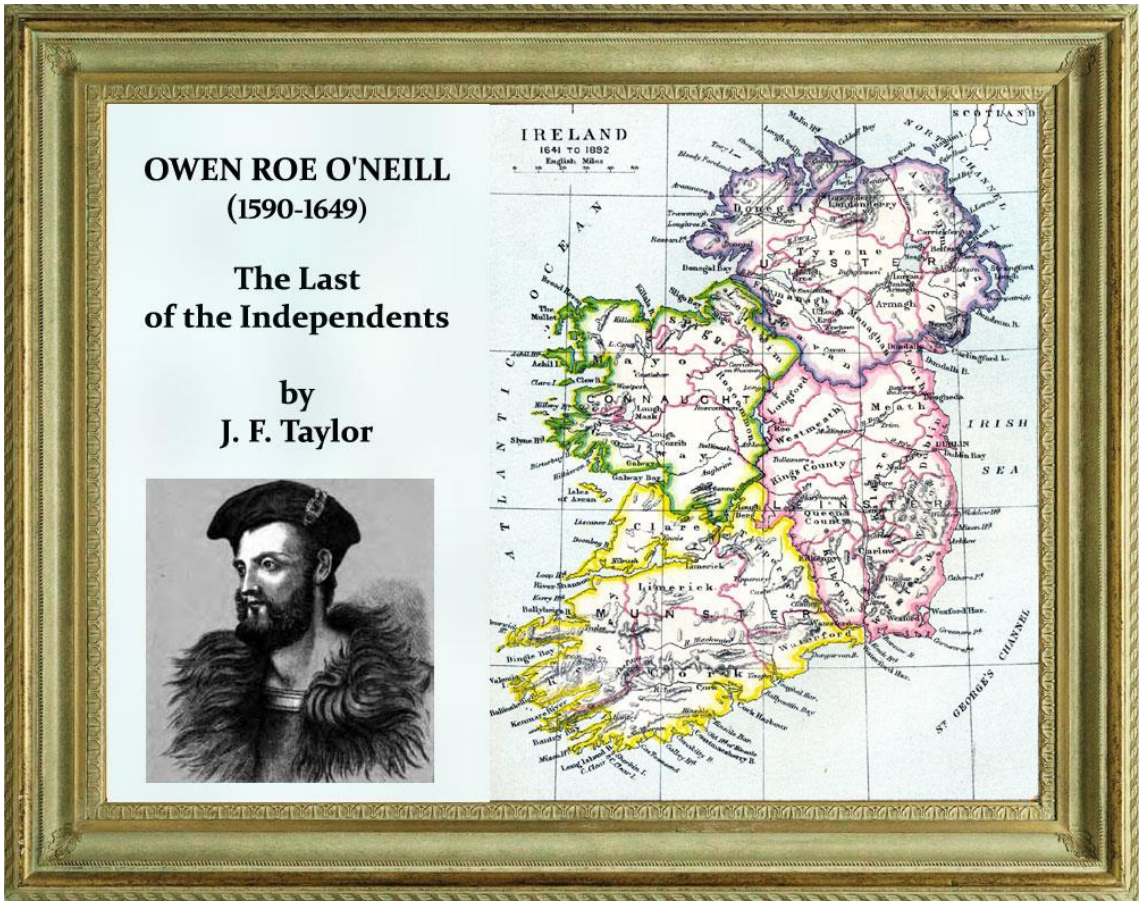
OWEN ROE O'NEILL

A.D. 1585- 1649

The Last of the Independents

J. F. Taylor.



PREFACE

BY some strange fate Owen Roe O'Neill, the most illustrious man of action that Ireland has produced, still remains almost unknown to his countrymen and to the world. His name indeed has been brought home to the Irish people by the genius of Davis, but no one has endeavoured to give to this *nominis umbra* substance and form. The history of this great man is indeed to be found only in the crude materials of contemporary documents, for writers of his own and later times, while mentioning his name with admiration and praise, have left the records of his life almost untouched. Clarendon who had every reason for political hostility, still bears testimony to the purity of his character and his unblemished honour. But no historian has yet recounted his singular military achievements, nor attempted to show how his great soldiership was combined with clearness and breadth of political vision, deep intuition of men, and genius for conciliation or liberty and law. It is unfit that this heroic memory should perish from the mind of Ireland.

The purpose of this sketch is to show how the figure of O'Neill stands out against the darkness and disaster of his age. In doing this within a limited space it was unavoidable that many conditions and movements of the time should be but lightly touched upon; and it has been impossible, for instance, to trace the motives which guided the crooked conduct of the men of the Pale or the vacillations of ecclesiastical policy. This short volume must, therefore, be looked upon as a mere introduction to a more full study of these still obscure times.

For the present my only intention has been to bring back to Irishmen the remembrance of a great man, who, by the completeness of his endowment in intellect and virtue, by his commanding mind, character, and will, is lifted into the highest rank of heroes.

J. F. Taylor.

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CHAPTER I.

A CENTURY OF SUBJECTION

THE O'Neills had ruled as princes in Ulster for centuries, and eighty successive chiefs of the name, according to the Chroniclers, had been solemnly installed in power at the Rath of Tullahogue before Con the Lame (Con Bocagh) accepted the earldom of Tyr-Owen from King Henry VIII in 1542, abandoning the simple title of "O'Neill" so hateful to English ears. In that same year the King of England was for the first time proclaimed King of Ireland, and the two countries, England and Ireland, were declared to be thenceforward indissolubly connected by law. A few years before, Henry had struck a heavy blow at the feudal semi-independent nobles of the Pale, by sweeping off the whole house of Kildare; when, in 1537, Silken Thomas and his uncles were put to death at Tyburn, the line of the great Geraldines closed, and the Anglo-Normans in Ireland were left without any recognized head. It was at this time, too, that Henry was declared Supreme Head of the Church in Ireland, and all ecclesiastical jurisdiction was vested by law in the hands of Protestant Churchmen, who became mere civil servants. From an Irish Parliament the king had nothing to fear. The parliament was nothing but an assembly of the English in Ireland. Even such little power as it had exercised in former times had been taken away in the previous reign, when in a moment of panic it committed suicide by passing Poynings' Act of Drogheda, in 1495, binding all future parliaments not to propose any legislation without having first obtained the assent of the English king and council. With Nobles, Church, and Parliament at his feet, Henry held undisputed power in Ireland, and no contending authority of any kind remained to limit, hamper, or control his government.

There were at this time three distinct peoples in Ireland—the Ancient Irish; the amalgamated Norman-Irish, usually called the New Irish; and the Ancient English of the Pale. No deep or lasting lines of hostility separated these three peoples. For when the Statute of Kilkenny was passed in 1367, ordering all Englishmen in Ireland to cut off communication with the natives, few of the nobler Anglo-Norman houses obeyed that decree. Outside the Pale, indeed, the statute rather hastened amalgamation; and although within the Pale it was for some time observed, it gradually fell into

desuetude in the fifteenth century, and England was too busy elsewhere to look after its observance. The lines of division grew fainter and fainter, until it seemed as if all traces of difference should soon fade away. But new disturbing influences now came in, and religious rancour acerbated national animosity. Those who refused to acknowledge the spiritual supremacy of Henry were put outside the protection of the law. Cathedrals, churches, and abbeys, and the lands by which they were maintained, were taken from Catholics and handed over to protestants, except in some rare instances when Catholic consciences were elastic enough to acknowledge Henry's claims.

These claims, however, could only be enforced within the limits of the Pale, which was now once more hemmed in from the rest of Ireland by a new dividing line. For two centuries the limits of the English Pale had not advanced into Irish quarters. The Bruce campaign of 1314-18 had rolled back the tide of invasion almost to the gates of Dublin, and there up to Tudor times it had stood. But it was part of Henry's policy to make real the kingship which he claimed. If his predecessors, who had been merely Lords of Ireland, were contented with the submission of the Pale he for his part was resolved not to stop short of dominion over the whole island. Conquest recommenced, and wars of aggression on the native chiefs followed one another quickly. The completion of the conquest of Ireland was the Tudor programme, and the completion was accomplished precisely at the extinction of the Tudor dynasty. Terrible slaughters and devastation took place during the sixty years that elapsed from Con Bocagh's submission until Con's grandson, the great Hugh O'Neill, submitted at Mellifont on the very day of Elizabeth's death.

It was in these years that Munster was laid desolate in the frightful "Desmond waste" (1571), and the old Celtic population was expelled from Leix and Offaly, the King's County and the Queen's. New English settlers came and occupied the confiscated lands, and a new tide of invasion swelled and roared as wave after wave of bold adventurers poured into Ireland carrying destruction in their wake. These new adventurers made settlements on the conquered lands, and the limits of the Englishry were extended daily. In Ulster, however, no such lodgment was attempted. Little scattered bodies of Scotch were splashed on the eastern seaboard of Antrim, but up to O'Neill's submission in 1603 Ulster was still substantially unmixed "Ancient Irish". To them the accession of James the First irresistibly brought hopes of a better day. James boasted of his descent from the Irish Fergus, the conqueror of Scotland. He was dear to the Catholics as the son of the most romantic of queens, for Ireland had been deeply moved by the sufferings and death of Mary Queen of Scots. Hugh O'Neill and James had been in alliance, and it looked as if the Saxon supremacy was

about to pass, and that the Celt once more was to have his day. Great rejoicings took place in Ireland. Bards foretold the golden days at hand when, under a Gaelic king, Gael and Gaoll should live in brotherhood and peace. For the first time all the Irish people were claimed as subjects of the English crown. For the first time, too, all Ireland lay calm, peaceful, and exhausted, and the time for magnanimous statesmanship had come.

To the wise reforming ruler, sympathetically approaching the Irish problem, there could not come a more auspicious moment; but it soon became clear that James was not the man for such a task. The sword indeed was no longer used or needed; but James's agents effected by fraud what the Tudor soldiers had effected by force. For open tyranny chicane was substituted. Adventurers ravened for spoils, and they employed in procuring them the weapons of the forger, the cheat and the false witness. Unwary victims were lured into the meshes of a law unknown and unintelligible to them, and their ignorance and credulity became the instruments of their ruin. Landowners were encouraged to surrender their lands on the promise of better and safer titles; but the surrenders once made, the titles were either refused, or granted with deliberate flaws which afterwards worked the annulment of the grants. The first blow fell on Ulster. The Bann and Foyle fisheries had been in the immemorial possession of the O'Neills; and Hugh, the earl, had received a grant from the king of all the lands and appurtenances of the clan. By subtle quibbles it was now sought to deprive him of his seignorial rights over these fisheries. They were taken from him and granted to adventurers. When he expostulated he was threatened with worse treatment still. His clansmen, now his tenants, were urged by castle agents to pay him no rent, and they had to come secretly to Dundalk where he lived to escape the eyes of the officials. Hugh was harassed with summons after summons calling him to answer in Castle Chamber for charges unsubstantiated by a tittle of proof. Warned from abroad by an Irish officer of an intended charge of treasonable conspiracy about to be brought against him, and knowing well that his life was aimed at so that his lands might be seized, he with kith and kin sailed away from Ireland in 1607.

The confiscators were now let loose on Ulster; but the Chichesters and Hamiltons had to share the plunder with great commercial 'adventurers'. Lord Bacon had very strongly advocated a settlement or 'plantation' of 'estated tenants', with fixed rights independent of any lord or landowner, and great London companies were willing to carry out this scheme. This was a terrible blow to the clansmen, for to make room for yeoman 'planters' it was necessary that the clansmen should go. Now the clansmen were in no way involved in O'Neill's alleged conspiracies, and O'Neill had by Brehon law no more right to the lands of the clan than a managing director had to the property of the shareholders. But these considerations did not stand in

the way. By a test case known as the case of Tanistry, a judgment of the courts was obtained against Brehon law, and as, by the royal grace, the common law of England had been extended to all Ireland, it followed that all rights and titles recognised by Brehon jurisprudence were no longer of any avail. All land was held mediately or immediately from the king, and as the Earl of Tyrone had forfeited his estate to the king, all those who held under him were involved in the destruction of his title. O'Donnell's clansmen were similarly involved in the ruin of their chief; and two years later, in 1609, the O'Doghertys were ousted from all legal right to their lands by the forfeiture declared against young Sir Cahir O'Dogherty, Owen Roe's brother-in-law. All Ulster was given over to the devourers; and although self-interest, humanity and fear modified the plans of expropriation, the clearance was effective and thorough. Ulster was made the most miserable of the provinces, by a parody of the forms of law subdued to the uses of the swindler and the cheat. The chief contriver of these fraudulent practices was Sir John Davies, who by a few gracious words has won for himself a respected name through the kindness of historians. He was in truth an unprincipled adventurer, and, as James's attorney-general, was the ready and eager adviser in every scheme of plunder.

It was part of the policy of Davies to introduce the forms of the English constitution into Ireland, only to distort them from their original purpose. A parliament of all Ireland was called; but it was packed with Castle clerks and attendants returned for imaginary boroughs created by royal writ. Trial by jury was introduced; but sheriffs carefully chose 'safe' men, and if Catholic jurors declined to find priests guilty of having celebrated mass their 'recalcitrance' was put forward as a proof of the unfitness of Papists to serve on juries at all. Although the penal statutes of Elizabeth were graciously allowed to lapse, old acts passed against Rome 'in Catholic times' were now resuscitated; and by Father Lalor's trial and condemnation for praemunire in 1607, Davies accomplished all the purposes of Elizabeth's Acts through the older Acts of Edward III and of Richard II. Priests were again banned, churches were closed, schools suppressed, and education forbidden.

Then the great exodus began. Irish students had to seek abroad for intellectual training and scholarship. A number of colleges were founded by Irish piety and munificence, and the youth of Ireland thronged these homes of learning, which stretched like lines of light from Louvain to Rome, and from Salamanca to Prague. While Waterford see was polluted by the abominable Atherton, the sons of Waterford City, the Lombards and Whites and Waddings, were the councillors of cardinals and kings. The sages and scholars of Ireland were in exile and the light of knowledge faded from the land. Swordsmen as well as bookmen fled from Ireland to seek careers

abroad. Irish Catholic soldiers had fought against Hugh O'Neill at the close of the seven years' war against Elizabeth. They found themselves now turned adrift, and nothing remained for them but to fly from their unhappy country. Irish 'swordsmen' were already famous in great continental armies, and during the first quarter of the seventeenth century Irishmen joined the ranks of the Spanish, Austrian, French, and even Swedish forces. The English officials gave hearty encouragement to this flight from Ireland, and were at no loss for high reasons and lofty justification for their policy. Thousands of young Irishmen thronged into the Spanish service. Captains and colonels rapidly procured commissions for raising regiments, and at stated times the Irish harbours were filled with ships bearing brave men away forever from their native land. The drain grew greater as confiscations increased; and although rulers came and went, policy glided on in satisfactory continuity, names only changing as Mountjoy, Chichester, St. John, and Falkland succeeded one another.

