothing compared to the mischief which is raging at present. The expression of a conciliatory desire on your part would suspend immediately the agitation of the public mind.'

Mr. Froude says that the members of Council knew more than Lord Moira – 'if he really believed his words;' and he

¹⁸⁶ See *Castlereagh Papers*, i. 237.

adds that they must have found it hard 'to sit patient under his flatulent declamation.' How much Turner's tattle had excited the Cabinet, and aroused lasting prejudice against a statesman not less able than estimable, appears from the historian's words: 'At that moment the Council were weighing intelligence from the friend at Hamburg, so serious that they had all but resolved on an immediate arrest of the entire Revolutionary Committee.'

Reinhard tells De la Croix, on July 12, 1797, that while 'Lord Edward Fitzgerald and Macnevin¹⁸⁷ were of the moderate party, Turner was for a speedy explosion.'¹⁸⁸ Turner was co-operating in a very base policy, one which unscrupulous statesmen are said to have planned. During the examination of Macnevin before the Secret Committee, Lord Castlereagh confessed that 'means were taken to make the United Irish system explode.' The policy of exciting a premature explosion before Ireland had been organised peeps forth in the Report of the Secret Committee of the Irish Parliament: 'The rebellion [we are told] would not have broken out so soon as it did, had it not been for the well-timed measures adopted by Government.'

Turner's policy changed according as the policy of his employers changed. In March 1798 the rebel Directory at Dublin were seized as they sat in council at Oliver Bond's. Soon after, three out of thirty-two counties rose; and to crush that partial

¹⁸⁷ After 1798 Macnevin migrated to America, where he filled several important medical posts, and published numerous books. He survived until July 1841.

¹⁸⁸ *Castlereagh*, i. 283.

revolt cost England twenty-two millions of pounds and twenty thousand men.

CHAPTER VIII

GENERAL NAPPER TANDY

An old and very influential French newspaper, 'Le Journal des Débats,' published, on February 29, 1884, an article descriptive of the pleasure with which its writer had heard sung a touching but simple Irish lyric, 'La Cocarde Verte,' commemorative of the career of General Napper Tandy. It had been sung, he said, at Paris, by an English girl, who threw into its simple lines a power most entrancing. The melody and the words continued to haunt him at all hours,¹⁸⁹ and, some months later, we learn, found him in London, seeking information, but in vain, regarding Napper Tandy and the song. During a subsequent tour to the 'Giant's Causeway,' his inquiries were not much more successful. 'J'avouai que nos histoires de France ne nous parlent pas de Napper Tandy, et je quittai Portrush sans être absolument satisfait.'

When French history is silent as regards Tandy, and remote inquirers appear so much interested about him, the present chapter may not have been written in vain.

The arrest by British agencies of Tandy and others within the neutral territory of Hamburg and contrary to the law of nations

¹⁸⁹ The words of the French writer will be found at p. [78](#), *infra*.

was baldly denied for some time.¹⁹⁰ A similar tone was taken by official authority as regards the subsequent surrender of Tandy to England; but how true was the story, and with what striking circumstances fraught, will presently appear.

Soon after the departure of Humbert's expedition for Ireland, Tandy, now a general in the French service, accompanied by a large staff, including Corbet and Blackwell, sailed from Dunkirk in the French ship 'Anacreon,' having on board a store of ordnance, arms, ammunition, saddles, and accoutrements. He effected a landing on the coast of Donegal, but, learning that Humbert, after having beaten Lake at Castlebar, had met with reverses and surrendered to Cornwallis, he abandoned the enterprise and re-embarked. It is told in the 'Castlereagh Papers' that the 'Anacreon,' when attacked by an English cruiser, gave battle near the Orkneys, and that 'Tandy had put two twelve-pound shot in his pockets, previous to leaping overboard in the event of striking to the English ship.'¹⁹¹

¹⁹⁰ The *London Courier* of September 14, 1799, displays the following translation of a letter addressed to a Paris journal: 'Citizens, — *The Redacteur* has said, and many other Journalists have repeated it, that Napper Tandy had been given up by the Senate of Hamburg. I declare to you, Citizens, that not a word is said of this in any letters received in any of the Banking houses in Paris, nor in those which I myself have received. I hasten to give you this information, because the Public ought never to be *deceived*. (Signed) 'Daniel C. Meyer,' Consul General from Hamburg.'

¹⁹¹ *Castlereagh Papers*, i. 405. The letter, of which this is a bit, was written by a spy who contrived to accompany Tandy as a sort of aide-de-camp, and was on board the 'Anacreon' during the voyage. Wickham divulges merely his initial, 'O,' but the reader will find his name and career successfully traced in the Appendix.

An interesting memoir of Colonel Blackwell, who died in 1809, appears in Walter Cox's 'Irish Magazine' for that year. William Murphy, an old '98 man, and afterwards the well-known millionaire, said that Cox played fast and loose, betraying his own party and the Government alternately. Cox begins by saying that 'few occurrences excited a stronger or more universal sensation than the treacherous arrest at Hamburg, in 1798, of Blackwell, Morris, Tandy and Corbet.' Cox describes Blackwell's perilous descent with Tandy on the Irish coast, and states that, when passing through Hamburg going back to France, the secret of his arrival and that of his comrades 'was betrayed to the British envoy, Crawford, by two pensioned spies of England, *Turner* and *Duckett*.'¹⁹²

Cox was a shrewd man; but when suspicion is once raised it is apt to extend beyond due limits. He was right as regards *Turner*; he wronged *Duckett*. His impression of at least the first was probably derived from Blackwell himself, for Cox acknowledges that some of the facts 'the writer of this sketch received from the mouth of Colonel Blackwell.'

General Corbet privately printed at Paris, in 1807, strictures on the conduct of the Senate of Hamburg for having handed him over to the British minister. Appended to this *brochure* is a letter written by Tandy some days before his death, giving an account of his arrest. 'The original,' writes Corbet, 'is in my possession.'

I arrived in Hamburg on the evening of the 22nd of

¹⁹² Cox's *Irish Magazine*, January 1809, pp. 32-4.

November, 1798 [writes Tandy], and the next day I went with M. Corbet to visit the French minister and the Consul General Lagan to obtain passports to Paris. I passed the day with the consul general and prepared for my departure, which was to have taken place the following day. I was invited to sup the same evening by Messrs. T – and D – , in a house where Blackwell, Corbet, and Morres supped also; we remained there till midnight, and at four o'clock went to our hotel. Towards morning I was awakened by armed men rushing into my chamber.

Cox jumped at the conclusion that the names thus cautiously initialled by Corbet, are Turner and Duckett.¹⁹³ A coming chapter will vindicate Duckett; and I am bound to conclude that this man, if he really joined the supper party, had been duped by the plausibility of Turner. Turner and Duckett have been previously shown as on friendly terms.¹⁹⁴

The accuracy of the information by which Crawford, the British minister at Hamburg, was able to effect his *coup* excited general surprise. According to the 'Castlereagh Papers' tidings reached him that Tandy and others were lodged at an inn in Hamburg called the 'American Arms,' and on November 24, 1798, soon after five o'clock A.M., this minister, accompanied

¹⁹³ It will be shown, later on, that an Irish spy named 'Durnin' resided at Hamburg.

¹⁹⁴ See letter to Talleyrand, *ante*, p. 27. Some persons supposed that because Duckett lived at Hamburg like Turner, he used that great gangway to France for espionage. In the *Castlereagh Papers* (ii. 6) Duckett is described as 'Secretary to Léonard Bourdon.' Bourdon is noticed in the *Nouvelle Biog. Générale*, was 'l'agent du Directoire à Hambourg, d'où il fit partir les émigrés.'

by a guard, entered the house. Early as it was, Napper Tandy was found writing. The officer demanded his passport. Thereupon Tandy, with composure, said he would produce it, and going to his trunk he took out a pistol, which presenting, he said: 'This is my passport.' The officer grappled with him, and the guard rushing in secured Tandy. 'He and his associates were put in irons, and confined by order of Sir James Crawford.'¹⁹⁵

And now for a short digression ere finishing the story of Tandy's woes.

People were puzzled to know how the complicated intrigue which achieved his capture – contrary to the law of nations – could have been completed in a few hours. There can be little doubt that Turner – whom Cox broadly charges with the betrayal, by furnishing information to Crawford had ample notice of their coming.¹⁹⁶ Besides Turner's personal acquaintance with Tandy, official ties of brotherhood had arisen between them, and

¹⁹⁵ Sir James Crawford, British minister at Hamburg from 1798 to 1803. Crawford afterwards filled a similar post at Copenhagen, where Reynolds, the Kildare informer, is also found acting as British consul. Reynolds's betrayals were long subsequent to those of Turner, and of a wholly different sort. His evidence was given in court publicly. The editor of the *Cornwallis Papers* states that Crawford died on July 9, 1839; but Mr. Ross confounds him with an utterly different man. The *Black Book*, published in 1820, records (p. 31) a pension of 1000*l.* 'continued to the family of Sir James Crawford, late minister at Copenhagen, dead.' The 'most exhaustive' works of biographical reference omit Sir James Crawford, a remarkable man, and one who played an important part in European history; and a letter of mine in *Notes and Queries*, asking for facts about him, failed to elicit a reply.

¹⁹⁶ *Infra*, p. 79.

nothing was more natural than the invitation to sup.

A letter headed 'Secret Information from Hamburg,' and bearing date August 16, 1798, has found its way into Lord Castlereagh's correspondence.¹⁹⁷ The writer, clearly Turner, is found back at Hamburg after one of his periodic visits to Paris, where, with his usual *audace*, he claimed to be an accredited envoy of the United Irishmen, and sought to discredit the mission of Lewins.

Before Tandy had left Paris for Dunkirk, where the 'Anacreon' was being equipped for Ireland, he had some unpleasant differences with Lewins and Wolfe Tone.¹⁹⁸ This afforded prospect of a golden harvest for our spy. Tone had long avoided Turner; Lewins repudiated his pretensions. Our spy now 'sided' with Tandy's party, and intrigued to such purpose that he seems to have got himself appointed *locum tenens* of the general. In this affair Muir and Madgett, with honest motives, bore a part. Muir, a distinguished Scotch advocate, had attached himself to the republican interest, and was tried for sedition.¹⁹⁹ Madgett –

¹⁹⁷ *Castlereagh Papers*, i. 306-9.

¹⁹⁸ Why Tone's *Diary*, as published, does not once name Turner, may be due to the uncertainty as to whether Turner was alive in 1826, and perhaps Tone's son, from motives of prudence, cut out some allusions to him. Tone died in a Dublin prison on November 19, 1798, three days before the arrest of Tandy. Tone and Turner were closely associated in their studies, distinctions, and political pursuits. Turner entered Trinity College, Dublin, on July 2, 1780; Tone entered on February 19, 1780. Turner was called to the Bar in 1788; Tone in 1789.

¹⁹⁹ Muir's trial took place on August 30, 1793. He was transported to New South Wales, from which he escaped by American agency. After a series of great sufferings

an old Irish refugee – held a post in the Foreign Office in Paris, and will be remembered by readers of Tone's Diary as in constant communication with him. It is needless to quote in full the anonymous letter of our spy. It will be found in the 'Castlereagh Papers,' vol. i. pp. [306](#)-9. The men noticed in it, McMahon and O'Coigly, McCann and Lowry, had been old allies of Turner's; and 'Casey, brother to the priest,' Tone, Tandy, Lewins, Teeling, Orr of Derry, McCormack, all figure in the original information conveyed to Lord Downshire.

