



1946

The Irish Opposition to English Oppression Under the Protector

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Recommended Citation

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THE IRISH OPPOSITION TO ENGLISH OPPRESSION
UNDER THE PROTECTOR

by

Margaret E. McVey

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of
the Requirements for the Degree of Master
of Arts in Loyola University

June

1946

VITA

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INTRODUCTION

The ever debatable subject of the English oppression of the Irish, coupled with the rise of the vigorous and history-making personality of Oliver Cromwell, make the turbulent years from 1641-1652 a fascinating period of history for study, analysis, and documentation. The intent of this thesis is to provide a study of affairs in Ireland during this time, beginning with the rebellion of 1641 and concluding with the Cromwellian settlement.

It was necessary to give some background for the rebellion of 1641 first, that is, its causes, the various groupings of the Irish population, and the efforts of each of these groups to gain dominance, in order to orient the reader to this most important event which gave rise to the many events that followed.

Although the primary consideration of this paper is to analyze Cromwell and his relationship to the Irish problems, it is not possible to do so without also giving some study to King Charles I of England. As this king's power dwindled he sought aid from Ireland and Scotland, making rash promises to the Irish and Scotch if they would but come to his assistance. The Irish people were inclined to be royal minded, particularly the landed gentry, and they attempted to help the king whenever possible. The fact that he was unable to live up to his promises and often denied much of what he had promised, affected their loyalty not at all. Much of this allegiance might be attributed to the genius of Ormonde, his viceroy in Ireland. The king's continued

CHAPTER I

DISUNION IN IRELAND IN THE FORTIES

Under the rule of Thomas Wentworth, Earl of Strafford Ireland had shown some material progress. Justice was administered impartially, laws were equal and Ireland was enjoying a prosperity she had never known. Underneath, however, the nation was seething. Continued confiscations of land, favoritism shown to English colonists, the exclusion of Catholics from public office and the deprivation of their civil rights were beginning to bear fruit.

Strafford maintained, "Ireland was a conquered country; whatever the inhabitants possessed, they derived from the indulgence of the conqueror; and the imprudent grants of preceding monarchs might be resumed or modified by the reigning monarch."¹ He wished to settle Connaught as Ulster had been settled. "A commission was appointed to survey the lands, and to trace and enquire into the titles of their professing owners. In strict construction, four-fifths of Connaught was found to belong to the Crown. . ."² The Irish were enraged.

Complete alienation of the native Irish from the government followed. They were convinced that the English had determined to deprive them of all of their property by whatever means available. This fact was proven by the con-

1 Lenyard's History of England, G. Bell & Sons, Ltd., London, 1910, 450.

2 James A. Frounde, The English in Ireland, Longmans, Green & Co., London 1895, 88.

duct of the King and his Ministers. In this matter of confiscation Charles and the Commons showed remarkable unanimity. Furthermore, the declaration of Parliament against the Catholics, the threatened persecution of Papists by the Puritans and the attitude of the Irish clergy in the established and Scottish church were ill omens to a people steeped in the tradition and beliefs of the Roman Catholic Church.

Meanwhile Strafford had come into disfavor with the King. He was recalled, tried and executed. The reason--he was accused of organizing an army in Ireland to crush English and Scottish liberty. The army which he had raised was ordered to disband. This trained group of eight thousand infantry and one thousand horse were turned loose in a country ripe for an uprising. Strafford was succeeded by William Parsons, a Puritan. With his appointment the Irish felt, "There was every reason to expect that spoliation, and not protection, would be the chief object of an administration, at the head of which was a wicked and unprincipled adventurer".³

Many theories have been advanced as to the probable cause of the rebellion of 1641. Some writers opined that because of the general revolt against monarchy in England the Irish were inspired to redress their grievances by a resort to force. This was not an effort to repudiate the English monarchy; "...at the utmost they demanded the rights of Ireland as a Catholic Kingdom with a viceroy acceptable to native feeling, Parliament set free from the shackles of Poyning's law, and full civil and religious rights for the Catholic population."⁴

3 W. C. Taylor, History of the Civil Wars of Ireland, Constable & Co., Edinburgh, 1831, 261.

4 Edmund Curtis, A History of Ireland, D. Van Nostrand Co., Inc., New York, 243.

Buchan suggested the following causes: "Ultimately they are to be found in centuries of misgovernment and misunderstanding, and notably in the barbarities and confiscations of the Elizabethan settlement. But a potent proximate cause was the removal of Strafford, and the disbandment of his army."⁵ Other authorities agree that the rebellion was the natural outcome of the Ulster plantation. Fred Warner in The History of the Rebellion and Civil War in Ireland suggests that the choice of a Lord Lieutenant was unwise. James First, Duke of Ormonde, as the leader in Ireland, would have smothered the uprising.

On October 23, 1641, the Irish broke into open rebellion. Their aims were to restore Catholicism as the state religion, "and the reinstatement of the original owners on lands that a century of confiscation and penal statutes had wrested from their possession".⁶ Their first objective was Dublin Castle which was favorably situated and well supplied with arms and ammunition. At the same time, Sir Phelim O'Neill was to fall upon the English colonists throughout Ulster, capture their forts and thus incite a general uprising. There is a variance of opinion on what the authorities at Dublin knew of the plans. Warnings had been given but apparently nothing had been done to put down the incipient revolt. Taylor said Parsons was aware of the plan. "But Parsons looked forward to a rebellion as his harvest. He had already gained a large fortune by trading in confiscations; and he trusted that a new insurrection would place at his disposal more estates than even

5 John Buchan, Oliver Cromwell, Houghton Mifflin Co., Boston, 1934, 81.

6 Lady Burghclere, The Life of James First Duke of Ormonde, John Murray, London, 1912, I, 124.

Strafford had ventured to contemplate."⁷

Information was received in Dublin the night before the uprising and though most of the leaders managed to escape the Castle at Dublin was secured and the attack on Dublin failed. O'Neill was successful in his surprise attack. His forces numbering thirty thousand were undisciplined and filled with a desire for revenge. "But bloody and barbarous as the rebellion was, no general massacre was either planned or carried out. The first object of the rebels was simply to drive the colonists from their houses and lands and in the process some were murdered and all plundered."⁸ Word of the disaster was sent to London and to the King at Edinburgh. He asked the Scottish parliament to ship five thousand soldiers to Ireland. If they had acceded to his wishes and O'Neill's army had been confronted by a trained group of men, the rebellion would have been confined to Ulster. As it was Charles I, King of England, was only able to raise an army of fifteen hundred with Ormonde as commander. With the few at his command Ormonde went to Dublin.

However Ormonde was allowed no freedom of action. Why? "That special pleader, the Jacobite Carte and the most impartial of modern historians (Gardiner), are agreed that the fatal policy of inertia and delay was dictated by the desire to await the coming of an English Puritan army, restrained by none of the mercy Irish Catholics might show to those of their own race and creed. The fertile lands of the nobles of the Pale promised a richer harvest than could be reaped in the bogs and forests of Ulster."⁹

7 W. C. Taylor, 263.

8 Charles Firth, Oliver Cromwell and the Rule of the Puritans in England, G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York, 1909, 58.

9 Lady Burghclere, 142.

They were anxious to have the Catholic Lords of the Pale participate in the rebellion in order to have some excuse to confiscate their lands which hitherto had remained untouched. These Peers of the Pale were most anxious to help the government but needed arms and munitions to replenish their meagre stores.

The lack of supplies and the official manifestos were not calculated to improve relations between the Lords and the Government. The first proclamation, October 23, 1641, decried the "most disloyal and detestable conspiracy intended by some evil-affected Irish papists".¹⁰ This caused such alarm among the Lords and brought forth so many protests that the Lords Justices were compelled to issue another statement:

That by the words Irish Papists, they intended only such of the old meer Irish in the Province of Ulster, as had plotted, contrived and been actors in that Treason, and others that adhered to them, and none of the English of the Pale and other Parts, enjoying all His Majesty's subjects, whether Protestants or Papist, to forbear upbraiding in matters of religion.¹¹

The Declaration of Parliament of December 4, 1641, which caused the English Catholics of the Pale to unite with the Irish, is summarized by Mary Taylor Blauvelt as follows:

Parliament resolved that it would never tolerate Popery in Ireland, or in any other of His Majesty's dominions, and decided that Ireland must be reconquered by more confiscations of Irish land. Two and a half million acres there would be set aside to repay those who advanced money for that purpose. On this matter there was no party division, it was again a unanimous Parliament.¹²

10 E. Borlace, History of the Irish Rebellion, R. Clavel, London, 1675, 22.

11 Ibid., 22.

12 Mary Taylor Blauvelt, Oliver Cromwell - A Dictator's Tragedy, G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York, 1937, 95.

The revolt soon resolved itself into a struggle of Catholic against Protestant. Ireland, at the beginning of 1642, had four fairly well defined groups. Each of these groups had its own army. The Old Irish or native Catholic Irish wanted complete separation from England. This group was in Ulster. The old Anglo-Irish or Normans wanted civil and religious liberty but not political autonomy. The lack of union within these two parties greatly weakened their cause. Arrayed against these was the Puritan group in Dublin who were closely allied to the Scotch Presbyterians in Ulster, under the leadership of Robert Munro, and the Royalists, members of the Anglican Church, and firm adherents of the King. The last named were lead by Ormonde.

Meanwhile Parliament, busy with thwarting the King and keeping rival factions under control, sent the Irish Protestants nothing in the way of supplies which they had gathered or the army which they had organized. They used the army as a threat against the King. "It was then, and long after, the fashion to look upon the Irish with contempt. It was supposed that an Irish insurrection could be suppressed at any time by a vigorous effort. While, therefore, the English parliament promised speedy exertion, the leaders were determined to secure England first, and leave Ireland for a more convenient season."¹³

The Lords Justices also hampered others who were trying to stop the revolt. Some of the nobility had professed a desire to join with the government forces and proceed directly against the rebels. This offer was refused. The only military activity was directed by Sir Charles Coote. He merely laid waste the country and massacred indiscriminately.

¹³ W. C. Taylor, 268.

From Dublin, under date 25th February, 1642, the Government issued for the guidance of its generals, the very clear and explicit command, 'to wound, kill, slay and destroy by all the ways and means you may, all the rebels and adherents and relievers; and burn, spoil, waste, consume and demolish all places, towns and houses, where the said rebels are or have been relieved and harbored, and all hay and corn there, and kill and destroy all the men inhabiting, able to bear arms.'¹⁴

In another respect the Lords Justices were at fault. The King and Parliament issued a proclamation of amnesty to all Irish rebels who would lay down their arms by a fixed date. Though this pardon did not extend to the leaders it was still too generous for the Lords Justices. The declaration, as finally agreed upon by them, limited the amnesty to parts of Ireland, notably sections that had not as yet been too active in the revolt, thus nullifying the full effect of the royal pardon.

