

How The Irish Came To Go Abroad

Elliott O'Donnell

1915

From The Departure of The Early Missionaries To The End of The Third Great Emigration

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Although many Irishmen had left their native shores before the seventeenth century, up to that time there had been no emigration in the usual sense of the word.

When not merely for the sake of travel, it was either for the purpose of acquiring knowledge, of spreading their religion and art, of redressing their own wrongs, or of assisting others to redress theirs, that the Irish had hitherto sought a foreign country, and, in a few cases, though with no idea at first of making it their home, had eventually settled in it.

Of these excursions abroad, one of the earliest on record is that of Naoighiallach, better known as Niall of the Nine Hostages, who led a punitive expedition into Britain. Naoighiallach, or Niall of the Nine Hostages, was the ancestor of the O'Neills (O'Niall converted into O'Naill, and then into O'Neill), O'Donnell's (O'Dohmniall—O'Dohmnaill—O'Donnell), O'Connell's (O'Conniall—O'Connaill—O'Connell), and various other clans. He reigned over all Ireland from A.D. 379 to A.D. 405, and was probably the first Irishman of note to visit England.

Following his example, Irishmen of lesser fame led similar expeditions, but no one of any note appears to have visited England again till about A.D. 520, when Finen, or St. Finnian, a native of Leinster, travelled in Britain, and perceiving the ignorance and heathenism of the Anglo-Saxons, planned their conversion ; afterwards returning to Ireland, and founding at Clonard the renowned School with which his name has ever since been associated. Among his pupils was Columcille, or St. Columba, a descendant of Niall of the Nine Hostages, and a member of the Cinel-Connail, or Clan Connail—which gave its name to the O'Dohmnaills (O'Donnells)—who, anxious to carry on the work begun by St. Finnian, after having established his head monastery on the Island of Iona, visited the Northern provinces of England to select sites for the founding of branch houses.

Another Irishman we hear of in England was St. Adamnan, Columba's biographer, (also of the Cinel-Connail), a native of Donegal, and sixth Bishop of Iona, who, about A.D. 685, journeyed from Iona to York to intercede with Alfred, King of the Northern Saxons, for the release of a number of Irish prisoners.

Following close upon St. Columba, St. Aidan of Galway, at the invitation of Oswald, King of Northumberland, went over to help in the conversion of his subjects to Christianity, and afterwards founded the monastery of Lindisfarne. He was the first in the line of bishops that take their title from Durham, and greatly to the disgust of his biographer, the Venerable Bede, he sided with the Irish Church in the differences regarding the celebration of Easter. St. Aidan died in A.D. 651 and was succeeded by another Irishman, St. Finan of Tipperary, who, through his untiring efforts to convert the Northumbrians, won the friendship of King Oswiu, and the esteem of Bede. St. Finan spent the greater part of his life in England and died about A.D. 661.

Almost contemporary with St. Finan were two other famous Irish missionaries, St. Fursa, or Fursey, and St. Finbarr, or Bairre. St. Fursa, the son of Fintan, a Prince of Munster, was born about A.D. 590, near Lough Corrib. After studying to be a priest under St. Meldan at Inchiquin, he erected a monastery at Rathmat, and then crossed over into England and began his work of conversion among the heathen of East Anglia. After six years' toil, during which time he won over many hundreds of the rude and savage Anglo-Saxons to Christianity, he went over to France, where he established a world-wide reputation for his piety and learning. "The reputation of St. Fursey," says a calendar of Scottish Saints, "extends far beyond the limits of the Anglo-Saxon Church." Not only is he the most distinguished of those missionaries who left Erin to spread the Gospel through the heathen, or semi-heathenized races of mediaeval Europe, bridging the gap between the old and new civilizations, but his position in view of dogma is a most important one. He has profoundly affected the eschatology of Christianity.

Though less celebrated than St. Fursa, St. Finbarr of Connaught did much to advance the cause of Christianity in England by materially aiding in the conversion of Mercia, and by improving and developing the Monastery of Glastonbury.

There is little doubt, too, St. Cuthbert was Irish, and, according to Dr. Healy, Coadjutor Bishop of Clonfert, there is a manuscript in the library of the Dean and Canons of York that substantiates that belief.

St. Gall, the founder of the monastery of Arbon, which eventually became so celebrated that the name of St. Gall was given to the surrounding country—now the province of St. Gall ; St. Albin, made Abbot of the monastery of St. Augustine at Pavia by Charlemagne ; St. Foelan, St. Boniface, St. Killian were also Irishmen ; and at the present day 155 Irish Saints are still venerated in Germany, 46 in France, 32 in Belgium, 13 in Italy, and 8 in Denmark, Norway and Sweden. It is, of course, impossible to enumerate all the Irish pioneers of civilization and religion, their name is legion—only let it be understood that long, long before the inhabitants of what is now England had ceased to be savages, Ireland had attained a far-famed reputation as a centre of art and learning. One of the oldest transcriptions of Horace in existence, now in the Library of Berne, is written in Celtic characters, with notes and commentaries in the Irish language ; and so proficient did the Irish monks become in their knowledge of Latin and Greek, that they were eagerly sought after as teachers by students of every nationality.

But this was not all. Most of these monks loved Art, and many were great artists. In Denmark, France and Spain, there are yet to be seen evidences of their wonderful skill in architecture and the working of metals. It is only in England—in the country that owes everything to Ireland, her raising from the quagmire of paganism and barbarity, and the very foundations of her civilization—that all traces of her early skill in art have been ignored, and all recognition of her ancient supremacy in learning jealously suppressed.