The letter begins by saying that 'Tandy, having quarrelled with Lewins and Tone, called a meeting of United Irishmen, at which a division took place; the numbers pretty equal.' Tandy's rupture with Lewins was quite enough to make Turner take Tandy's side. Dating from Hamburg, and believing that the real 'minister of the interior' was a good cook, he writes: —

A General Creevy, who goes with the great expedition [to Ireland], called on me one day at Paris and stayed dinner. Muir and Madgett were of the party. It was for the purpose of inquiring into Tone's character, which we gave him. Madgett and Muir swore me into the Secret Committee for managing the affairs of Ireland and Scotland in Tandy's place: there are only we three of the committee.

he arrived at Paris in February 1798, but died on September 27 that year from the effect of the hardships he had endured. The papers of the Home Office show that in 1793 Muir came to Dublin to confer with the United Irishmen, and on January 11 in that year was elected one of the brotherhood. *Vide also Life of Thomas Muir*, Advocate, by P. Mackenzie (Simpkin, 1831).

He then proceeds to describe his visit to the Hague, and the information he acquired there. It may be asked if any evidence exists that Samuel Turner left his usual quarters at Hamburg and was in Paris at this time, and afterwards at the Hague. On p. 409 of the same volume of *Castlereagh*, Turner is described by name as in Paris on business connected with the United Irishmen, and that from thence he repaired to the Hague. Here he was consulted, as he stated, by General Joubert on various points, including the 'safest places for debarkation.' The West coast, he tells Wickham, 'seemed to be the most eligible, from Derry to Galway.' In the letter to Talleyrand²⁰⁰ the West coast is also suggested as the best point to invade.²⁰¹ The spy, after alluding to the 'contrivances of Lewins,' who 'strives to prevent any person doing anything with the (French) Government but himself,' reports Duckett as a most active rebel. He makes this statement in a paper meant for the private perusal of Portland²⁰²

²⁰⁰ *Ante*, pp. [25](#)-9.

²⁰¹ A man whom he found in consultation with Joubert, planning the invasion of Ireland with a map of it before them, he describes in this and subsequent letters as O'Herne. Students of the *Castlereagh Papers* have been unable to identify this man; but it is clear that the O'Herne who figures in them was no other than Ahearne, so often mentioned by Tone in his *Diary*. The letter to Wickham mentions General Daendels as a co-conspirator with O'Herne. In Tone's *Diary* we read (p. 460): 'Received a letter from General Daendels, desiring me to send on Aherne to him, without loss of time, to be employed on a secret mission.'

²⁰² The writer mentions his election in Tandy's place as proof of his unsleeping vigilance and increased power to betray. Portland, instead of seeing that the man thus ready to take a false oath would not scruple to say anything, was so struck by the

and Wickham. Thus it would appear that Blackwell and Cox wronged Duckett in accusing him of informing against Tandy. To Duckett, a man hitherto maligned, it is necessary in justice to return.

Lord Edward had died in Newgate June 4, 1798. The departure of his widow from Dublin and return to Hamburg are announced in the 'Evening Post' of August 16, ensuing. Our spy, as the 'friend' of the dead Geraldine, welcoming Pamela back and tendering sympathy and consolation, would be a good subject for a picture. Mr. Froude tells us that the great power wielded by this seeming exile of Erin lay in his intimacy with Lady Edward Fitzgerald at Hamburg. Morres had been sojourning here previous to Tandy's arrival, and, like Turner, received hospitality at her hands. 'Lord Downshire's friend,' who we are told had access to her house and post-bag, could not fail to know Morres well. It will be remembered that Dr. Madden blows hot and cold on Reinhard, the French minister at Hamburg, and suggests that he may have betrayed to Pitt his correspondence with De la Croix; but Reinhard had now been succeeded by a new man; and if further exculpation²⁰³ of Reinhard were needed after the testimony of Mignet, it is found in the fact that the correspondence of his successor was also tampered with. The

importance of the letter that he sent a copy of it to Dublin for the guidance of Lord Castlereagh. Here was a man, as Curran once said of an approver, 'willing to steep the Evangelists in blood.' Turner, in a previous letter (*ante*, p. 28), glibly writes: 'I attest the business on oath.'

²⁰³ *Vide ante*, p. 68 *et seq.*

letter of 'Lord Downshire's friend,' in which he proposes to become a spy, mentions, as a striking proof of his power, that he had full access to the *bureau* of the French resident at Hamburg: M. Maragan now filled this post. A letter addressed by him to Talleyrand may be found in the 'Castlereagh Papers.'

Most Secret.

Hambourg, 29 Brumaire.

M. Harvey Montmorency Morres,²⁰⁴ of Kivesallen, in Ireland, has called upon me, on the part of the interesting Lady Edward Fitzgerald: he has been outlawed, and fears that he is not safe at Hamburg. He was an intimate friend of the late Lord E. Fitzgerald's; he has, therefore, acquired a right to the kindness of the widow, and it is on this ground alone that she has allowed herself to express it. Mr. Morres was the leader of the numerous corps of United Irishmen: he is utterly ruined in consequence of his attachment to the cause of liberty. He wishes to go to France, where he has important matters to communicate. He is expecting from day to day an officer, who has commanded some expedition, and he hopes to make the journey with him.²⁰⁵

This was Tandy, as a succeeding letter explains. Tandy and Morres were seized at the same moment, and doubtless on the

²⁰⁴ Harvey Morres, of the ennobled family of Frankfort (b. 1767), had been in the Austrian service previous to joining the Irish rebellion; married, in 1802, the widow of Dr. Esmonde who was hanged in '98. He subsequently gained the rank of a French colonel, and died in 1839.

²⁰⁵ *Castlereagh Papers*, ii. 96.

same whisper. Hamburg encouraged an impression that Russia prompted this arrest; but, unless on the hypothesis that Pitt had the Senate of Hamburg in his pay, it is hard to understand how orders were sent to effect arrests there, just as if it were on British territory. Mr. Secretary Elliot was a member of the family which some months previously received the peerage of Minto in acknowledgment of diplomatic service. This official, writing to Lord Castlereagh, says: 'I learn from Mr. Hammond, Canning's colleague [in the Foreign Office], that Napper Tandy is suspected to be at Hamburg, and instructions have been sent to our resident there to apprehend him.'²⁰⁶ Thus Crawford must have heard in advance of Tandy's coming, and taken his steps accordingly. Of course he at once acquainted the head of his department; and hence the remark of Mr. Elliot.²⁰⁷ Some historians convey that Tandy, after his ill-fated expedition to Ireland, returned direct from Donegal to Hamburg, *en route* for France. The words of the editor of the 'Cornwallis Papers' are that 'he returned *immediately to France*.' But these accounts are most misleading. Tandy did not get back to France until after his liberation in 1802, and instead of the few days which might be supposed to intervene

²⁰⁶ *Ibid.* i. 405.

²⁰⁷ Tandy had borne a part in every Irish national movement from November 1783, when the Volunteer Convention met. He was a most determined man and a firm believer in artillery, a brigade of which he commanded in Dublin, with the words 'Free Trade or –' inscribed on the breeches of the guns. The procession of Volunteer delegates from the Royal Exchange to the Rotunda was announced by the discharge of twenty-one cannon.

between the departure from Donegal and arrival at Hamburg, it was nearer to two months. Dreading renewed trouble with the English cruisers, Tandy gave orders to steer for Norway. All landed at Bergen, and after suffering many vicissitudes sought to reach France by land. The cold became so intense that, as Corbet notes, people were found frozen to death at the gate of Hamburg. Weary and footsore, Tandy arrived here at twilight on November 22, 1798. Hungry for Irish news, he readily embraced Turner's invitation to sup.²⁰⁸

This meeting between Tandy and the man whose 'wearing of the Green'²⁰⁹ had forced to fly his native land may have been in the thoughts of the rebel bard when writing the rude ballad which, a century later, so excited the querist in the 'Journal des Débats: – '²¹⁰

²⁰⁸ It is doubtful whether the supper formed part of the plan for the arrest. All arrangements with that design had been already organised. *In vino veritas*; and the effect of the supper was, of course, an increased knowledge and command of the conspiracy, with proportionate profit to the spy. For such suppers he had a special *gusto*. 'I supped last night with Valence, who mentioned having introduced Lord Edward, &c., &c.' See letter to Lord Downshire, p. [4](#) *ante*.

²⁰⁹ See Carhampton's command to Turner, when at Newry, to remove his green neckcloth, p. [11](#), *ante*. Reinhard, writing to De la Croix, says that these 'imprudences' compelled Turner to leave Ireland.

²¹⁰ These are his words: 'Pauvre de forme et bien simple de style, mais d'une puissance d'autant plus entraînante, surtout sous le charme d'une voix qui jetait toute l'intensité de la passion Anglaise dans les accens de douleur et de colère, toujours un peu vagues et flottans, de la fantaisie celtique. L'air et les paroles ne me sortaient point de l'oreille; et, comme toute impression d'ensemble se concentre toujours sur un détail unique, il y avait surtout une strophe étrange qui me hantait.'

'I met with Napper Tandy, and he took me by the hand,
And he said 'How's poor old Ireland, and how does she stand?'
'Tis the most distressful country, for it's plainly to be seen
They are hanging men and women for the wearing of the
Green.'

It was no isolated secret that Turner had acquired and disclosed. General Corbet, speaking of Morris, Tandy and Blackwall, gives an interesting account of their subsequent imprisonment at Hamburg, and how successive plans to effect their escape became marvellously foiled. 'I lost myself in vain conjectures,' he writes. 'It was not until a long time after that I learned the infamous treason of which I was the victim. I was very far from suspecting the author.' And then, in a foot-note, he indicates him with great caution, dreading the penalty of an action for libel.

A man [he writes] residing at Hamburg, who had all my confidence, and that of my three companions in misfortune, was at this precise time sold to England, and was one of Crawford's numerous agents. He was informed of all our projects, and communicated them to this minister. This man is now [1807] actually in London,²¹¹ and pensioned by the

²¹¹ The London *Post-Office Directory*, eighty years ago and later, gave the names of those only who were engaged in trade. But Holden's *Triennial Directory* for 1808 includes the name 'Samuel Turner, Esq. 21, Upper Wimpole Street.' The name disappears from the Dublin Directory about the same time.

It is strange that Corbet was able to anticipate by half a century the revelation made in the 'Cornwallis Papers,' that a secret pension had been given to Turner for information in Ninety-eight. But his privately printed *brochure* may indeed be styled a sealed book.

Some hours after the arrest Maragan, the French resident, wrote to the Senate at Hamburg claiming Tandy and his colleagues as French citizens, and threatening to leave the Hague unless they were released. Crawford opposed the demand in terms equally strong, and, needless to say, carried his point. The French *chargé d'affaires*, observing Tandy's critical state of health, offered a large sum to the officer of the guard to permit his escape, but the superior influence of Crawford overrode all obstacles.

The letter of Tandy, from which an extract has already been made, states that after his arrest one hundred louis d'or were taken from him and never returned. His sufferings in prison he describes as so severe that life became well nigh insupportable, and more than once he prayed to be led out on the ramparts and shot.

John Philpot Curran gives us some idea of what these sufferings were: —

²¹² *The Conduct of the Senate at Hamburg revealed*, by William Corbet (Paris, 1807). The number of copies privately printed was small; the pamphlet is very scarce, and obtains no place in the Halliday Collection, R.I.A.

He was confined in a dungeon little larger than a grave; he was loaded with irons; he was chained by an iron that communicated from his arm to his leg, and that so short as to grind into his flesh. Food was cut into shapeless lumps, and flung to him by his keepers as he lay on the ground, as if he had been a beast; he had no bed to lie on, not even straw to coil himself up in if he could have slept.