Until December 1st, the revolt was practically limited to Ulster, a small part of Leinster and a county in Connaught. Later through the unfortunate acts of Sir William St. Leger in the field and the attitude of the Lord President at Clonmel the Munster group was alienated and joined the insurgents. St. Leger had resorted to imprisonment and death for many innocent people and when the Munster gentry appealed to the Lord President he was very displeased. In this group was Ormonde's brother, Richard Butler. Even though his kinsmen had joined the revolt Ormonde remained true to his position as commander of the English army. He was not in favor of the plan of the Lords Justices to plunder, slay and lay waste the country. He knew too well that in ravaging the country the people of Dublin would eventually

¹⁴ Seumas MacManus, The Story of the Irish Race, The Devin-Adair Co., New York, 1921, 413. Also Carte's Ormonde.

starve through lack of supplies. Whenever possible he spared castles and cabins. The Lords Justices continued to hamper his movements. When he successfully put the rebels to flight at Drogheda they would not permit him to pursue them and thus one more opportunity for ending the rebellion was lost.

In 1642 the Protestant forces in Ireland were divided into three groups--one in the county of Cork under Lord Inchiquin, another about Dublin under the King's viceroy, Lord Ormonde, which consisted of Scotch troops under Monro. The Catholic rebels held all the centre of the country.¹⁵

Owen Roe O'Neill was appointed leader of the Irish cause. Upon his arrival in July he set about training the Old Irish army. He quickly put a curb on acts of lawlessness and violence and punished many who had been guilty of such crimes. In regard to Owen Roe O'Neill, Morley says, "... a good soldier, a man of valor and character, was the patriotic champion of Catholic Ireland."¹⁶

During the early part of May a meeting of the Roman Catholic hierarchy met at Kilkenny to discuss plans for a confederation. They averred that the war was just because it had been undertaken for religion and the king. This group was augmented by a number of lords and gentlemen and through the joint efforts of laymen and prelates the Supreme Council was created. The Council was composed of two members from each province. Lord Mountgarret was its first president.

The Confederation of Kilkenny proved to be perhaps more of a curse than a blessing to Ireland. The establishing of the Confederation was the establishment of a Parliament

15 Lieut-Col. T. S. Baldock, D.S.C., Cromwell As a Soldier, Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co., Ltd., London, 1899, 370.

16 John Morley, Oliver Cromwell, Macmillan & Co., Ltd., London, 1901, 283.

for Ireland. As, to please the Catholic Anglo-Irish (the "new Irish") lords and gentry, the Confederation proclaimed its stand 'for faith, country, and king'-- meaning King Charles of England--so also to please the same party the susceptibilities of their king was supposed to be saved from hurt, by naming it a confederation instead of a Parliament.¹⁷

The Parliament of Kilkenny met in October. Its membership included clergy, nobility and commoners. Its first official deed was a declaration avowing their loyalty to the king. Next they proceeded to assume the government of the country. A Supreme Council was appointed, having judicial and executive power. This council had twenty-four members. The Supreme Council was established, "For the protection of the King's subjects against murders, rapes and robberies contrived and daily executed by the malignant party, and for the exaltation of the Holy Roman Catholic Church and the advancement of His Majesty's service..."¹⁸ They also had authority to mint money and enlist soldiers for a national army. One very disastrous step taken by the Parliament was the provision whereby each province would continue to have its own army and own general--no supreme command. This plan was not destined to improve the strategy of war.

The Irish could not agree among themselves. The Anglo-Irish and the Irish were continually at bay. Some of the Irish joined forces with the Anglo-Irish and this combined force worked against the Ulster group. A clique controlled the Supreme Council. Ormonde used this faction to the advantage of the king. They were ready to negotiate with Charles I and dur-

17 Seumas MacManus, 415.

18 Richard Bagwell, Ireland under the Stuarts and during the Interregnum, Longmans, Green & Co., London, 1909, 26.

ing the period of negotiation sent Charles supplies and money for which Owen Roe had pleaded in vain. Due to lack of cooperation the Irish were defeated by a smaller army; an army divided and with no hope of reconquering the country. Ingram said:

For the eight years which preceded the arrival of Cromwell the Irish had the uncontrolled possession of the greater portion of their country. The accounts which we have of the infinite distractions which prevailed among them during this period would be incredible if they were not derived from the writings of contemporary Roman Catholics. The interminable and ever-recurring animosities, contentions, sudden changes and defections could only have happened in a country which, like Ireland, had but lately been freed from the tribal system and had not yet coalesced into a unity. "It is vain to hope for stability in this kingdom since affairs are never the same for two days together" wrote the Papal Nuncio in 1648.¹⁹

After repeated requests the king decided to negotiate with the Irish--1642-43. He refused to accede to many of their demands but through the untiring efforts of Ormonde a cessation treaty of one year's duration was concluded in September of 1643. This would allow Ormonde to divert some of his troops from Ireland to help the king in England. He also hoped to organize an army of the Irish Catholics to aid the king. Truly Ormonde was a Royalist.

According to the terms of the cessation each side was to keep the sections of Ireland they were then holding.

Thus in less than eleven months after their "General Assembly at Kilkenny in October, 1642, the Irish Confederates were, by treaty with the Crown of England, in recognized possession--for the time--of 'lands, castles, towns, forts and cities'--under local government of their own election, and with civil and religious liberties--for

19 T. Dunbar Ingram, A Critical Examination of Irish History, Longmans, Green and Co., London, 1904, I, 108.

attempts to assert which, in previous years, the administrators of the English Government in Ireland had inflicted severe penalties'.²⁰

In regard to this struggle in Ireland, Gardiner says:

As in Scotland, so in Ireland, the question was not so much whether England was to win forcible mastery over those portions of the British Isles outside her borders, as whether they were to be used to determine the political institutions of England herself. The attacks on Ireland and Scotland, which were now to follow, were in a certain sense acts of defensive warfare.²¹

In 1645, Cardinal Rinuccini, a Nuncio from the Pope, arrived in Ireland to aid the Catholic Confederation. He was to replace Pier Francesco Scarampi, a papal agent, who had been sent to Ireland at the request of the Irish people, in July of 1643. Rinuccini agreed that lack of unity was the Irish nation's chief difficulty. The discord between the Old-Irish and the Anglo-Irish was very apparent. The Anglo-Irish had church property. This they would lose if the church was again publicly recognized in Ireland. "Englishmen in thought and feeling, what they wanted before all else was peace and reconciliation and their influence, Rinuccini reports was great."²² The Pope was well aware of the trouble and instructed Rinuccini to disregard the restoration of Church property.

"The Old-Irish, Rinuccini wrote, saw in the nuncio the minister of God

20 John T. Gilbert, History of the Irish Confederation and the War in Ireland, 1641-1643, M.H. Gill & Son, Dublin, 1882, II, CXVII.

21 Samuel R. Gardiner, Oliver Cromwell, Longmans, Green & Co., London, 1901, 170.

22 Freiherr Von Pastor, History of the Popes, translated by Dom Ernest Graf, O.S.B., Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co., Ltd., London, 1940, XXX, 158.

and the Young-Irish the dispenser of a prince's money."²³ The Young or Anglo-Irish preferred papal subsidies to a papal nuncio. A treaty had been made with Ormonde in March of 1646 but it was not published until after the nuncio arrived. The Anglo-Irish feared news of the treaty would reach Rinuccini and that he would then return to Rome with the money they needed so badly. When the treaty was proclaimed it was criticized by everyone. The clergy in particular were very disappointed as the treaty made things easier only for the individual Catholics--"as a body, Catholics were not guaranteed the possession of their churches and other Church property."²⁴

The Supreme Council attempted to win over Rinuccini but received no aid in this respect from Ormonde.

Kilkenny indeed gave the Viceroy a solemn reception but the assembly of nobles convened at Cashel refused to admit him, and Clonmel shut its gates against him. On the other hand the nuncio entered Kilkenny at the head of an army, the peace treaty was declared null and void, the Supreme Council thrown into prison and another elected in its place on the 26th September.²⁵

When the Civil War broke out in England, Inchiquin and Monro sided with the Parliament, whilst Ormond remained faithful to the king. Thus divided, the Protestants could not hope to reconquer the country, and might probably have been annihilated had not the Catholics been equally split into factions. The great Ulster chief, Owen Roe O'Neil, held aloof from Lord Preston and the Catholics of the centre and west, while the Pope's nuncio formed a third

23 Ibid., 159. Also Aiazzi, Nunziature in Irlanda di monsignor G.B. Rinuccini, Florence, 1844, LV, 395.

24 Pastor, History of the Popes, XXX, 161.

25 Ibid., 162. Also Gardiner, Civil War, II, 543 seq.; and Aiazzi, 158.

party, which effectually prevented the others from combining.²⁶

O'Neil and Preston were constantly at each other's throats. When the Scottish forces attempted to take Limerick they were utterly defeated by O'Neil at Benburb, June 5, 1646. The next year, emboldened with their success, the Irish decided to take Dublin. O'Neil and Preston could not agree on strategy. Meanwhile Ormonde handed the city over to the Parliamentary army. O'Neil's and Preston's armies fought independently, constantly trying to outwit the other. If they could have buried their differences and worked together, Dublin could have been easily taken.

If, just once, during the bloody years, the Irish had joined forces, what a victory would have been theirs. Such chances of success, such waste of manpower, such petty jealousies were not destined to improve the condition of a nation or its generals. So it was with O'Neil.

We find him frequently almost betrayed by the Supreme Council because the Norman lords of Leinster, perpetually anxious for their own feudal estates, were ready to treat with either one of the English parties which was for the moment victorious. At this time the Norman lords were in possession of many of the confiscated abbey lands in Ireland, and there was perpetual friction between them and the Catholic Church on this account. The Norman landowners were the element of weakness throughout the whole of this national movement. While praying for the final defeat of the English Parliamentarian forces, they dreaded to see this defeat brought about by Owen Roe O'Neill, in whom they saw the representative of the old Gaelic tribal ownership, a return to which would mean their own extinction.²⁷

Guerrilla warfare continued with varied success. Intrigue, plotting, treachery continued. Old Irish versus New Irish; Ormondites working on

26 T.S. Baldock, 370-371.

27 Charles Johnston and Carita Spencer, Ireland's Story, Houghton, Mifflin & Co., Boston, 1923, 199.

Preston, who was a weak, vacillating creature. Ireland now had six distinct parties and armies all working against each other. They united and divided most unexpectedly. Through it all O'Neil held steadfast, sometimes with five armies in league against him. In this bitter struggle Irish even united with anti-Irish to fight one another. Rinuccini continued to wage a losing battle with the Supreme Council. They had sent envoys to France for aid. Two were antagonistic toward the Nuncio, the third was his ally. All he could succeed in doing was to exact a promise from the General assembly to the effect that no decision as to religion would be considered without the Pope's approval. Negotiations were carried on and the Queen of France was persuaded to pawn her jewels. The money was to be used in support of Ormonde without waiting for the Pope's sanction.