The era of Irish missionaries over, we next hear of the Irish abroad in the dispatch of a fleet of sixty ships from Dublin to help Edwin and Morcar against the Normans. The fleet sailed up the Bristol Channel and, entering the estuary of the Avon, successfully navigated the narrow, winding gorge, and anchored just outside the city, in what is now known as Cumberland Basin. But the Normans drove them off, and, on their sailing away, the Irish, making one more attempt to land on the banks of the distant Tamar, were again repelled, this time finally.

A long period now ensues, during which many desultory visits were paid to France and other countries on the Continent, but none of much moment till that of the brutal, dissolute Diarmaid (Dermot) Macmurrough, King of Leinster, who, through his unholy love for the beautiful Devorgilla, wife of Tiernan O'Rorke (O'Ruark), brought about the ruin and disintegration of Ireland. As Mr. Justin McCarthy remarks, "Helen was not more fatal to the Greeks and Easterns than Devorgilla, Erin's Helen, proved to the neighbouring islands that lie along the Irish Sea. Through ages of bloodshed and slaughter her country has indeed bled for her shame."

The story of the quarrel between the Macmurroughs and O'Rorke is too well known to be repeated here. The fate of Ireland, had this quarrel never happened, would, doubtless, have been the same in the end. The inroad of the English would have been postponed, perhaps for one, perhaps for two centuries, but one day they would have come over and taken everything, just as they came and took everything in Canada, India, Africa and Australia. Destiny makes empire builders of most nations. It was England's turn then. God knows, but the turn of the Celt may come, too, some day.

Ireland, although no longer a kingdom—for in 1180 Roderick O'Connor, the last King of Ireland, was obliged to visit London, to pay homage to Henry II in order to retain the solitary province of Connaught—still continued to send out small detachments of her native populace.

At the beginning of the thirteenth century, Ireland having ceased to be the chief home of learning, a large number of young Irishmen, no longer conscious of superior advantages at home, went to Oxford to be educated; whilst others sought instruction from the venerable monks of Hereford, Bath and Bristol.

In 1243 a contingent of Irish soldiers, amongst whom were Felim O'Connor, Chief of Connaught, a descendant of Roderick, and the two Irishized Normans, Maurice Fitzgerald and Richard Mac William Bourke, went from Ireland to aid the English in their war with the Welsh; and, a little later, the wars with Scotland, the Wars of the Roses, and the Rebellions of Perkin Warbeck and Lambert Simnel, saw the departure of even bigger contingents.

It was not, perhaps, until Henry VII's reign, when Gerald Fitzgerald, "The Great Earl of Kildare," who had been the chief supporter of the Yorkists in Ireland, came to London to answer a long category of complaints brought against him by the Archbishop of Armagh, that any great Irishman again visited England. The decision of the Court was in the Earl's favour and he returned to Ireland jubilant. Two years later he was recalled to England to answer various charges brought against him by his hereditary enemy Ormonde, and this time he was committed to the Tower. When brought to trial before Henry VII, his native wit and frankness served him. Asked by Henry whether he was provided with a counsel to defend him, he replied, "Yea, the ablest in the realm; your Highness I take for my counsel against these false knaves." This pleased the King so much that he listened to the accusations brought against Kildare with a distinct leaning in favour of the Earl, and when Kildare, in response to the demand of the Archbishop of Cashel's counsel as to why he had burned down the Archbishop's Cathedral, replied, "Sure, I would not have done it if I had not been told that the Archbishop was inside," the King leaned back in his chair and laughed long and loud. The Court were astonished, not to say dismayed, at this levity, and one of the prosecuting party pleaded with the King. "Your Highness," he said, "is probably not aware that all Ireland cannot keep this Earl of Kildare in order." "Is that so?" said Henry, still laughing, "then let this Earl keep all Ireland in order. It is my will." And Kildare went back to Ireland in triumph. The next appearance of a Kildare in London was that of Gerald Fitzgerald, son of the great Earl, who was de-

tained at the Court of Henry VII as a hostage for his father's fidelity ; but he appears to have been treated extra-ordinarily well, and, marrying the young and beautiful Elizabeth Zouche, he was permitted to return to his own country, where many high posts and honours were bestowed upon him by the new king, Henry VIII. On his next visit to London, occasioned through the charges brought against him by Ormonde, he incurred the bitter enmity of Wolsey, and was sent to the Tower, only escaping execution through the friendly intervention of the Constable. Pardoned by the King, he returned to Ireland, but was again summoned to London some years later to answer fresh accusations again brought by Ormonde. This time fate was not so kind to him ; no pardon was forthcoming, and he died of a broken heart in the Tower. Interred in St. Peter's Church in the Tower, he was the first Irishman of distinction to be buried in London.

The next Irishman of note to come to London was also a Fitzgerald, named Thomas, son of Gerald Fitzgerald, and commonly known as " Silken Thomas." He, too, was thrown in the Tower through the machinations of Ormonde, and he had not been there long before his five uncles. Sir Oliver, Sir John, Sir James, Sir Walter and Sir Richard, were treacherously captured and lodged with him. On 3rd February, 1537, after many cruel tortures, all six were executed like common criminals at Tyburn.

Irish traders were now coming in increasing numbers to London, Liverpool, and Bristol, but no one of any particular account landed in England till Con Bacagh O'Neill, inaugurated The O'Neill on the death of his brother, obeying Henry VIII's summons, presented himself at the English Court on the 24th of September, 1542. Being given to understand in that jocular, yet sinisterly significant manner that was so characteristic of Henry VIII, that unless he renounced the name of O'Neill, adopted the English dress and language, was wholly obedient to the King's laws, assisted the Deputy in his hustings and refused to succour any of the enemies of the King and his minister, his stay in London might be exceedingly uncomfortable and protracted, he submitted. What else could he do ? He was sent back to Ireland, under escort, with a few cheap and paltry presents.