The details given by Corbet of their detention are hardly less painful. At last he and Morres were removed to a new prison.

What had happened to me [he writes] would have naturally discouraged and prevented me from making any new attempts; nevertheless, I managed to correspond with my two companions in misfortune; and we all three stood so well with our guards, the greater number of whom we had gained, that we resolved to arm ourselves and place ourselves at their head, to deliver Tandy, who was in another prison, and after to repair to the house of the French ambassador. Our measures were so well taken that we hoped this time at least to recover our liberty in spite of the impediments which fortune might put in our way. But *the same traitor* who had formerly deranged my plan discovered all to the English minister, Crawford, who immediately gave orders that our guards should be changed, and even that those of the different posts of Hamburg should be doubled, which continued even to our departure. Such was the result of the last struggle we made to obtain our liberty at Hamburg.

These incidents occurred at a time when wagers had been laid that the days of French power were numbered. England, Austria and Russia prepared to form an alliance. Suvarov, repulsing the French arms in Italy, had entered on French territory; the Archduke Charles advanced on the Rhine, and the Duke of York was in full march on Amsterdam. Hamburg felt that the time had come when England might be truckled to, and France slighted. At midnight on September 29, 1799, after ten months' detention, Tandy and his companions were torn from the sanctuary they had sought and put on board an English frigate which had cast anchor at Cuxhaven.

Their departure was marked by a curious incident, which General Corbet thus notices in describing his arrest and extradition: —

In open sea, and half a league before us, an English frigate laden with gold, and on the way to Hamburg, was suddenly wrecked and only one sailor saved. What was the use of this? Was it to purchase additional mercenaries against France? Was it the price of that treachery of which the Hamburgers were just guilty? Happy would the Continent be if all the gold leaving England for such purposes had been buried in the sea!²¹³

Corbet, describing his arrest in the first instance, says that he

²¹³ Corbet's *Narrative*. (Paris, 1807.) General Corbet did not live to see the day when the recovery of such treasure was regarded as feasible. In 1889 appeared the prospectus of the Aboukir Bay Company for recovering the treasure sunk in the 'L'Orient,' destroyed by Nelson at the Nile.

asked the soldiers by what authority they acted. 'They appeared not to be ignorant that we were French officers; they answered that they should fulfil the orders of the minister of England.'²¹⁴

For a time France sought to stifle its wrath; but at last it was resolved that the conduct of Hamburg should be denounced to all States, allied and neutral; that all French consular officers quit the offending territory; and that every agent of Hamburg residing in France should leave in twenty-four hours. The Senate of Hamburg now became penitential, and wrote to say so. 'Your letter, gentlemen,' replied Napoleon, 'does not justify you. You have violated the laws of hospitality, a thing which never happened among the most savage hordes of the desert.'

A deputation from the Senate arrived at the Tuileries to make public apology to Napoleon. He again testified his indignation, and when the envoys pleaded national weakness he said: 'Well, and had you not the resource of weak states: was it not in your power to let them escape?' In reply it was urged that such negligence would have irritated rather than appeased the Powers. Napoleon laid a fine of four millions and a half on Hamburg. This sum, it is naïvely remarked by Bourrienne, his secretary, mollified him considerably, and helped to pay Josephine's debts.

An interesting account of the arrival in England of Tandy and his companions appears in the 'Courier,' a leading London paper, of October 31, 1799.²¹⁵ A military *cortège* accompanied them

²¹⁴ *Ibid.*

²¹⁵ File in possession of the writer. The British Museum, so rich in other respects,

from Sittingbourne to Rochester, and thence over Blackfriars Bridge, up Ludgate Hill, to Newgate.

Had Buonaparte and his staff been sent here by Sir Sydney Smith, they could not have excited more curiosity [records the 'Courier']. A vast concourse of people was gathered at the landing place, who attended the prisoners and their escort to the garrison gates, where a new concourse was assembled, and so from stage to stage to the end of the journey, everybody, old and young, male and female, was anxious to get a peep at this wonderful man, now become, from the happy perseverance of Ministers, a new bone of contention among the powers of Europe.

Napper Tandy is a large big-boned muscular man, but much broken and emaciated. His hair is quite white from age, cut close behind into his neck, and he appears much enervated. This is indeed very natural, if it be considered that he is near seventy years of age, and has just suffered a long and rigorous confinement, his mind the constant prey of the most painful suspense. He wore a large friar's hat, a long silk black grey coat, and military boots, which had a very *outré* effect.

Blackwell and Morres seem to be about five and thirty. They are two tall handsome-looking men, wore military dresses, and have a very soldierlike appearance. The former is a man of a very enterprising genius, about the middle size, apparently not more than four or five and twenty, and has much the look of a foreigner.

Morres had not accompanied Tandy in his expedition to Ireland; and it may be asked on what grounds he was placed in irons, and made to share with the ill-starred general all the rigours of a tedious imprisonment. While Morres indignantly protested against this persecution, he little thought that a document, seriously compromising him, and penned by his own hand, had been given up to the Crown officials. This was a memorial which, on his arrival at Hamburg as an Irish refugee, he had written, in Lady Edward's house most probably, and addressed to the French Minister at Paris. It was intercepted as usual, and may now be consulted in the 'Castlereagh Papers.' Colonel Hervey Montmorency Morres tells Bruix how he had been intrusted by Lord Edward with the direction of the intended attack upon Dublin, and especially as regarded the magazine and batteries in the Phoenix Park; how after the death of Lord Edward he escaped from Dublin, and remained concealed until the arrival of Humbert at Killala, when he assembled the men of West Meath to aid the invading army; but upon the surrender of Humbert he disbanded his followers, and, being pursued by the King's troops, made his way to England, and thence to Hamburg on October 7, 1798. In conclusion he implored the protection of France for himself and his family.²¹⁶

After Tandy and Morres had been removed to Ireland, they were placed at the bar of the King's Bench, when the Attorney General prayed that sentence of death should be passed upon

²¹⁶ *Castlereagh Correspondence*, ii. 94-6.

them. Historians curtly tell that the prosecution broke down on a point of law; but this explanation does not quite satisfy. The prisoners pleaded that they were arrested abroad by the King's command, and were thereby prevented from surrendering themselves for trial before the day limited by the Act of Attainder for doing so. The case was argued for days. Tandy's legal position was shown to be this: 'Why did you not surrender and become amenable to justice? Because I was in chains. Why did you not come over to Ireland? Because I was a prisoner in Hamburg. Why did you not do something tantamount to a surrender? Because I was unpractised in the language of the strangers, who could not be my protectors, inasmuch as they were also my fellow-sufferers.' Counsel argued that when the Crown seized Tandy at Hamburg it thereby made him amenable, and so satisfied the law. Lord Kilwarden, a most humane judge, ruled that Tandy should be discharged.²¹⁷ But their triumph was short-lived. Tandy was transferred to Lifford, Donegal, previous to being tried in the district where two years before he had made a hostile descent from France. In Lifford gaol Tandy lay for seven months, during which time great efforts were made to ensure the conviction of so formidable a character; and April 7, 1801, was at last fixed for his trial. Several applications to postpone it were refused by the court, and divers law arguments and objections overruled.

The compact with Turner that he should never be asked to brave public odium by appearing as an approver, was of course

²¹⁷ Howell's *State Trials*, xxvii. 1194-1243.

respected; but it would seem that he was now brought over to Ireland for the purpose of assisting the law officers in their difficult and delicate task. That the quondam spy at Hamburg was in Ireland at this very time, though soon after he is back again in Hamburg, can be shown. The Registry of Deeds Office, Dublin, records that on February 25, 1801, Samuel Turner, vaguely described as 'of the United Kingdom of Great Britain,' executed to George Lysaght a conveyance of lands in Clare. In society he was well trusted, unless by a few who kept their thoughts to themselves; and at this same time also he became the trustee of the marriage settlement of John Wolcot²¹⁸ and Dorothy Mary Lyons. One can hardly realise this man, whose more fitting post would be a funeral feast, presiding at a bridal breakfast and wishing joy and long life to his friends. His trip to Ireland 'killed two birds with one stone,' for the Book of Secret Service Money expenditure reveals that on July 8, 1801, 71l. 13s. 3d. is paid 'per *Mr. Turner* to Chapman in Cork for one year and eleven weeks, at one guinea.' Chapman I suspect to have been a minor agent employed by Turner to ferret out evidence against Morres and the Corbets (both Cork men), and in connection with the prosecution of Tandy.²¹⁹ The 'one year and eleven weeks' would cover the

²¹⁸ John Wolcot is a rare name. All have heard of John Wolcot, well known as 'Peter Pindar,' the merciless assailant of George the Third.

²¹⁹ The intercepted memorial from Morres to the French Government, preserved in the *Castlereagh Papers* (ii. 96), urges: 'In case of future attempts on Ireland on the part of France, the province of Munster, which abounds in good havens, and whose men are the best republicans in Ireland, is the point to be looked to.' The capture of

time that Tandy and his companions, after their removal from Hamburg, lay in an Irish gaol awaiting their trial.

Tandy, finding the evidence against him overwhelming, admitted the accuracy of the indictment, and was sentenced to die on the fourth of the ensuing May. In this course he was doubtless influenced by his son, with whom, as will be seen, McNally, the debauched legal adviser of the rebels, could do what he liked.²²⁰ Meanwhile Napoleon, on his return from Egypt, claimed him as a French general, and held an English prisoner of equal rank a hostage for his safety. It was now not so clear that Pitt had a legal claim to the life of a man who wore the uniform of a French officer, and had come into his hands under circumstances the most peculiar.

As regards Blackwell, the fellow-prisoner of Tandy, Portland, writing to Cornwallis, speaks of having been importuned by Mrs. Blackwell's family, whom he describes as 'of considerable influence in Somersetshire,' and imagines that 'there is no intention of inflicting any punishment on Mr. Blackwell.'²²¹ Soon after we find Blackwell²²² discharged, but, unlike Morres, he proudly refused to give bail. Morres after an imprisonment of more than three years regained his liberty on December 10,

Cork is proposed, i. 295.

²²⁰ See Appendix, 'James Tandy.'

²²¹ *Cornwallis Papers*, iii. 284.

²²² See memoir of Blackwell in Cox's *Irish Magazine of Neglected Biography* for 1811, p. [32](#).

1801. Tandy, less fortunate, was removed to Wicklow gaol, and his son asserts that while there the French minister in London signified that Buonaparte had sent directions to his brother Joseph not to sign the treaty of peace 'at Amiens' till Tandy was restored. M. Otto had in fact, as Bourrienne states,²²³ previously negotiated with Lord Hawkesbury for his release. Mr. Froude says that 'Tandy was spared as too contemptible to be worth punishing.'²²⁴ This hardly conveys a true idea of the facts. A pardon was at last made out for him on condition of banishment to Botany Bay. To this proviso his son demurred; but, as Mr. Marsden, the Under Secretary at Dublin Castle, assured him, 'all that was required was merely the name of *transportation*, in order to strike terror into others; and that he would pledge his honour, if he acquiesced, that his father should be landed wherever he pleased, that it might appear to the world as if he made his escape at sea.'²²⁵

Tandy arrived at Bordeaux on March 14, 1802. Bonaparte's treaty with England was signed on the 27th of the same month. Military honours hailed Tandy. Bordeaux was illuminated, and he was promoted to the rank of a general of division. But in the midst of this jubilee the old rebel read with horror a speech of Pelham's in Parliament stating that 'Tandy owed his life to the

²²³ *Life of Napoleon.*

²²⁴ *English in Ireland*, iii. 488.