Meanwhile "The Second Civil War had its counterpart in Ireland, where in May, 1648, Lord Inchiquin and the Munster Protestants threw off obedience to the Parliament and hoisted the royal standard."²⁸ Ormonde's party immediately decided to conclude an armistice with Inchiquin. In spite of the opposition aroused by Rinuccini and his adherents, the treaty was concluded. The Nuncio thought his safety was threatened and left May 27, 1648. "He pronounced a sentence of excommunication and interdict against the adherents of the armistice."²⁹ The Supreme Council were aroused by Rinuccini's order and much confusion resulted. When O'Neil denounced the treaty the Council revoked his commission as general of Ulster. He continued to fight but was

28 Charles Firth, 255.

29 Ludwig, Freiherr Von Pastor, 165. Also A. Bellesheim, Geschichte der Katholischen Kirche in Irland von der Einfuhrung des Christentums bis auf die Gegenwart, II, 451 seq.

not too successful. According to Harris the peace did very little honor to Ormonde or the king. However by means of it, the chief parts of Ireland declared for Charles and afterwards for his son. By the terms of the treaty religious toleration and freedom for the Irish Parliament was guaranteed. Despite the threats of the Nuncio the terms were generally accepted.

"Rinuccini who had been ordered by the Supreme Council to leave Ireland, now announced that since the Holy See kept no nuncios with Protestant rulers his nunciature was at an end. He left Ireland on March 2, 1649: his mission had been a complete failure."³⁰

Having pacified the Confederates and driven away Rinuccini, Ormonde was now for the moment almost master of Ireland. If he could only regain Dublin before Cromwell was ready, the chances of war and politics might yet turn in the young King's favor. He attempted to win over O'Neill.

... O'Neill was willing to accept the peace if he might be allowed 6000 foot and 800 horse at the expense of the country, but the Commissioners of Trust, with whom all such questions rested, would not agree to more than 4000 foot and 600 horse. When at last they yielded it was only on condition that the regiments of Sir Phelim O'Neill and others who had deserted the Ulster general should form part of the force. Suspecting ill-faith, Owen O'Neill turned to Jones and Monck.³¹

George Monck, governor of Ulster for Parliament, was solely interested in preventing a coalition between Ormonde and O'Neil. He proceeded to arrange an offensive and defensive alliance with O'Neil whereby in return for powder received O'Neil would refrain from any agreement with Ormonde or any other opponents of Parliament. Monck had succeeded in his purpose. Not until

30 Ibid., 166.

31 Richard Bagwell, 174.

after the arrival of Cromwell did O'Neil join forces with Ormonde. MacManus says:

In face of the fearful disaster that threatened in the coming of Cromwell, Owen Roe not only brought himself to league with the abhorrent Ormonde, but, with characteristic nobility, he, one of the great military leaders of the era, agreed to subordinate himself and his army to Ormonde's supreme command.³²

Ormonde had attempted to win Jones over to the Royalist cause but was unsuccessful. Then he made an effort to recover the city of Dublin. Through treachery, intrigue and lack of preparedness Ormonde's army was routed by Jones' garrison, outside of Dublin, at Rathmines. Thus the door into Ireland was left wide open; Ormonde's soldiers were crushed and the Irish were still fighting among themselves. The English, after nine years of warfare, were as one under Cromwell.

The inability of the Irish factions to quit fighting among themselves and to grant their full support to O'Neill in the critical days of the Great Rebellion, spelled the doom of the cause of political and religious freedom for more than a century in Ireland.³³

Froude expresses the lack of unity in the following words:

The "earth-tillers" of Ireland had from immemorial time, been the drudges and the victims of those of their own race who, thinking it scorn to work, had been supported by others toil--who, calling themselves rulers, were in no point morally superior to their own wolves, and had nevertheless usurped to themselves the name of the Irish nation, claimed before the world to be the representatives of their countrymen, and, while clamouring over their wrongs, had meant only at bottom that they were deprived of their own power to oppress.³⁴

32 Seumas MacManus, 422.

33 Tom Ireland, Ireland Past and Present, G. P. Putnam's Sons, N.Y., 1942, 156.

34 James A. Froude, 133.

For a time it seemed as if the divergent forces in Ireland would converge against the hated Cromwell. The Confederate Catholics estimated that they, if united, could bring 200,000 men into the field. Together with this powerful force we now find O'Neil and his army. The Rathmines defeat had drawn Catholic and Anglo-Catholic Ireland into one mighty army, ready to do Ormonde's bidding. The Ulster Scots, enraged by the execution of Charles, were ready to act against the common enemy. Ormonde's own men were of the best and most determined of the Royalist party. Only Dublin and Londonderry were in the hands of Parliament and an invading army would have to convey its own supplies every inch of the way. Why then, were the Irish defeated?

According to one contemporary writer, the explanation follows:

Emboldened by the defeat of Ormonde at Dublin, the adherents of the Nuncio, and especially the regulars, resumed their intrigues. They inveighed against Ormonde and his supporters as enemies of God and man; accused him of treachery, complained that the Nuncio, a man who had done so much for Ireland, had been driven away by Ormonde and his faction; clamoured that he should be recalled and entrusted with supreme power and preached everywhere that, as they had to submit to a heretic, it mattered little whether the submission was made to Cromwell or to Ormonde.³⁵

CHAPTER II

ATTITUDE OF THE IRISH TOWARD THE ENGLISH MONARCHY

In general, the Irish people respected the loved their monarch. He, weak and vacillating as he was, was a symbol of authority to them. They appealed to him in all their needs and regardless of how he failed them they still looked up to him. Charles I was aware of their loyalty to him and instead of fostering it and using it to the best advantage, he wilfully used the Irish as a means to an end, caring not how they fared, so long as he had what he wanted.

Colonization of Ireland by the English was thought to be the best method of controlling the barbarous Irish. This often resulted in maltreatment of the natives, "guilty, in the eyes of the English settlers, of the inexpiable crime of regarding their country as their own and of doing their best to keep it for themselves".¹ Both James I and Charles I tried to improve the situation. Their authority was based rather on law than violence. "Nor was there wanting in them a certain benevolence towards Irishmen, though the form taken by that benevolence was to make Irishmen as like Englishmen as possible, without thought of helping them to develop on their own lines."²

The great Catholic landowners in Ireland sought religious freedom and a voice in the government of the country. The masses asked also for the

1 Samuel R. Gardiner, Cromwell's Place in History, Longmans, Green & Co., London, 1897, 54.

2 Ibid., 54.

restoration of confiscated lands. In 1641 the landowners said they would hold Dublin for the king and send an army to aid him in his fight against the English Parliament. Meanwhile the bulk of the Irish population revolted and soon Ireland was in full insurrection. Stories of the cruelties and massacres were greatly exaggerated in England.

Moreover, at this time in England's development, there was a special inducement to magnify tenfold horrors which in themselves were bad enough. The Parliamentary Party desired to alienate public support from the King. They had made much capital out of the fact that an army of Irish Catholics was raised for use in England. The Irish rebels were now represented as the King's allies; for their own purposes they professed to act in the King's name; and therefore Pym and his friends had a strong political reason to paint their deeds in the blackest colours.³

Roger Moore, when asked the reason for his part in the rebellion, said, "To maintain the royal prerogative, and make the subjects of Ireland as free as those of England."⁴ Again we see the attitude of the Irish toward their King.

The Irish, when expedient, used Charles as he used them. During the rebellion of 1641

it was reported that Sir Phelim O'Neill was exhibiting a Royal Commission which empowered him to take arms for the defense of the King's person, and, in that cause, "to attack all castles and forts and to seize the goods, persons and estates of all the English Protestants"... Undoubtedly the Commission was in part, if not altogether a forgery... But whatever its origin, it did its work, arresting opposition to O'Neill in Ireland and sowing broadcast the seeds of suspicion in England.⁵

3 Stephen Gwynn, The History of Ireland, The MacMillan Co., New York, 1923, 277-278.

4 W. C. Taylor, 276.

5 Lady Burghclere, 145.

Guizot maintains that the majority of the Catholic aristocracy with the Irish Protestants supported the King's cause but were hindered every step of the way, "by the passions, suspicions, and exactions, as natural as they were ill advised, of the Catholic population who marched beneath their banners".⁶

The king was so shocked when the rebellion occurred that he immediately gave the entire management of Ireland to Parliament. He also was fearful of being implicated in the uprising. He even consented to more confiscation of land in Ireland, in order to obtain money for the raising of an English army to suppress the revolt. Ormonde, as his leader in Ireland, was endeavoring to make peace with the Irish, so that when the time came, they would rally to the support of the King.

When the Confederation of Kilkenny was organized, Ormonde hoped to work through them, for the King's welfare. The difficulty was religion. The Council wanted the Catholic church as it was prior to the reformation. All the king could give was unlimited toleration if he wished to retain any of his few friends in England.

The Lords and Gentlemen who, though Catholic, were for peace with the King, and the Legate would have no peace till the Church had her own again, threatening, if the Council were obstinate, to take the bishops to Italy with him and leave the kingdom unshepherded. The King's double dealing came to the Legate's help. More eager than ever, as the war went against him, for a peace which would bring him the swords of the Irish Catholics, he had empowered Ormond to treat on conditions which he could acknowledge to the world; and at the same time he had sent the Earl of Glamorgan with other

6 M. Guizot, History of Oliver Cromwell and the English Commonwealth, Blanchard and Lea, Philadelphia, 1854, I, 86.

conditions, pledging himself, if only the secret were kept till the war was over, to grant all that the clergy demanded.⁷

The secret was not kept and when the Glamorgan articles were published Charles had to deny their authenticity. This treachery caused a split in the Catholic party. Ireland was now divided into four hostile camps.

In March of 1644 the Supreme Council of the Confederation of Kilkenny sent representatives to the King for a redress of grievances. At first their demands were too preposterous and had to be revised. Even then they could never be granted by an English government because of the complete subjection of the Protestants in Ireland which the demands entailed. Negotiations continued throughout the year but no compromise was reached.

In January the King had told his wife that Ireland 'must at all times be sacrificed to save the crown of England, Montreuil assuring me that, France, rather than fail, will assist me in satisfying the Scots' arrears'. His later letters to her are in the same spirit, and with some reason from his own point of view, he declares the Irish wanting in generosity.⁸

Through all the intrigue, plotting and machinations of the King the Irish remained loyal to him. When, in an effort to appease the Puritans, he denounced the Catholics they did not hold him responsible. They put the blame on the Parliamentary party. They believed Charles was a friend of Ireland and her faith. Charles more and more courted to the confederation as his own position in England became untenable. The Supreme Council accepted the barest of favors from him. "As was ever the case with the New Irish, if their property and their religion were left unmolested they were

7 James A. Froude, 128-129.

8 Richard Bagwell, 108.

tolerably content to be ruled by England as England wished."⁹ The Supreme Council by their snobbery, bias and foolish trust in Charles made a tangle of Ireland's case and made futile the long years of struggle which might have been crowned with success. MacManus continues, "The General Assembly having reaped rich promises--and little else--from King Charles and Ormond, had in return humbly and dutifully laid Ireland at Charles' feet. His cause was henceforth their cause".¹⁰

Many writers aver that Irish loyalty to Charles was a matter of self preservation. He was the lesser of two evils. They would rather be dominated by Charles than by the Puritans. Harris declares they favored Charles in preference to Parliament.