In Ulster the rich valleys were occupied by the Scotch planters, and the houseless and landless clansmen, huddled on the mountain tops in their poor, rude; wicker cots called 'creaghts', or 'keraghts', followed the herds of cattle which were now their sole wealth. These wandering outcasts sent many soldiers to the wars; but they still remained at home in numbers uncomfortably large for the planters. Mysterious midnight drilling went on. Clouds of priests and friars passed to and fro between Ireland and the Continent. Rumours of Tyrone's return were heard everywhere. "He would come; he was coming; he had come". To those who asked if a rising were lawful in the eye of the Church, priests dexterously distinguished between rebellion and a war of restoration. "Tyrone might have become a rebel" they said; "but O'Neill cannot". The saying stamps the character of the new rising. It was to be no revolt against the ancient overlordship of the English king. It was a rising for the old tribal kingdom of the clan against the new claims of sovereignty, the assertion of which for a hundred years had brought such desolation on the whole land.

But there were others who took wider views. Some among the leaders of the people thought the time had come for a national movement for liberty. Old barriers were broken down, and the tie of common creed began to unite races and tribes long torn asunder by hatred, jealousy, and prejudice. The 'Ancient Irish' of Ulster, Connaught and Wicklow, were for once united in interest with their old hereditary enemies, the English of the Pale. Priests and bishops encouraged this new spirit and fanned the flame of national consciousness and unity. Outlaws themselves, they came from abroad in rude crazy barks, on dark nights when seas were breaking and winds were in uproar, so that they might escape the foeman and the spy. Then lurking in caves and mountain fastnesses, they gathered their flocks around them

and told them what popes and emperors were doing, and how in God's good time Erin should again be free. Captains and colonels came too, rousing the men at home to be ready when the men abroad should return. England, it was thought, should be swept into the vortex of European troubles and then the blow for Irish liberty should be struck. But England kept aloof from European complications, and Hugh, the great earl, went down to his grave in 1616 without having once caught one gleam of hope during his nine weary years of exile. With his death all purpose seemed to die out in Ireland. The stillness of the tomb settled over the whole land, and English statesmen boasted that the Irish sphinx had yielded up her secret, and that resolute and salutary restraint soon overcame all unruliness in the strange wayward island. For twenty-five years that hymn of victory went up. The ashes of assassinated Ireland at last reposed in their final resting place; and England's great mission in the world should no longer be impeded by the importunate outlaw at her door.

What healing measures came during these twenty-five years? What thought was taken of Ireland? What policy was adopted? New confiscations took place in Wicklow and in Connaught, and heavier blows than ever fell upon unhappy Ulster; while the machinery of Church and State worked out the degradation of the people, steeping them in ignorance, poverty, and terror. Forgery and fraud were as efficacious as ever; and the highest in the land stooped, as in the attempted spoliation of the O'Byrnes of Wicklow, to subornation of perjury and to perjury itself. One of the most skillful and persevering of these legal swindlers was the insatiable Boyle, queerly called "The Great Earl of Cork". With gospel precepts on his lips this plunderer waded to wealth through the blood of his victims, and therewithal he much increased his store and piously rejoiced in the abundance which the Lord had given unto him. His counsels were ever at the disposal of active confiscators, and he now and then rebuked the 'remissness' of the officials in Dublin for not putting such "practices" into more frequent operation.

To men like him, Ireland's seeming death-sleep of twenty-five years was a time of ease and entertainment. The dark background of homeless wanderers and widows and orphans weeping, churches rifled and schools destroyed, only threw into more brilliant relief the mansions, the wealth and the retinue of every successful criminal grown great upon the wages of his crimes. The trembling people looked on in terror, and only prayed that worse might not come, for worse was threatened.

In 1632 Spenser's *View of the State of Ireland* was published, and its publication struck terror into the hearts of the defenseless Irish. The book had been written forty years earlier; but its maxims were quite in tune with the time of its issue to the world. The 'gentle' poet had a policy of clear and logical simplicity; the clearing out and extermination of the native Irish. In

the temper of 1632 such a book was as it were a message from hell, working on the passions of evil men. Another book, written by a Mr. Blennerhassett, was published about the same time. The writer was an English settler, and he had taken much thought about Ulster and the troubles there. He advised a system of kerne-hunting as the best remedy. Spirited English sportsmen would enjoy the novelty, and soon the "wolf and the wood-kerne" would be cut down by the spears of hardy huntsmen. The "kerne" were "poor wandering creatures in creaghts", he explained, and he was confident that they could readily be extirpated.

Spenser and Blennerhassett, the two evangelists of robbery and murder, found ready disciples. In that very year new clearances took place in Ulster. The new owners had found that Irish tenants were less troublesome than Scotch or English. They paid more rent, and they were far less sturdy in the assertion of rights. Gradually a great part of the confiscated lands went back into their possession. Intermarriages between the planters and the natives became frequent and notable; and it looked as if the old weird attractiveness of the Celt was once again to charm the enemy into a friend and lover. This serious peril was properly appreciated by an ever-watchful government. New laws breathing the spirit of the Statute of Kilkenny were passed, and all tenancies to Irishmen in the planted lands were declared void in 1632. Ulster was once more crowded with poor "wandering creatures in the creaghts", and the cruel policy lit the old fire in the most temperate and cautious breasts. Wise men dreaded a return to the methods of the Desmond war with its rapine, massacre, and devastation. Waterford, the eye of Ireland, was deeply stirred by the closing up of its schools which had by salutary connivance been allowed to go on in a simple and obscure way, doing most excellent work in the mental training of the south, till Ulster Puritans again called out for the forcible closing of such schools, "more like Universities than schools", they complained, where Papists were still surreptitiously taught. Lured by some slight concessions, the Catholics of the Pale had hoped to found a university in Dublin which would relieve them from the perils of seeking education abroad; for they had tried in vain to bring about an agreement with Oxford or Trinity College, to which many Catholics had resorted until the gates were closed in their faces. In Backlane the beginnings of a home of learning were quietly formed; but the poor embryonic university was trampled underfoot, its teachers were imprisoned, and its rooms and teaching apparatus were handed over to Trinity College. These were the blessed fruits of that long peace, the unsettling of which by "Papist rebels", has moved the indignation of supercilious critics. Threats of worse things to come drove the outcast Catholics into agues of terror, and they waited like poor dumb animals for the scourge and the goad. But men pass through terror unto courage. The

quarry at bay forgets fear, and fights fry dear life. Its wrath is the black tragedy of history.

CHAPTER II.

THE LEADER AT HOME

CONSTITUTIONAL methods of seeking relief from disabilities began to be adopted in Ireland soon after the accession of the Stuarts. The opening years of James's reign were occupied with the task of solidifying the structure of go the whole island. Sheriffs were the viceroys; judges went circuit, and the new shireland of Ulster and Connaught was reduced to the political condition of the Pale. The deep line of division between the Pale itself and the rest of Ireland showed signs of entirely fading away, and from the total subjugation of the island there arose the consciousness of common Nationality. New forces too began to make themselves felt. Commerce with its wealth and enterprise gave life and energy to the cities of the South, three of which—Waterford, Cork and Kilkenny—had at the accession of James closed their gates against the Royal heralds, refusing recognition of the new king until due guarantees of freedom should first be given, and although Lord Mountjoy had forced them into submission, these cities were still the homes and centres of National aspiration. The 'New English', as the Tudor colonists were called, had in some cases thrown in their lot with the 'Ancient Irish'; but the time was too short since their coming to blot out the distinguishing features of creed and race by which they were marked off from the natives and the amalgamated Norman-Irish. The new plantation in Ulster, largely Scotch, introduced another distinct element more separated by feeling and character from the old Irish than any of the previous settlers had been. 'The Planters' were Puritans of the Geneva school, whose hatred of Popery was intense, earnest and consuming, and who, camped as it were on the confiscated lands, trusted only to their own weapons and their own bravery to hold at bay the houseless outcasts on the hills. Instead of three peoples in Ireland, as in Henry's time, there were at the outset of James's reign no less than five.

But the tie of common religious belief began to draw races and classes together, and the sentiment of faith overleaped all ethnic and geographical boundaries. The blending of races followed; and in three provinces, Celt, Norman, Saxon, and Dane began to be merged in the common race of Irishmen. In these three provinces there was a strong desire for peace and

quiet. Old hatreds had died out, and in very weariness everyone sighed for rest. Ulster was, and continued to be, the stormed centre, and in the early days of James's reign, an insurrectionary movement would probably have been confined to the newly planted province with possibly some commotion here and there, but with nothing like a combined national uprising. The other provinces trusted to the justice of their demands, and hoped that the chains rivetted by the Tudors would be at once removed by the friendlier dynasty which had come to the throne. They approached the king with humble and respectful petitions, but they found that their prayers were answered by insulting allusions to plots and conspiracies in England with which the Irish Catholics had no more to do than the Waldenses. The bishops of the State Church in Ireland who at James's accession showed the moderation born of pusillanimity and fear, now once more raised their "frowning foreheads" and began an new era of persecution. They had the power, and they exercised it ruthlessly, of issuing writs of excommunication which placed the victims outside the full protection of the law, and they were empowered by writs of assistance to call in the arm of the State to execute ecclesiastical decrees. These persecutions welded the three Southern provinces into one, and a nation in embryo was visible to keen contemporary observers. But Ulster was still raw and red after the wounds of the wars and the deeper wounds of the plantation.

In such a condition of things the first Parliament for all Ireland was called in 1613. Had this been a properly-constituted parliament the grievances of the times would have been gradually redressed, notwithstanding the opposition of the State bishops who held sway in the House of Lords, or the stringent hold on Parliamentary conduct secured to the Crown by Poynings' Law. But this first Parliament of all Ireland was a mere mockery. The Catholic Irish by any known test of due representation were entitled to at least two-thirds of the seats. Sir John Davies, however, packed the House with "clerks, captains, and serving men", and so secured his own election to the Speakership over his honourable rival, Sir John Everard. Men turned away in despair from Parliament soon after, and left to the irresponsible junta of State officials in Dublin the unhampered management of affairs. And so long as England kept clear of the whirl of European politics these unbridled rulers lorded it over Ireland. But when by Buckingham's folly England and Spain were thrown into hostility in the last year of James's reign Ireland became an object of great solicitude to the Government of England, and it was thought necessary to put on foot a standing army for its protection or retention, For this purpose money was needed, and although even in England the salutary principle that "redress should precede supply" was still inoperative it must always happen that redress is more easily obtained from a king asking for assistance than from one who needs no such help. Many proposals were made, but James's death

put an end to the negotiations. The difficulty was only postponed, however, and although Charles was much more thrifty than his father, the necessities of State compelled him to increase the Irish army fourfold, so that with all his economy the cost of the Irish administration advanced rapidly, and the ordinary revenue was inadequate to meet the State demands. The system of taxation in the English Pale was the system applied to all Ireland. It was a single tax, and that was a tax on land; so much per ploughland was assessed as it had been in England up to the time of Edward III. Such a tax was too meagre and too slow to meet the wants of the Crown; and in order to raise the required sum a voluntary assessment by Parliament could alone be relied on to satisfy the pressing demands upon the Treasury.

In 1628, therefore, a great opportunity arose once more for a permanent settlement of Ireland. Lord Falkland was Viceroy, and he was overflowing with professions of sympathy and friendship to the Catholics, who on their part were ebullient with loyalty, and only too ready and eager to respond with assessments and contributions to any appeal from the Crown. In such a temper both sides seemed to approach the consideration of public affairs; and for the first time it looked as if a great career were open, to an able and instructed Irish constitutional leader. Such a leader was soon seen and recognised.

Roger Moore, or Rory O'Moore, of Ballyna in the County Kildare, was a scion of the princely house of Leix Offaly which had been overturned in the reign of Philip and Mary, whose names in Philipstown and Maryboro' commemorate the confiscation. In all accounts of the time we see him as a deep and thoughtful man of singular fascination and charm, to which a stately form and handsome face naturally contributed. He was a 'travelled' man; had seen cities and men, courts and camps, senates and universities. A convinced Catholic himself, he was tolerant in a time of intolerance, and looked for National advancement, not in the lifting up of one ascendancy on the ruins of another, but in the purging of the State and statute book from all partiality and injustice. Guided by him and his father-in-law, Irish landowners and merchants entrusted agents in Parliament to make terms on their behalf, and he, with other Irish gentlemen of all creeds, fixed the basis of settlement early in 1628. In that session of 1628 arrangements were come to which, had they been faithfully observed by the Government, would have put Ireland in the wake of civilized and ordered life and not driven her back to the elemental weapons of nature. The Irish claims for redress were embodied in a list of "Graces" which his Majesty, "out of his own exuberant mercy", was to grant as a token of royal recognition of his subjects' loyalty. The main articles were:—

(1.) The confirmation of titles to estates, notwithstanding mere formal flaws;

(2.) Restriction of Monopolies; and Trade with England to be free;

(3.) Billeting of soldiers to be restrained, and no one to be punished by martial law in time of peace;

(4.) The unconstitutional Court of Castle Chamber not to hear private suits nor to tamper with witnesses;

(5.) That surplus fees, tithes, and other exactions by the Protestant clergy be regulated by law, and that wits of assistance be discontinued; and that Church lands should be liable to public burdens;

(6.) That wholesale reprieves of convicted criminals be prohibited, and the royal prerogative be entrusted to impartial ministers only;

(7.) That the exorbitant fees of sheriffs, officers of courts, and clerks of markets, be moderated ; and

(8.) That the grievous oppressions of his Majesty's Roman Catholic subjects be mercifully considered.

It would have been well if the Irish Parliament had declined to vote supplies to his Majesty until these most pressing demands had been first passed into law. But there were three several parties into which the constitutional reformers were divided, the Leinster nobles, the Irish of the other provinces, and the Puritans of Ulster. To the moderate 'loyalists' of Leinster it seemed unnatural that doubt or misgiving should be cast upon his Majesty's gracious promises, and the representatives of the other provinces naturally hesitated before they put in peril what might have become a great measure of public redress. Lord Falkland solemnly promised full satisfaction of all the demands made by the agents; and relying on that promise the parliament on the 1st day of April, 1628, voted three annual subsidies to his Majesty's use. Parliament was thereupon no longer necessary; nor would it be until the need of a further subsidy should arise. The Houses were accordingly dissolved, not one of the Graces having been carried into effect, and the Parliament had to content itself with a vague promise that the administration should be carried on in the spirit of the popular demands.