²²⁵ *Appeal to the Public*, by James Tandy (Dublin, 1807), p. [108](#), 2nd ed. Halliday Pamphlets, vol. 915, R.I.A.

useful information and discoveries he had given to the British Government.' He addressed a letter to Pelham, now a peer, branding the statement as mean, audacious, and false. 'This may appear uncouth language to a courtly ear,' he added; 'but it is the voice of truth. I never had any connection or correspondence with your Government, and if I had, they knew my character too well to attempt to tamper with me. Had you contented yourself with saying, "there were particular circumstances in my case," you would have adhered to the truth, for you know the whole, though you have let out only a part!' Tandy thus concluded: 'I am, my Lord, with the same sentiments which I have uniformly cherished and supported, a friend to universal benevolence, and an enemy to those only who raise their fortunes on their country's ruin!'

Pelham probably confounded Napper Tandy with James Tandy, from whom information had been given to his confidant, McNally, and by 'Mac' conveyed to Dublin Castle. Napper told his son all, not thinking it would transpire. His feelings had been roused by the imputation, and in a letter to the 'Argus' he gave them fuller vent. 'Had discoveries been proposed to me, I should have rejected, with scorn and indignation, a baseness which my soul abhorred... I had made up my mind for death in a cause which no mode of execution could stamp disgrace upon. It would have been death in the cause of freedom and of my country – a cause which would have converted the scaffold into an altar, the sufferer into a victim!'

Mr. Elliot, who, I think, afterwards succeeded his brother as Lord St. Germans, echoed in Parliament the taunt cast by Pelham, and spoke of 'Tandy's ignorance and insignificant birth.'²²⁶ Tandy, addressing Elliot, said: —

The illiberal attack which you have made upon me in your speech of the 24th of November last, in the British House of Commons, is the cause of my troubling you with this. My '*ignorance and insignificance*,' which you have painted in such glowing colours, ought, with a man of sense, to have been my protection; but you have proved yourself as deficient in this, as in point of good manners, which is the true criterion of a gentleman.

You cannot, sir, but know (for you pretend to be a man of information) that I hold a high rank in the army of this great and generous nation, which places me upon a footing with the proudest peer of your island. You know, also, that the honour of a soldier is dearer to him than life; yet, with these facts before you, you have dared to traduce my character, and have attempted to affix a stigma to my name which nothing can now wipe out but the blood of one of us. *A French officer must not be insulted with impunity*, and you,

²²⁶ This is probably the same Mr. Elliot (see *ante*, p. 77) who states that instructions had been sent to have Tandy arrested on the neutral ground of Hamburg. Elliot, who applied the term 'insignificant' to Tandy, must have read the informer's letter (since published in the *Castlereagh Papers*, pp. 405-9), where Tandy is described, among other contemptuous epithets, as 'insignificant'! Elliot is styled in the *Castlereagh Papers*, 'Military Secretary to Lord Cornwallis, the Viceroy.' 'Cornwallis Elliot' is a favourite name in the St. Germans family. Tandy addresses his assailant merely as 'Mr. Elliot.' The Elliots formed a powerful diplomatic *coterie*.

as well as the country which gave me birth, and that which has adopted me, shall find that I will preserve the honour of my station. I, therefore, demand of you to name some town on the Continent where you will be found, accompanied by your friend and your pistols – giving me sufficient time to leave this, and arrive at the place appointed.

Napper Tandy, General of Division.

Bourdeaux, December 12, 1802.

Eight weeks elapsed. Elliot failed to reply, and Tandy, in accordance with the fashion of the day, proclaimed him 'a calumniator, a liar, and a poltroon!' This fierce climax was preceded by a more temperate tone.

The question in debate [he said, when Elliot assailed him] was for laying a tax on Great Britain, in which I, as a French citizen, could not possibly be implicated, and, therefore, it is evident that I was wantonly dragged in for the sole purpose of calumny and abuse. Such conduct was unmanly, as no brave man would attack a defenceless person, much less an absent one.

Ignorant of the source to which his betrayal was due, it did not occur to Tandy that the speeches of Elliot and others may have aimed at diverting suspicion from their real informant. Tandy, in reply, advanced merely the suspicion that the charge of being an informer was fulminated to excite the jealousy and disgust of his adopted country France, which, unlike America, had opened her

arms to afford him protection.²²⁷

The wearing worry of Tandy's later life had sapped his strength, and left him sensitively open to hostile shafts, which his conduct provoked. His vanity was commensurate with his patriotism, and in his stoutest day was easily wounded. He gradually sank, and died at Bordeaux in 1803. 'His private character,' writes Barrington, 'furnished no ground to doubt the integrity of his public one.' He died, as he had lived, a staunch Protestant.²²⁸

Much has been written of the wonderful escape from Kilmainham Gaol of Corbet, afterwards a general in the French service, and one of the prisoners captured with Tandy at

²²⁷ Elliot, writing to Lord Castlereagh, says: 'The Americans absolutely refuse to admit the Irish traitors into their territories' (*Castlereagh Papers*, i. 405, 411, 413, 415, 421). This is the letter which refers to the contemplated arrest of Tandy at the Hague, and in it he further says: 'I have begged Pelham to come to London immediately.' Succeeding letters describe Elliot and Pelham closeted together at various places.

²²⁸ The Society of United Irishmen had no treasonable design when first formed, as the following letter admitting the O'Connor Don would almost in itself convey. Tandy writes to Charles O'Connor from Dublin, December 8, 1791: —'Sir, — I have to acknowledge the favour of your very polite letter, and to assure you that I had particular pleasure in seconding the motion for the admission of Mr. O'Connor into the Society of United Irishmen — and that no exertion of mine shall be wanting to compleat the emancipation of my country, give her a free and general representation, and render to every man what I conceive to be his just and undoubted rights, security for his liberty and property, and a participation in the blessings of that land where Nature has placed him. (O'Connor Don MSS.) Parliamentary Reform and Catholic Emancipation were the two objects sought; and it was only when both demands had been spurned by the Irish Parliament that the organisation drifted into deeper plans. Some recollections of Tandy's expedition to Ireland will be found in the Appendix.

Hamburg, and thence removed to Dublin. Miss Edgeworth was so much struck by this romantic escape, that she made it the leading incident of her best novel. But, considering the subtle international difficulties that had arisen, and with the suggestion of Under-Secretary Marsden before us, it is a question how far Corbet's escape may not have been connived at by Castlereagh.

The sermon which Napoleon preached to the Hamburg deputies on their infringement of the law of nations was in the mouths of his admirers for years after; but it lost in impressiveness by his own violation of the neutral territory of Baden, when, on the night of March 17, 1804, he sent a strong guard to seize and carry off to France the Duc d'Enghien. After a hasty trial by court-martial, and on unproven charges of conspiracy, he was cruelly put to death in the Castle of Vincennes. In the heated discussions to which this outrage gave rise, Buonaparte more than once quoted the case of Tandy, and feebly sought to find in the past conduct of Hamburg a precedent and justification.

Thomas Addis Emmet accused him of coldness and indecision as regards the long threatened invasion of Ireland, because, instead of steering for Erin in 1798, he changed his plan and went to Egypt. The arrest of Tandy in Hamburg rekindled Napoleon's hostile feeling, and shortly after the death of that general he resolved to carry out comprehensively his oft-mooted design.

The 'Correspondence of Napoleon'²²⁹ contains a letter to Berthier, dated September 27, 1804. He says that an expedition to Ireland had been decided upon; that 18,000 men for that purpose were ready at Brest; that a simultaneous landing was to be attempted in Kent; while in Ireland the French army would march straight on Dublin. Meanwhile 200,000 men were encamped at Boulogne; but hostile plans collapsed with the smash of the French fleet at Trafalgar. A few weeks later the so-called 'Army of England' traversed the banks of the blue Danube instead of the Thames. General Mack capitulated at Ulm; Francis of Austria fled, and Napoleon's legions entered Vienna.

²²⁹ Bingham's *Correspondence of Napoleon*, ii. 96. (Chapman and Hall, 1884.)

CHAPTER IX

ARREST OF JÄGERHORN IN LONDON – THE PLOT THICKENS – TURNER SHOT THROUGH THE HEAD

In 1799, Turner's stealthy steps can be traced once more in London. It will be remembered that Lord Edward Fitzgerald had met, by appointment near Whitechapel, M. Jägerhorn, a secret envoy of France, and gave him, in full detail, information regarding every point on which that agent had been charged to inquire. Jägerhorn was 'the estimable Swede' named by Reinhard, the French minister at Hamburg, when writing the intercepted letter. This document, dated July 12, the editor of the 'Castlereagh Papers' assigns to the year 1798;²³⁰ but as Lord Edward was dead at that time,²³¹ it must belong to the previous year. Other secret missives were sent to Dublin at the same time by the Home Office, in order to guide the course of the Irish Government. These papers, filling forty pages of the book,²³² were the result of a successful stroke of espionage at Hamburg.

²³⁰ *Castlereagh Correspondence*, i. 282.

²³¹ Lord Edward Fitzgerald died on June 4, 1798.

²³² *Castlereagh Correspondence*, i. 270-309.

M. Jägerhorn is of course the person alluded to by Mr. Froude when describing the nocturnal visit to Lord Downshire. 'He [Lord Edward] had been watched in London, and had been traced to the lodgings of a suspected agent of the French Directory, and among other papers which had been forwarded by spies to the Government, there was one in French containing an allusion to some female friend of Lady Edward, through whom a correspondence was maintained between Ireland and Paris.'

Hamburg was Turner's usual residence, and Jägerhorn had an estate near that place.²³³

Although the case of M. Jägerhorn is opened in the first volume of the 'Castlereagh Papers,' and misplaced among the incidents of another year, we do not find until far in the second the letters addressed to him in 1797 by General Valence and Lord Edward. In 1799 Jägerhorn had sought to renew his perilous enterprise. The same keen scent which traced Lord Edward, in 1797, to the lodgings of the confidential envoy in London, was once more on his track. Wickham, writing from the Home Office on March 28, 1799, has news for Castlereagh in Dublin: 'I have the satisfaction to inform your lordship that we have secured M. Jägerhorn, who was coming over here on a mission similar to that which he undertook some two years since, when he met Lord Edward Fitzgerald in London.'

A full report is given of Jägerhorn's examination, in which he is asked: 'Were you not charged to deliver to Lord Edward

²³³ *Castlereagh Correspondence*, ii. 265.

Fitzgerald a letter from somebody?' and he replied, 'Madame Matthiessen.' This was the lady, nearly connected with Lady Edward, and alluded to by Mr. Froude as a name found in secret papers. He is further questioned about Lord Edward, Lady Lucy, General Valence, and a number of other persons whose names had cropped up in the interview between Turner and Downshire; but, though the queries were searching, and Jägerhorn now seemed completely in Pitt's power, nothing material was wrung from him. England and Russia were at this time allied, and Jägerhorn, pretending that he had a pension of 2,000 roubles as a spy of Russia, rather dumb-founded his examiners, and he at last regained his liberty. All this is to be found, with full details, in the 'Correspondence of Lord Castlereagh.'

The paltry sum which Turner received for his services now comes to be considered. This man, who had every facility of access to Lady Edward's house at Hamburg and its rebel *entourage*, held the key of a position so incalculably important that he never himself discerned its marketable value. Thousands would doubtless just as readily have been paid to him as 'the cool 500*l.*' that he modestly asked. 'To get the information had cost him,' he said, 'three times that sum, and to keep up the acquaintances and connections he had at Hamburg he could not live on less.' 'Small profits and quick returns' seems to have been his motto.