Charles cherished this disposition, and, by a variety of methods, endeavoured to make it declare in his favor, and support his cause. Some success, it is well known, he had,--more, probably he would have had, but for the extreme bigotry of the priests, and the nuncio, who were hardly to be satisfied by any concessions.¹¹

Lenyard has the following to say concerning the monarch: "Charles was not satisfied with sowing the seeds of disaffection in England; the same arbitrary sway, the same disregard of the royal word, the same violation of private rights, marked his government of the people of Ireland."¹² During Strafford's regime in Ireland the people became incensed at his high handed-

9 Seumas MacManus, 416.

10 Ibid., 423.

11 William Harris, An Historical and Critical Account of the Life of Oliver Cromwell, F.C. and J. Rivington, London, 1814, III, 219.

12 Lenyard, 450.

ness and sent a Remonstrance of Grievances to the King. If the King would correct some of the evils they promised him strong military aid. That they did so is shown in the statement of John Dod given before a Committee of the House of Commons in 1643: "That, as near as he could possibly compute, there were then at Oxford about three thousand Irish Rebels; and that most of the king's life guard were Irish."¹³

Ingram claims the Irish had no affection for or loyalty towards Charles I. "They carried on a bloody war with the King's forces, convened a rival Parliament while his was sitting, raised taxes, despatched envoys to foreign powers, besieged his capital city, and hawked his Crown of Ireland about Europe, offering it to any Catholic Prince who would accept it."¹⁴

In regard to Charles' actual implication in the rebellion some think he had a hand in it; the Irish believed the queen encouraged it. Hume sets forth many arguments to prove that he had no part in it. "But what is alleged against him is, that he excited the Irish to appear in arms, master the protestants, and help the king against his parliament."¹⁵

This we do know, Charles played the field. He was too often unsuccessful because in trying to conciliate the Catholics he would forget about the interests of the Protestants. Ormonde, so sure that the Protestants would be completely forsaken, left Ireland. However, he returned and tried again to unite all of Ireland. "Common loyalty to the king should be the tie, and

13 John T. Gilbert, LXXVII.

14 T. Dunbar Ingram, 105.

15 Wm. Harris, II, 408.

neither religion should triumph at the expense of the other."¹⁶ The peace, finally achieved, came too late for Charles but it did succeed in uniting all the forces in Ireland, ready to do battle, for the name of a king. Was he worth the Herculean efforts they made?

16 Hilda Johnstone, Oliver Cromwell and His Times, T.C. and E.C. Jack, London, 50.

CHAPTER III

CROMWELL'S PURPOSE IN INVADING IRELAND

After the death of the King, England feared a royalist uprising in Ireland.

War against Ireland had always excited passionate enthusiasm in England, in almost all parties. This hostility of race, religion and politics had been used against Charles I with unfailing success; and from it the republicans hoped to derive the same advantages against his son. As soon as it became known in London that he had been proclaimed King in Ireland, and that Ormonde rallied almost the entire nation beneath his standard, it was resolved that he should be attacked there.¹

Cromwell was appointed commander in chief of the army. His cruel violence in the Irish campaign can be traced to a number of circumstances. England has always been capable of ferocious attacks when wronged by those it holds to be of a lower caste. This trait goes back to the earliest days of English history and can be pointed out again and again through the years England has survived as a nation. "But in the middle of the sixteenth century the vindictive passions of the nation were aggravated, not only by the inferior culture of the general population, but by the prevalence of a bitter civil war; and, it must be added, by a misguided use of Old Testament precedents amongst the enthusiasts who determine national policy."²

It must always be remembered that Cromwell was a Puritan. Essentially

1 M. Guizot, 91-92.

2 J. Allanson Picton, Oliver Cromwell - The Man and His Mission, Cassell, Petter, Galpin & Co., London, 1883, 291.

then he was a reformer in church matters and in all things connected with civil liberty. As a Puritan, he had been steeped in the hatred of all things Catholic. He hated the vestments of the clergy, the stained glass windows of the cathedrals, in fact anything that reminded him of Rome. In this respect he was not unlike all other Puritans. He shared with them their animosity of the Stuarts, in whom they feared a definite alliance with the Pope in Rome.

As Tangey relates:

The entire experience of his own life and the experiences of the two preceding generations, had given Oliver good cause to look upon Roman Catholic priests as traitors to Protestant England--as emissaries of a Power which was continually endeavouring to array every Papish interest against it--and as the most insidious and deadly enemies of civil and religious liberty.³

The Puritans felt and history shows that the march under Charles was toward Rome. Strongly convinced of this Oliver decided to reconquer Ireland. He realized there would be no peace in Ireland until England was again in charge.

Most authors concur in the belief that Cromwell erred in his treatment of the Irish. However they all contend there were mitigating circumstances for his conduct. Gardiner says:

The errors of Cromwell in dealing with Ireland were rooted in his profound ignorance of Irish social history prior to 1641, and to his consequent entire misunderstanding of the true character of the events of that fatal year. What he believed, in common with the mass of his countrymen, was that up to that date Englishmen and Irishmen had lived side by side in a spirit of contented happiness, to the mutual benefit of both races, and that then, without the provocation, Irish Roman Catholics, at the instigation

3 Sir Richard Tangey, The Two Protectors: Oliver & Richard Cromwell, S.W. Partridge & Co., London, 1890, 161.

of their priests, had done their best to exterminate their English benefactors by a series of atrocious massacres.⁴

Buchan believes that Cromwell's conduct in Ireland was influenced by the state of his health. He had had an actual breakdown and a sort of malaria accompanying it. His bodily condition was not normal and had not been for some time before the second Civil War. The state of his health was so precarious that a doctor was in constant attendance. "The balance of his nature was maladjusted; mind preyed upon body, and body distempered mind."⁵

Cromwell had been brought up in an atmosphere of hatred toward the Irish. This he shared with practically all Englishmen.

He knew nothing of Irish civilization and culture, believed that the Irish were a barbarous race, and as Milton put it, 'indocile and averse from all civility and amendment'. And if he did not conquer this barbarous race, and conquer them quickly, England would be in a desperate position.⁶

The news of the Irish massacre of 1641 reached England at a particularly critical time. The country was in an uproar. Cromwell's real interest in Ireland probably dated from this grim event rather than from any previous desolations inflicted on Ireland by the Tudors and Strafford. Charles' interest in the Irish cause and the fact that Ireland was mainly papal were facts that made a deep impression on Cromwell's mind in the intervening years.

Stories of the atrocities committed in Ireland against the English were often grossly exaggerated and tended to strengthen the animosity of the English toward the Irish.

5 John Buchan, 274.

6 Mary Taylor Blauvelt, 195-196.

The English and Scotch of that age were, with the exception of a few scholars, ignorant of the ancient culture of the Irish people, incredulous of their gifts and graces, and unable to conceive that the confusion and barbarism of the island were the result of English greed and misgovernment. The unity of the Aryan race and the place of the Irish in it were unknown. The native people were therefore regarded with the arrogant assumption, or contemptuous compassion, too often characteristic of British feeling towards alien populations of conquered lands.⁷

Cromwell, ignorant as the rest of his countrymen in respect to Ireland, was incensed by these tales. When money was being collected to outfit an army to send against the rebels he contributed five hundred pounds to the cause. The contributors, of course, were to be repaid later in another confiscation of Irish land. Blauvelt says this shows Cromwell's profound ignorance of Irish history and she maintains he never learned any more.

The Puritans felt that the rebellion of 1641 opened an era of butchery, followed by nine years of confusion and bloodshed, which resulted in an almost complete obliteration of the Protestant faith and English interests. The recovery of Ireland was entered into in the spirit of a religious war. They wanted to restore Protestantism in Ireland. Cromwell's policy in Ireland was no different than the traditional Englishman. He pursued it with more vigour and thoroughness. He and all English Puritans did not want Catholicity in the realm. They felt that peace and prosperity could never be gained in Ireland, "without a dominant and preponderating order of English birth and Protestant belief".⁸

Cromwell, speaking before the General Council at Whitehall in March,

7 J. Allanson Picton, 292.

8 Frederic Harrison, Oliver Cromwell, MacMillan & Co., Ltd., London, 1907, 133.

said

And truly this is really believed: if we do not endeavour to make good our interest there, and that timely, we shall not only have (as I said before) our interest rooted out there, but they will in a very short time be able to land forces in England, and to put us to trouble here. I confess that I have had these thoughts with myself, that perhaps may be carnal and foolish. I had rather be overrun with a Cavalierish interest than a Scotch interest; I had rather be overrun with a Scotch interest than an Irish interest; and I think of all this is most dangerous. If they shall be able to carry on their work, they will make this the most miserable people in the earth, for all the world knows their barbarism--not of any religion, almost any of them, but in a manner as bad as Papists and you see how considerable they are therein at this time. Truly it is (come) thus far, that the quarrel is brought to this state, that we can hardly return unto that tyranny that formerly we were under the yoke of, which through the mercy of God hath been lately broken, but we must at the same time be subject to the kingdom of Scotland or the kingdom of Ireland for the bringing in of the King. Now that should awaken all Englishmen, who perhaps are willing enough he should have come in upon an accomodation, but not (that) he must come from Ireland or Scotland.⁹

The accepted axioms of the whole Puritan party and of Cromwell were:

"the Mass was by law a crime, Catholic priests were legally outlaws, and all who resisted the Parliament were constructively guilty of murder and rebellion".¹⁰ Taylor says: "In short, this Puritan agent of God behaved as a homicidal lunatic."¹¹ Why? His mind was filled with the tales of the horrid massacre. There was some truth in the stories but anyone with an unbiased

9 Wilbur Cortez Abbott, The Writings and Speeches of Oliver Cromwell, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1939, II, 38-39.

10 Sir Richard Tangye, 168.

11 G. R. Stirling Taylor, Cromwell, Little, Brown & Co., Boston, 1928, 244.

mind would be able to realize that it is impossible to slaughter more Protestants than were actually living in the affected districts. Then, too, Cromwell could not understand what lay behind the reasons for revolt.