The Catholics had not long to wait before they saw the full value of these promises. Proclamations were issued on April 1st, 1629, against the

exercise of any rite, ceremony, or observance of Catholic worship, on the alleged plea that, encouraged by the hopes of toleration the emboldened Papists had dared to quit their hiding places, and their priests had dared openly to celebrate Mass. When on the arrest of a priest in Dublin a great tumult took place, and an angry multitude rescued the prisoner, a cry went up from all sides that it was high time to apply strong measures to the unruly rabble, and their 'Mass-Priests'. All schools and 'Mass-houses' were then closed, and no longer, even under 'decent and modest cover', could Catholics acquire the rudiments of learning, or kneel in common worship before even the rudest of altars. But the Graces had not altogether fallen to the ground. The Puritans of Ulster had been relieved of many burdensome obligations by the intervention of viceregal influence, and they rewarded their Catholic allies by being the loudest in clamouring for more chains and lashes for the insolent Papists. But their time of trouble was near at hand, and they had soon again to turn to their despised fellow-countrymen for assistance and sympathy. It was no longer with petty and contemptible tyrants that Ireland had to deal; for all the scattered rays of despotism were brought to a focus, and the baleful star of Strafford rose in malignant majesty and overcast the whole land.

Thomas Wentworth, 'the great apostate', was the arch enemy of Puritanism, which he looked upon as the religious counterpart of what he called "Tom Loodle's commonwealth", or government by the multitude; and when, as Earl of Strafford, he came to Ireland as Lord Lieutenant in 1633, Puritans and Catholics alike were brought under a more grinding tyranny than ever. His rule, however, was not without beneficent reforms. He established order within and without; remodelled the army, and regulated its relations to the people; guarded the coasts from the Barbary pirates; and abated the extortionate demands of State officials who had been long grinding the faces of the poor. He boasted that what he promised he always fulfilled, and in a sense he did fulfill the promise he made on his entry into Dublin to govern in the spirit of the Graces; for when the servile and manipulated parliament of 1634-5 voted supplies for an indefinite time and so made Strafford absolute, he so far abated the evils complained of that he put an end to all irresponsible tyranny but his own. During his five years of unhindered despotism Strafford was harsh and overbearing; but there are no bitter memories of his rule in Ireland. He was the most impartial of tyrants, and his lust of power impelled him rather to strike down great criminals like Boyle of Cork, and Loftus of Ely, than the weak and defenseless victims on whom these men had trampled. Smitten by the ambition of becoming a great minister rivaling if not surpassing Richelieu, all constitutional checks and hindrance, were naught to him; and the feeling of power was strongest upon him when sitting in Castle Chamber, he dispensed capricious justice, or when he gathered round him the officers of

the new Irish army which to awe possible rivals he had raised and organised during the last years of his Viceroyalty. With undisputed power and with a mighty army he hoped to make the throne of Charles as absolute as that of Louis. His ecclesiastical policy was that of Laud, and he brought the State Church in Ireland into almost complete conformity with that of England, and thus necessarily put himself into conflict with the Puritans. In fact Strafford's administration so pressed on Catholics and Puritans alike that the common sufferings of both combined them in political and parliamentary alliance once more. In Ireland constitutional activity was impossible during the five years of absolutism; but a great era of true parliamentary development was soon to open, and the Irish Parliament too was about to grow into the full consciousness of its dignity and trust.

Charles's throne was threatened in 1639, Whether fomented by Richelieu or stirred by the sense of wrong, the discontented Scots had bound themselves into a Solemn League sworn to cure the wrongs of Scotland; and they made for themselves a provisional government, which they promised to obey until their grievances were redressed. The news of this great event flew over Ireland, stirring varied emotions and hopes. The Scots in Ulster, loudly summoned by their brethren, made no sign and showed no willingness to take part in the designs of their countrymen at home. But they were wild with exultation. Strafford on his part hurried up the Irish army, nine thousand strong, to Carrickfergus, dispatched cruisers to Cantire, and made ready for a descent on western Scotland. Strafford's army was for its numbers one of the finest in Europe. It was composed of young active men of splendid physique, who had been drilled by old seasoned veterans, and were now themselves panting for battle. They were mostly Catholics too, and had been drawn largely from the ranks of the evicted clansmen of Ulster. Stationed at Carrickfergus, they cut off all communication between the Covenanters on both sides of the channel, and their presence was resented keenly by the Ulster Puritans. In calling the troops to the north Strafford made ready for a bold and resolute policy. With the Irish army he meant to take Argyle and the Covenanters in the flank, while the McDonnells of Ireland were to stir their kinsmen in the Highlands to a great uprising in the king's favour. Had Charles taken this bold course, or had he taken the equally bold and courageous course of conceding frankly what his Scotch subjects demanded, the tide of events might have rolled in his favour; but by untruthfulness and dissimulation he cast away the opportunity for war without having secured the prospects of peace. England was tired and weary of Stuart rule, and as the new democratic movement in Church and State swelled more and more in volume, the Scotch Covenanters found strong and determined allies among the leaders of the English democracy. Charles in his alarm endeavoured by shifts and artifices to evade the points at issue between himself and his Scotch subjects. But he was dealing with keen-

sighted men who knew him well and who were not deceived by his blandishments and hollow promises; and when he was driven to arms by the resolute stand made by the Covenanters under Henderson's leadership, the king had no choice but to summon parliament.

In Ireland, too, after five years' interval, a new parliament was summoned. The Irish House of Commons presented during the years 1640 and 1641 a stubborn front to the Executive, claiming for itself the direction of most public departments, the sole control over taxation and expenditure, and the regulation of trade; it reproved officials, and, flying higher, it brought the Lord Chancellor and other great ministers to the bar of the House of Lords under the revived process of impeachment. Roger O'Moore and Captain Audley Mervin were the two leaders of the Catholic and Puritan parties respectively, and all hopes of separating them were soon abandoned, as they were found in close and firm alliance against the party of the Castle. Agents from the Irish Parliament were despatched to London to present to the king and to the English House of Commons a Great Remonstrance, in which Strafford's high-handed acts of tyranny were enumerated and particularised. This remonstrance was almost certainly the work of Roger O'Moore, and it was admirably calculated to draw Catholic and Puritan together. The evils complained of were general evils touching all alike, so that a mixed committee composed of Catholics and Puritans adopted it, and won a ready passage for it in the House of Commons. North and South seemed now united in Parliamentary opposition, and the work of O'Moore seemed at last to promise a rich harvest. An impartial hearing by king and Parliament in London would have brought his labours to full fruition.

But, unfortunately, both king and Parliament were no longer capable of impartial investigation. They were in conflict, though not actually at war, and each looked at the Irish question with partizan eyes, concerned mainly as to what the effect of any step might be upon the fortune of parties in England. The Long Parliament sided with the Puritans, and members were deeply moved by the doleful complaints of the Ulster planters. Unhappily, these complaints were levelled as much at the mercy shown to Catholics as at the peculiar burdens under which the Puritans themselves were suffering; and men like Pym and Hampden were ready in the name of liberty to rivet heavier chains and fetters upon the main portion of the Irish population. The Irish agents, however, stood loyally together, and when Strafford was removed from the vice-royalty, and his deputy Wandisford was ill, so that it became necessary to appoint Lords Justices to carry on the government, they expostulated against the appointment of Lord Dillon of Kilkenny west, and after a rather heated correspondence with the king and his advisers succeeded in carrying the point. But Puritan influence then

overbore Catholic recommendations, and two fiercely-bigoted zealots, Parsons and Borlace, took up the reins which had fallen from the strong hands of Strafford.

Puritan authority now ruled supreme, and muttered threats against Catholics were heard on all sides. Rumours of the wildest kind began to spread, and people talked of a great Scotch invasion which would end in a general massacre of all Papists. The panic increased when orders came for the disbandment of Strafford's army, and heated debate took place in the Irish Parliament where Catholic lords and gentlemen protested against this step. And so too did the Puritans, who saw in a scattered army, unrestrained by discipline and smarting with ancient wrongs, a grave menace to the plantations. Impressed by these expostulations, the Government sought a remedy from a different quarter. Spain and England were on friendly terms; and Charles was ready enough to strengthen the hands of Richelieu's enemy in recompense for the great cardinal's alleged intervention in Scotland. The king accordingly made arrangements with the Spanish Ambassador for the transportation of the Irish troops to Spain, and orders were issued to the regiments to march to an appointed seaport, having first deposited their arms in arsenals chosen by the executive. When these orders came the wrath of the Irish House of Commons rose to the point of fever, and the king and his ministers were charged with the perfidious betrayal of the country to the hereditary enemy of England. None were louder in these denunciations than the Leinster lords, and most certainly they were sincere. But the Catholic members from the other provinces, inspired by Roger O'Moore, were equally vehement in their objurgations and protests. The opposition was too powerful, and the Government gave way. The regiments were stopped at the intended ports of embarkation, and the men were ordered to their homes. The order was a mockery; most of the men had no homes, and soon every little town was filled with stragglers and idlers from the disbanded regiments.

But meantime even the most moderate Catholics were abandoning all hope of Parliamentary redress. In the Parliament which had been called in the last year of Strafford's viceroyalty, measures for the relief of Catholics had been assented to by the king and council, and only formal 'testification' of that assent was needed. But the Puritan Lords Justices impeded in every way the introduction of such measures, and by delays, prorogations, and dilatory pretexts, the remedial bills were put off, notwithstanding the continued protest of Catholic lords and representatives. Fourteen Catholic peers, with Lord Fingal at their head, had been sitting for weeks preparing amendments, resolutions, and remonstrances; but when they saw how the Lords Justices stopped Parliamentary business, they ceased their efforts and retired in disgust from constitutional action, Roger O'Moore too had

given a full and patient trial to constitutional methods. As the first inspirer of an Irish Parliamentary party he was in a sense the precursor and prototype of our Grattans and O'Connells. Powerful within the House, outside the House he was simply idolized. Hopes rested on him alone, or as the people piously sung, their hopes were "in God and our Lady and Rory O'Moore". He himself had aspired to redress some at least of the many grievances—Penal laws, Poynings' Law, monopolies, and the system of trying cases by the Lord Deputy himself "on paper petition", thus ousting the courts of the land and unsettling all rights. So long as the House of Commons had any true existence, O'Moore thought it wise to assert Catholic influence in its sphere. But when the king betrayed the Irish administration into Puritan hands by surrendering all control into the hands of a committee of the English Parliament, his hopes of peaceful redress were finally annihilated. Henceforth he was to stand as the deviser and leader of a great national uprising. For many years he had been in communication with John O'Neill, the feeble son of the great Hugh, and had taken active part in all the attempts made by priests and soldiers to prepare the Irish for a war of national redemption. Now suddenly he held in his hand an instrument more potent than Parliament itself. Thousands of brave and daring soldiers were at large, and O'Moore took instant steps to organize them into secret battalions. They were unarmed; but the castle of Dublin was bursting with "arms, munition, and ammunition", and if the Irish by a bold swoop once made themselves masters of that hated hold, an Irish insurrection must almost certainly succeed, even though the Irish troops abroad, or the Catholic states of Europe should fail to give assistance. Roger O'Moore was a keen observer and a most cautious man. Under his guidance it looked as if a united Ireland was about to do battle against a divided and distracted England.

Of all the Irish leaders at home, O'Moore alone comprehended and sympathized with the whole of the aims and aspirations by which the men of each of the four provinces were moved. Bound by affinity and blood to many noble houses of the Pale, O'Moore and his father-in-law, Patrick Barnewell of Killbrue, stood in the front rank of Catholic commoners. Like Barnewell and the Catholic lords, he would have been well contented with a free parliament and a free church under the titular sovereignty of the English king; and although he did not share with them the passion of loyalty to the throne, he would, like a chivalrous cavalier, have supported the throne against all enemies if imperative demands of patriotism had not made rebellion a bounden duty. With the outcast clansmen of Ulster and Wicklow he sympathized still more ardently, and his own scattered clan wafted from Leix to Kerry, and from Kerry to Connaught, clung with a wild fascination to the homes of their fathers, and made O'Moore readily understand how, in addition to poverty and hunger, heart-longing

embittered the lives of the evicted. An accomplished scholar, he mourned over an intellectual race brutalized by an inhuman system of government and law, since to use his own words national genius can only blossom in the light of national liberty, and political emancipation is the only road to the emancipation of the mind. When he finally came to the conclusion that all hopes from constitutional activity were vain, he looked abroad for guidance, and early in 1641 he put himself in direct communication with Owen Roe O'Neill. He had already made an extended and minute tour through all Ireland. Afterwards he approached some leading members of both Houses of Parliament, one of whom, Lord Maguire, has left an account of O'Moore's persuasiveness and skill which puts before us the work of the Irish leader during the year 1641 :—