'Fresh evidence of the person's power to be useful,' writes Froude, 'made Pitt extremely anxious to secure his permanent

help.' The Cornwallis papers record, but without any attempt to identify him, that the pension Samuel Turner received – dating from 1800 – was but 300*l.* a year. Wellington when Irish Secretary addressed to Portland a letter in which a present payment of 5,000*l.*, and 'not more than 20,000*l.* within the year,' appears guaranteed to one nameless informer.²³⁴

Another case may be cited. A document placed in my hands by Sir W. Cope, Bart., records that his grandfather was told by Under-Secretary Cooke to stop at no sum, not even 100,000*l.*, in urging Reynolds to turn approver. Reynolds, not realising the importance of his evidence, consented to take 5,000*l.* and 1,000*l.* a year, with the post of British consul. The tergiversation of Reynolds did not take place until 1798, long after Turner had sold the pass.

The services of 'Downshire's friend' were more timely and, perhaps, more valuable. He told what he knew in 1797: the names he gave of the Executive Committee (p. 7, *ante*) proved more important than might appear at first sight. Reynolds, it is true, gave the hint that a Committee would be found sitting at Bond's on March 12, 1798, but he does not seem to have disclosed names; his son says that the names were inserted in the warrant purely 'on speculation.'²³⁵

As regards the more distinct whisper of Turner, the betrayal

²³⁴ Letter of Sir A. Wellesley to the Duke of Portland: dated 'Holyhead, June 19, 1808.' *Civil Correspondence of the Duke of Wellington (Ireland)*, pp. 454-5.

²³⁵ *Life of Reynolds*, by his Son, ii. 153.

of the Belfast Directory, at the very hour that Tone was leaving Brest with a French fleet, proved in itself a paralysing blow, and one worth its weight in gold. But the arm that dealt it struck from behind unseen. However, as most of the information that Downshire's friend gave concerned the Northern organisation, he may, perhaps, be credited with this exploit. The loss of Ulster was the loss of the right arm of the rebellion. Turner made his disclosures on October 8, 1797. Besides the list of the Executive Directory, there can be no doubt that in the information which followed he named, with others, John Hughes of Belfast, the date and place of whose arrest tally with the presumption that to Turner it was due. The 'History of Belfast' records: 'October 20, 1797 – John Hughes, bookseller, having been apprehended in Newry²³⁶ on a charge of high treason, was brought in here escorted by a party of light dragoons.'²³⁷ Mr. Froude says that 'Downshire's friend' kept him informed of everything.²³⁸

How well Turner knew Hughes is proved by the sworn testimony of the latter,²³⁹ in which he describes a breakfast in June 1797, with Samuel Turner, Teeling, Macnevin, etc., when the fitness of the country for an immediate rising was

²³⁶ Newry had been Turner's home.

²³⁷ *History of Belfast*, p. 478.

²³⁸ Immediately after the rebellion Downshire received 52,500*l.*, nominally as compensation for borough seats. The magnitude of the sum has excited historic surprise; but in making this payment other services were, no doubt, weighed, including the timely information of which Turner made him the channel.

²³⁹ Before the Secret Committee of the House of Lords, 1798.

debated. Hughes had been a great patriot previously, but now to save himself became a mercenary informer, and even sought to criminate Grattan, who thereupon was dismissed from the Privy Council, though, as Stanhope²⁴⁰ admits, without just cause. There had been no more zealous propagandist of the rebellion than Hughes, and he names a long list of men whom he himself had sworn in on a prayer-book. In 1802 John Hughes retired to the United States and became a slave-owner.

Wickham's letter of June 8, 1798, enumerated, for the information of Lord Castlereagh, a number of men whose arrests in England seem consequent on the information furnished by Downshire's visitor. These names include McGuckin, the attorney, who had been concerned for O'Coigly at Maidstone. The subsequent career of this once determined rebel, but who soon after his arrest in 1798 became a spy for the Crown, enhances the importance of Turner's information at a great crisis. The first recorded payment to McGuckin of secret service money is March 5, 1799.²⁴¹ His son migrated to France, and was created a baron by Louis Philippe.

The peril of assassination which shadowed every step made by Turner was not adequately weighed by Pitt when estimating the value of his services. The risk he ran was not confined to Ireland. The life of an English spy abroad was deemed

²⁴⁰ See *Life of Pitt*, ante, p. 36.

²⁴¹ Account of S.S. Money applied in detecting Treasonable Conspiracies per affidavit of Mr. Cooke.

equally unsafe, and there is much reason to fear that more than one met with short shrift. Even a successful diplomat, if his subtlety touched French interests, could not regard his life as safe. The disappearance of Benjamin Bathurst, a kinsman of Earl Bathurst, has never been explained. Bathurst was sent on a secret mission to Vienna, at the time that England before opening the Peninsular campaign sought to persuade Austria to declare, by way of a distraction, war against France. Austria soon after crossed the French frontier, and Bathurst received hints of threatened personal doom. Hoping to avoid assassination, he took a northerly route in returning to England, and on reaching Perleberg in Brandenburg, he visited, in his agitation, the commandant of cuirassiers, requesting that sentries might mount guard at the inn where he stopped. These were supplied, and Bathurst spent the day in writing and destroying letters. Shortly before his carriage came to the door in the dark of a November evening, he told some troopers who escorted him that they might withdraw. While all the household was on the alert to see him off, he walked beyond the circle of the lantern glare, and was lost to sight at the heads of the horses. This occurred on November 25, 1809, and Bathurst was never seen or heard of more, notwithstanding that, as we are reminded by Baring Gould, England offered 2,000*l.* reward, and Prussia 100 Friedrichs d'or, for the discovery even of his remains.

To trace the spy with whom these chapters mainly deal seemed, at the outset, almost as hopeless as to find Bathurst's

bones. Of all the Government informers not one has been more ingeniously guarded from discovery. Wellington, with all his astuteness, supposed that the fact of a man's name appearing in the Banishment Act was conclusive evidence against him of having been a rebel,²⁴² and therefore disqualified from claiming any favour from the Crown. But had he known the secret history of Turner's case, it would have opened his eyes. A Fugitive Bill was passed in July 1798, enumerating the rebel leaders who had fled from justice. In this bill we find Samuel Turner named. During the following year Parliament was asked to lend itself to the fraud of branding as a traitor the same Samuel Turner, by passing against him an Act of Attainder. From 1797 he lived abroad, posing as an 'exile of Erin.'²⁴³

The sealed chest in Dublin Castle which was opened a few years ago contained the only letter I ever saw signed with Turner's name. It related to his pension, and it was necessary to lay the

²⁴² Vide *Irish Correspondence*, p. 386.

²⁴³ The original of 'The Exile of Erin' was said to be an obscure democrat named McCann; but it is just as likely to have been that finished actor, Turner himself. So prominent and conversable a man must have been well known to Thomas Campbell, then a strong Radical, and who, as he tells us, wrote the 'Exile,' at Altona, near Hamburg, in 1801; and it suggests conflicting emotions to speculate as to how far the figure of Turner, in his slouched hat, gazing wistfully from the beach, in search of prey, may have influenced the beautiful idea of the poet: —'There came to the beach a poor exile of Erin, The dew on his raiment was heavy and chill; For his country he sighed, when at twilight repairing To wander alone by the wind-beaten hill. But the day-star attracted his eye's sad devotion, For it rose o'er his own native isle of the ocean; Where once, in the fire of his youthful devotion, He sang the bold anthem of Erin-go-Bragh.'

mask aside for once. We have already seen him styled Furnes, Richardson, and especially 'Lord Downshire's friend.'²⁴⁴ A new name is now adopted to puzzle posterity. He directs that 500*l.* be lodged to the account of 'J. Destinger,' and this sum he was to draw through a third party. Turner's letter is addressed, not to Dublin Castle, but to Cooke in London, that gentleman having been succeeded, as Under-Secretary for Ireland, by Mr. Marsden.

Rt. Hon^{ble} Mr. Secretary Cooke. ²⁴⁵

Hamburg: May 18, 1802.

Sir, – In consequence of letters I've had the honour of receiving from Lord Castlereagh and Sir James Craufurd, I take the liberty of intruding relative to a pension of 300*l.* per annum the Government has thought proper to bestow on me for information on Irish affairs.

His lordship states that you have been so kind as to offer to pay the pension to any person I would name as agent – or in any way I was to propose. At present there is no person in Ireland I'd like to trust, and till some mode is adopted, I should be extremely obliged if you'd take the trouble of lodging in any bank in London the sum of 500*l.* (British) on

²⁴⁴ Also 'Jean Thomas,' *ante*, p. 20. Compare also Wellington's *Irish Correspondence*, p. 357, regarding a letter received in 1808 'from – *alias* – .'

²⁴⁵ This letter was forwarded by Cooke to Marsden for his guidance.

account of J. Destinger – the name I shall draw it under – through Sir Geo. Rumbold.²⁴⁶

Now that the war is over, and it is *supposed* all persons in my line are discharged, I make it a point to spend much more money than heretofore in order to do away any idea of my being employed and income diminished, and it is for that reason I request your attention, and beg the honour of a line through Sir George to say where the draft is to be sent.

Hoping one day or other to merit your good opinion, I remain, most respectfully, &c. &c.

S. Turner.

Turner spent money freely, and often when he could ill afford it. He had a social status to maintain: he was the son of a county magistrate; had distinguished himself in college; belonged to an honourable profession. He was the trustee of marriage settlements. He was 'Lord Downshire's friend!' If he continued to wear his mask well, why might he not aspire to attain, in America at least, the high official rank of his late colleague and fellow-prisoner, Thomas Addis Emmet, whom she at last honoured by a public funeral and a monument raised by national subscription?

The 'Dublin Directory' for 1804 describes Samuel Turner's address as 58 St. Stephen's Green, in that city. The volume must have been compiled during the previous year, and it may be that the Irish Government, in 1808, removed him to Dublin, with the object of picking the brains of those who had been concerned

²⁴⁶ Sir George Rumbold was Consul-General at Hamburg. Died 1807.

in Emmet's rebellion of that year. Until the very night of its outburst, in July 1808, the existence of a slumbering volcano had not been suspected. After the vain attempts to convict and hang Tandy, Turner had returned to his old quarters.²⁴⁷

The Irish Government were wholly unprepared for Emmet's revolt. No wonder that Wickham, with the experience he had acquired, confessed amazement that the secret should have been kept so well.

The Secretary of State cried out with astonishment to think that such a preparation for revolution could be carried on in the very bosom of the seat of Government, without discovery, for so long a time, when any of the party could have made their fortunes by a disclosure of the plot; and remarked, at the same time, in presence of Mr. Stafford and the two Mr. Parrots, John and William, that it was because they were mostly all mechanics, or working people, that the thing was kept so profound; and said that if the higher orders

²⁴⁷ A small box of papers, labelled 'Curious and Selected,' is preserved in the Record Tower, Dublin Castle. Two unsigned letters supplying private information in 1803 have puzzled their official custodians. St. John Mason – a cousin of the ill-fated Robert Emmet – is the man mainly sought to be incriminated. The letters are endorsed 'R.' and I observed, in holding up one against the light, that the capitals 'S. T. 1801,' appear as the watermark. 'R' is the cypher by which Castlereagh points to 'Richardson,' *alias* Turner, in his letter to Wickham (p. 46, *ante*). The case of St. John Mason and his prolonged imprisonment without trial was brought before Parliament in 1812. The Duke of Richmond – then Viceroy – wrote a despatch and made allusion to the above letters. 'Who the writer may have been I know not,' observes his Grace, 'but he appears to have been some secret informer of the Government.' This despatch was ordered by the House of Commons to be printed June 2, 1812.

of society had been connected, they would divulge the plot for the sake of gain.²⁴⁸

Turner was at once set in motion: but how? We find him put into the same gaol with a swarm of State prisoners, many of whom had been active in 1798. All daily met for exercise in the yard of Kilmainham Gaol, and had every opportunity for converse. Here Robert Emmet himself had been confined until the very day of his execution.