With Edward VI on the throne, vigorous religious persecutions at once began within the English pale, and, as a result, many hundreds of Roman Catholics fled from Ireland. The majority of these took refuge in France and Scotland, but a good sprinkling landed in Wales and Cornwall, and not a few found their way to London.

This migration, however, was only temporary, for on Mary's accession the fierce Protestant regime in Dublin ended, and money was generously sent to the refugees to enable them to return.

The Irishman of most note in London during this reign was O'Connor of Offaly, who had been imprisoned on account of his religious views by Edward, but whom Mary released, treated sumptuously, and sent back to Ireland laden with costly gifts.

With Elizabeth's succession to the throne, the real era of gloom and suppression in Ireland began. And yet it was not owing to any racial or religious prejudice on the part of the Queen. Elizabeth, as many authenticated anecdotes prove, had a great admiration for the handsome Irish, and would doubtless have done much for them, had not Cecil persuaded her to send certain ministers as Deputies to Ireland. These men, actuated partly by jealousy and bigotry, and partly by greed, for Ulster offered a remarkably fair field for spoliation, so continually and subtly blackened the Irish in Elizabeth's eyes that they eventually succeeded in entirely poisoning her mind against them, and, instead of continuing their friend, she ultimately became their arch enemy and oppressor.

Before that state of affairs was reached, several of the more eminent of the Irish chieftains visited England. The first to come was the cruel and treacherous Shane O'Neill, who at that time had his kinsman, Calvagh O'Donnell, a prisoner in chains in a dungeon, whilst he was making violent love to his wife, the sister of Mac-Donnell, Earl of Argyle. Shane O'Neill was the terror of Ireland, trusted neither by friend nor foe, and, after the Lord Deputy had made several fruitless attempts to have him put out of the way by secret assassination, Elizabeth expressed a desire to see him. Accordingly, he came to London, and this is Mr. Froude's account of his reception. "The Council, the peers, the foreign ambassadors, bishops, aldermen, dignitaries of all kinds were present in state, as if at the exhibition of some wild animal of the desert. O'Neill stalked in, his saffron mantle sweeping round and round him, his hair curling on his back and clipped short below the eyes, which gleamed from under it with a grey lustre, frowning, fierce and cruel. Behind him followed his gallo-glasses, bare-headed and fair-haired, with shirts of mail which reached beneath their knees, a wolf-skin flung across their shoulders, and short, broad battle-axes in their hands."

O'Neill and his retinue were, in all probability, rather more prepossessing than this picture presents them—Mr. Froude's value as an historian being considerably modified by his manifest partiality—but there is most probably some truth in the description of their dress and of the crude curiosity and ignorance of the crowd assembled to see them.

That O'Neill must have possessed great attractions for the other sex is evinced by the fact—too well authenticated ever to have been questioned—that Elizabeth was so taken with him, that she invited him to Windsor as her guest, flirted openly with him, told him, half in play and half in earnest, that he was never to select a wife without consulting her first, as she knew better than anyone else who would suit him, loaded him with presents, and very reluctantly allowed him to leave her, proclaiming that he was to be treated on his return to Ireland as one of her most loyal and trusted allies and subjects.

The next Irishman of distinction to visit London was the man Shane O'Neill had so cruelly wronged—Calvagh O'Donnell, Lord of Tirconnell. His entry into the Royal presence differed essentially from that of his rival, Shane. He came alone, travel-stained and weary, and, kneeling at the Queen's feet, went into ecstasies over the beauty and symmetry of the white-bejewelled hands that were held out to him to kiss. Elizabeth dealt gently with him; all the woman within her rose uppermost when she listened to the story of his wrongs, and noted the confirmation of it in his face and eyes. Nor did his appearance—for he was tall and straight, with strong and rather curiously emphasized features, hair slightly tinged with red, and a general expression of great frankness and sincerity of purpose—fail to leave its mark on her impressionable heart. He, too, came as a guest to Windsor, and when he went back to Tirconnell, it was as "her man," and with a Patent Royal, [1] bearing her signature, creating him Earl of Wexford.

So charmed was Elizabeth at this time with the Irish that, directly after Calvagh's departure, she invited "The O'Rourke." Walker, in his *Irish Bards*, gives a long account of O'Rourke's visit to London, the substance of which (reproduced from the Editorial Notes to Lady Morgan's *O'Donnel*) is as follows —

"O'Rourke, the chief of Brefni, a brave and powerful person, was invited by Queen Elizabeth to London, though under the displeasure of the Lord President Bingham. The Queen made him warm professions of honours and service, intending by this invitation to lead him into a kind of exile, in order to secure his obedience. O'Rourke confided and obeyed her summons; but before his departure he assembled his vassals and friends in the great hall of

his castle, and entertained them with all the splendour of the times. (Such was the parting feast which gave rise to the song of the bard in after-days.) On the arrival of the Irish chief in Whitehall, the Queen was ready to receive him. The elegant symmetry of his person, and his noble aspect, struck Her Majesty and he was soon ranked among her choicest favourites.” The authenticity of Walker’s sequel has been disputed, but, as the action he attributes to Elizabeth is consistent with her character, one may be pardoned the assumption that there is in it at least an element of truth. He says, “ One night a person tapped at O’Rourke’s door and was admitted—it was a woman. The visit continued to be repeated, the lady always retiring before daybreak. The Chief’s curiosity became urgent ; he pressed the mysterious lady to reveal herself, but she refused ; a straggling moonbeam, however, discovered to him a ring that glittered on her finger ; he examined it unobserved by the wearer. The next day he saw it upon the Queen’s finger at Court, and had the impudence to hint his suspicion to Her Majesty. His fatal curiosity (adds the tradition) was punished with secret death—he was assassinated that night.”