> "Being in Dublin, Candlemas last was twelvemonth, the Parliament then sitting, Mr. Roger Moore did write to me desiring me that if I could in that spare time I would come to his House (for then the Parliament did nothing but sit and adjourn expecting a new commission), and I answered that I would; and thereupon he himself came to town presently and I went to see him at his lodging. He spoke of the many afflictions and sufferings of the natives, particularly in the late times of my Lord Strafford's Government, and he particularized the more ancient Irish natives as having suffered most, and how on several plantations they were all put out of their ancestors' estates. All which sufferings, he said, did beget a general discontent in both bodies of natives, to wit, the old and the new Irish. And if the gentry were disposed to free themselves they could never desire a more convenient time, the distempers in Scotland being then afoot. He asked me what I thought of all this. I said such things were out of my element. He then told me the gentry in Leinster and Connacht had been sounded by him, and to gain Ulster I came, said he, to speak to you. Then he spoke of my narrow estate, overwhelmed in debt, and the greatness of the estates of my ancestors. He next spoke of Catholic religion, and said I fear, and so do all understanding men, this Parliament intends the utter subversion of our religion. By this persuasion he obtained my consent. The next day he invited Mr. Reilly and I to dine with him, and after dinner he began again the discourse. He showed the feasibility of the project, troubles in Scotland, disunion in England, a large disbanded army (meaning the army raised by my Lord Strafford), all Irishmen and well-armed. He explained his plans. Each should endeavour to draw his own friends into the act Next, word should

be sent to Spain and the Low Countries, that a day should be set apart for a rising, and on that day we should seize all the arms on which we could lay hands. But nothing definite was to be fixed until we first sent word to the Irish oversea, and got their advice. Do not, said he, spend too much time in trying to win over the gentlemen to our side. If the Irish once rise, the Pale gentry will soon join or at least be neuters. Mr. Moore then said that next Lent he would make journey down into the North to know what was done there, and he spoke of a great man whose name we importuned him to give, and on long entreaty he told us it was the Lord of Mayo, and, said he, there is no doubt of him; no, no more than of myself. And we thereupon parted. The next Lent Mr. Moore went into the North; and, for that it was assize time, he readily met his friends. Neal O'Neill then came from Spain, sent by the Earl of Tyrone, with word that Cardinal Richelieu had promised succour, and that we should rise at All Hallowtide; but soon came news of Tyrone's death, being killed in Catalonia. Mr. Moore thereupon directed the messenger to repair to the Low Countries to Owen Roe O'Neill and acquaint him and see what he should advise. And Toole O'Connolly, a priest (parish priest, I think, to Mr. Moore) was also sent to Colonel Owen Roe O'Neill. And we came to know from Barnwell, a friar, that gentlemen of the Pale and other members of the house of Commons had meetings and consultations how they might prevent attempts against religion. And many colonels and captains landed out of Flanders who were under colour of transporting the disbanded soldiers to Spain, to lead them together against the Castle, and with the arms there to arm those in remote parts of the kingdom. The colonels spoke much of the plans of Owen Roe O'Neill, how he had considered of four great obstacles and how they were to be overborne. First, If war ensue, where can money be found to pay the soldiers? Secondly, How and where they could obtain foreign succour? Thirdly, How to draw in the Pale gentlemen? Fourthly, Who should undertake to surprise the Castle, and how it should be done? To the first it was answered : That the rents in the Kingdom everywhere, not having respect whose they should be, should be collected to pay the soldiers. To the second, it was said help would not fail. And (said the colonel) Owen O'Neill told me that he had or would procure arms (I do not remember which of these the colonel spoke, that Colonel O'Neill had arms or would procure arms) for ten thousand men. And (said he) I make no question, but if we send into Spain we shall not miss of aid. For I, being in London the last year in the Scots troubles, was in conference with the Spanish Ambassador, and talking of the

troubles then afoot, he said : That if the Irish did then rise too and send to Spain, their messengers would be received under canopies of gold. To the third one of the colonels (Plunkett) said he was morally certain (these were his words) that the Pale gentlemen would join. For, said he, I spoke to many and particularly to my Lord of Gormanstown, and they were all very ready and willing. Touching seizing the Castle, that was fixed after three or four meetings. Colonel Brian O'Neill came out of Flanders from Owen Roe, with a message that a day was to be fixed and that he would be with them on notice of that day. And Owen had told him that he had seen Cardinal Richelieu twice that year, and had comfortable and hopeful promises from him. And Ever MacMahon told us that Owen had always depended on French aid more than other. For, said he, I remember shortly after the Isle of Rhé enterprise (1629), being in the Low Countries I heard for certain that the colonel did send to France to the marshall then commanding, and he received answer that they were willing and eager, but there were Italian wars afoot, which, when settled, they should see what could be done. But these wars lasted long, and the enterprise for that time failed. Later in the month Mr. Moore came to me and told me that another messenger had come from Owen Roe, ordering the rising without delay, and to let him know fourteen days before hand, and he would be with us. And, said Mr. Moore, time is not to be overslipped. Then we arranged the plan for seizing the castle. Sir Phelim, Mr. Moore, Captain O'Neill, Ever MacMahon, and myself did fix on the 23rd of October, being that the day, which was Saturday, was the market day, on which day there should be less notice taken of people up and down the streets".

Roger O'Moore now made way for the chief to whom henceforth he gave his whole allegiance. The strength of the new movement lay in the leader abroad. Neither Roger O'Moore nor Lord Maguire nor Sir Phelim were military men. Of "the Five" who met to plan the attack on Dublin Castle two, Conn O'Neill and Ever M'Mahon, were special envoys of Owen himself from Brussels. The officer placed in general command in Ireland, Colonel Brian O'Neill, "came out of Flanders from Owen Roe" carrying full orders for the conduct of affairs. It was no longer to the feeble John, a mere nominal head of the O'Neills, that Irish patriots had to look; but to the worthy heir of a great name, a commander renowned on the fields of Europe. In the military rising now planned the sole director was Owen Roe O'Neill.

CHAPTER III.

THE LEADER ABROAD.

OWEN ROE or Don Eugenio O'Neill, the first leader of the Irish nation in its struggles for liberty, was the son of Art McBaron O'Neill, a younger brother of Hugh, the great Earl of Tyrone. The great-grandson of Con Bocagh first Earl of Tyrone, the great-grandson of the last great Earl of Kildare the father of Silken Thomas, he represented in his own person the two leading lines of the Ancient Irish and the Old English. In the rebellion of Hugh O'Neill against Elizabeth, Owen's father, Art McBaron, led the Irish troops in the stirring campaign of 1595, during which the line of the Blackwater was cleared of the English and the huge wooden castle built on the river banks was besieged and captured. In the succeeding years Art and his two sons, Cormac and Shane, commanded the men of Ulster in the battles near Lough Neagh, where they combined land and water operations with great skill and daring; but as Owen's name does not appear in any of the contemporary reports we may infer that he was at that time too young to bear arms. He was probably born in or about the year 1582. In his boyhood he saw the long and varied struggles against Elizabeth, and as he was about sixteen years old when Hugh won the great victory of the Yellow Ford, and twenty at the disaster of Kinsale, he was old enough to appreciate the striking events and varied fortunes of his great uncle's insurrection. After Hugh's submission at Mellifont, Owen, in common with many other young Irish gentlemen, sought a career on the Continent, and with his younger brother, Art, entered military service in the Spanish Netherlands, then and for many years the theatre of a great war. His father remained in Ireland, and the Dublin governors thought it prudent to leave him in undisturbed possession of very considerable territory; "because", as they explained, "he has two sons captains in the Archduke's army and a lusty blade at home". The Archduke's army was really the Spanish army as the Archduke was politically subject to the King of Spain. At the death of Charles V his vast empire fell asunder, and several states were constructed from its ruins. Ferdinand as Emperor ruled in Vienna over the Austrian dominions, while Spain, Burgundy, and the Netherlands came to the hands of Philip II. At Philip's deaths in 1598 his daughter, Clara Eugenia, and her husband, the Archduke Albert, acquired the Netherlands, where they

reigned under the strange title of “the Archdukes” until Albert’s death in 1635.

The long and trying years during which they governed are looked back upon by the people with love and veneration; and the “good Archdukes” are dear even now to the people of Flanders. It was of great importance to Owen in the course of his political development that he was schooled in a state which combined imperial unity with local freedom; and although he never elaborated any theories of government, yet from time to time he dropped hints which show that he would have willingly accepted an autonomy for Ireland on the lines of the free government of Flanders, yielding loyal obedience in imperial matters to a non-intermeddling suzerain. It must be always remembered that in Owen’s earlier years Ireland had never been a nation; for until the old tribal kingdoms were extinguished and until Palesmen and natives were involved in common suffering no feeling of common nationality could well arise. In the process of nation-making, therefore, Owen would have been most willing to pass through a period of honourable transition and compromise; and indeed there are indications that the germ of this principle came into his mind in Brussels, where under the very real overlordship of Philip III the Archdukes were left quite uncontrolled in all internal affairs. Analogies, however, usually fail at the most critical points and this is especially so with analogies of government. There were many causes of unrest and trouble in Ireland which were unknown in happier Flanders, and it is in no way certain that a copy of the Flemish constitution would have been a wise political prescription for the cure of Irish sufferings and wrongs. However, Owen saw in Flanders a striking instance of a free nation loyally attached for offence and defence to a state outside itself, as he saw in Brussels one of the most brilliant courts in Europe.

Into that brilliant court Irish gentlemen were warmly welcomed. O'Neills and O'Donnells met there side by side with the Gormanstown Prestons of the Pale, the Bourkes of Mayo, the O'Briens of Clare, and the Talbots and Dillons of the central counties of Ireland. Great scholars like Peter Lombard were encouraged and honoured, and famous physicians like Owen O'Shiel were received as confidants and friends into the Viceregal Palace. Ireland was well represented in all the higher walks of intellectual and social life; nor was she without worthy representatives in the less distinguished ranks and classes. Thousands of brave Irish soldiers did good service in these long Low Country wars, and in most of the Belgian towns the garrisons were largely made up of Irish clansmen serving under their chiefs, or of adventurous Palesmen or townsmen who had gone abroad to learn the soldier’s glorious trade.

In 1606, the names of Owen Roe and his brother Art first appear in the reports of English agents from Brussels. Both were then captains, and both were noticed as men upon whom a keen official watch should be kept, as rumours of conspiracies and plots were industriously circulated and possibly it was thought the Irish in Flanders were at that time planning a descent on Ireland. However, no such movement was then afoot, and indeed up to the flight of the Earls in 1609 no real danger threatened the peace of the Government in Dublin. Both the Earl of Tyrone and the Earl of Tyrconnell seemed contented with their lot, and although both must have mourned over the humiliations and disasters which had befallen upon their race, no symptom of rebellious intent could be detected by the most searching official eyes. But dark charges were made against O'Neill by anonymous detractors, and one of the Fermanagh Maguires, a captain in Brussels, warned him in time to fly from the plotters who were bent upon his ruin. Accordingly, on Holycross Day the two earls, O'Neill and Rory O'Donnell, sailed from Lough Swilly with kinsfolk and retainers numbering ninety-nine in all. Hugh O'Donnell had died some years before in Spain, and of his house none remained but Rory and Cathbar, and both left Lough Swilly together. They were accompanied by Cathbar's wife, "the Lady Rosa O'Dogherty", who soon after Cathbar's death became the wife of Owen Roe O'Neill. "Surely", said the Four Masters, "the winds never wafted from Erin a company more illustrious". Two great princely houses were left desolate, and the last chiefs of Ireland passed into the land of exile. They journeyed through France into Flanders, and there Owen Roe and his brother met the great head of the O'Neills, broken with age and with infirmities. The old chief went on to Rome, and Owen saw him no more; and in Rome, blind, worn, and heart-broken, he dragged on a few wretched years until death mercifully released him in 1616.

When the natural leader was gone, events forced Owen Roe into a commanding position. Two of Tyrone's sons had been struck down by the long arm of English assassination, and the one survivor, poor incapable John, was a futile substitute for his mighty father. In his empty and foolish life at Madrid where he mingled in those bright scenes of court life of which glimpses are given to us by the pencil of Velasquez, the only trace of his influence was to interfere from time to time in ecclesiastical appointments and to procure the nomination of a few bishops to Irish sees, which were posts of peril rather than of worldly dignity.

Thus it was that the Irish abroad while recognizing and respecting the heir of their great chief, began on all trying and difficult occasions to consult "his cousin-german, Colonel Owen O'Neill". And Owen's great qualities deeply impressed his countrymen, for to the intellectual powers necessary for leadership he added the reticence and self-command which are almost

equally essential. In all his enquiries and studies into means and materials and opportunities for an Irish rebellion he seemed cold, calculating, and impassive; but now and then there were indications of the soul of fire which burned under that icy surface. There never was a more patient, laborious, and methodical leader; the slightest detail he microscopically examined; all movements in England and Ireland were watched by him with calm vigilance, nothing seemed to escape him, nothing to ruffle or perturb. In 1628 and 1629 he was constantly in communication with Richelieu, and it speaks well for his political insight that he at all times looked rather to France than to Spain for help in an Irish war of liberation. The nets of the great Cardinal were too widely spread, and his encouragement of Owen ended in friendly assurances; but Owen Roe undoubtedly won the warm admiration of Richelieu, who corresponded with him as with one wielding great political and military power, and more than once in pauses of the great European drama the Cardinal returned to the question of Irish revolt, and held out hopes of help in arms, money and men. Ireland for the first time had left her insular moorings, and was mingling in the ocean movement of European politics; and in that trying time she found in Owen a leader well fitted for the task of guiding her new course. Bred as a soldier in "the only martial academy of Europe", he was still by gifts and training one of the ablest of diplomatists. If the Irish at home had in Roger O'Moore a high-minded and accomplished leader, the Irish abroad had in Owen Roe O'Neill much more than this; they had a great captain and a great man. To him they looked as to their acknowledged sovereign, and his home in Brussels was, during all the years spent in the careful weaving of national association, the heart and centre of the whole Irish movement. His noble wife, a queenly woman of pathetic grandeur, and as devotedly Irish as himself, inspired her countrymen with her own lofty courage. If Owen was the *de facto* head of the O'Neills, Lady Rosa from the death of her brother, Sir Cahir, was the *de facto* head of the O'Dogherty's, while her eldest boy, Cathbar O'Donnell's son, was pointed out by prophecy as the liberator of Tyr-Conaill. The three great Ulster clans, therefore, naturally looked to Owen and to his wife as to their rulers in exile. But if Lady Rosa, the grand-daughter of Shane O'Neill, strengthened Owen's claims to the active leadership of Ulster, Owen himself by blood and birth combined, like Roger O'Moore, the two great races of the Old Irish and the Old English of the Pale, while his commanding faculties won to him the ready obedience of the Wicklow "Byrnes and Tooles", and the Longford O'Ferralls, who filled his ranks with brave and fearless soldiers.

Owen's active leadership is distinctly traceable as far back as 1634, and in that year, remarkably enough, two men who subsequently became his most active emissaries—Heber McMahon and Daniel O'Neill— made journeys through most of Ireland. Heber McMahon is reported to have then

warned Sir George Ratcliffe of plots and conspiracies which had come to his knowledge; but he seems to have done so in such vague terms that the only effect of his communication was to divert attention from his own suspicious movements. Daniel O'Neill, Owen's nephew, came to Dublin fortified with recommendatory letters from the Elector Palatine to Strafford, and he was enabled as Strafford's favoured friend to learn much of the condition of Ireland, and the possibilities of success in an armed rising.

Both McMahon and Daniel were engaged in propaganda, and the results became visible very soon; for in the following year (1635) a great swarm of Leinster recruits came to Owen's regiment, which now numbered 3,000 men, and was fast becoming the training school for the approaching Irish war. This accession of Palesmen gave O'Neill's regiment a national, as distinguished from a tribal or provincial character, and was indeed the first effective step towards the confederation of the Old Irish and the English of the Pale. For the separation between the two had been rigidly maintained, even in exile, up to that year; and Colonel Thomas Preston, a skillful officer of the noble house of Gormanstown, had been looked upon as the natural leader of the Palesmen soldiering in Flanders, and Owen Roe as the leader of the Old Irish only. Preston had many advantages Over O'Neill in the recruiting of his forces. He found it easier to procure licenses from Strafford, and while the Ulstermen had to leave Ireland on chance ships under cover of darkness and storm, Preston's recruits marched openly to the nearest ports and embarked in the light of day, with the "God-speed" of their friends cheering them for the journey. Captain Thomas Tyrrell of Westmeath was licensed by Strafford, at Preston's request, to raise and transport 200 men to Flanders; but Preston bitterly complained that when Tyrrell landed he and his men "went off and joined the regiment of Owen O'Neill". The work of organization went on daily, and the Irish priests were Owen's most zealous coadjutors. Law had reduced the Catholic Church in Ireland to the position of an illegal secret association, and clandestine worship was now accompanied by appeals to the faithful to rise in their wrath against the insolent oppressors of their race and their creed. A great insurrection seemed ominously to impend. But European events intervened, and the tidal movements on the Continent swept asunder the Irish in Flanders from the Irish at home, so that for some years there was no possibility of joint action between them.