In the words of the great Tory historian, Lecky: Behind the people lay the maddening recollection of the wars of Elizabeth, when their parents had been starved by thousands to death, when unresisting peasants, when women, when children had been deliberately massacred, and when no quarter had been given to the prisoners. Before them lay the almost certain prospect of banishment from the lands which remained to them, of the extirpation of the religion which was fast becoming the passion as well as the consolation of their lives, of the sentence of death against any priest who dared to pray beside their bed of death.¹²

Thus to Ireland came the scourge of mankind, the dreaded Cromwell. His bitterness toward their faith, his desire to avenge the slaughter of his countrymen and his ultimate aim to recover Ireland for the English filled the Irish with dread. They knew he had come as a representative "of the Commonwealth or Republic of England which had abolished alike Monarchy, the Church, and the Peerage".¹³ Yet, even in the face of this terrible disaster, the Irish could not bury their individual differences long enough to overcome the common enemy.

12 Ibid., 225.

13 Edmund Curtis, 250.

CHAPTER IV

CROMWELL'S CAMPAIGN IN IRELAND

Affairs in Ireland were deemed so important by Parliament and the Council of State that they at once asked Cromwell to assume military command of the country. They fully expected an Irish invasion of England if the Catholics and Royalists won out in Ireland. Cromwell appeared surprised and perplexed when notified of his appointment. He finally agreed to accept the post speaking of "his own unworthiness, and disability to support so great a charge, and of the entire resignation of himself to their commands, and absolute dependence upon God's providence and blessing, from whom he had received many instances of His favour".¹ Stirling Taylor says Cromwell's speech was "his usual subtle blend of religious emotion with a shrewd worldly desire to get plenty of money to provide for the necessities of God's army".²

The recovery of Ireland was entered into in the spirit of a religious war. Protestantism was to be restored in Ireland. Large scale preparations were in order. Cromwell asked for much in the way of provisions and manpower. These requests were granted. The Army was infected with men who were fanatical in their ideas of Parliament and government. "The individualist doctrines of Independency and the prayer-meetings of the army had led to their natural issue--an outburst of democratic fanaticism; and democratic

1 M. Guizot, 348

2 G. R. Stirling Taylor, 221

fanaticism in the army could only end in mutiny."³ Cromwell put down these uprisings with celerity and severity. The rebellions were swiftly and cruelly ended and the leaders executed.

The manner in which troops were selected to serve in the Irish campaign is worth noting. Picton says:

The mode of selection was not less extraordinary than the authority directing it. In the first place the officers and adjutators assembled gave themselves to 'solemn seeking of God by prayer'. There were fourteen regiments of horse and an equal number of foot, out of which eight were to be chosen, four of either arm. Fourteen papers were cut to an equal size, and on four of them the word 'Ireland' was written, the rest being left blank. The whole were then shuffled, and to prevent suspicion of collusion a child was brought in, who drew out the papers one at a time, and presented them in succession to the officers representing the horse.⁴

Cromwell asked the House not to delay in getting him the materials of war. He said he was willing to carry on with the expedition in order to prevent the Royalists from overrunning Ireland. However he had no confidence in his ability to crush the Irish but was willing to do his best. An army of twenty thousand men were put under his command. They were determined, well disciplined and well equipped. They were also infected with religious fervor. "Their commander, however, as well as being a Protestant zealot, was a sturdy English nationalist, a great soldier, and a cool-headed politician. Here was a combination which only a union of all Ireland could have beaten and the spirit of which promised little quarter to 'papists' and their religion."⁵

³ Frederic Harrison, 134.

⁴ J. Allanson Picton, 281.

⁵ Edmund Curtis, 249-250.

After securing the materials of war Cromwell had to secure means of moral action. As the Commonwealth had few friends in Ireland, Cromwell proposed to undermine Irishmen. On learning that Lord Broghill, one of Ireland's ablest, was going through London on his way to offer his services to Charles II, Cromwell made an appointment to see him. Lord Broghill was naturally astonished because he had never met Cromwell. Before he had time to reach a decision, Cromwell was announced. Cromwell told Broghill that his plans were fully known. On Broghill's emphatic denial of his intended visit to Charles, Cromwell assured him he had the necessary evidence to prove his statements. In fact he told Broghill that he could show him his own letters. "They have already been examined by the Council of State who had made an order for your being committed to the Tower; but I have obtained a delay in executing the order, till I should previously have conferred with you."⁶ Thus spoke Mr. Cromwell. Broghill, trapped, admitted everything and then asked Cromwell's advice. Cromwell, at the behest of the Council, offered him a command in the Irish army. "You shall have the authority of a general officer, no oaths shall be imposed upon you, and you shall only be required to serve against the Irish Catholics."⁷ Broghill wanted time to consider the proposal but was informed that once Cromwell left him, with the offer not accepted, he would become a state prisoner. There was no choice so Broghill acquiesced. This is just one example of Cromwell's strategy. He tried to conciliate, bribe or divide Catholics working with influential laymen and the clergy.

6 M. Guizot, 95-96

7 Ibid., 95-96. Also Carte's Ormonde Letter, I, 249; Godwin's History of the Commonwealth, III, 153-155; Cromwell's Letters and Speeches, II, 95.

However, on reaching Ireland, all such ideas were abandoned. From then on religious as well as political fanaticism was the order of the day.

There were two incentives for the invasion of Ireland at this time: one was to acquire more Irish land for the members of the army and for those who had made the undertaking possible; secondly, the army had to be kept occupied, preferably outside England. This is the oldest device of a dictatorship--taking attention away from domestic affairs and keeping their chief support, the army, from becoming a danger to them. Cromwell landed at Dublin in August of 1649 with seventeen thousand men of the Puritan army.

They were extraordinary men, his Ironsides--Bible-reading, psalm-singing soldiers of God--fearfully daring, fiercely fanatical, papist hating, looking on this land as being assigned to them the chosen people, by their God. And looking on the inhabitants as idol-worshiping Canaanites who were cursed of God, and to be extirpated by the sword.⁸

Supreme civil and military command in Ireland was given Cromwell. When he arrived in Dublin he spoke to the people concerning his intentions. In this declaration he made clear to the people and to the soldiers of Jones's Army just what was expected of them. His own army had been well instructed.

Concerning this Declaration, Abbott says:

Modelled upon his earlier proclamations, in the Scotch campaign, it was designed to quiet the fears of the Irish, to dispose them to friendly relations with the invading force, to guarantee them the possession and enjoyment of their property--at least until the first of the following year--and to serve notice on his men that any infraction of his orders would be punished with the utmost severity. It was at once sound military procedure and good politics as well as good morals, designed to conciliate the people against whose leaders he was then

⁸ Seumas MacManus, 423.

about to move, and, incidentally, to undermine the position of those leaders, whose hungry and badly supplied followers had lived at virtually free quarter on a terrified country.⁹

Cromwell issued orders to the army that they were not to rob, pillage or inflict cruelties upon the people. "He would have no wrong or violence of any kind toward people of the country, unless actually in arms or employed with the enemy. He offered a free and secure market, and promised safety to all persons disposed to pursue their industry peaceably under protection of his army."¹⁰ In fraction of these rules would be severely punished. By offering peace and security to the peasant folk, who were not actively engaged against him, Cromwell became the recipient of all sorts of provisions for which they were duly paid.

Now as to the setup of the Irish forces: The Scots in the north were under the command of Viscount Montgomery. Ormonde was about thirty miles northwest of Dublin; Inchiquin, with a few thousand men, held scattered posts; Owen Roe O'Neill, nominally with Ormonde, was of little service to him, through hesitation or illness. Jones' victory at Rathmines had greatly undermined the morale of the Irish as well as weakened them in numbers and equipment.

These, with the few scattered followers of Clanricarde in Connaught, formed the forces opposed to the Parliamentarians, who under Cromwell in Dublin and Coote in Londonderry surpassed the Royalists so greatly in unity, equipment and leadership, if not in numbers.¹¹

This division among the Irish forces had its counterpart in the Irish people. Religious and political motives as well as personal motives kept

9 Wilbur Cortez Abbott, 111.

10 Sir Richard Tangye

11 Wilbur Cortez Abbott, 115.

them apart even at this critical time.

Of the three main groups into which they fell, the Confederate Catholics were for a united Catholic Ireland, but not, like the party of the Papal legate Rinuccini, for an Ireland under papal dominance, while men like Owen Roe O'Neill, no less Catholic and nationalistic, had been opposed to both the Confederates and the Papal party.¹²

Cromwell moved on Drogheda August 31, 1649. On September 3rd he began the siege. He proceeded to storm it on the tenth, "and the events of that storming are a living memory in Ireland to this day. 'The curse of Cromwell on you' is still the most terrible of words on the head of a foe. The Irishman can think of nothing more hellish than what Cromwell did in the streets of Drogheda."¹³ Both sides realized that Drogheda was an important military post because it commanded the way to the north. With proper reinforcements the Irish might have been able to turn back Cromwell's men.

In the massacre at Drogheda two thousand men were killed in cold blood. said, "I believe we put to the sword the whole number of the defendants. I do not think 30 of the whole number escaped with their lives."¹⁴ Many civilians were also killed. There is strong evidence that many women and children were among those slain. Cromwell had ordered no quarter.

There is no doubt that in what he did, Cromwell was covered by the strict law of war, which placed a garrison refusing surrender outside the pale of mercy; but the law had seldom been acted on in the

12 Ibid., 115.

13 G. R. Stirling Taylor, 222.

14 F. W. Cornish, Life of Oliver Cromwell, Rivingtons, London, 1884, 202.

English war, and it is permissible to doubt whether Cromwell would have acted on it on this occasion, if the defenders had been other than 'Irish papists' as he scornfully called them.¹⁵

Cromwell apologized for his severity but deemed it necessary because these men were connected with the massacre of 1641. "Ludlow, on the contrary, assures us, that when Oliver arrived at Dublin, the Royalists 'put most of their army into their garrisons; having placed 3 or 4,000 of the best of their men, being Mostly English, in the town of Tredagh (Drogheda), and made Sir Arthur Ashton governor thereof."¹⁶

In writing to the Honorable William Lenthal, Speaker of the Parliament of England, Cromwell justifies his actions in this way:

I am persuaded that this is a righteous Judgement of God upon these Barbarous wretches, who have imbrued their hands in so much innocent blood, and that it will tend to prevent the effusion of blood for the future which are the satisfactory grounds to such Actions, which otherwise cannot but work remorse and regret. The Officers and Soldiers of this Garrison, were the flower of all their Army; and their great expectation was, That our attempting this place, would put fair to ruine us; they being confident of the Resolution of their men, and the advantage of the place.¹⁷

Most probably more blood has been shed in Ireland, in consequence of the hatred aroused against Cromwell by his action at Drogheda, than was spared by the terror he aroused there. Irish massacres should be treated as

15 S. R. Gardiner, Oliver Cromwell, 173.

16 Rev. M. Russell, Life of Oliver Cromwell, Constables' Miscellany XLVIII, Edinburgh, 1829, II, 22423. Also Ludlow, I, 301.