According to other chroniclers, however, who admit the Queen’s fascination for O’Rourke, the Irish Chieftain was accused of having received some shipwrecked Spaniards under his roof—an accusation that was as unfounded as its source was mysterious—and publicly executed. Whether he was poisoned or beheaded, O’Rourke’s son, who was in London at the time, determining to avenge his father’s death and the spoliation of his own property by the English Lord President, hastened back to Ireland and joined the flag of Red Hugh O’Donnell.

Red Hugh came over to England several times, but his visits were neither so frequent, nor so protracted, as those of his illustrious kinsman, Hugh O’Neill, Earl of Tyrone.

The greatest efforts were made to make an Englishman of Hugh O’Neill. When in his teens he was brought to the English Court by Sidney, and introduced to the Queen, who not only gave him a command in her special bodyguard, but granted him a pension and also provided him with a whole bevy of tutors. At length, so English did he become, that, in 1580, he co-operated with Essex in the massacre of his countrymen at Smerwick, and in the partitioning and settling up of Antrim.

The disaffection of O’Neill, and his subsequent union with Red Hugh O’Donnell against the English, led up to the culminating scene in the great war of 1595-1602, when, defeated by Mountjoy in the desperately fought battle of Kinsale, the two chieftains rallied their broken forces on the banks of the dark and swollen Bandon and agreed to part—O’Donnell to go to Spain to entreat aid from the King, and O’Neill to remain in Ireland and continue harassing the English. The departure of Red Hugh on the 6th of January, 1602, which gave rise to Moore’s famous song of the Union of the Olive and the Shamrock, marked the beginning of a national exodus, which, in a varying degree, has gone on, from that day to this, and has never ceased.

In 1603, the war in Ireland over, Hugh O’Neill, forgetful of his promise to Red Hugh O’Donnell, to go on struggling to the bitter end, made a formal submission on his knees to the Lord Deputy and members of his Council at Mellifort, near Drogheda, was pardoned, and came to London as a guest of the King. His reception, though nothing like so cordial as it had been on former occasions, was too friendly to meet the approval of many of the English. “ I have lived,” wrote Sir John Harrington, one of the august veterans who had fought for the Deputy in Ireland, “ to see that damnable rebel, Tyrone, brought to England, honoured and well liked. O what is there that does not prove the inconstancy of worldly matters ? How I did labour for all that knave’s destruction ! I adventured perils by sea and land, was near

starving, ate horse flesh in Munster, and all to quell that man, who now smileth in peace at those who did harass their lives to destroy him ; and now doth Tyrone dare us, old Commanders, with his presence and protection.”

Beyond the circle of smiling ladies, and a few courtiers broad-minded and chivalrous enough to extend welcome to any knight, so long as he was brave and gallant, O'Neill encountered nothing but sullen scowls ; the black and angry looks of officials and adventurers, who had looked forward to the forfeiture of his lands ; of soldiers longing to avenge old scores ; and of bigoted religionists, hating him on account of his Catholic faith. It was a trying situation, and it required all O'Neill's tact and courage to live through it. His stay in London, however, was not for long. Lawsuits with O'Cahan, the Bishop of Derry, and others of his enemies called him back to Ireland, and his next journey, namely, to Rome, was his last.

In these two migrations—that of Red Hugh O'Donnell and Hugh O'Neill—there sailed from Ireland in all about 120 souls, few of whom ever again visited their native land.

The next two Irishmen of distinction to visit England after Hugh O'Neill were Rory O'Donnell, Red Hugh's brother, and Sir Niall Garv (Garbh) O'Donnell, grandson of Calvagh O'Donnell, Earl of Wexford, and the ally of the English in the war of 1598-1602. These two came to London as rival claimants of the Earldom of Tirconnell, a title that became vacant on the death of Red Hugh. Charges of treachery to his allies, the English, being brought against Sir Niall Garv, and confirmed, the Earldom was awarded to Rory, who certainly had the better right to it. Both returned to Ireland, but were destined to leave it soon after for good. Tirconnell accompanied Hugh O'Neill to Rome, and Sir Niall Garv O'Donnell, becoming involved in his kinsman, Sir Cahir O'Dogherty's, rebellion, was arrested for high treason, brought in chains to London, and, together with his son, Nachtan, lodged in the Tower. He died, some say by the hand of the assassin, in 1626, and was the first real Celtic-Irishman—the first of the O's and Mac's—of any note to be buried within the precincts of the Tower. Of the fate of Nachtan nothing is known for certain ; some affirm that he escaped, found his way to France in a coasting vessel, joined the army of Louis XIII, and was killed in a duel ; others, that he died in captivity from lack of proper nourishment and fresh air. Sir Niall left two other sons, Manus and Hugh Boy, whose descendants are still living. Of Sir Niall Garv O'Donnell's character many adverse things have been written, but of his skill and courage never has there been any question. The O'Sullivan Beare, in referring to him, called him “ a man of great and daring spirit, endowed with a knowledge of military affairs”— a description that is amply corroborated by many other chroniclers.

The four great Irishmen, Hugh O'Neill, Red Hugh O'Donnell, his brother Rory, and his cousin Sir Niall Garv out of the way, the English, having no one else to fear, at once commenced their work of robbery, expulsion and extermination. Nor can the annals of any country in Europe show a blacker record. There were already a large number of English settlers—chiefly traders—in Munster, Leinster and Connaught ; but few had hitherto crossed into Ulster, and it was Ulster upon which the crafty King of England and his rapacious myrmidons had long had their eye. The reason of this is not far to seek. The larger portion of Ulster, consisting of the Counties of Donegal, Derry, Tyrone, Cavan, Armagh and Fermanagh, belonged to the exiled Earls of Tyrone and Tirconnell, admittedly the richest of the Irish chieftains, and they not only had in their immediate possession—in their castles and abbeys, which Mr. Froude, in his racial antipathy to the Irish, would have one believe were quite humbly poor and bare—gold and silver plate and ornaments, some of home manufacture and some from Spain and Italy ; jewels, mostly from Spain, Italy and the Far East ; pictures, from Italy ; books and parchments of Celtic origin, or from various parts of Europe ; carpets,