The execution was followed by that of several of his confederates. Let us look back. Martial law is proclaimed; a dead calm prevails. Turner is now traced stealthily making his way to the Secretary of State's Office, Dublin Castle. Anxious to avoid committing himself in writing, especially with a true signature, he seeks the safer medium of oral communication. Mr. Marsden cannot be seen; he is engaged just then in conference with the chief law officer of the Crown. Turner scribbles the following and sends it in; no signature is attached, but the paper and enclosure are endorsed, by Marsden, 'Mr. Samuel Turner':

Understanding the Attorney-General is just with you, I take the liberty of sending in a letter of Mr. Ball, but wish to speak on other matters.

Sergeant Ball's letter is dated

Temple St., October 3, 1803.

²⁴⁸ MS. recollections, communicated by one of Emmet's officers, Bernard Duggan.

I have looked into the Act of Parliament and considered in what manner you should proceed in order to do away the effect of the attainder thereby passed against you. Nothing short of an Act of Parliament, reversing the former as far as it affects you, will be sufficient to enable you to sue for your property in our courts of justice. I think you mentioned that some other plan had been suggested as sufficient. If you will let me know what it is, I will give it the most attentive consideration.

How Marsden and the Attorney-General settled the difficulty, no correspondence exists to show; but the London 'Courier' of December 5, 1803, most lucidly reveals the facts: —

On Friday last, Samuel Turner, Esq., barrister-at-law, was brought to the bar of the Court of King's Bench, in custody of the keeper of Kilmainham Prison, under a charge of attainder, passed in the Irish Parliament, as one concerned in the Rebellion of the year 1798; but having shown that he was no way concerned therein, that he had not been in the country for a year and seven months prior to passing that Act —*i. e.* for thirteen months prior to the rebellion — and therefore could not be the person alluded to, his Majesty's Attorney-General confessed the same, and Mr. Turner was discharged accordingly.²⁴⁹

²⁴⁹ This Attorney-General was Standish O'Grady, afterwards Lord Guillamore. The author of *Ireland and its Rulers* states of him (i. 126): 'He was a quaint joker; a shrewd and old-fashioned wit, with a vein of dry humour. As a judge he enjoyed a plebeian popularity, for he took great sport in baffling the Crown lawyers.'

The 'Dublin Evening Post' of the day states that Turner's arrest was due simply to his indiscretion in visiting Ireland on business arising from the death of his father.²⁵⁰ But as the 'Post' in 1803 had been subsidised by the Crown, this account was probably meant to mislead. The Castle archives bulge with the brimful letters of its editor, H. B. Code. Turner's committal to Kilmainham was only another act in the great drama, one scene of which Mr. Froude has so powerfully put before us. 'Samuel Turner, Esquire,' of imposing presence and indomitable mien, a veteran in 'the cause,' the man who had challenged the Commander-in-Chief, the envoy to France, the exile of Erin, the friend of Lord Edward and Pamela, the disinherited by his father, the victim of State persecution, now stood before his fellow-prisoners the 'Ecce Homo' of martyrdom, commanding irresistibly their confidence.

Of his detention in Kilmainham Dr. Madden knows nothing; but he mentions that Turner accompanied the State prisoners – nineteen in number – to Fort George in Scotland, the final scene of their captivity. Here Turner's work was so adroitly performed that we find a man of incorruptible integrity suspected instead. Arthur O'Connor told John Patten that Thomas Addis Emmet 'gave information of a letter which O'Connor was writing, through which means Government became acquainted with the

²⁵⁰ 'Mr. Turner only returned to this country within the last few weeks on account of the death of his father, who left his property to younger children thinking the elder could not return, or that, if left to him, it would be laid hold of by Government by virtue of the Act of Attainder.' —*Dublin Evening Post*, November 29, 1803.

circumstance.' A long correspondence on the subject has been published by Madden. Emmet at last challenged O'Connor. Patten,²⁵¹ the brother-in-law of Emmet, was told to bring a certain pair of duelling pistols to Fort George; but, thanks to the efforts of Robert Emmet to allay the dispute, the weapons were not used. It was Patten's impression that Turner's machinations had set the two friends by the ears. Although O'Connor apologised, and both parties shook hands, it is painful to add that half a century after, when the upright Emmet had been more than twenty years dead, O'Connor, in his book 'Monopoly,' stigmatised him as a man of bad faith. A suspicion more baseless was never uttered. In this book the name of his fellow-prisoner, Turner, is not once mentioned. Indeed, the inference is that he thought well of Turner; for O'Connor, after criticising the Catholic members of the Directory, declares that he had much greater reliance on the *Northern* chiefs. O'Connor, Emmet, Neilson and others were detained at Fort George until the Peace of Amiens, and then enlarged on condition that they should expatriate themselves for ever.²⁵²

In 1807 Sir Arthur Wellesley, afterwards Duke of Wellington, entered on his duties as Irish Secretary. A letter, dated Dublin Castle, December 5, 1807, and addressed to the Admiralty,

²⁵¹ John Patten, librarian to the Royal Dublin Society, survived until the year 1864. He furnished me with many facts, duly noted at the time. Some appear in the *Sham Squire*.

²⁵² For a curious poem which O'Connor distributed *en route* to Fort George, see Appendix.

recommends a midshipman in the navy, Francis Turner, for promotion. 'He is the son of a Mr. Turner in this country, who has strong claims to the favour of the Government for the loyalty and zeal with which he conducted himself during the rebellion in Ireland.'²⁵³ Doubtless the new hand merely wrote in this letter what the permanent officials prompted.²⁵⁴

Downshire, although a staunch Tory of the old school, uniformly supported the Catholic claims. This example probably influenced his *protégé*. O'Connell, while inculcating moral force in his struggle for civil and religious liberty, was fond of enlisting in his bodyguard men who in more troubled times had staked their lives and fortunes for Ireland. He had himself been a 'United Irishman,' as will be shown. The rebel General Clony presided as chairman at the Catholic Association. Rowan, Teeling and 'Con' McLoughlin sat at the Council board, or stood on the National platform. What confidence must not O'Connell have reposed in the man who, as will appear, avowed himself ready to die for his chief!

An aged gentleman, Patrick O'Byrne, who was born at Newry,

²⁵³ *Civil Correspondence of the Duke of Wellington (Ireland).*

²⁵⁴ The promotion urged by Wellington would seem to have been made, and merited. *The Gentleman's Magazine* for July, 1813, under the head of 'Admiralty, May 30,' records the capture by some boats, under the command of Lieutenant Turner, of a French privateer, after a severe conflict and loss of life. I am bound to say, however, that the Turner mentioned by Wellington as having strong claims on the Government since 1798, is not satisfactorily shown to be Turner who gave important information during the Rebellion.

almost under the shadow of Turner's patrimonial gable, but who never once doubted his fidelity to the cause in which O'Byrne himself has been no silent ally, supplies a fact of sufficiently curious import: —

When the Orange ascendancy faction resolved to put O'Connell out of the way [he writes], and their champion, the unfortunate D'Esterre, horsewhip in hand, was ostentatiously parading the streets of Dublin, accompanied by leering friends, to compel O'Connell to fight him, Mr. Samuel Turner took up his position in a hotel where it was known D'Esterre would go to seek O'Connell. He had not been there long before D'Esterre and his staff entered and inquired for O'Connell. Immediately Mr. Turner advanced and stated that his friend Mr. O'Connell was not there, but he — Mr. Turner — was there to represent him. No: they did not want Mr. O'Connell's friend; the Liberator himself was the object of their search. Mr. Turner, with the same spirit that he had challenged Lord Carhampton, now declared that he adopted Mr. O'Connell's words, publicly uttered, and made himself responsible for his actions. In vain; none but O'Connell himself would serve their purpose, and Mr. Turner was denied the opportunity of doing battle for his friend.²⁵⁵

²⁵⁵ Letter of Mr. Patrick O'Byrne to W. J. F., Dublin, September 6, 1880. D'Esterre was a practised duellist. He and O'Connell at last met in a field near Naas, and D'Esterre fell January 31, 1815. Lord Whitworth, the famous diplomat, was then Lord Lieutenant. The *Sentinel*, an independent newspaper, declared that the most memorable event which occurred in his Vice-royalty was this duel. It had engrossed

All this time it cannot be said that, although undiscovered, Turner was still a happy man. The dread spectre of assassination ceased not to haunt him. 'After long experience of the world,' says Junius, 'I affirm before God I never knew a rogue who was not unhappy.' Nor was Turner's presentiment surprising McSkimmin's History of Carrickfergus, 103-73, in his 'History of Carrickfergus,' states that the pistol and the dagger were no uncommon means of dealing with informers; and he supplies a list of men who thus suffered.

Books which treat of 'Ninety-eight' often mention Byrne of Dundalk. In 1869 the late Mr. John Mathews of that town gathered from Byrne's representative, Mr. P. J. Byrne, Clerk of the Crown, several facts, and, in enclosing them to me, styled his informant 'the highest authority on the unpublished history of the County.' Two days later Mr. Byrne was no more. The inquiries I then made had no reference to Samuel Turner, but some passing notices of this man which occur in the manuscript are useful in now supplying missing links. Mr. Mathews was an ardent patriot, and he described, not without emotion, how Turner died. Regarding him as a rebel true to the end, he writes:

Turner went to the Isle of Man, and having quarrelled

the attention of all Ireland, and ought to engross that of Parliament also. Everyone asked why the outrage which led to the catastrophe, being so public and protracted, had not been restrained by some one of the many members of his Government who had observed it. But vainly the friends of peace inquired why D'Esterre had not been placed under arrest.

there with a Mr. Boyce, agreed that the dispute should be settled by an appeal to arms. Both, with their friends, repaired to the field of honour, and as Turner was preparing for the struggle his adversary shot him through the head; and [adds Matthews] thus terminated the career of a man whose only regret was that his life was not lost in the service of his country.²⁵⁶

Was the vengeance wreaked by Boyce meant as a tardy retribution? Was the John Boyce, who with five other prisoners was consigned in 1797 to Carrickfergus Gaol, connected with the Boyce who shot Turner? What Boyce had against Turner was a secret which died with both. No proceedings seem to have been taken against the man by whose hand he fell. And possibly this forbearance was not uninfluenced by the fact that the Crown had need no longer for their informer's services, but, on the contrary, gained by his death. Turner was a clever man, troublesome to deal with, haughty, touchy, and resentful; and, like Maguan,²⁵⁷ Bird and Newell, he might at any moment publicly turn upon his employers and betray them with as little compunction as he had already sold his comrades.

A word as regards Lord Downshire, through whom Turner's disclosures were at first conveyed. This peer, who at one time had wielded potential influence at Whitehall, and had the ear

²⁵⁶ Turner was very treacherously served by his impulsive foe. Perhaps Boyce thought that had O'Connell accepted Turner's services in that lonely field in Kildare, he might have been tempted, like Iago, to deal a stealthy stab.