The great Cardinal Minister of France began in 1634 that tremendous duel with the House of Austria on which he had for so many years set his heart. When Richelieu moved, he moved like a fierce black cloud clothed in terror, and he burst like a bolt of thunder on the Spanish possessions. In the failing ears of Father Joseph he was able to announce "Breisach is ours, Joseph; Breisach is ours", as his strange mysterious familiar lay dying in his

arms. And for six years that war raged through the Netherlands, and everywhere in the front of the fight was "the Irish regiment of the Count of Tyrone", under the command of Don Eugenio. But whether in garrison or on the field, Owen Roe never abated his zealous watchfulness over the Irish preparations for war. During the siege of Aire the Irish regiment was encamped outside the lines of the French besiegers, and Owen's tent was the council-chamber of the whole Irish race. From his majordomo, Henry Cartan, we learn many interesting particulars of his labours at this time. Messengers from Ireland came constantly to him, and there repaired unto him Colonel Hugh McPhelim O'Byrne, who had been a captain in Tyrone's regiment in Spain. And he remained with Colonel O'Neill four and twenty hours, most of which was spent in private conference. And the said Hugh McPhelim was overheard to say, "We are to adventure our lives for the succoring of a scabbed town of the King of Spain, where we may lose our lives, and we cannot expect any worse than death if we go into our own country and succour it". "And shortly after there came to the camp of Aire an Irish friar, one of the O'Neills disguised, who remained with the said Owen about six days and then departed, and Captain Brian O'Neill, a cousin of Colonel Owen's, came there too, and shortly after the friar and the captain were said to be gone to Ireland".

Cartan tells us that at this siege O'Neill lost a map or chart of Ireland, in which were set out full particulars of all the towns, roads, fortresses, harbours, castles, and other special features of Ireland, all marked in cipher, as well as estimates and biographies of all the most important people in Ireland, all under assumed names; Sir Phelim O'Neill was known as President Rosse, Daniel O'Neill was Louis Lanois, Leinster was 'Valois', and Ulster 'Brabant'. The resources of each district were carefully and fully set out, and all the ties or differences which bound or separated families in high places were elaborately detailed. We are told that Owen deeply deplored the loss of this chart, and only when a copy was brought to him from Ireland did he rest from anxiety and grief. He could indeed ill afford the loss, as the time was one of special activity; for already Roger O'Moore had notified to him the state of affairs in Ireland, and busy as Owen was with military operations, he now more than ever directed and controlled every detail of the insurrectionary plans.

From 1634 onward while Owen was engaged in organizing the Irish race into a great military brotherhood, his kinsmen were his chief coadjutors in the work. His brother Art died young, leaving a son, Hugh, who was ripening into early manhood when Owen's great task began. Hugh was a silent retiring man, and a fearless warrior; indeed his subsequent defense of Clonmel (1650) shows him to have been a soldier to the heart's core; but he was little fitted for the subtle stratagems of secret plots and conspiracies,

and Owen but rarely put his services into requisition. Con and Neal O'Neale were his ablest envoys to Ireland, passing to and fro so often and so rapidly that it was said “how wonderful it is with what celerity the Irish abroad learn what takes place in Ulster”. Art McGuinness, the son of one of Owen’s sisters, a friar and a man of learning, a cadet of the noble house of Iveagh and Clandeboy, served Owen in many delicate and perilous embassies to Roger O'Moore, to Lord Antrim, and to Sir Phelim O'Neill. Another nephew and priest, Father Hartigan, was sent by Owen Roe to stir up the Gaels of the Scottish Highlands where he was labouring to organize a great Celtic League; and was also his envoy to Father Luke Wadding at Rome, and to Richelieu’s brother, the Archbishop of Bordeaux. But by far the most remarkable of the nephews of Owen Roe was the brilliant and versatile Daniel, known to the secret association as “Louis Lanois”, and to royalists by the nick-name of “Infallible Subtle”; “much superior in subtlety and understanding”, says Lord Clarendon, “to the whole nation of the Old Irish”. He was a man of irresistible personal charm, of extraordinary dash and fertility of resource; brilliant, light-hearted, and of irrepressible humours, “a great observer and discerner of men’s nature and humours”, and although withal inclined to ease and luxury, his industry was indefatigable when his honour required it. Daniel had been trained at the English court, and he passed many years between the court and the Low Countries, the winter in one, and the summer campaigning in the other, “which was as good an education”, says Clarendon, “as that age knew any”. He was never checked by nice scruples : “I shall not let the devil have odds of me” was the motto of questionable morality by which he intimated his willingness on occasion to use the devil's methods. His life was one unbroken romance. He went on perilous missions from King Charles to his sister the fair Queen of Bohemia and her husband “the Winter King”; he was the close friend of Prince Rupert, and the favourite pupil of Archbishop Laud. Under his uncle, Owen, he fought through the campaigns of 1635 and 1636; when the troubles broke out in Scotland in 1637, he obtained a commission in the Royal Army, and in the rout at Newburn, next year, he was made prisoner having been left for dead upon the field, but was liberated shortly after. As the great troubles grew Daniel became more and more active, and he was implicated at one and the same time in the two great army plots in England, and in the great national movement of the Irish. Very likely the royal prerogative, then in peril from the attacks of the violent parliamentarians, seemed to him the only bulwark against Puritan intolerance and persecution. An O'Neill of the O'Neills himself (for father and mother were of the clan), he had been educated a Protestant, and as a Protestant he lived and died. Indeed his leaning to royalism is in no way strange when his early surroundings and associations are remembered.

But there was probably another and a most cogent reason. The king in the early months of 1641 was in close communication with the Catholic noblemen and gentry of the Pale; and although there is no formal proof of his active participation in any of their designs there is little doubt that he gave countenance and encouragement to their plans against the Puritan 'usurpers' in Dublin. It is, therefore, not to be wondered that Daniel while maintaining his close correspondence with Owen Roe, and while taking his counsel in all emergencies, entangled himself at the same time with the Gordons and Astleys who were then busily employed in winning over the army and navy to the side of the king against the Puritan Long Parliament. In one of these adventurous enterprises Daniel was detected, and his life was in peril. He escaped for the moment to Brussels, but returning soon after he was made prisoner and committed to the Tower. Articles of impeachment were drawn up by Pym, and the impeachment was moved by "Mr. John Hampden". From the alleged acts of treason enumerated Daniel's procedure in his dangerous work is laid bare, and we may see the working of that subtle mind which, Clarendon tells us, exercised "an extraordinary influence over all by the marvelous dexterity of his nature". When seeking to rouse troopers against the Houses he was reported to have said :— "Many things are now done by parliament to the king's great disadvantage, and it were well and wisely done if the army petitioned parliament, taking good care that its petition should be respectfully heard". These were dangerous words, and Daniel's life was in danger. But while "Mr. John Hampden" was thundering against him and Irish Papists, the Constable of the Tower came with the news that "Mr. O'Neill had gotten out during the night". Then indeed there was an outcry. Proclamation followed proclamation; but it was shrewdly feared that the admirals at the ports had been tampered with by Daniel, and at any rate it came to pass that he reached Brussels in safety, and became again the subtlest counsellor of his illustrious uncle, the one man against whose intellect he confessed himself unwilling to pit his own; for "that subtle man", said he, "is beyond my sounding". Under Owen's directions Daniel's services were priceless, and at this conjuncture, free as he was from heady enthusiasms, with his compelling convictions and indomitable will, he became Owen Roe's most powerful auxiliary. Later on he returned to England, became Gentleman of the Bedchamber to King Charles, fought in many battles and took part in many negotiations; and after a young manhood of incredible adventure he closed his life in leisured ease dying in an old manor house in Kent while holding the office of Postmaster-General for the Three Kingdoms, and leaving as his widow the accomplished Countess of Chesterfield. Surely of all that remarkable group of O'Neills who gathered round Owen Roe the most striking and dramatic figure was that of the slim lithe young gentleman described in the Hue and Cry of May, 1642, as "slight built, of a sanguine complexion, no beard, auburn hair, about thirty years of age".

Such were Owen's instruments abroad; at home, however, his kinsmen were equally in the forefront of the National movement. One nephew, Lord Maguire, was the only peer among the earliest of those who took part with O'Moore; Lord Antrim, Owen's cousin, who linked the Celts of Scotland with the Celts of Ireland, and whose hardy isles men were to the northeastern seaboard of Ireland what the fearless O'Flaherties were to the Atlantic coast and to the Shannon estuary, was friendly from the outset, and eventually joined Sir Phelim. Sir Phelim himself was not only an O'Neill, but so close to the chiefly line that he laid claim to the succession, while his own natural incapacity was shielded by the wise counsels of his brother Turlough, "a deep, sad man, well seen in the laws of England". But if the movement was practically an O'Neill confederacy, Owen and his nephews and his noble wife inspiring and directing all, there were other families in Ireland willing to join in a national uprising. The O'Byrnes of Wicklow were active. Able and daring soldiers of the name and clan had joined the Spanish army. One of them especially, a brave, resolute, staunch man, Hugh M'Phelim, became a captain in Catalonia, but rank in Spain had little charm for him, and he longed for work at home for the old cause; he became a very close friend of Owen's. Another intimate and valued follower was Ever M'Mahon, afterwards Bishop of Clogher. Only the Connaught Irish were overcast and cowed, and had little fight left in them. Lord Clanrickarde dominated the province, surrounded by sleek and prosperous official Catholics, he too being a Catholic and apparently a learned and thoughtful one. Mr. Geoffrey Browne, Mr. Patrick Darcy, and Mr. Richard Martin, composed his conclave of friendly advisers—all deeply trained lawyers who saw in constitutional agencies the only feasible course of national redress, and were in sympathy with Roger O'Moore, although they thought he aimed too high. They themselves would have been well pleased with Emancipation from Elizabeth's penal statutes and the repeal of Poynings' Law and shrank from any bolder programme; as a valuable record of the time says :—"I see none of these Connaughtmen as constant as gentlemen should be". In circumstances thus confused and distracted, it was all the more unfortunate that the great counsellor and leader Owen O'Neill, was cut off from all communication with his countrymen, and while they groped their way unguided he was holding three French armies at bay behind the feeble fortifications of Arras.

CHAPTER IV.

O'NEILL AS COMMANDER

SPAIN had been raised to greatness by Cardinal Ximenes and for a century she overtopped all rivals on the continent. Through the genius of an even greater Cardinal, Richelieu, France had risen during the second quarter of the seventeenth century into the foremost rank of European powers. Two great powers contending for the mastery were thus brought face to face; and it was inevitable that before long there should be a collision between them and a decisive conflict for supremacy. Richelieu determined to strike the first blow, and he seized his opportunity skillfully. He had brought all France into obedience. He had swept out of his path all who hampered him, princes, nobles, Marshals of France; and in 1640, collecting the French armies into one great host at Amiens, he burst upon the Spanish frontier hoping at one blow to crush and stun the enemy. The Spaniards in Flanders had indeed anticipated an attack, though they utterly mistook the point of danger. They expected the French army at Bethune or Doullens or Douai, and Richelieu's generals by their movements and dispositions before actual fighting began fostered this belief. The Spanish armies were commanded by the brother of King Philip IV of Spain, the Cardinal-Infant, then of about thirty-seven years of age, an officer who had seen much real service. The chief of his staff, Don Philip de Silva, acted under him as General, of the Forces in Artois. Count Issenbourg served under Don Philip as Governor of the town and fortress of Arras. An old decayed town of little military importance, a fortress of a former age, antiquated in design, with crumbling walls and ruined works, Arras lay in a poor posture of defense, and no serious resistance seemed possible. Its very antiquity, however, appealed to that strange romance which lay deep down in Richelieu's terribly practical nature. Caesar had sat down before these walls; why should not Louis and his minister do so too? Richelieu ordered the siege in May, 1640. The Spaniards had denuded Arras of troops; drafts were made upon the garrison to strengthen Bethune and Doullens and Douai, no one in the Spanish service dreaming of an immediate attack on the old town of the Atrebates. But at two o'clock in the afternoon of the 15th of June, 1640, the sentinels on the old towers of Mont St. Eloi (a famous monastery six miles from the walls, once the home of the great Celtic scholar Alcuin), saw the brilliant army of Marshal de Chatillon advancing in splendour and pride from one side, while a few minutes later they saw from the other side the

hosts of the famous Marshal de Meilleraye, deploying and emerging into sight on the road from Cambrai. Bells were tolled; trumpets sounded; the alarm rang through the city. Arras was invested.

At that moment the town was without ramparts or earthworks or other defenses that could resist attack; and there was no responsible commander within the walls. The younger French generals (among others D'Enghien, afterwards the illustrious Condé) were for an instant assault; but cooler counsels prevailed, and Arras was allowed breathing time. A council was formed in the town, consisting of prominent citizens and a few soldiers, one being "Don Eugenio O'Neill, Irish Colonel, a chief of great experience". Councils are not suitable for martial undertakings. Less than ever are they so when as in Arras local patriotism reaches the point of wild fanaticism. The town and the townsmen were the only objects of the civilians' care; but soldiers have at times to consider whether, with a view to the wider interests of the campaign, the town itself should not be immolated, even though one stone should not be left upon another. This difference of aim affects conduct from the first moment of investment. The scientific soldier acts with reference to the main purposes of the whole war, the townsmen would fain precipitate themselves at once upon the enemy, putting all to the hazard of one rash hour. These difficulties tore the council at Arras asunder, and nothing was heard but mutual charges and recriminations. Before five days had passed, however, a sealed packet arrived from Don Philip de Silva addressed to Don Eugenio O'Neill in which he stated that His Eminence, the Cardinal-Infant, was graciously pleased to assign the command of the town to O'Neill, and he further nominated a council including among others Baron d'Erre, the Governor of the town, to assist Don Eugenio in the direction of the defense.