tapestry, silk and satin goods, from Spain and Portugal and the Far East, whither Irish mariners are known to have wandered and traded at a period when England could only boast of coracles ; and many other treasures—but were the representatives of clans that owned many hundreds of acres of rich pasture land, interspersed with highly prosperous and contented towns and villages. In addition, Ulster possessed the best harbours and the best climate in Ireland, but had it not been only too obvious that without their leaders the Irish of Ulster were paralysed and helpless, the hordes of London and Scottish shopkeepers and usurers, who swarmed across the Channel at the bidding of James, would never have dared to put a foot within the province. The alleged treason of the O'Neill and the O'Donnell was the excuse offered for the now wholesale robbery. A commission of omnivorous Londoners, under the protection of an army of steel-clad soldiers, sat at Limavaddy, and with Bible and Prayer-book—the customary and, assuredly, the only trade-mark of their respectability—on the table by their side, drew up a list of all the Ulstermen who owned anything that was worth taking. When this list was complete, the Scottish and English mercenaries were called in, and to the representatives of twelve City of London Companies, in which were included the Drapers, Skinners, Salters, Mercers, Ironmongers and Fishmongers—men who had no sense of art, of poetry, of literature, of pity, of honour, of anything save of making and hoarding up money—were sold great tracts of Derry, the Derry of the O'Neills. In a few cases, the owners of property having influential English friends, it was feared that complications might arise, and a more subtle method was employed. Spies, chiefly London Jews, were set to work, and, for finding out and inventing flaws in the title deeds, they were well remunerated. All property thus denounced was, of course, confiscated and appropriated by King James. But the newcomers—the ancestors of the present generation of Ulster Orange-men—could not enter into their new possessions till the rightful occupants had left, and, as it was deemed likely that many of these occupants would show fight, the ejectors called for the assistance of an armed force. The summoners had not far to go for it. All that was necessary in that way had been provided by the thoughtful King of England and his Parliament.

Most English historians have preferred to pass over what followed, and one can readily understand the reasons that have prompted them ; but an omission of this kind can scarcely be regarded as “ playing the game,” especially when one notes how readily the same historians have narrated in full detail shameful scenes in the chronicles of other countries.

The worst horrors of the Spanish War with the Dutch, of the Russian subjugation of Poland, of the Massacre of St. Bartholomew's Day, and of the French Revolution are as nought compared with the English treatment of the Clans of O'Neill and O'Donnell during the war of 1598-1602, and afterwards, during the Anglo-Scotch colonisation of Ulster.

Before the Commission of Attorneys and Usurers had terminated their sitting at Limavaddy, the inhabitants of the villages round Derry and Donegal were awakened one morning by the jingling of spurs and stirrups and the chinking of sword scabbards. There was nothing unusual in these sounds. During the war they had heard them often enough, but now peace was supposed to have been declared, and their chiefs were far away on the waters, they marvelled, not a little, at the advent of soldiers. They were not left long in doubt as to the nature of the mission. Dismounting from their horses, the troopers drew their swords, and at a word from their commanding officers rushed into the cabins. The Irish are born fighters, and times without number have struggled against odds that few other nations would have attempted to face ; and even on this occasion, when naked, starving and unarmed, they did their best. However, what chance had bare limbs and empty hands against swords, pikes, guns and armour ? The old men were knocked down, shot and hacked to pieces ; the young men, stunned and bound, to be afterwards marched off, linked and chained together, across the moors and hills to Dublin ; the weak—to fall down and die of sheer exhaustion, the strong—

to be shipped off to Germany, where they were drafted into the army of Gustavus Adolphus, who used them for beasts of burden, and made them occupy the most hazardous positions in battle.

Such was the fate of the male members of the Clans of O'Neill and O'Donnell ; that of the women was even worse. Those who were young and comely were violated and murdered, or taken away to be the slaves and mistresses of any who cared to buy them from their captors ; those who were old or ill-favoured either were killed, or, after being stripped and beaten, were driven away with the greater number of the children into the woods and morasses. Most of the infants in arms were tossed high in the air and caught laughingly on pikes, or brained with the heels of boots, or on boulders. In this manner some 20,000 Irish were got rid of, and the eviction question in Derry and Donegal was permanently settled.

The newcomers, that is to say, the Lowland Scotch (not one Highlander was present) and the Anglo-Saxon shopkeepers, speedily took possession of the vacated premises, and the so-called colonisation of Ulster was begun. Can anyone wonder that the Irish have at times tried to retaliate, or that Orangemen have never been particularly popular with their neighbours ? If Rome was built on smouldering ashes, upon what were Belfast and Londonderry built ? Not a whit less cruel than Nero were James the First and his paid parasite Mountjoy.

This first big exodus over, emigrations in small numbers, forced on by the policy of James and his successor, Charles I, both of whom had their eyes fixed hungrily on Ireland, began to take place. What had happened to the owners of property in Derry and Donegal was now happening in Connaught. A whole army of pettifogging attorneys from London made out cases against the men of Connaught, some of whom were told that the titles to the land they had held for hundreds of years were invalid ; whilst others were accused of treason. No matter how monstrous and how empty the charges levelled against them, the result was always the same—they were deprived of all they had, and threatened with instant torture and imprisonment unless they left Ireland immediately. The Commission Court which was held in Dublin had 300 Irish landowners, all of whom were Roman Catholics, imprisoned on false charges, robbed of everything they possessed, and subjected to the torments of the boot, the water-rack, and the thumb-screw. Those evicted ones who were fortunate enough to escape capture fled to the nearest seaport towns, whence they embarked for France, Spain and America.