17 Letters from Ireland, London, Printed by John Field for Edward Huffand, Printer to the Parliament of England, 1649, 9.

an illustration of the length to which an exaggerated conviction of a divine purpose may lead a man. . . about all his 'mercies' he writes in the same tone. 'Give me leave' he writes after Drogheda had fallen, 'to say how it comes to pass that this work is wrought. It was set upon some of our hearts that a great thing should be done, not by power or might, but by the spirit of God. . . And therefore it is good that God alone should have the glory.'¹⁸

After the terrible slaughter at Drogheda Ormonde wrote: "It is not to be imagined how great the terror is that these successes and the power of the rebels have struck into the people. They are so stupefied that it is with great difficulty that I can persuade them to act anything like men for their own preservation."¹⁹

After Drogheda Ormonde ordered Dundalk and Trim abandoned. Cromwell proceeded northward and town after town fell before his might. Then he turned southward to Wexford where the Cromwellian army had two scores to settle: 1) the people of Wexford were papists; 2) they had preyed on English shipping, supposedly when they were helping the king. This town's inhabitants were in the throes of dissension. Some wanted to surrender immediately but Sinnott, the leader, tried to gain time for reinforcements to come up from Ormonde. Much parleying went on between Cromwell and Sinnott. The reinforcements arrived but Cromwell had already proceeded to storm the town. Surrender terms were set forth by Sinnott but before negotiations were completed the castle was surrendered through the treachery of Captain James Stafford. A slaughter, as at Drogheda, followed.

Besides the confiscation of land at Wexford, "there was captured much

18 Hilda Johnstone, 52.

19 Mary Taylor Blauvelt, 196.

military material, including fifty-one pieces of ordnance and some forty vessels in the harbor."²⁰ Morley feels that Cromwell was not directly responsible for what happened at Wexford. He quotes Cromwell:

Indeed it hath, not without cause, been set upon our hearts, that we, intending better to this place than so great a ruin, hoping the town might be of more use to you and your army, yet God would not have it so; but by an unexpected providence in his righteous justice, brought a just judgement upon them; causing them to become a prey to the soldier, who in their piracies had made preys of so many families, and now with their blood to answer the cruelties which they had exercised upon the lives of divers poor protestants.²¹

For the capture of Wexford, Cromwell received the thanks of Parliament. Parliament went even further. "On October 2, 1649, the English Parliament appointed a national Thanksgiving Day in celebration of the dreadful slaughter--and by unanimous vote placed upon the Parliamentary records-- 'that the House does approve of the execution done at Drogheda as an act of both justice to them (the butchered ones) and mercy to others who may be warned by it.'²²

Cromwell's next stop was Ross. He wrote to the Governor, Lucas Taaffe, asking him to turn over the town to the use of the Parliament of England. Taaffe agreed but only on the fulfillment of the following conditions: 1) he and his men were to march out with the honours of war; 2) with the assurance that private property would be respected; 3) free exercise of religion (liberty of conscience) would be granted to those who remained. In reference

20 Wilbur Cortez Abbott, 144.

21 John Morley, 266.

22 Seumas MacManus, 425.

to the third request, Cromwell replied: "I meddle not with any man's conscience; but if by liberty of conscience you mean a liberty to exercise the mass, I judge it best to use plain dealing, and to let you know, where the Parliament of England have power, that will not be allowed of."²³ The governor agreed to Cromwell's terms. Many of the hitherto Irish joined Cromwell's ranks, as their own army suffered defeat. The garrison of Cork suddenly revolted and declared themselves with the Parliamentarians. Broghill was partially responsible for their defection. Of course the Protestants in Munster were happy, at the opportunity offered them, to break with the Confederate Catholics. This aroused the cry of treachery among the Irish and it also inspired more of Inchiquin's men to desert.

In reference to Inchiquin, Abbott gives the following story:

Inchiquin himself came under suspicion when a Catholic priest, Father Patrick, stated publicly that he had seen a copy of Inchiquin's agreement dated the day of the Cork mutiny, October 16, by which he promised to deliver Youghal to Cromwell and receive a command of six thousand men. That charge was supported by other witnesses, one of whom, a colonel under Ormonde added later that the original was taken from the body of Bishop Egan of Ross when he was captured and hanged the following spring. Inchiquin denied the charge, and even wrote to General Michael Jones to vindicate him, but the harm was done. Inchiquin's authority was weakened and though he gathered new forces in Leinster, his influence in Munster was largely replaced by that of Broghill.²⁴

"In the midst of all this havoc and clash of war, Owen Roe O'Neill, the only commander in Ireland that seemed a match for the great parliamentary

23 Wilbur Cortez Abbott, 146. Also Carlyle, Letter CX.

24 Wilbur Cortez Abbott, 151.

general, was struck down by sickness."²⁵ He died at Cavan in November of 1649 and thereby struck the death blow to the Royalist party. "The Irish were as sheep having no shepherd. Stubborn resistance was made in detail, but there was very little concerted action."²⁶

After the reduction of Ross, Cromwell met with some resistance at Duncannon and Waterford. Ormonde, meanwhile, was being severely criticized for allowing the Parliamentary army to rebuild the bridge at Ross at the junction of the Barrow and Nore into the county of Kilkenny. Inchiquin felt that if Ormonde had prevented this, the reversal suffered by Cromwell would be nothing short of defeat. Ormonde had more men than the English but they were poorly supplied with war materials. Furthermore, "he was distrubed at the surrender of Cork and the deserption of Inchiquin's men; and he felt that he could not trust his own troops until the results of the recent disasters had been appraised."²⁷

Cromwell continued his policy of undermining the loyalty of the Anglo-Irish to Ormonde. He regarded these maneuvers as being far more important and less costly than operations in the field. Blake and Phayre, on their arrival in Cork, had orders from Cromwell to start an insurrection. They were ably assisted by Broghill and Townsend who were already there. Negotiations were carried on between Cromwell and the men of Cork. Terms were

25 Patrick W. Joyce, Ireland, P. F. Collier & Con So., New York, 1907, 125.

26 Richard Bagwell, 210.

27 Wilbur Cortez Abbott, 44.

agreed upon. Then Youghal also decided to join the Parliamentary forces, largely at Broghill's persuasion.

At this time Cromwell's immediate concern was the health of his army and bad weather. He had only three or four thousand men, fit for service. Ormonde's army outnumbered them by about twenty thousand. But Ormonde had other difficulties: lack of money, his own lack of military ability and absolute lack of unity among his men. His potential strength lay in the Catholic Irish whom he distrusted keenly. In turn, they not only distrusted him but were very jealous of the English Protestant officers whom he favored. Cromwell, knowing all this, took advantage of it whenever an occasion offered itself.

Ormonde made his headquarters at Kilkenny. He wanted to quarter some of his troops at Waterford and Limerick but was refused admittance. Some of his men deserted. "Some were stationed in various places between Waterford and Clonmel; some were left to shift for themselves, and of these many never bore arms for Ormonde again but returned to private life or, as Clarendon says, took service overseas."²⁸ Charles II, realizing that no help was forthcoming from Ireland, turned to the Scots. He had for some time entertained the notion of going to Ireland and establishing himself there. With the news from Ormonde concerning defeats, the lack of unity and the lack of money and supplies he was literally thrown into the arms of the Scots. Ormonde felt too that there would be trouble in getting a successor for O'Neill. It was utterly impossible to unite the Irish with the English and Scotch Royalists therefore most of the defense would be borne by the native

Irish and thus the leadership would go to the Catholic clergy. This prophecy of Ormonde's came true.

Cromwell went into winter quarters at Youghal. However while there he was not idle. "He had must to do as Lord-Lieutenant--settling courts of judicature in Dublin, collecting money for his troops, visiting all the garrisons in Munster, and doing other necessary work."²⁹ He formed a civil government for Munster and Ireton was appointed president by Parliament. Meanwhile he continued to bombard Parliament for more men, more money and more supplies.

Cromwell's motive in treating the Irish Catholics with particular harshness may be traced to a controversy in which he engaged sometime before he left Ireland. On December 4, 1649 the Irish prelates assembled at Clonmacnoise to issue a manifesto known as the Clonmacnoise decrees. They realized there would be no religious toleration under Cromwell.

The formal decrees of Clonmacnoise were embodied in four articles. By the first fasting and prayer were ordered 'to withdraw from this nation God's anger, and to render them capable of his mercies.' By the second the people were warned that no mercy or clemency could be expected 'from the common enemy commanded by Cromwell by authority from the rebels of England'. By the third the clergy were ordered under severe penalties to preach unity, 'and we hereby manifest our detestation against all such divisions between either provinces or families, or between old English and old Irish, or any of the English or Scotch adhering to his Majesty'. The last decree was one of excommunication against the highwaymen called Idle Boys, and against all who relieved them. Clergymen were forbidden on pain of suspension to give them the Sacrament or to bury them in consecrated ground.³⁰

29 F. W. Cornish, 210.

30 Richard Bagwell, 210-11.

The clergy said that Cromwell, in his effort to extirpate Catholicism, would resort to massacre and banishment of the inhabitants. In turn, Cromwell wrote a long argumentative reply which sheds much light upon his Irish policy. Morley says the Clonmacnoise Manifesto, "only lives in history for the sake of Cromwell's declaration in reply to it (Jan. 1650). . . It combines in a unique degree profound ignorance of the Irish past with a profound miscalculation of the Irish future."³¹

According to Cromwell, the Irish had no grievances. They had not lost their lands through the maneuvering of English statesmen and lawyers. Their religion was no religion at all. "Favour enough was shown to them if they were allowed to bury their creed in their hearts, though they were deprived of those consolations on which those who held their faith were far more dependent than the adherents of other churches."³² This was the universal belief of Englishmen of that time, including Cromwell. The conquest of Ireland and the subjugation of its people was held to be most important. The English wanted the Irish to be English or suffer the consequences.

In his reply Cromwell stressed the Irish massacre of 1641. "You," he says, "unprovoked, put the English to the most unheard of and most barbarous massacre (without respect of sex or age) that ever the sun beheld."³³ This paper was the longest Cromwell had ever written. "It combined statescraft, theology, religious emotion, arguments, persuasion and threats, in an amazing denunciation of the ecclesiastics who had ventured to speak for their people

31 John Morley, 268.

32 S. R. Gardiner, Oliver Cromwell, 178.

33 F. W. Cornish, 211.

and their church."³⁴

He defended his own actions saying no one unarmed had been killed. Those in the streets or in houses, stormed or fought for by his soldiers were imperiled. Banishment was the fate of those in arms, rather than slaughter. Lands taken were only taken from those who had rebelled and caused the massacre.