Steps were at once taken by the new commander to put the town in a better condition. It was too late to send away the surplus population. But the buildings in the suburbs which had been allowed to stand, were at once doomed to demolition. Churches, monasteries, academies, and private mansions were destroyed, and nothing left outside the walls which could offer shelter to the enemy. Some persons of rank wished to leave; but O'Neill sternly refused; all should stand or fall together. Iron discipline is very trying to townsmen accustomed to democratic rule; and there was from the outset considerable friction between Owen and the citizens. It was really the most difficult part of his task to bring turbulent and brave townsmen to understand that there is a time when inactivity is a supreme martial virtue, and when raw valour may be deadly. Here with 1,500 men Owen was holding in check an army of over 30,000 French, led by three marshals (Meilleraye, Chatillon, and Chaulnes), and inspired by the superintending genius of Richelieu. Each day was a gain in the game of war. The French

had taken with them provisions for a month. The armies of Spain and Lorraine were round them on most points of the compass; and now, when the news of the investment spread, these armies were strengthened by drafts from garrisons; and by the whole military force of Flanders which rose like one man to liberate beloved Arras. The French generals were superb soldiers. In three weeks they had completed a double line of fortifications round their camps, and at regular distances forts and redoubts strengthened these defenses. These works ran round Arras in a circumference of fifteen miles. Meilleraye's headquarters were fixed at Sailly, between Douai and Cambrai, protected by a marsh and by the river Scarpe, which winds slowly in the plain near Arras. Chatillon and Chaulnes were at Bray, outside Mont St. Eloi. And a grisly soldier of fortune, named Rantzau, who had accompanied Oxenstiern when the famous Swedish Chancellor visited Richelieu in 1634 and was now in the French service, was in charge of Croats and other irregulars who were ready for the hottest work of the war. Trenches were dug round every encampment twelve feet wide and ten feet deep, and the French sat down in a great entrenched circular camp, using the outlying heights as points of strength.

From these heights, indeed, the enemy commanded the whole circumference of the town. Arras itself lies on a low mound which is lifted from the bottom of a hollow or basin, the basin itself being surrounded by a series of heights which form an almost regular circle, enclosing it with a kind of cup-like rim. The town on its low mound surrounded by walls forms an inner ring of defense of about two miles in ambit, and from the walls a slope of half a mile falls downwards into the hollow. A gentle ascent of about two miles or so leads up on all sides to the encircling range of heights where the great outer ring of French offensive works lay in an ambit of "five leagues". The French had Swedes, Dutch, Croats, and Swiss in their ranks; while the garrison consisted of Italians, Spaniards, Flemings, Croats, and about four hundred Irishmen of "Tyrone's regiment". O'Neill was harassed by the foolish patriots of the town who asked him to make sallies; the men of Arras never feared death, they said, and they were ready to face any enemy. Partly by genial raillery and partly by stern command, Owen abated their unruliness. They were quite welcome, he told them, to march out whenever they pleased, and whatever happened would be serviceable to the arms of the king. "For if you succeed", he reasoned, "you will have clearly promoted the king's interest; while if you are all killed you will have lightened the burden of useless mouths which the town has now to bear". But would he order the soldiers to support them? "Oh, certainly not, every soldier is needed for some work. He cannot be exposed madly". He paid little heed to noisy complaints against the soldiers, and although the sternest of disciplinarians, he found excuses from any lapse from duty reported by the jealous citizens. Rantzau's Croats had nearly captured one gate where a

sentry, fatigued by long watching, did not see the enemy until they had reached the counterscarp. A deputation came from the Hotel de Ville to the Grande Place, near which, hard by the gate of San Michel, the general had his headquarters. He listened carefully, silently. They pressed him to speak. "Yes", said he reflectively, "it is a pity we soldiers have not learned to do without sleep". The townsmen soon ceased their complainings as they found the mettle of the man with whom they had to deal; and the soldiers more than ever loved and honoured their commander.

Sallies were speedily made under his direction on the night of the 20th of June. Rantzau had been carousing—was "quite drunk", says the outspoken chronicler; suddenly he found himself surrounded by soldiers from the garrison and by the troopers of Lamboy (most dashing of Spanish cavalry officers), and yelling out meaningless words, "cursing terribly", he was of small help to his poor soldiers, whose bodies lay in scores on the plain, cut down in a fight in which they and their kin far away in Croat villages had little interest or concern. Vigilant Meilleraye hurled his horse against the assailants; rescued Rantzau, after his arm had been cut off by a sword-stroke, and drove away the Spaniards, who retreated doggedly to camp and town. Next night new sallies were made which were repulsed by Chatillon and the light cavalry. Lamboy at all times hung menacing on the flank of the French swift as the storm in movement and in attack. He had fixed his camp at Sailly, eight miles from Arra, and five miles away from the French outposts. There with 8,000 dashing cavaliers; he held his watch, ever ready to swoop down and to destroy. With 2,000 picked sabres he tried to break in to Arras. He was met by Meilleraye, ever vigilant, ever ready. Lamboy and his men fought like lions; but they were overcome, forced back, pent up, and to all appearance lost; when a sally from the garrison, admirably conducted, saved them at the critical moment, and Meilleraye was chased back headlong to his lines. In the closing days of June the Spaniards massed and concentrated their troops for a mighty effort. The Cardinal-Infant at the head of the stately regulars of Spain, the Duke of Lorraine with his own quota and German auxiliaries, Ludovic and his Croats, and all the added strength of Flanders, moved majestically in converging lines until they pitched their tents within sight of the French entrenchments. The lines were examined. The positions were reconnoitered. It was decided after debate that an attack involved too much peril. They determined to besiege the besiegers, and so established a gigantic blockade, cutting off all ingress and egress from the French.

The French, so surrounded, never lost heart. Food was growing visibly scarce and actual famine threatened them; but never for an instant was there heard one murmur or one complaint from all that mighty host marshalled under the French lilies. The great Richelieu knew well the

imminence of the peril. He dispatched convoys of food. Meilleraye, tireless and watchful, took 1,500 horsemen and galloped away at midnight to meet and escort the convoy. Bucquoy (whose father had defended Arras bravely in 1597) had been sent with an equal force on the Spanish side to protect their convoy coming from Cambrai; and without design or prearrangement both forces met, and after a terrible fight victory remained with the French. This relieved the besiegers immensely. They had food for some days, and their ammunition was plenty. On July 1st Meilleraye pushed the lines nearer to Arras, and the circle narrowed to a circumference of about ten miles. The Spaniards thought this a fit opportunity for a main assault; but the French repulsed them with awful carnage. On the 4th the trenches were opened, and one of the most terrible bombardments of the 17th century began. The Church of St. Lawrence stood nearly half a mile outside the line of the city walls. In clearing the suburbs this church was left standing, although O'Neill had given orders for its demolition. Seeing it standing, he ordered men to occupy it and strengthen it by outworks, and in some of the sallies it gave valuable shelter and protection. Now, however, the indefatigable Meilleraye formed a redoubt in front of it, and poured shot and shell into the building. A mine exploded and shattered the whole building, and the French rushed to the attack. They only found seven Irish musketeers, all the rest having retreated; and these brave men held at bay 300 French and Swiss until the cannons were ordered to play upon them, whereupon they surrendered. This church was now made one of Meilleraye's strong posts. He pushed his works nearer and nearer, until by the 7th of July only 150 yards intervened between his lines and the half-moon protecting the gate of St. Nicholas. But outside, like a circumambient fate, hung the Spaniards, and the town showed no sign of yielding. To make an assault in the presence of the Spanish army would be madness, yet what was to be done? A council of war was held in Meilleraye's tent. The three marshals could come to no decision, and it was determined to submit the matter to Richelieu for his direction. The answer of the great Minister is preserved, and it is a valuable illustration of the fact that men of real genius know their own limits at least in practical affairs, and leave special work to specialists :—"I am not a soldier, nor capable of giving advice on such a question, though I never could see why anyone should quit lines to fight enemies in the open. The king has given you three the command of his armies because he believed you capable. It matters little to him whether you stay in your lines or issue out of them. But your business is war and mine is to govern France; and if you fail in taking Arras I shall take your heads".

The marshals now, indeed, set vigorously to work. Four batteries incessantly thundered on the devoted city. Owen had much to do to hold in the turbulent and ebullient multitude, eager and daring, but as foolhardy as they were brave; and a man grown grey in the wars of the time must surely

have smiled when boys twelve years old came clamouring for arms (as their admiring panegyrist says), and declaring their readiness to sweep away the "accursed French". A sally was made on the 18th July. The citizens gathered in great strength at the gate of St. Nicholas, near which the French batteries were now planted. The citizens bravely stormed the works, and destroyed much of the half-moon which the enemy had captured. They were oppressed and overpowered with numbers, and retreating flung away their muskets "because they had no powder", they said, and therefore they "flung them at the enemy". The great gate of St. Michel, close to Owen's quarters, was blown up next day by the French engineers, and the Irish garrison there barely escaped with their lives. All round the terrible circle of fire and iron was closing in. Public buildings and private habitations came crashing in ruin as the guns thundered. The Chapel de Ste. Chandelle was tumbled to the ground; the great belfry of the cathedral was shattered; hospitals, mills, and factories were destroyed, and every street and square was ploughed with the infernal hail. Yet the citizens bore up bravely. They shouted out pleasantries, they sang exulting songs :—

Les François prendront Arras,

Quand ce chat prendra ces rats.

A few small convoys came to the French and saved them from utter famine. Important relief reached them at the close of the month. The enemy, informed by their spies that our convoy was coming by the road to Ancre, hurried their troops to intercept our relief. A number of waggons soon came in sight, moving along, as it seemed, slowly and ponderously. The waggoners turned the horses' heads when they saw the enemy, who at once gave chase. But the waggons were light, and rushed swiftly back to Corbie. While the enemy wasted time chasing empty waggons, 600 well-stored ones, full of sound provisions, and accompanied by bullocks, cows, and sheep to a great number, passed by the road from Doullens to our camp without even once meeting an enemy. The Spaniards were seriously in want of provision at this time. They found it very hard to seal the French within their lines; the extent of the works and the many roads through the fiat country necessitated an almost innumerable army to close in a besieging camp of 30,000 men; and French forces set free in other places preyed and burnt the outlying country which the massing of Spanish troops had left exposed. From Dunkirk to Gravelines was overrun, and the town of Art was burned after a brave defense by the inhabitants, all soldiers having been called away, "*à cause du fameux siége d'Arras*".

On the 28th July a terrible assault was made by Meilleraye on another half moon protecting one of the gates. He was met with musket balls, red hot iron-grenades *et feux d'enfer*? French dash eventually prevailed,

although at terrible cost, and a lodgment was made; but the whole garrison, with O'Neill in charge, drove the besiegers out again and hurled them back to their own lines. Next night Meilleraye, covered by a terrible artillery fire, again seized the position and filled it with an overwhelming force. His miners now worked like demons under the city walls, while *pique a pique* the fight went on incessantly above. On the night of the 30th the mine played, and left a gaping breach in the battlements. Meilleraye ordered an assault, and on the ramparts a fearful carnage took place. O'Neill ordered all who could carry arms to advance. The citizens fought heroically. They attacked redoubts of the enemy, and, prodigal of their lives, rushed up to the very mouths of the batteries. A Swiss regiment was nearly cut to pieces. But the grip on the walls was unloosened, and the French, though mown down in hundreds, stood firm as rocks until, after four hours' indescribable butchery, Milleraye was left in possession of the breach. He had paid dearly for his success, and the French were so crippled by their losses that they made no further attempt for some days upon the town. Meantime other movements were going on. Richelieu had despatched from Amiens another army containing "*toute notre noblesse et gens de main à rompre ces obstacles*". Amore brilliant army never set out on a campaign. The Sieur du Hallier was in command. The Doullens route being clear, rendezvous was fixed in that direction; and Meilleraye was informed of the plans. Always ready, that able leader collected a few thousand men, and in a famous night march sped to the defiles of Beaufort, where he remained masked and hidden, awaiting the arrival of Du Hallier. Du Hallier had reached Doullens in the evening, and two hours after midnight he set out towards Arras. When he had marched four leagues and the morning began to fleck the sky, he heard a welcoming shout; and then arose "a joy and a military acclamation enough to kindle the iciest hearts, as thousands of brave men, with one voice, cried out 'Long life to France and to the King'."

A thousand waggons now lumbered across the plains in slow security. All the roads were opened. Arras was indeed doomed. At this moment General Lamboy urged the Cardinal-Infant to break the French lines, weakened by the absence of Meilleraye and his men. The Cardinal was at the time very ill. Although only in his thirty-seventh year, the sands of life were nearly run out. He was undecided. Philip de Silva sent word to O'Neill to have the garrison ready to co-operate. O'Neill called a council in the Grande Place, and discussed the plans; himself and his son, Henry Roe, were to lead the Irish in person, and the great gate of San Michel was to be the place of *sortie*. Unfortunately time was wasted. That Spanish and Austrian slowness on which the great Napoleon always reckoned paralysed the purpose of Lamboy and O'Neill. It was only at three in the afternoon of August the 2nd that the trumpets sounded, and one of the bloodiest engagements of the time began. Lamboy, by prearrangement with O'Neill,

made a pretended attack on Rantzau's quarters; and then, suddenly wheeling, spurred for the river Scarpe towards a detached fort near the French lines which Chatillon had made his central position. O'Neill's movements were nearly similar. He threw out the Croats and some citizens *pour amuser les notres*; while he and Henry, with eight squadrons of cavalry, galloped to the help of Lamboy. "It is impossible", says a French report, "to describe the deeds of arms and the brilliant actions which passed on both sides. Marshal de Chatillon, among others, not satisfied to direct as a general, became once more a trooper, and threw himself into the thick of the battle". The regiment of Ronceroles held the fort; and they defended it with indomitable bravery. But O'Neill swept them from it after two hours' fighting, and he and Lamboy joined hands. Chatillon hurried up the Guards, the regiments of Champagne, Navarre, and Piedmont, and other fresh forces. After a terrible conflict they drove Lamboy and O'Neill out of the fort; but before they could settle into it the Spaniards, Italians, and Irish with loud hurrahs carried it again at the point of the bayonet. The French were driven back in confusion, leaving three generals and many officers dead upon the field. And then under the blazing sun "they advanced so near our lines as nearly to become masters of them". The Cardinal-Infant who had made a strong attack on the lines of de Chaulnes now brought up his forces; so that a general battle took place in this quarter. The battle sounds reached the ears of outlying bodies of the French; and the volunteers under the Grand Escuyer of France came up two thousand strong, and took the Spaniards in flank. These brave volunteers had been in garrison, as they were old and ill and feeble; but they answered the call of France, and fought with the heart and zeal of the youngest. Generals on each side fought like ordinary soldiers, for at this stage valour and stamina were to determine the result. Quarter was not given on either side, "because there was no time to ask quarter, or if any asked he could not be heard, all ears were so stunned with the roaring of cannon, the rattle of musketry, the clashing of swords, and the cries of battle". So the battle raged and roared, armies tumbling like billows to and fro when the mighty forces under Du Hallier and Meilleraye came swarming across the plain. The shock of their onset was tremendous. The Spaniards reeled and staggered, struck back feebly, and then sullenly retreated; but the young French nobility, blooded for glory, came charging at full speed and the brave Spanish warriors, abandoning the fort, were driven back, broken and torn by the onset, their ranks raked by the French guns which now incessantly belched fire.