Emigrations of this nature went on till 1641, when the curtain rose on the second great tragedy of the century.

Since the object of this volume is to portray the Irish out of Ireland and not at home, only just sufficient reference must be made to this drama to make it clear that one of the immediate outcomes of it was another emigration on a big scale.

The cause of the tragedy was the arbitrary and aggressive conduct of the Anglo-Scottish settlers in Ulster towards the residue of natives. No sooner were these settlers established, securely ensconced in their homes, than they began to abuse and ill-treat the Irish whom they had robbed. Should an Irishman be seen in Derry or any of the other Anglo-Scotch towns, he at once became the object of anger and insult. Children threw stones at him, dogs were set on him, women called him a “ dirty Papist,” and “ starving scamp” ; and by the men he was not infrequently kicked to death, since to kick an Irishman was considered no crime, and, therefore, entailed no punishment. A worse fate befel the Irish women. The Anglo-Scottish settlers, taught by their religion that Irish Catholics were scarcely human, that they could claim none of the rights of ordinary civilians, and that it was in no way sinful to do anything to them, allowed themselves to be wholly carried away by their vices. No Irishman's wife or daughter

was safe ; and, when any attempt on the part of the enraged and broken-hearted husband or parent was made to punish the miscreant, the aid of other ruffians was at once summoned and wholesale murders took place. Within 50 miles of Derry and the site of the present town of Belfast, there was not a hamlet, nor a wood, nor a hillside that had not witnessed a tragedy of this kind, and echoed and re-echoed with the groans of slaughtered clansmen and the screams of violated women. This kind of thing went on, until, at last, goaded into desperation by the terrible injustices and cruelties inflicted on them, the natives of Ulster called upon Sir Phelim O'Neill to help them.

Sir Phelim, fourth in descent from a younger brother of Con Bacagh O'Neill, the nearest of kin to the Earl of Tyrone (who had died in 1610), and still owner of considerable estates in Tyrone and Armagh, which he had been allowed to retain through the allegiance of his grandfather. Sir Henry, to the English cause, was the most prominent Celtic-Irishman in Ireland at that time, and, as such, was the last great hope of the Patriots.

In response to the appeal of his clansmen for vengeance, he held a meeting in his house in Dublin, at which Roger More, Lord Maguire, Turlough O'Neill, Sir Con Maginniss, and other persons of distinction were present ; and drew up plans for a general insurrection.

This was the origin of the much-debated Rising of 1641. Many historians, both contemporary and modern, have given particulars of the campaign, but few have succeeded in discussing it impartially. Those who have treated it with least display of partisanship and most temperately are Justin McCarthy, John Mitchell, and John Prendergast. Thomas Carte and Goldwin Smith are fair and moderate only at times ; Edmund Borlace and Froude are never anything but grossly inaccurate and prejudiced. There can be little doubt that cruelties were perpetrated on both sides. But, as Justin McCarthy says, in reference to the Irish, " it is only fair to remember that most nations that have been treated cruelly are cruel in their revenge when they get it, and the followers of Sir Phelim O'Neill believed they had as bitter wrongs to avenge as men can have. They had been taught lessons of massacre by their masters, and this was their first essay."

The Irish, then, were actuated by a burning sense of injustice ; the English—by greed, and religious and racial bigotry. Of the massacres alleged to have been perpetrated by the Irish there is nought but the flimsiest evidence. The Special Commission sent for from London to enquire into them was in itself farcical. It was entirely composed of friends and relatives of the Anglo-Scotch, and had arranged its verdict before starting. The bribery of witnesses was wholesale, and almost the only evidence listened to was that of old women who had been far removed from the scenes of the alleged massacres, and had heard of them for the first time when sent for by the Commissioners. The crowning proof of the utter shame and fraudulency of this so-called enquiry lies in the fact that, when a demand was made by certain Irish officers to be shown the hundreds of corpses declared to be choking the river near Portsdown, only one body could be found.

Far different were the scenes witnessed after the English left Mullaghmast ; after Essex desisted from " wiping out" the Clan O'Neill ; after Bingham withdrew his troopers from Connaught, and the legions of Sir W. Cole turned their heels on Munster. There were corpses then for everyone to see, corpses not merely of Irish soldiers but of Irish women and children, of Irish old and sick. Thousands of corpses, vales and villages of corpses, bays and rivers of corpses, forests full of corpses—and no Commissioners to enquire as to how they came there. The English public heard of none of these things. And why ? Because those who were responsible for the doings of the King's troops took very good care the Commission should report nothing that might in any way create sympathy with the Irish ; for there were plenty of

men and women in England then who had hearts—hearts uninfluenced by bigotry and fanaticism—even as there are plenty now.

The war in Ireland lasted with varying success till Cromwell crossed over with 8,000 foot and 4,000 horse in 1649. The deaths of Owen Roe O'Neill, who had superseded Sir Phelim in the command of the Patriots, and Roger More, both of whom died at a strangely convenient time for Cromwell, paved the way to success for the English ; and one cannot help thinking that Cromwell won because the Fates were with him. At the moment of his landing, the Patriotic party was worn-out with its long, wearisome struggle ; it had no funds to provide more arms and ammunitions which it sadly needed ; and its most capable leaders were dead. It stood absolutely no chance against the greatest military genius of the day, backed up with all that the wealth of England could provide ; and it was hopelessly crushed.

What Cromwell did in Ireland has few parallels in the annals of European history ; the atrocities at Drogheda and Wexford, carefully glossed over in English history books, whilst fully equalling those of Alva in Bruges, and far surpassing those of Tilly at Magdeburg, prove that the Protestants have been at times every whit as cruel and fanatical as the Roman Catholics, and that ferocity and pitilessness are the monopoly of no one creed.