²⁵⁷ Maguan of Saintfield is not to be confounded with Magan.

of Pitt, lived to fall into deep disfavour with Government. He steadily opposed the Legislative Union, and helped to form a joint-stock purse with the object of out-bribing Dublin Castle. In chastisement he was dismissed from the Lord Lieutenancy of Down, deprived of his rank as colonel, expelled from the Privy Council, and threatened with a parliamentary inquiry into his conduct. These blows told, and on September 7, 1801, he breathed his last.

CHAPTER X

EFFORTS TO EXCITE MUTINY IN THE ENGLISH FLEET

Of Duckett, an amateur rebel envoy, mentioned in connection with the arrest of Napper Tandy,²⁵⁸ something remains to be said. He was a man of very active habits, and if less impulsive would have had more friends. Tone, already the victim of misplaced confidence, viewed many men with suspicion, and let them see it. In 1796 he was passing as a French officer, and mentions in his diary that, when waiting to see De la Croix, the minister of war at Paris, Duckett, who chanced to be also in the ante-room, sought to enter into conversation with Tone by handing him an English newspaper. Advances of this sort, though natural in an exiled Irishman meeting another, were not without effect in making Tone distrust and avoid him.²⁵⁹ Duckett no doubt had projects connected with the enterprise in hand to which the chivalrous Tone would not stoop; but of these Tone knew little, and his prejudice was formed on quite different grounds.

²⁵⁸ *Ante*, p. [72](#).

²⁵⁹ Many men recoil from affable persons who seem over-anxious to know them. Sir Gavan Duffy in *Young Ireland* states that Davis had been prejudiced against the subsequently most distinguished Darcy Magee, because he had 'obviously determined to transact an acquaintance with him.'

These suspicions were shared by Madgett, an official in the French War Office. Duckett, it appears, told Madgett that two expeditions were to proceed to Ireland. 'Madgett said that he had endeavoured to put Duckett off the scent by saying he did not believe one word of the story, but that Duckett continued positive.' Tone adds that the information was probably true; but that it was terribly provoking it should be known to Duckett, 'to whom, by the by, De la Croix revealed in confidence all that he knew, for which he ought to be damned.' Tone later on admits that he knows nothing against Duckett unless by report.²⁶⁰

Tone's unhealthy impression Dr. Madden caught contagiously. In the first edition of his book, published forty years ago, he conveys that Duckett was a spy subsidised by England.²⁶¹ Innuendo grew at last into accusation, and a more recent edition records that Duckett, 'there is good reason to believe, was not employed by the Irish Directory, but by the British Minister, Mr. Pitt.'²⁶² Again, we are told that Duckett was '*assuming* the character of an agent of the United Irishmen at Paris, and continually dodged Tone in all his movements.'²⁶³

I cannot endorse this imputation. In no pension list, or account of secret service money, is the name of Duckett to be traced; nor is there one line to criminate him in the archives of the

²⁶⁰ Tone's *Journals*, ii. 141. (Washington, 1847.)

²⁶¹ *United Irishmen, their Lives and Times*, 1st ed. i. 40-75.

²⁶² *Ibid.* 2nd ed. ii. 37.

²⁶³ *Ibid.* iv. 603.

Home Office. Nay more. Open the 'Castlereagh Papers,' and there Duckett is found denounced as a sworn enemy to England. These valuable State papers were published ten years previous to the issue of Dr. Madden's revised edition; but, uninfluenced by their revelations, he renews the charges against Duckett.

Guillon, who has had access to the Government archives in France, says that Truguet, Minister of Marine, had thrown himself heart and soul into the projected invasion, and proposed to land 30,000 men in Ireland, under Hoche; and 60,000 later on in England; but the Directory deemed the plan too daring, and threw it aside; until Tone's memorials made their thoughts recur to invasion, and they then adopted a portion of the rejected scheme of Truguet.²⁶⁴ An interesting letter from Duckett to Truguet, Minister of Marine, turns up among the intercepted despatches. This functionary had just been succeeded by a new hand.

Is the Government still resolved to prosecute the same plans and the same projects [Duckett asks]. Can my country rely on its promises? Let me know, I beseech you in the name of Liberty, what is to be done? Shall I go home to accelerate the period for the arrival of which we are all solicitous? Consider that it is only patriots and enemies of England who risk anything – it is their blood that will flow.

The fears I had lest I should not be able to convert your bill into money are unfortunately realised. I have presented it to Citizen

²⁶⁴ *La France et l'Irlande.* (Paris, 1888.)

Reinhard, explained to him who I was, and what I was going to do. I showed him how necessary it was that I should leave Hamburg. He replied that his personal means did not permit him to comply with my application, adding that he could not act, because I had not a particular letter for him.

A mysterious task and goal are glanced at.

I am grievously mortified that I am not at this moment at the place of my destination. You know how deeply I interest myself in this cause; my presence will be conducive to the success of our friends. I wait for nothing but your answer to set out. I would merely request you to speak about me to your successor, to explain to him my situation and my necessities, in order that he may take into consideration the expenses which I shall be absolutely obliged to incur; for, when once arrived at my post, it will perhaps be impossible for me to receive assistance from him. I therefore beg of you to make him put me beyond the reach of accidents, by causing a sum that will afford me the means of subsisting and acting to be remitted to Hamburg. It does not belong to me to fix it. It is for him in his wisdom to see what sum will be necessary and indispensable for the expenses of six months. It would be superfluous to assure you of my attachment to the cause, and of the high consideration which I have for you personally.

P.S. – Address your answer to Citizen Reinhard: it is he who undertakes to forward this letter to you.²⁶⁵

²⁶⁵ *Castlereagh Papers*, i. 294-5.

It will be remembered that the betrayer whom Mr. Froude dramatically pictures as unbosoming himself to Downshire was the confidant of Reinhard at Hamburg, had access to his house, and used that fact to prove that his services, as an informer, were worth purchase by Pitt. I have elsewhere shown that the letters headed 'Secret Information from Hamburg,' which have crept into the 'Castlereagh Papers' to puzzle the world,²⁶⁶ can only have been written by 'Lord Downshire's friend' —*i. e.* Turner. One appears at page [306](#) of the first volume of that work. *There* the objects vaguely broached by Duckett are revealed as plainly as though Reinhard himself had whispered the word. The spy, having furnished other items of news, writes: —

'Duckett is at Hamburg; he has denounced Stone at Paris as a traitor.²⁶⁷ I hear he [Duckett] has got money from the [French] Government for the purpose of renewing the mutiny in the English Fleet.'²⁶⁸

²⁶⁶ The puzzle is increased by the noble editor's arrangement of the letters – made without regard to chronological order.

²⁶⁷ Stone is the man who had been tried in 1795 for high treason, and found guilty. But Duckett, though a staunch rebel, may have had good reason for denouncing Stone three years later. Madame de Genlis, in her *Mémoires*, upbraids Stone with having treacherously retained some money which had been entrusted to him for Pamela. See tome iv. 130-1.

²⁶⁸ Clarke, when giving Tone his commission in the French army, asks him (*Journals*, i. 151) if he knew one Duckett: 'I answered I did not, nor did I desire to know him.' Clarke replied that Duckett was 'clever.' Clarke, afterwards Duke de Feltre, stooped to ignoble tactics from which Tone recoiled. Clarke was a strong advocate for *chouannerie* (see Tone, ii. 96-9), and probably encouraged Duckett in his scheme for destroying

Obstinately hostile winds, as in 1796, once more saved England. Tone, whose untiring energy had accomplished the organisation of the invading forces, soliloquises in his diary of 1 August, 1797: —

I am, to-day, twenty-five days aboard, and at a time when twenty-five hours are of importance. There seems to be a fate in this business. Five weeks – I believe six weeks – the English Fleet was paralysed by the mutinies at Portsmouth,²⁶⁹ Plymouth, and the Nore. The sea was open, and nothing to prevent both the Dutch and French fleets to put to sea. Well, nothing was ready; that precious opportunity, which we can never expect to return, was lost; and now that at last we are ready here the wind is against us, the mutiny is quelled, and we are sure to be attacked by a superior force. At Brest it is, I fancy, still worse. Had we been in Ireland at the moment of the insurrection at the Nore, we should beyond a doubt have had at least that fleet, and God only knows the influence which such an event might have had on the whole British Navy.

Much that Tone privately penned is found confirmed by a secret committee which sat while Parker's²⁷⁰ corpse hung in

the English dockyards and exciting mutiny in the fleet.

²⁶⁹ At Portsmouth, when Lord Bridport gave orders to put to sea, every ship at St. Helens refused to obey. The marines fired and five seamen were killed. The crew of the 'London' turned the guns, and threatened to blow all aft into the sea. The officers surrendered; the marines laid down their arms, and Admiral Colpoys and Captain Griffiths were put in confinement.

²⁷⁰ Leader of the mutiny.

chains at Sheppey. It appeared that the crews were largely sworn to espouse the Irish cause; 'to be faithful to their brethren who were fighting against tyranny;' to carry a portion of the fleet into Irish ports, hoisting, instead of the Union Jack, a green flag emblazoned with *Erin-go-bragh*.²⁷¹

Dr. Madden's suggestion that Duckett was a spy of Pitt's is reiterated with cruel consistency. Part of the grounds of his suspicion was Duckett's intimate relations with Reinhard, also suspected by Madden, but who is now shown conclusively to have been true. Madden frequently quotes from the 'Castlereagh Papers,' but overlooks the following letter from Sir J. Crawford to Lord Grenville, one wholly inconsistent with his hypothesis that Duckett, like Turner, was a spy for Pitt. Crawford was, of course, the British representative at Hamburg.

October 23, 1798.

I shall abstain from any measures against Duckett, continuing, at the same time, to have him narrowly watched, which I hitherto have so completely, that there is scarcely a single step which he has taken since he has been at Hamburg with which I am unacquainted. His views for the present seem to be turned principally towards his Majesty's dockyards, and not choosing to venture in England himself, he is very desirous of getting over hither some one of those evil-disposed persons whom he knows to be employed in the dockyards, for the purpose of concerting with him

²⁷¹ *Report of the Secret Committee of Commons, England, 1799.*

the means of setting them on fire... He is in very little esteem in France, and is particularly ill with Talleyrand.²⁷² His principal supporter is Bruyes (*sic*),²⁷³ brother to the deceased admiral, and who was Minister of the Marine. He pretends that, in case of a successful attempt on the part of the French to land in Ireland, his object would be to get over to that country; but I have not hitherto been able to learn any particulars respecting his commission. He affects much secrecy, even with those with whom he lives in the greatest intimacy.²⁷⁴ He has of late been in correspondence with Holt,²⁷⁵ the rebel chief, who, through him, has been pressing the French for assistance. He says that there are 3,500 land troops on board the squadron which lately sailed from Brest, but that they have French uniforms for 7,000 men, with the view, as he pretends, of clothing the first bodies of Irish that might join them in the same way as their own troops, and thus, a numerous body appearing in French uniforms, of impressing the Irish nation at large with an idea that they had landed a considerable force.²⁷⁶

This letter explains the more ambiguous despatch written two

²⁷² As Tone suspected Duckett to be a spy, he doubtless cautioned Talleyrand against him. These misgivings spread from bureau to bureau.

²⁷³ Tone's *Diary* of June 16, 1798, praises the talents and activity of Bruix; 'but what could he do? In the first place, he had no money,' &c. – ii. 501.

²⁷⁴ Turner's instructions from the Home Office were, if he would not prosecute, to open a correspondence, at least, with leading rebels.