He had come to Ireland to avenge innocent blood, and, with the assistance of God, to hold forth and maintain the lustre and glory of English liberty in a nation where we have an undoubted right to do it; wherein the people of Ireland, if they listen not to such seducers as you are, may use liberty and fortune equally with Englishmen if they keep out of arms. . . . And having said this, and purposing honestly to perform it, if this people shall headily run on after the counsels of their prelates and clergy, and other leaders, I hope to be free from the misery and desolation, blood and ruin, that shall befall them, and shall rejoice to exercise utmost severity against them.³⁵

In this reply Cromwell showed his deep hatred of Catholicism. He really declared war on the Roman Catholic clergy and Catholic laymen. Any Catholic who read it knew that "it justified the prelate's assertion that Cromwell, if he could, would extirpate not only Catholicism from Ireland, but even Catholics who attended mass."³⁶

By the end of January, 1650, Cromwell was ready to get his army on the march and ferret out the enemy from southern Ireland. His men had recovered from their illnesses, replacements had arrived from England and adequate supplies and munitions were at hand. Through treachery he was able to take

34 Wilbur Cortez Abbott, 196.

35 F. W. Cornish, 212-13.

36 Wilbur Cortez Abbott, 196.

Newborough and then he met with little resistance until he came to Kilkenny. Any town offering resistance was put to the sword. The treaty he made with the governor of Fethard should be taken note of. It not only spared the clergy but, "the people of the town enjoyed the privileges thus conferred on them throughout the whole of the Interregnum, escaping by their loyalty to the English authorities the transplantation to Connaught which overtook so many of their neighbors."³⁷

Cromwell proceeded on his way, waiting now and then for reinforcements as he had to leave men in every place he took for garrison duty. Town after town fell to his command. Hewson's army was coming from the east and Cromwell's from the west, thus closing in on Clonmel and Kilkenny which were without hope of reinforcements. So, the Irish waited, in one desperate attempt, and crushed Cromwell's forces. No, they proceeded to argue over terms of joint action between Protestants and Catholics; over the admission of native Irish to Ormonde's privy council; the placing of Catholics in prominent posts and ad infinitum. Ormonde had no choice. He had to agree to some of the Catholic requests. Even then they were suspicious of him. Conditions were becoming appallingly worse.

When a bishop was elected to succeed O'Neill in Ulster, Monro became so disheartened that he allowed the Parliamentary forces entrance at Enniskillen. Thus the North was lost to Ormonde and his followers. At Kilkenny terms were offered and refused but after much scurrying of emissaries back and forth, easy terms were offered to soldiers and inhabitants. Then, on to Clonmel. Cromwell had little more to do in conquering Ireland. English and Scotch

³⁷ Ibid., 210.

royalists were ready to yield. "Only the Irish remained to be dealt with, and only that part of them under the immediate control of the clerical war-party was ready to go on with the struggle which now appeared hopeless."³⁸

Michael Boyle, Dean of Cloyne, was sent by Inchiquin's men to dicker with Cromwell on surrender terms. "Articles for the Protestant Party in Ireland" were finally signed. The Irish were as eager to be rid of their English allies as the allies were to be rid of them thus the collapse of Royalist resistance in Ireland.

The resistance at Clonmel was the stiffest of all. The bloody lessons of Drogheda and Wexford had not been learned. "They found in Clonmel the stoutest enemy this army had every met in Ireland; and there never was seen so hot a storm, of so long continuance, and so gallantly defended either in England or Ireland."³⁹ A nephew of Owen Roe O'Neill was in command at Clonmel, Major General Hugh O'Neill. His plan was very ingenious. He didn't bother to repair the fortifications that had been damaged by the artillery.

Instead of endeavoring to repair the damage to the fortifications, he had enlisted every person available to pile stones, timber and mortar to form walls some eighty yards in length on either side of a lane running up from the breach, digging a huge ditch at the end of the passage and planting his guns behind it.⁴⁰

Cromwell, not knowing, or ignoring these defences, ordered another storm. A slaughter of Parliamentarians resulted. He continued to pour men into this breach for four hours but could not get through. Then he ordered his army to

38 Ibid., 240.

39 John Morley, 267.

40 Wilbur Cortez Abbott, 250.

retreat. Cromwell lost over two thousand men.

By a strange quirk of fate O'Neill, with neither food nor ammunition to carry on, proceeded to evacuate the garrison. He had been promised all the aid Ormonde could secure but the Commissioners of Trust had balked Ormonde at every turn. They seemed anxious to hinder Ormonde rather than Cromwell. Several hours after O'Neill had started his evacuation, the mayor of Clonmel proceeded to negotiate with Cromwell. Terms were given which gave the assurance of safety to the inhabitants and their property. Only then did he discover that O'Neill and his men had escaped. In regard to the surrender of the town, Morley says it "was no more than a husk without a kernel."⁴¹ The siege of Clonmel was the most disastrous of Cromwell's entire career.

After the surrender of Clonmel, Cromwell left for England, May 29, 1650, leaving Ireton to subdue the remainder of the country.

With his departure from Ireland, though he was to have a profound influence on that island in the coming years, Cromwell's direct connection with its fortunes was over, for he never saw Ireland again. His campaign there was an episode, though an important one, in the history of the relations between England and Ireland in these years. He did not conquer the Irish, he never even met any of their armies in the field. The way was paved for him by Jones' victory at Rathmines, without which his task would have been incomparably more difficult. He faced a defeated and discouraged enemy with a superior force, . . . Finally, although he did not say so, he accomplished almost as much by bribery as by arms.⁴²

Policy and vengeance inspired the cruel treatment meted out to the Irish by Cromwell. Lamartine says, "Cromwell converted his victories into massacres and pacified Ireland thru a deluge of blood."⁴³ In connection with

41 John Morley, 267.

42 Wilbur Cortez Abbott, 257.

43 A. De Lamartine, Life of Oliver Cromwell, Houghton, Mifflin, Boston, 1859, 174.

Cromwell's cruelties Ashley holds this position:

But few people, whatever their religion, would acquiesce in Cromwell's theory that the massacre of soldiers and priests and the wholesale confiscation of private property must be gladly assented to by a nation because a small section of it at one time rebelled in exasperation at its undoubted wrongs. Still, as Cromwell had invested 500 pounds in the system, he naturally upheld it and indeed extended it.⁴⁴

Even the order to cut down the corn, before it was ripe, so that the Irish would be denied the means of subsistence, "could not be justified on the ground that they frightened the Irish into shortening the war since this struggle against overwhelming odds lasted for nearly three years longer."⁴⁵ This and the other cruel acts only strengthened the hatred of the Irish for the English, which continues to the present day.

Author after author spends much time trying to analyze Cromwell's actions in Ireland. Some uphold him, some condemn him; others offer extenuating circumstances in trying to justify him. Guizot maintains:

Cromwell was not bloodthirsty; but he was determined to succeed rapidly and at any cost, from the necessities of his fortune, far more than for the advancement of his cause; and he denied no outlet to the passions of those who served him. He was an ambitious and selfish, though really great man, who had narrow-minded and hard-hearted fanatics for his instruments.⁴⁶

He holds that Cromwell was a genius in his method of dealing with people. He seemed to know just what was the proper approach in every case. Through Irish monks, as police among his enemies, he was kept informed of their

44 Maurice Ashley, Oliver Cromwell, Jonathan Cape, London, 1937, 169.

45 Tom Ireland, 155.

46 M. Guizot, 106.

actions. The monks, at times, even provoked dissension among the Irish. When Cromwell's attempts at disrupting the Royalist party seemingly failed, he proceeded to dissuade the Irish soldiers from their manifest duty. He told them they were free to go and serve abroad. He succeeded in interesting many in this venture and thus materially weakened the strength of the Irish army. At other times English gold was effectively used to disorganize soldiers and natives.

In condemning him, many invectives have been hurled at him and doubtless exaggerations have crept into the stories. Headly presents this picture:

The simple truth is, his conduct of the Irish war was savage and ferocious--unworthy of a civilized man, much more of a Christian, and will rest a spot on his name to the end of time. In sacking cities, massacres will sometimes occur, when a long and bloody resistance has so exasperated the soldier, that all discipline is lost . . . the inhabitants were slaughtered; but the officers took no part in it--nay, exposed their lines in endeavoring to arrest the violence. But here we have a Puritan commander, who prays before going to battle, sings psalms in the midst of the fight, and writes pastoral letters to parliament, not permitting, but ordering massacres to be committed.⁴⁷

Cromwell believed that he was right, that he was sent as a special agent of the Lord to destroy His foes and establish His church. However, he had received no revelation from God to direct him in his actions.

No wrong will every right a wrong and in this respect Cromwell's mission to Ireland was a distinct failure. Taylor said: "It is interesting to meditate what a very different campaign Cromwell would have conducted in Ireland if he had possessed a little more human kindness, and less of the

47 J. T. Headley, The Life of Oliver Cromwell, James M'Glashan, Dublin, 1849, 216.

divine mercy of God."⁴⁸ I might add, it would be interesting to see the effects of Cromwell's campaign in Ireland if he had been fighting a people, solidly unified, with one aim, one purpose, under the leadership of one man. The Irish could have completely annihilated the English and thus made Ireland a land for the Irish, free from English domination and English colonists. Then Ireland could have truly worked out her own destiny.

48 G. R. Stirling Taylor, 229.

CHAPTER V

THE CROMWELLIAN SETTLEMENT

After the death of Ireton, Fleetwood took command of the army and later became lord deputy. In October of 1652 a High Court of Justice was set up to administer justice to those implicated in the rebellion of 1641. About two hundred were convicted and hanged. The war was over but pestilence and famine were widespread in the country. It was generally understood that Cromwell's soldiers were to be paid in Irish lands. "They were to take the place of those among the native proprietors who by rebellion had forfeited their holdings."¹ Thus with a large military Protestant infiltration, occupying the fertile parts of the land, the Irish problem would be settled now and forever after.

MacManus describes conditions in Ireland in the years immediately following Cromwell's invasion in this wise:

When the wars were ended and 'peace' had been established then was the exhausted remnant of the nation condemned to shoulder its bitter burden--slavery worse than death, and a terrible exile, worse than either--the transplanting of all of the Irish race who were still alive, in Ulster, Leinster and Munster, to the barren bogs of Connacht; so that the smiling fields of the fertile three-quarters of Ireland might be divided among the children of the conqueror. It was the great Cromwellian Settlement.²

The peace he refers to was the Articles of Kilkenny signed by the Earl of West Meath, for the Irish, and the Parliamentary Commissioners, on behalf of

1 James A. Froude, 135.

2 Seumas MacManus, 428.

the English in 1652. Then in August of the same year Parliament passed the famous "Act of Settlement" for Ireland which is generally called the "Cromwellian Settlement." This plan was not exclusively Cromwell's. It was merely "an extension of the Tudor policy of conquest and English settlement, and which had been laid down in 1642 by the Long Parliament after the rebellion."³ Gardiner is of the same opinion. By this act Parliament said the whole of Ireland was forfeited, now that it had been conquered by the English, and Parliament could do as it wished with both the land and the people

The outline of the plan of settlement was this: First, all the ringleaders who had been engaged in the massacre of 1641, were, on conviction, to be put to death, or banished as the court should decree. Second, those not engaged in the massacre, but had borne arms against parliament, were to forfeit two-thirds of their estates, and be banished during the pleasure of Parliament, or receive the value of the remaining third in land in Connaught; while those who, choosing to remain neutral, had refused to take up arms, for the commonwealth, were to forfeit one-third or one-fifth of their estates, and remain in quiet possession of the remainder. These severe enactments, however, affected only the upper classes, while 'all husbandmen, ploughmen, labourers, artificers and others of the mean sort, were to be asked no questions, and to receive no punishment.' The design of parliament, in putting these severe conditions on Ireland, was, no doubt to give the preponderance to the Protestants, who succeeded to the confiscated estates.⁴

In this way

The arrears of pay of the Cromwellian army and the claims of the adventurers under the Act of 1642 were met by the confiscation of nine counties. Ireland had to pay for its own conquest and, says Clarendon, 'was the greatest capital out of which the Cromwellian government paid all debts, rewarded all services, and performed all acts of bounty.'⁵

³ John Buchan, 288.