Half the Irish population of Ulster and Connaught having been disposed of by butchery, it now remained for Cromwell to get rid of as many of the rest as possible by deportation.

The disbanded Irish soldiery received his attention first. The valour of Irishmen was well known on the Continent. It had become proverbial in the armies of Henri Quatre, Wallenstein, Gustavus Adolphus, William of Orange, and other famous leaders, and, when once it was known that recruits were to be had from amongst the old clans, every effort was made to obtain them. Recruiting sergeants of many nationalities crossed the waters, and to the roll of foreign drums, between the years 1651 and 1654, over 40,000 Celtic Irishmen marched away, to die with all their accustomed gallantry—many winning unperishable re-nown—in the services of France, Spain, Poland and Italy.

Having thus succeeded in deporting the men, Cromwell next turned his attention to the women. Hearing that the planters in New England and the West Indies were weary of maroons, and would pay any price for white women, Puritan Cromwell at once volunteered to supply their needs. Gangs of his soldiers invaded Connaught, and pouncing on all the women and girls they could find drove them in gangs to Cork. It was the work of 1603 over again, only on a much larger and even more revolting scale.

The young and pretty women were frequently violated, the older and uglier—beaten and branded. From Cork they were taken to Bristol, and, after being publicly sold in the market there, they were thrust on board ship, and borne to their final destinations. The mind shrinks from imagining the horrors of their sufferings at sea. From the records of survivors they must have been at least equal to any of the sufferings experienced by African slaves on the way to America. But, as certainly did not happen in the case of the latter, their hardships excited no sympathy in England. The inhabitants of Bristol watched them being packed on board and driven below with the same dull curiosity and phlegm which they displayed in watching the embarkation of cattle. To them, doubtless, there was little to choose between a cow and an Irish Roman Catholic—neither, in their opinion, could feel sorrow nor pain. In this manner did Oliver Cromwell ply his white slave traffic ; and, according to Justin McCarthy, it was only when Cromwell's agents in human flesh began to seize upon English women to inflate their masters' coffers that the practice was stopped.

In the meanwhile the question of the Celtic children had been solved. Sir William Petty, one of the most successful of the English looters who followed in the wake of Cromwell's army in Ireland, states, in his writings, that 6,000 boys and girls were transported as slaves from Ireland to Jamaica, and that the total number transported there and to Virginia amounted to 10,000.

When Oliver Cromwell handed over the reins of government in Ireland to his son, Henry, who for many years was Lord Deputy, the same system of transportation was continued. We read in Justin McCarthy's *Outline of Irish History* that Henry Cromwell not only approved of the deportation by force of 9,000 "Irish wenches" for the consolation of the soldiers in the newly-acquired Colony of Jamaica, but, on his own motion, suggested the shipment also of from 1,000 to 2,000 boys of from twelve to fourteen years of age. "We could well spare them," remarked the saintly Henry, "and who knows but it might be a means to make them English—I mean Christians?"

John Prendergast—ever moderate in his language, even in his *History of Ireland* of these days—describes the great deportation thus: "Just as the King of Spain sent over his agents to treat with the Government for the Irish swordsmen, the merchants of Bristol had agents treating with it for men, women, and children, to be sent to the sugar plantations in the West Indies. The Commissioners of Ireland gave them orders upon the governors of garrisons, to deliver to them prisoners of war; upon the keepers of gaols, for offenders in custody; upon masters of workhouses, for the destitute in their care 'who were of an age to labour; or, if women were marriageable, and not past breeding'; and gave directions to all in authority to deliver them to these agents of the Bristol sugar merchants—in execution of which latter direction Ireland must have exhibited scenes in every part like the slave marts in Africa. . . . In the course of four years they had seized and shipped about 6,400 Irish—men and women, boys and wenches." And, as he goes on to say that in 1655, in October alone, another shipment of 1,000 boys and 1,000 girls was made at Galway, some idea may be formed of the magnitude of the exodus.

The fate of the Roman Catholic priests was reserved to the last, and no English historian ventures to say what actually happened to them. Their fate, however, may be gathered from the unpublished records of private individuals, and from the unpublished works of contemporary Irish and Continental chroniclers in the national libraries in Ireland, in Paris, Madrid, Rome, Vienna, and other cities. From these sources there is abundant evidence to show that they fell victims to the fanatical hatred of the Scotch settlers and Cromwellian soldiery. Priest-hunts with hounds and lassoes were no uncommon form of pastime among the new settlers in Ulster and Connaught, nor were stoning and drowning the worst modes of death inflicted on the unhappy fugitives when caught. A large number—some authorities say as many as 2,000—were stowed away in irons in the holds of ships and sent to the Barbados; whilst at least another thousand were tumbled out on the beaches of the islands of Aran and Inishbofin, and heard of no more. Only a few escaped, and these, being smuggled out of the country by their friends, landed in Spain and France, where they were received with every kindness and hospitality.

With the departure of the last of these batches of fugitives, the second great Irish emigration of the century may be said to have terminated.

With the restoration of the Monarchy in England, the hopes of many of the exiles rose. Charles II was, in part at least, a Celt, and was known to have strong leanings to Roman Catholicism. It was surmised, therefore, that he would be a willing party to the return of the banished ones, and would see, too, that they took possession of their own. But in this, as in

many other things, Charles proved a disappointment. He had a far shrewder eye to his own interests than was commonly supposed, and as he saw in the keen, money-making Anglo-Scotch settlers, who at once offered their allegiance, more useful and profitable adherents to his cause than in the exiled Irish gentry, who had nought to recommend them save their swords, no invitation was given to those so eagerly expecting it ; and the pillagers were allowed to retain possession of their bloodstained loot.