O'Neill brought all his survivors into the walls, and sheltered a few hundred others whose retreat has been cut off, and so after ten hours of terrific slaughter, the French remained masters of their lined and the Spanish army was sent broken and beaten into space. Relief for Arras was no longer possible. Marshal Meilleraye, wishing to be merciful, wrote to

O'Neill expressing his personal admiration, and pointing out to him the uselessness of prolonging the defence now that there was no longer any fear of famine in the French camp, and the Spaniards could by no possibility come to the relief of the town, Don Eugenio replied that he had never relied upon the wants of the French or the help of the Spaniards, but upon his own proper resolution and the vigorous defence of the town by those under his command, who were resolved to perish upon the breach sooner than surrender. But the townsmen were now utterly panic-stricken. The municipal authorities met in the Hôtel de Ville, and resolved that Don Eugenio should be requested to treat with the enemy. O'Neill refused. "Then the said townsmen went to the Council of Artois and requested that without a moment's delay the President of the Council, the Bishop of Arras, and the Provost of the merchants should accompany the mayor and municipal body and join them in begging the camp master, Don Eugenio O'Neill, not to imperil the town, but to treat with the besiegers. The deputation came to the Grande Place. O'Neill was inexorable. Then the Abbe of St. Vaast, Owen's intimate friend, joined in the supplication, and he implored O'Neill to save the lives of those who had shown such constant bravery during the siege". Nothing could move that firm and constant mind. He told them gently that it could not be. He and they were bound as faithful men to hold the town for his Majesty. Full of terror, the townsmen sent out two messengers, one to Meilleraye, and one to the Cardinal-Infant. They proposed negotiations with Meilleraye, and they appealed to the Cardinal to displace O'Neill by some more popular general. Meilleraye congratulated them on their good sense, and the wisdom they displayed in saving their town from these Spanish soldiers who cared nothing for them or for Arras. The Cardinal replied that he and his royal brother, the King of Spain, had unlimited trust in the skill, loyalty, and devotion of Don Eugenio O'Neill, and he charged the citizens on their allegiance to obey him. O'Neill had not yet abandoned hope. He thought that by holding out he was rendering an important service, to the Spaniards. Meilleraye, on the other hand, felt every hour's delay a disgrace to the great army of nearly 100,000 men, now idly held before a garrison of 1,500. He brought artillery into closer position and he was preparing for the most furious cannonading that Arras had yet felt, when messengers came from the Cardinal-Infant to Owen stating that no advantage could be gained to the armies of the king by his further resistance, and laying it upon himself to say whether it were not more humane to treat.

Owen was full of anxieties. Next day a further breach was made in the walls by a mine, and rope bridges and fascines were advanced for a general scaling of the walls. Meilleraye now implored Owen to yield, and offered all possible mitigation of the surrender. The townsmen were insane with terror.

Owen summoned a council of soldiers and civilians. The “notables”, lay and ecclesiastical, passionately appealed to him to make terms for them and to avoid bloodshed. Negotiations were opened, and on the afternoon of the 9th August they were completed. There were nine military articles, and thirty-one civil; all most honourable, and all most honourably kept. That evening the Spanish troops were to leave the town, and the French were to enter. But although the garrison came out, entrance by the besiegers was deferred until next morning; and the soldiers rested peaceably side by side with their brave conquerors. Next morning the whole garrison were under arms. The officers who had slept in Arras came out and headed them. Then with drums beating and colours flying, and matches lit, they faced for Douay. French chivalry was touched. The superb army of the French king presented arms to their brave adversaries, and the courtly Meilleraye (gentle as he was heroic) said to O'Neill:—“Your bravery, Colonel O'Neill, has added to the lustre of our achievement. You surpassed us in all things, save fortune”. And the two brilliant soldiers passed out of each other’s lives for ever. The cannon of the town were to have been brought away; but the citizens higgled over them, saying that they belonged to the town and not to the King of Spain; so Owen gave them his contemptuous consent, and they retained the guns. And—it is noteworthy—“Te Deum was chanted in the principal church of the city next day, and the Bishop of Auxerre officiated amid tempestuous popular acclamations of *Vive le Roy de France*?”

So ended “*ce memorable siége sur lequel toute l’Europe avoit les yeux fichez*”; stoutly fought as became cavaliers and soldiers; death ever present, but courtesy softening much; the turning point in the fortunes of two great powers—one driven to the downward road, and the other moving higher and higher into civil and martial glory.

CHAPTER V.

THE INSURECTION

DUBLIN in 1641 contained about 20,000 inhabitants. The two Cathedrals and the Castle were the chief buildings within the precincts of the capital; immediately round them lay the ancient city, girdled about by mouldering walls four hundred years old, through which a few gates of great antiquity gave entrance. But outside the ramparts new private mansions were springing up. Chichester House was in the suburbs. Stately town houses were beginning to rise in Dame Street, where the Earl of Kildare lived, with other nobles and men of rank. Trinity College, founded out of the spoils of All-Hallows, lay conveniently near Dublin, and the meadows stretching down to the Liffey were the exercising play-ground of the students. Stephen's Green was an open space, much resorted to by the citizens when they were not deterred by the O'Byrnes and O'Tooles, who sometimes pitched their camps too dangerously near the place, hiding themselves in the woods of Ranelagh, from which they made swift and daring raids up to the city walls. Wooden bridges spanned the river, and few houses or streets had yet arisen on the northern side. Round Mary's Abbey there were gentlemen's houses, flanked by wine shops and taverns. The river was little used except for lugger boats which deposited goods at the quays. Ringsend was the chief landing place, although Howth was of some commercial importance. The streets were scarcely paved, and orders were issued from time to time by Parliament for the carrying off of the noisome heaps of refuse which were allowed to collect in the open spaces opposite each door. No Catholic church was to be seen. But on inquiry one would be guided into a pestiferous bye-way, where some poor priest was courageous enough to say Mass by stealth to a trembling congregation. The Catholic Archbishop of Dublin, Thomas Fleming, lived in a few rooms in Cook Street. The abortive Catholic University in Back Lane was now a mere lecture room in the hands of the Board of Trinity College. All places of note were in Protestant hands. Parliament before meeting in the Castle was usually marshalled to the cathedral, and when the Catholic Lords of the Pale

declined to enter (as they did in 1614) it was looked on as a mark of disloyalty to the State and the State Church.

The State had its headquarters in the Castle. Government was carried on by the Viceroy or his Deputy, assisted by the Lord-Chancellor, the Prime Sergeant, the Archbishop of Dublin, and sometimes the Lord Chief Justice. There being no Viceroy in October, 1641, the government was directed by Lords Justices Parsons and Borlace, nominated by the Puritan Committee of the English Parliament. Parsons was a greedy, grasping adventurer, who had grown great by fraud and spoliation. "His whole learning consisted of being able to write a scrawl, which was almost illegible"; but he lived at this time in a splendid mansion on Merchants' Quay. The new and stately house of the rigid Calvinist, Borlace, Master of the Ordnance, stood in College Green, at the very verge of the open space. Borlace had placed most of the arms and ammunition in his control in the Castle vaults, and not an ounce of powder could be obtained without his personal signature. But the Castle was poorly guarded. Old worn-out soldiers were on sentry, useless for watch or for protection. The gates were in bad repair. A sudden attack would most probably have succeeded in capturing the place. For the keepers dreamt of no danger, and it is a noteworthy fact that although the secret movement had been so long astir, no one had broken faith by giving information to the Government. The designs of Owen Roe and O'Moore were kept close, and the Castle rulers were in blank ignorance of any coming danger up to the very evening before the intended outbreak. Lord Justice Parsons was in his house at Merchants' Quay when he was told that a strange man wished to see him. The Lord Justice had some visitors at the moment, and sent out an evasive answer; but the stranger was inflexible. He must see the Lord Justice, he said. Parsons came out and found a man of the fairly well-to-do class of servitor and tenant, "much in drink", who stated that his name was O'Connolly, and that he was in the service of Sir John Clotworthy. He had over-heard plotting, and had been allowed into the counsels of the plotters. Dublin Castle was to be seized early next morning; his foster brother, Colonel Hugh McMahon, in his cups had told him so, as they had been drinking in Winetavern Street McMahon said that four or five hundred men were to come to town that very night, "and our design", said he, "is to take the Castle of Dublin, which we can easily do, they being secure and off their guard. The warders are old silly men, and cannot resist. The castle once taken the kingdom is ours, for there is artillery, powder, and ammunition there which my Lord Strafford had brought over from Holland, enough for 30,000 men; and the greatest part of the town being Papists would join with them".

Parsons was inclined at first to treat the warning with derision; but having consulted Borlace, a resolution was come to that the city gates

should be strongly guarded, all suspicious persons watched, and strong posts set at various points of the city. Both Parsons and Borlace had received many reports and discoveries from sheriffs and other officials of the strange and suspicious movements of Lord Maguire and Roger O'Moore during the summer, and still more during the months of September and October; how, under the guise of attending the funeral of Sir Phelim's wife, many "oversea Irish" had come together and remained in secret consultation; how Mr. Moore had made the house of his son-in-law in Monaghan the muster-place for all dangerous and rebellious persons in Ulster; how camp fires blazed on the hills, and priest, crucifix in hand, exhorted the people to die heroically rather than live as slaves and cravens. Many reports were known to be exaggerated, many false; still, that trouble was imminent seemed written in letters of fire. Willoughby, an able officer, was called into council, and the defence of the city was entrusted to him. He hurried up young and active soldiers to replace the poor, old, superannuated halberdiers, he strengthened the gates of the Castle, and he distributed arms among the Protestant loyalists of the city.

Roger O'Moore soon saw that the enterprise was frustrated, and he advised his friends to see to their safety. His warnings were, perhaps, too late, for Lord Maguire and Colonel Hugh McMahon were captured that same night. McMahon resisted but was overcome, and was brought before the Lords Justices. He told them it was true they had him in their power and might do what they pleased with him. He was not going to make any denials. He felt sure that things had gone so far nothing could now undo them. Wherefore he said that twenty out of every county were to have been there with them in Dublin; that all the lords and gentlemen in Ireland who were Catholics were also with them; and what is done is now so far advanced as it is impossible for the wit of man to prevent it. McMahon was not speaking words of idle menace; the rebellion broke out at the appointed hour, but how unlike the rebellion planned by O'Moore and Owen Roe! Instead of a military insurrection aided by a great popular revolt, and directed from the seat of government at the Castle itself, the rising now could only be the tumultuous outburst of an angry and undisciplined multitude. The great project, arranged with such ability and care fell to the ground, wrecked not by treachery but by McMahon's loose and babbling tongue. On such threads the fates of nations hang!

Stunned by the disaster, many were for the abandonment of further operations or attempts, but Sir Phelim O'Neill and the men of the north were in nowise disheartened, and they made ready for instant action. Accordingly on the night of Saturday, October 23rd, the wanderers in the creaghts and all the other discontented and disaffected Ulstermen burst upon the English colony and drove the trembling planters flying to the great

towns. Proclamation was made to the Scotch settlers that no war was waged against them, but against the Saxon, the common enemy of Scots and Irish. Castles, towns, and forts were captured, and some arms were thus obtained by the insurgents. In a fortnight Sir Phelim made himself master of Tyrone and Armagh, and by the capture of Fort Mountjoy restored the control of Lough Neagh to the clansmen, whose fishing fleets swept once more that inland sea. All Ulster west of the line of the Bann was now, with the exception of the two strong places, Derry and Enniskillen, in the hands of Sir Phelim. He was bent on the capture of Derry, but events forced him eastward to guard the frontier from Chichester and Arthur Hill, who had raised the settlers of Antrim and Down and formed a great camp of observation on Blair's Heath near Lisnegarvy: the Irish appeal to the Scots in fact had fallen flat, and both the old Scots of Antrim and the new Scots of the Plantation made common cause against the Ulstermen. In his march to the east Sir Phelim fixed his headquarters at Newry, and there he paused uncertain what next to do. Inflated with a brief success he issued orders in the royal style, called himself "O'Neill", and showed too clearly that his weak head had been turned by his momentary elevation. To win over doubtful waverers he published a forged document which purported to be a royal proclamation from King Charles authorizing the Irish rebellion. At Sir Phelim's execution in 1653, however, this poor weak headed creature proved all his faithful loyalty and absence of personal regard by refusing to win a reprieve offered if he would consent to charge the king with having signed the proclamation, or with any participation whatever by word or act in the northern rising.

The royal proclamation had little effect in Ulster but in the Pale, where the loyalists wished to put the best face on the alliance which they soon saw to be inevitable, it was of some moment that even the claim of royal patronage should be advanced, as that argued Sir Phelim's desire, at least, of bearing arms under his Majesty's orders. But lies do not thrive, and the turning point of Sir Phelim's career is to be found at this time. Flushed with glory he swept on to Uriel, captured Dundalk, which made no resistance, and then, without guns or siege materials of any kind, he with his half-armed multitude sat down before Drogheda. Months were wasted in this ill-judged enterprise; opportunities were thrown away, now through incompetence, and again through undisciplined license, and the great outspread, sprawling camp of the Irish was a sad spectacle to all men. One gleam of success relieved the dark record—the brilliant achievement of Roger O'Moore at Julianstown, where he almost completely destroyed a large contingent sent from Dublin to the relief of the garrison. But the success of O'Moore had no substantial effect on the main operations; and at last worn, weary, and disgusted, the Irish army raised the siege and

marched back to their homes, or rather melted away on the line of homeward march.