⁴ J. T. Headley, 220.

⁵ Edmund Curtis, 252.

Thus the people in Ireland, who had anything to lose, were driven from their property. The common people, who would be of value to the incoming English settlers were allowed to remain.

Henceforth there was to be in three of the Irish provinces a class of landed proprietors of English birth and the Protestant religion surrounded by peasants and labourers who were divided from them by racial and religious differences of the most extreme kind. Such an arrangement boded ill for the peace of the country. The immediate result was untold misery to the sufferers and the kindling of hope in English bosoms that at last Ireland would be peopled by a race loyal to the institutions and religion of her conquerors.⁶

Soldiers in the Irish army were permitted to enter the army of any foreign country, friendly to England. About forty thousand, officers and men, took advantage of this offer. One questions the "advantage." Thebaud maintains that "their expatriation was made a necessary condition of their surrender by the new government."⁷ As an example he cites the following:

Lord Clanrickard, according to Matthew O'Connor, 'deserted and surrounded, could obtain no terms for the nation, nor indeed for himself and his troops, except with the sad liberty of transportation to any other country in amity with the Commonwealth.'⁸

The few young men remaining, along with young women and children were shipped into slavery to Jamaica, the Tobacco Islands and other parts of the West Indies.

The work of settlement was far worse than actual warfare itself. "It took as its model the Plantation of Ulster, the fatal measure which had des-

6 S. R. Gardiner, Oliver Cromwell, 256-57.

7 Rev. Augustus J. Thebaud, Ireland Past and Present, Peter Fenelon Collier & Son, New York, 1878, 275.

8 Ibid., 275.

troyed all hope of a united Ireland, and had brought inevitably in its train the revolt and the war."⁹ English of the Pale were included as well as Protestant Royalists who had not espoused the Parliamentary cause. The process of transplantation was begun in August of 1652 and was to be completed by May 1, 1654. Protestants and Catholics suffered together much of the time although treatment of the Catholics was generally more harsh. According to Joyce:

This vast exodus of the native population went on from 1652 to 1654. But it was found impossible to clear the gentry completely out of the land. Many settled in wild places; many were taken as under-tenants on their own lands, and in course of time many inter-married with the new settlers. The laws against the Catholic religion and against Catholic priests were now put in force with unsparing severity. But the priests remained among their flocks, hiding in wild places and under various disguises, and the Catholic religion was practiced as earnestly and as generally as ever.¹⁰

If any of those to be banished were found in restricted areas after May 1, 1654 they were to be treated as outlaws, subject to the whims of their captors. In this settlement, the people who suffered most were usually the well-to-do, accustomed to certain comforts and luxuries. They were subjected to untold miseries on their journey to the wastelands of Connaught. They suffered the fate of war prisoners which was banishment. Clark holds that this practice was common in that era and continued to be so into the eighteenth century. Moreover Cromwell did not instigate the idea. Parliament was responsible for that custom.

9 John Richard Green, A Short History of the Irish People, American Book Co., New York, 1888, 589.

10 Patrick W. Joyce, 127-28.

"The amount of land confiscated and planted is reckoned by Petty as 11,000,000 (English) acres out of the whole 20,000,000 acres of Ireland, nearly 8,000,000 of these being profitable."¹¹ The Cromwellian settlement as a means of colonization failed. Many of the soldiers sold their holdings in Irish lands to officers and speculators, taking what they could get, and then went back to England. However enough of the regular army remained and together with their families, established a new and potent force in the English and Protestant population of Ireland. They formed a new landlord class as many of them had taken over Irish estates. "The Catholic landowners were reduced to a minority, and the new English element in the towns never again lost their dominance in the civic and industrial life of the country."¹²

The Cromwellian settlement was the most thorough act in the history of the conquest of Ireland. It was "by far the most wholesale effort to impose on Ireland the Protestant faith and English ascendancy."¹³ It did more to bind the Irish to the Catholic Church and to alienate the Irish from the English rule than any other one thing. "On the Irish race it has left undying memories and a legend of tyranny which is summed up in the peasants saying of the Curse of Cromwell."¹⁴ Though the English trampled on Irish land, law, habits, religion, institutions and national sentiment the ultimate effect was a more united Ireland. Priests, though completely outlawed, continued to minister to their flocks, at the risk of their lives. The Irish poor re-

11 Edmund Curtis, 253.

12 Ibid., 254.

13 Sir Richard Tangye, 168.

14 Frederic Harrison, 147.

mained Irish even under the influence of Protestantism. The Irish in Connaught became more national in their views. Through intermarriage many an English soldier became a devout Catholic and an ardent Irishman because of his Irish wife.

In regard to the settlement Morley says:

What is called his settlement aggravated Irish misery to a degree that cannot be measured, and before the end of a single generation events at Limerick and the Boyne showed how hollow and ineffectual, as well as how mischievous, the Cromwellian settlement had been. Strafford too had aimed at the incorporation of Ireland with England, at plantation by English colonists, and at religious uniformity within a united realm. But Strafford had a grasp of the complications of social conditions in Ireland to which Cromwell could not pretend. . . A Puritan armed with a musket and the Old Testament, attempting to reconstruct the foundations of a community, mainly Catholic, was sure to end in clumsy failure.¹⁵

That Cromwell did have some idea of conditions in Ireland may be gleaned from a speech he made in December of 1649. In this speech he admitted that the Irish were oppressed and subjected to injustices by their landlords. He went on to say, "if justice were freely and impartially administered here, the foregoing darkness and corruption would make it look so much the more glorious and beautiful, and draw more hearts after it."¹⁶ This was Cromwell's only glimpse of the pivotal secret of the Irish problem and nothing came of it.

In some ways, we learn, the Cromwellian Act of Settlement was a boon to Ireland. Buchan avers that justice was more ably administered;

15 John Morley, 272.

16 Ibid., 272.

an attempt was made to educate the people; public libraries were started and Trinity College was endowed with land of the old Dublin archbishopric. James Froude states his viewpoint:

The vice of Ireland was idleness; therefore, by all means he stimulated industry. He abolished license, which the Irish miscalled liberty. He gave them instead the true liberty of law and wise direction; and he refused to sacrifice to English selfishness any single real benefit which it was in his power to confer.¹⁷

Gardiner maintains that Cromwell's plan was to punish the people who were responsible for the trouble, namely priests, chiefs and nobles. This was part of the settlement. Step by step this carries on his idea of how Ireland should be restored to the peaceful days prior to 1641.

For a time this policy of Cromwell's was successful. The entire native population was crushed and helpless and the country was protected against an invasion by Catholic powers. However, the will to live, to outwit their English neighbors and to restore their religion had a rejuvenating effect on the Irish. They gradually began to emerge from the hidden places, to worship more freely and to placate or endure their English neighbors. Though they suffered bitterly they never really lost hope. They were determined to make Ireland truly Irish and if the English had to be there then the English would have to be assimilated by them. As for Cromwell, to this day he remains one of the most despicable characters who ever set foot in Ireland. No one in all the history of Ireland has ever been so universally despised and detested as the Puritan who came to Ireland to avenge the massacre of 1641 and restore Protestantism throughout the land.

17 James A. Froude, 153.

CONCLUSION

The underlying causes of the difficulty in Ireland, resulting in Cromwell's invasion, may be traced to land spoliation and governmental mismanagement. Strafford, an able ruler, did much for Ireland but because of his stern rule, was bitterly hated. Yet he was replaced by Puritan leaders whom the Irish not only "detested but openly feared. The Irish placed their faith in a weak, vacillating king whose only regard for them was as a means to further an end. He used them to satisfy his own selfish purposes. When it was expedient to have their support he was their champion. Otherwise they were but as a pawn in the game he played. Seizure of their lands and the infiltration of English and Scotch colonists added fuel to the flame.

There is another side to the picture. What did the Irish do about it? Were they a united people, sending representatives to the king and Parliament for a redress of grievances? We know how utterly they failed to achieve any spirit of unity. They were so divided among themselves that only a miracle could have aided them in their efforts to expel the English. The clergy, with their preponderating weight of influence, would have been a powerful force in the struggle. Instead they aligned Irishman against Irishman, made the class division distinct and impassable, and used the whip of interdicts and excommunication to keep their followers in line.

Years of rebellion followed until the English found time to send an army to suppress Ireland. Cromwell was in command. He, who hated the very name

of Catholicism, who had completely rejected a monarchical form of government, came to Ireland to restore Protestantism and the English ascendancy. He was filled with fanatical zeal and revenge. His treatment of the Irish can never be excused. His army was greatly outnumbered, he was fighting on unfamiliar terrain and his supplies had to be shipped in. In spite of these obstacles he won. He never once met the Irish army in the field. Through treachery, bribery, stubbornness, ill will and primarily, lack of unity, the Irish went down to defeat.

Cromwell's methods, in suppressing the Irish, were cruel and violent. He sought to undermine their opposition by swift, horrible measures. He succeeded in making their resistance more stubborn; yet despite their feeling toward him they could not bury their individual differences and drive him from their land. There was the golden opportunity and they heeded it not. The fate of the Irish people lay in their own hands. Prior to Cromwell's landing practically all of Ireland was under Irish control. Why didn't they maintain this status? May I say once more, it was lack of unity, lack of a nationalistic feeling, disregard of their friends and neighbors, inability to submit themselves to authority. They have never learned that a united nation cannot fall.

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APPROVAL SHEET

The thesis submitted by Margaret E. McVey has been read and approved by three members of the Department of History.

The final copies have been examined by the director of the thesis and the signature which appears below verifies the fact that any necessary changes have been incorporated, and that the thesis is now given final approval with reference to content, form, and mechanical accuracy.

The thesis is therefore accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts.

May 28, 1946
Date

Joseph Roubik Jr.
Signature of Adviser