On the other hand, Charles II did not encourage persecution, and during his reign emigration, on anything like a big scale, ceased. There were many flights of families and of single individuals, to escape the clutches of the infamous Broghill, Earl of Orrery, and his equally infamous brother, Coote, Earl of Mountrath, the vilest pair of scoundrels that ever sat in the King's Bench, but there were no more transportations organized by the English Government—and from this form of horror, at least, Ireland was now free. It is most probable, too, that Charles would have done more to alleviate the condition of the Irish, had not the Titus Oates plot, which re-kindled the wildest fury all over England against the Roman Catholics, made it impracticable for him to exhibit any sympathy with them.

When James II became King the prospects of the Irish really brightened and many of the refugees returned.

With the Revolution, however, all hope of a Celtic Ireland was again completely shattered ; and immediately after the Battle of the Boyne, when Justin McCarthy, Viscount Mountcashel, Col. Daniel O'Brien, and Col. the Hon. Arthur Dillon, with about 4,500 Irish soldiers sailed for France, there to form the nucleus of the far-famed Irish Brigade, the third great Irish emigration began. But this great emigration included many, besides soldiers, who preferred to leave Ireland rather than remain in it, subject to the restrictions William III, in his blind hatred of the Roman Catholics, proceeded to impose on them. His penal laws in these days seem to us so childishly spiteful and unfair, that we can only wonder how any Parliament of even tolerably educated and rational men could ever have approved them. Yet, unthinkable as it is, many of these penal laws remained in force till well on in Victoria's reign.

The most important of them were the following —

1. No Catholic could sit in the Irish Parliament or vote members for it.
2. All Catholics were excluded from the Army, Navy, corporations, magistracy, bar, bench, grand juries and vestries.
3. No Catholic could be a sheriff, soldier, gamekeeper, or constable.
4. No Catholic could possess firearms under penalty of severe fines, imprisonment, whipping, or pillory, and their houses might at any time be searched by two justices or sheriffs.
5. No Catholic could own a horse worth more than £5, and any Protestant offering him that sum could compel him to part with his steed.
6. No Catholic could receive any kind of education whatever (this should be digested by those people who are wont to remark on the ignorant Irish peasants ; if they are ignorant, it was the English who made them so) ; neither were his children allowed to attend school.
7. No Catholic could purchase land, or inherit it, or receive it as a gift from a Protestant, or hold a life annuity, or a lease, for more than 31 years, or any lease on such terms as that the profits of the land exceeded one-third the value of the land. If a Catholic bought land, the first Protestant who chose to inform against him at once became the proprietor.

8. The eldest son of a Catholic, upon renouncing his creed and becoming a Protestant, immediately took over the whole estate of his father, who was reduced to the position of a tenant on sufferance.
9. Any wife renouncing the Catholic Faith and becoming a Protestant obtained a certain proportion of her husband's property, and was entirely freed from his control.
10. Any child apostatising was at once taken out of his father's hands and given a share of his father's property.
11. Any marriage between a Catholic and a Protestant was null and void ; whichever of the two was Protestant could leave the other at will and had sole control of the children.
12. A Protestant might seduce a Catholic's wife with impunity, and the Catholic was denied all means of obtaining redress.

Concerning these statutes, Mr. Justin McCarthy remarks, " It is hard for a more enlightened age to believe that such laws as these were ever passed, or, being passed, were ever practised. It was well said that the penal code would not have been practised in hell, or it would have overturned the kingdom of Beelzebub."

But even the penal laws did not comprise all that was done to crush and humiliate the Irish. From the Bench, Lord Chancellor Bowes and Chief Justice Robinson, both of whom nowadays would rightly be in Broadmoor, decreed that no such person as an Irish Roman Catholic existed, and that no Protestant could be legally convicted for doing anything he chose to a Papist ; and from the pulpit. Bishop Dopping of Meath announced that it was the King and Parliament's wish that no one should keep any faith with a Roman Catholic. Nor was this all. Not content with attacks on person and property, William proceeded to do all he could to destroy the trade of Ireland, Charles I had given the monopoly of the Irish woollen trade to English clothiers ; Charles II's ministry had prohibited the importation of cattle, sheep and swine into Ireland, and the transport of any kind of goods whatever in Irish-built ships ; but William III went much further. In 1696, all trade between Ireland and the Colonies was forbidden ; in fact everything was done that could be done to render it impossible for any Irishman to live in Ireland, and, in these circumstances, all who could scrape together the money and were not hopelessly tied to the land left. Many went to America to found there fresh towns and villages, whilst not a few joined their friends and relatives on the Continent. In all, including those already mentioned, this third great exodus totalled up to just a half of the entire Celtic population of Ireland, some hundred thousand having been slain in battle or massacred in the war of 1689-1691.

Some have said that William III and his Ministers, in their treatment of the Irish, must have been inspired by Satan, but, if so, Satan assuredly was laughing at them up his sleeve, for though, by forcing the Irish to migrate to France and America, they thought they were doing the finest thing in the world for England, in reality they were doing England the greatest possible harm. The descendants of these emigrants completely turned the tide against the English at Fontenoy, and they also turned the scales in the final issues of the American War of Independence.

[1] The original was as recently as 1911 in the hands of a gentleman in Birmingham, who lent it to the Archaeological Society of Belfast.

The Irish abroad, a record of the achievements of wanderers from Ireland (1915)

Author : O'Donnell, Elliott, 1872-1965

Subject : Irish

Publisher : London, New York, Sir I. Pitman & sons, ltd.

Language : English

Digitizing sponsor : Boston College Libraries

Book contributor : Boston College Libraries

Collection : Boston_College_Library; blc; americana

Source : Internet Archive

<http://www.archive.org/details/irishabroadrecor00odon>

Edited and uploaded to www.augty.org

January 16 2012