²⁷⁵ Joseph Holt, a Wicklow Protestant, published his memoirs in two volumes, but does not mention Duckett.

²⁷⁶ *Castlereagh Papers*, i. 263-4.

months before. Wickham transmits, by direction of Portland, for the information of the Irish Viceroy, a copy of a secret note,

which had been confirmed by the arrival of Mr. D – [*i. e.* Duckett] under a feigned name in Hanover, on his road to Hamburg, and I have little doubt of the truth of the rest from my intimate knowledge of the writer. D., by the extreme vigilance and activity of Sir James Crawford, has been discovered and arrested on his road; but, as he has been acknowledged as a person attached to the French Mission at Hamburg, and claimed as such, I fear there are no hopes whatever of his being delivered up, or even of having his papers examined.²⁷⁷

Your lordship, who will be aware of the extreme delicacy of this business, will no doubt feel the necessity of keeping the whole of it as secret as possible. In the mean time it is a point of no slight importance that this man should have been discovered on his road, and his journey so much delayed as that the object of it will be, in all probability, defeated.²⁷⁸

Tone's prejudice against Duckett influenced Macnevin. 'Mr. Duckett is still here,' writes Reinhard to De la Croix in another intercepted letter. 'I proposed to Mr. Macnevin to reconcile himself with Mr. Duckett. He has refused to do so.'

It is remarkable that while the usually clear-sighted physician

²⁷⁷ Duckett was secretary to Leonard Bourdon, who voted for the death of Louis XVI., and by his energy overthrew Robespierre, July 27, 1794. He headed the Conspiracy of the Faubourgs in 1795, and doubtless applauded Duckett in his scheme.

²⁷⁸ *Castlereagh Papers*, i. 263.

suspects Duckett of being an English spy, he praises '*the zeal and talents of Turner*.'²⁷⁹ Nor is there one line in Tone's Diary to indicate distrust of Turner; but the wrong man, in true dramatic style, incurs suspicion and blows. On September 21, 1797, Tone called on General Hoche at Rennes. Hoche spoke of Duckett, and Tone destroyed him with an expressive shrug, adding that he had boasted at Paris of his acquaintance and influence with General Clarke, and even with Hoche himself. Two days later Colonel Shee, the uncle of Clarke, and who accompanied the expedition to Bantry Bay, also inquires if Tone knew Duckett. 'I answered that Duckett was a scoundrel. I besought him to put Hoche on his guard.' It appeared that Duckett had made two or three advances to Shee, who, however, had consistently avoided him. Tone's gorge is raised, and he ends some remarks of asperity with 'I'll Duckett him, the scoundrel, if I can catch him fairly in my grip.'²⁸⁰

Duckett, according to the Hamburg spy, now shown to be Turner, was employed by the French Government to excite mutiny in the British fleet. Its first outburst was at Portsmouth; it was renewed at the Nore. As historians, who might be expected to treat largely of such incidents, barely notice that mutiny, a few remarks here are perhaps admissible; the more so as it will be necessary to recur again to Parker, who led the revolt. It assumed so formidable a front that Truguet thought

²⁷⁹ Vide Dr. Macnevin's memorial relative to a landing in Ireland. —*Ibid.* i. 305.

²⁸⁰ Tone's *Journals*, i. 208. (Washington, 1827.)

it might prove the death-blow to England's greatness. Parker, who possessed wonderful powers of persuasion, was soon joined by a large portion of Lord Duncan's squadron, and became the *soi-disant* admiral of the fleet. He blockaded the Thames, and threatened to starve London. His mutinous force now consisted of twenty-four sail of the line. Each ship was governed by a committee of twelve, together with two delegates and a secretary, and all assembled by beat of drum. The pulse of public feeling was shown in three per cent. Consols falling to forty-five. The Board of Admiralty visited the scene of the mutiny, but failed to effect an arrangement. Lord Northesk, R.N., waited on Parker to hear his terms. These were so exacting that Northesk hesitated. The following is culled from the (London) 'Courier' of June 8, 1797, and it will be seen how much Parker's letter differs from the mild version of it given in Campbell's 'Lives of the Admirals':

They persisted that the whole must be complied with... Lord Northesk was now rowed on board the 'Duke of York' Margate packet, under a flag of truce, with three cheers from the 'Sandwich,' and with the following paper to ratify his credentials.

'To Captain Lord Northesk

You are hereby authorized and ordered to wait upon the King, wherever he may be, with the Resolutions of the

Committee of Delegates, and are directed to return back with an Answer to the same within 54 hours from the date hereof.

R. Parker, President.

Northesk, furnished with a passport from Parker, returned to town, while Pitt and Dundas were hanged in effigy at the yard-arm. It was even debated to surrender the fleet to the French. Thereupon Sheridan suggested that all the buoys and beacons should be removed. A paper of the day states that the troops, ordered to fire on the fleet from the batteries at Gravesend, broke out into mutiny themselves, declaring that fratricide formed no part of their duty. The biographical dictionaries say that the popularity of Northesk and the firmness of Lord Howe caused the utter collapse of this great mutiny; but such history is misleading. The 'Repulse' was the first ship to abandon the cause, and becoming stranded was mercilessly cannonaded by the fleet. Its foremast and rigging were shot away; its decks were red with blood. Two more deserters, the 'Agamemnon' and 'Vestal,' escaped better. In slipping their cables and entering the Thames it was supposed that they were carrying into effect an already debated plan of bombarding Gravesend. The rest of the fleet followed and found themselves snared into the hands of the Government. When this fact became apparent, the mutineers were filled with fury. The ships separated, turned the great guns on each other, and fought furiously for hours, until at last Parker succumbed. In reading the trials of the delegates one is struck by

such Celtic names as Sullivan, Donovan, Walsh, Hughes, Brady, MacCarthy, Maginnis, Coffey, and Branon. Strange reports were current.²⁸¹ The 'Courier' of June 6, 1797, records that

when he [Parker] was carried before the magistrates, he took two letters out of his pocket, saying, 'These are my authorities; it was on these I acted.' From this it has been inferred [adds the 'Courier'] that he was set on by 'higher powers,' as the lower class call them: they say that Parker has declared he will not die till he has garnished Temple Bar with heads.

However, he made no distinct revelation. He was subjected to a number of interrogatories, 'dans lesquels,' observes a French

²⁸¹ The *Courier*, describing the execution of the delegates, states that the inextinguishable vitality of one man named Lee presented a striking spectacle, and that extra balls had to be poured into his head before he was despatched! A letter from the Irish Under-Secretary of the day, now preserved in the State Paper Office, reveals that Lee was discovered to have been a most determined United Irishman, and had joined the fleet for the sole object of helping the cause he had at heart. Lee and Duckett seem to have acted in concert. How largely the British navy was composed of Irish sailors, and under what circumstances their discontent originated, appear from an amusing anecdote. Shortly before Trafalgar, the first lieutenant of a man-of-war, when making his rounds to see that all hands were at their guns, observed an Irish sailor kneeling in prayer: 'What! are you afraid?' exclaimed the officer. 'Afeard, indeed!' replied the tar, contemptuously. 'I was only praying that the shots of the French might be distributed like the prize money – the lion's share among the officers.' Tone assured Carnot that England had recently raised 80,000 Irishmen for her navy and marines. Carnot did not tell him in reply to reserve that statement for the marines themselves, but took it as strict truth. The computation, however, will not stand historic scrutiny. According to an official return, it appears that Ireland had furnished 11,457 men for the navy, and 4,058 for the marines.

authority, 'on chercha vainement à découvrir les secrets moteurs de l'insurrection.'

Duckett's letter to Truguet, minister of marine, and the information of the Hamburg spy, help to throw light on this stirring episode. The mutiny is commonly ascribed to the harsh regulations of the Admiralty. A deeper design underlay it. Parker was at first committed to stand his trial before a civil court; but a court-martial was suddenly substituted. This deprived him of the forensic services of Erskine, whose powerful eloquence had successfully defended Horne Tooke against the Cabinet of Pitt. It was desirable that so dangerous a man should be got rid of without delay. His application for an adjournment was refused; and on June 30, 1797, he suffered death.

These mutinies were largely the work of Duckett, acting under the instructions of La Croix, the French minister of war. Tone, as we have seen, hated Duckett, whom he constantly snubs and denounces. Had there been a co-operation, the event would doubtless have been different. However all moderate men rejoiced at the issue. The mutiny formed part of a scheme to sever England's right arm; but the chivalry of Tone recoiled from a manœuvre of which he finally saw the importance while hesitating to approve of it. Dutch and French fleets for the invasion of Great Britain and Ireland had been nearly ready to start at the time of the mutinies.

Pitt used a powerful engine in subduing the mutiny. He despatched to the Nore a Roman Catholic priest, who

impressively preached the doctrine of submission.²⁸² This was probably the same priest of whom Father O'Coigly complains as worrying him in the condemned cell in the hope of persuading him to inform.

²⁸² Of course with the sanction of Bishop Douglas, whose name is often mentioned in the *Castlereagh Correspondence*.

CHAPTER XI

THE BETRAYER OF LORD EDWARD FITZGERALD ²⁸³

Another man there was of the same type as Turner, who posed in impenetrable disguise, but unlike Reynolds and Armstrong, spied in secrecy and on the express condition that he should not be asked to give public evidence and thus damage his social status.

An historian often quoted in these pages is not safe in suggesting that we may find behind the mask of Lord Downshire's visitor the betrayer of Lord Edward Fitzgerald. The utterly distinct quarter to which the Geraldine's arrest is due will presently appear. Lord Edward had the command of Leinster. Turner had mainly to do with Ulster. Guiltless he was of Lord Edward's betrayal in Dublin, for the simple reason, no doubt, that living abroad himself he knew nothing of his hiding-places. All other sensational incidents of that stirring time paled before the sorrow by which Lord Edward's arrest and death oppressed the people. A Dublin ballad expressed the fierce anxiety felt to discover and destroy the veiled betrayer —

²⁸³ I leave unchanged some of the circumstantial evidence which had convinced me of Magan's guilt, adding in brackets the criminatory letters subsequently found (January 1891).

May Heaven scorch and parch the tongue by which his life
was sold,
And shrivel up the hand that clutched the proffered meed of
gold.

Whilst, on the other hand, ballads inspired by loyal ardour did not hesitate to regard as a holy work the annihilation of Lord Edward Fitzgerald.²⁸⁴

In 1830, when continental thrones trembled and others fell, Moore published his interesting 'Life of Lord Edward' – a work which, however popular and opportune, will not bear a critical scrutiny as regards historic exactness. 'From my mention of these particulars respecting Neilson,' writes Moore, 'it cannot fail to have struck the reader that some share of the suspicion of having betrayed Lord Edward attaches to this man.' Moore's book attained a wide circulation, and the descendants of Neilson naturally felt the wounding words. A letter of his daughter strongly protests against them, and expresses a hope that allowance will be made 'for the indignant feelings of a child who has always been proud of her father's character.' Colonel Miles Byrne, a shrewd head which narrowly escaped the axe in '98, failed to endorse the imputation on Neilson, but hesitated not to declare that Lord Edward had been 'betrayed, and discovered by

²⁸⁴ Thus, in 'Croppies lie down,' to the tune of which, as Moore says, 'more blood had been shed than often falls to the lot of lyrical ballads' — 'The ruthless Fitzgerald set forward to rule, His principles formed in the Orleans school.'

Reynolds, a United Irishman, to the agents of Government.'²⁸⁵

²⁸⁵ *Memoirs of Miles Byrne*, iii. 247. (Paris: Bossange, 1863.)

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