Few men have been able to hold Celtic clans together, and Sir Phelim was quite incompetent for such a task. He soon found himself with only the semblance of an army, and when he reached Tyrone he was practically deserted. But Roger O'Moore had by his statesmanship won allies over to the Ulster-men, and their value was all the greater in this hour of need. In a masterly manifesto O'Moore had set out the grievances which had driven the Irish into insurrection, disclaiming any intent to make war upon the king, but announcing their desire to liberate his Majesty from the trammels imposed upon him by insolent and disloyal subjects. This manifesto came opportunely at the very time when the Lords Justices and Sir Charles Coote, by their inhuman cruelties, were goading Leinster into revolt. By skill and patience O'Moore brought about an alliance between the Lords of the Pale and the Ancient Irish already a Leinster army had taken the field under the command of Lord Mountgarrett, and North and South were joined under the title of Confederates. But other and nearer help came to Sir Phelim at this time. Urged by Owen Roe, Randal McDonnell, Earl of Antrim, the “Lord of Dunluce”, commanded his cousin, Alexander Colkitto McDonnell, to join his forces to those of the Confederates of Ulster, and Colkitto came from the western isles of Scotland with kernes and galloglasses 1,500 strong, marched to Tyrone, and formed a junction with the forces of Sir Phelim. Alexander and Phelim were both the bravest of soldiers, but they were both alike destitute of military skill; and mere daring was of slight avail against trained and well-armed troops such as they had now to meet in the Scotch veterans who, under Leslie, Munroe, and Stewart, had already landed. The Scotch Covenanters had offered to the English Puritan Parliament the services of ten thousand men, and in pursuance of agreement made four thousand veterans, the heroes of Continental battle fields, were landed at Carrickfergus. The Stewarts at Derry commanded what were known as the “Laggan army” and against this army Sir Phelim and McDonneil madly marched.

They were driven from the bloody field of Glenmaquin, near Raphoe, hopelessly beaten, and defeat following defeat, the whole of the lowlands were soon in the hands of the Scotch forces, and Fort Mountjoy was again garrisoned by the enemy. Sir Phelim no longer dared to hope. Evil news had come from Leinster. The Earl of Ormond, who had been appointed by the Lords Justices to the command of all the forces under their orders, had beaten the Leinster Confederates at Kilrush, and over the whole movement disaster hung like a black cloud. Broken-hearted, Sir Phelim summoned his chief followers to a conference at Glasslough in the county of Monaghan, and the resolution was come to that everyone should seek his own safety as best

he could, and that the rebellion should end then and there. “Sorrowful, and downcast of countenance”, we are told, “all then were”; when suddenly a messenger appeared among them to announce tidings that in the very moment of their extremity the true captain of the Irish people had landed on the shores of Donegal. “Then all indeed rejoiced”; at the coming of Owen Roe O'Neill every thought of submission was cast aside; and the remnant of a shattered army, despairing, discomfited, and ruined, went out with light hearts to meet the great leader.

The national rising of 1641 has stirred bitter and violent controversies. Zealous advocates on both sides have put forward impossible statements. The received account on one side was that the Papists rose in obedience to the directions of their priests, and murdered every Protestant that fell into their hands; that at Multifarnham Abbey a great occult meeting of Irish friars had been held, and there after long and patient debate it was determined that, on the whole, the best policy would be to leave no Protestant alive; that they issued orders accordingly and this was the origin of the bloody business. We may laugh at this tale now, but it was gravely repeated for many years as an indisputable fact. We are not indeed to think that it was repeated out of mere stupidity. It was done of deliberate design and that design was plunder. The words of Boyle—“Great Earl of Cork”—had not fallen on dull ears. Confiscations might at any time be brought about by a little judicious perjury; you hanged your troublesome neighbour, and you got his lands, prospering doubly by God’s great blessing. The London markets of 1641 showed that Boyle had opened a rich mine to the Castle adventurers; lands to be confiscated were quoted on the exchanges, and capital was freely invested. The king might perhaps forgive charges of treason in a rebellion fomented by his implacable and cruel Puritan ministers; but charges of murder were much less likely to be forgiven. Besides the Puritans were now accusing Charles of direct complicity in the Irish rising, and the more the Irish were blackened the more unpopular would Charles become. To aid in this good work charges against Irish Papists were invited, with promise of pecuniary redress for injuries; and the demand brought a ready supply. But the samples are not very convincing. The testimony of Protestant ghosts at Portadown, opinions, impressions, misgivings, hearsays, “which I verily believe” (as each poor deponent says), are treated as scientific and demonstrative proof by persons far too acute to be really led astray.

It would indeed be absurd to say or to think that in such a rising terrible and revolting things did not happen. But a prearranged massacre is disproved by these precious documents themselves. When we find faith worthy men bearing witness to what happened not in an hour or in a day but during a long sojourn in captivity, where they saw with their own eyes

what their captors were doing, then we are enabled to estimate the value of the charges of indiscriminate bloodshed. Taking then one adverse witness, the Rev. George Crichton, who is to be absolutely believed as his words and conduct show him to have been a pious but rather dull man, we may from his accusations infer the value of what the Protestant ghosts revealed. Mr. Crichton was many months in the custody of the Cavan O'Reillys. He tells us how he testified in their presence against all the abominations of Rome, to which they apparently listened with the most amused serenity. During all the months he was there he did not see one act of violence committed by "the rebels". But he heard a great deal. Big hulking fellows crowded round him, relating their daily exploits. "I am tired", said one; "I have been working very hard all day, killing Protestants". The others (orgies that they were!) laughed loudly at this, while poor good opaque Mr. Crichton wrestled with them in spirit and warned them of the wrath to come. In March, 1642, Mr. Crichton tells of a meeting of the Popish clergy in Kells. It was really a most important meeting, but Mr. Crichton did not know that. The "Popish Bishop of Kilmore" was there, and after the meeting he saw Mr. Crichton, and said to him:—"We have made a law today, Mr. Crichton, that all who do not go to Mass must quit the country and go away". "Where to, my lord", asked the poor man. "Away, out of the country", said the bishop. "Now, Mr. Crichton", said he, "you are a scholar; you know the tongues; be convinced and come to Mass". "Never, my lord!" said Mr. Crichton. "Well, you are a very obstinate man", said the bishop, and turning to a soldier he said, "Phelim, you must take Mr. Crichton to Cavan gaol". And the bishop laughed and was exceeding merry, and so were the officers and soldiers round him; and as he mounted his horse to ride away a fierce dog flew at the horse, and the bishop turned round and said: "Mr. Crichton, the very dogs here are not converted".

Mr. Crichton, unharmed save by the laughter to which his own dull mind lent all its malignant terror, was left at large, and went on freely testifying as before; and even his testimony disproves the possibility of a foreplanned massacre. Bedell's beautiful story is well-known. Bright and pure among the corrupt and worldly Anglican bishops, Bedell shines out with holy radiance. He was loved as an honoured father by the Catholics of Cavan and of Leitrim, where he laboured truly in the Lord's vineyard. Dispossessed of his church and of his house by the insurgents, who handed both over to Bishop McSwiney, Bishop Bedell nevertheless addressed his Catholic successor as "Christian brother". With his son and his son-in-law, he was detained in Cloughoghter Castle. There the bishop died, and when his body was being borne to the grave the little family group wondered to see an Irish detachment of soldiers drawn up to await the funeral. At first (as they tell us) they feared some interference. But they were much mistaken. The commander, who was also sheriff of the county, requested

that he and his soldiers might be permitted to show their deep sorrow for the beloved illustrious one that lay dead, and, being allowed, they followed the corpse in mournful silence until the grave was reached. Then O'Reilly the sheriff came forward bare-headed, and said that they might say what prayers they most desired to say in what way they chose, and he and his men should stay there and do them reverence. And it was so done; and then in one thing they were obstinate. They wished in their own manner to show their respect and grief. So the men were drawn up and a volley of honour was fired, and a deep chant went up to the sky, *Requiescat in pace ultimus Anglorum*. And a Catholic priest was heard to say, *O, sit anima mea cum Bedello*.

This scene, honourable to the illustrious prelate and to his poor outlawed foemen, is a fit commentary on Mr. Froude's readiness to accept every story of alleged atrocity and to discard the least word of praise or of exculpation. Outrages were committed, of course. When the wild tatterdemalion hordes of homeless clansmen rose maddened, we may be quite sure they did not weigh their every act and word. They poured into the little towns, seized the churches and public buildings, rang the bells, and captured all the arms on which they could lay hands. Unless resisted they stopped in most cases at that; but resistance led to violence and bloodshed. These were the acts of an infuriated multitude ground down for a generation under the heel of tyranny; and even were there many real charges substantiated, the wonder would not surely be very great. Different indeed is the responsibility of regular troops, regularly paid, under regular commanders. The original Dugald Dalgetty—Sir James Turner—was not chicken-hearted. He had seen war in its most terrible form in Germany. But he has left on record his condemnation of the excesses of the Scotch and English armies all through these Irish wars, while the barbarities of Coote, by order of Parsons and Borlace, were horrifying even to men of that awful time. Over and over again, men, women and children alike were put to the sword, and the events are recorded as mere ordinary occurrences. Whether the atrocities of Coote in Wicklow and Dublin, and the barbarities for which the unlettered boor Parsons is personally responsible, were as Carte suggests done of deep design to drive rich Catholics into revolt, and so to seize their lands, or whether butcheries and cruelties were committed in the mere wantonness of bigotry and hate, matters not at all. Children impaled on bayonets; venerable gentlemen like Read and Barnewell tortured on the rack; all Catholics in Dublin disarmed, threatened, persecuted, driven out; Father Higgins, the gentle friar and scholar, hanged without a trial; all Catholic members of both Houses first expelled, and then proceeded against as rebels; Poynings' Law suspended so that a gigantic bill of attainder, impossible under any semblance of constitutional law, might be passed; the Pale laid desolate by Parsons' orders "burn everything"; the prerogative of

pardon wrested from the king, and the lands to be confiscated vested in parliament; these and more than these are the proud memorials of the Puritan democratic parliament in Dublin, during the year 1642.

CHAPTER VI.

OWEN ROE IN IRELAND

FOR some months after the surrender of Arras, Owen O'Neill was attached to the army of the Cardinal-Infant. But now in a time of multiplied anxieties, when a rising of the Irish was in preparation, and when it was hoped that even in that very autumn Dublin Castle could be secured and a final blow struck at British domination in Ireland, military duty in the Spanish service could no longer be added to his duties as an Irish leader. In the early months of 1641 he therefore obtained leave of absence for a time, and settled once more in Brussels to direct as in former years the whole Irish movement. During the next year all questions by the leaders were submitted to his judgment, and he laid down for their direction the guiding lines of policy. As time went on the groups of friars and officers flitting to and from Owen's quarters made it clear that some enterprise was afoot. Dunkirk was watched, and every day saw envoys landing or embarking. "It was notable to observe (says Cartan) with what speed and certainty the Irish in Flanders received the news in Ireland out of England". Mr. Secretary Nicholas wrote to Sir Henry de Vic, the English agent at Brussels, at the end of the year:—"I am upon advertisement from Ireland and other places to put you in mind to have a special eye to the person and actions of one Colonel Owen, or as some term him Eugene O'Neill, at present in service of that state where you reside, of whom the rebels make great account and seem to hope much; nor is it unlikely he may have a design to transport himself with other commanders over to them, for their greatest want is of good officers and arms, being otherwise very numerous but most of them naked and unskillful". Acting on these instructions Sir Henry subjected Owen to a surveillance which borders on burlesque. Solemn reports in the State Papers describe Don Eugenio's habits down to the most insignificant detail, with discussions and conjectures as to the meaning of his slightest act. If he set out from Brussels, Sir Henry's spies took care to be near him; if he looked out for another house in Brussels, they speculated at length on his deep designs. Minute particulars of his personal appearance were sent home; these are not themselves forthcoming, but in later letters Sir Henry corrects some mistakes made in the report—Owen was not bald as stated; the height and stretch of forehead and his custom of wearing his

hair longer than the ordinary had misled the spies. Sir Henry also tried more active means of ascertaining Owen's designs. Two experienced spies were sent to sound him, and to find out if possible what plots he had in hand and how far the Spanish government was friendly to him. The spies made very little of their mission. They professed themselves burning with the desire of taking part in an Irish war of independence, and already they had taken some steps, they said, but in a matter so momentous they naturally came to him and only desired advice from him as to the dangers that might arise in their way. Was the Spanish government, for instance, likely to interfere with them? Owen did not know in the least. Then they opened their minds still more. They were quite willing, eager indeed, to serve under him. He surely had plans of his own. They would put themselves unreservedly in his hands. He only repeated the Spanish proverb (for we spoke in that language) *Pears take time to ripen*?

With the experience born of military command Owen above all things impressed on the leaders at home that until his coming they should keep an armed watch, and on no account be led to hazard their men and their fortunes in a pitched battle with the State troops. He always advised that the lords and commanders of the Irish army should by all means avoid to fight any battles with the English or the king's army until his own arrival in Ireland, but should weary them with night attacks. The main enterprise was to have been the seizure of the Castle of Dublin, and when news came to O'Neill that by folly and treachery the great scheme which was to have been the base and buttress of all the rest had been utterly wrecked, and the whole plan of action destroyed at the outset, he was very wrathful and for a moment downcast.

New plans had to be made to meet new difficulties. Arms were now the chief need of the Irish at home, and Owen's coming without supplies would be of little avail. He accordingly addressed himself to Don Francisco de Mello, the Governor of the Netherlands, and despatched messengers of special trust to France, Rome, and the Emperor desiring their assistance for the Irish in defence of their religion. Bishop McMahon undertook the main part of these negotiations, and found ready help in Rome, where Father Luke Wadding was his steadfast friend, and the ever-constant solicitor of the Irish cause in the Papal court. Early in 1642 Owen's final plans were fully made. Ulster was mostly in Irish hands; Leinster had just thrown in her lot with the northern province; the great seaports of the south were open. "I shall bring with me three ships"—so ran Owen's memorandum of his final dispositions—"with three or four hundred officers, and with munition and ammunition for horse and foot, and with all miners, cannon, and cannoniers". He despatched a friar to Ireland to advertise him of the safest landing place, and he promised Sir Phelim and Rory O'Moore that

with or without help "he would adventure himself and his whole estate in the service, and that assuredly he would be with them within ten weeks". On all and every one of his envoys and messengers he solemnly laid one injunction :—"Persuade Sir Phelim and Mr. Moore and the Lords and Commanders of the League that they should in all manner hold firm together, and not be deceived by the fair promises of the English or of the Government in Dublin, as Tyrone and Tyrconnell were, who, after they had submitted, were forced to fly the kingdom, and were robbed of their lands. Tell them to hold fast and firm, and there shall be no doubt of succor". For himself, now that the turning point of his life had come he sent some last grave words to his saintly ally, Luke Wadding. "I have received, Reverend Father", he wrote (in Latin) "proofs of your well-known zeal for our fatherland. Time glides away and Ireland groans and suffers, worn out not so much by her miseries as by the weary hope of foreign help, long hoped for and yet not come. I feel that I, at any rate, should make no more delay, and that in this hour of Ireland's troubles I should not be absent or seem wanting. I am girt up for my journey with many chiefs of our race. I bid goodbye to your paternity and return unbounded thanks for your unwearied exertions on behalf of Ireland and also towards myself"

Then setting all upon the cast of the die, he sailed for Ireland. He left Dunkirk with about 200 veteran commanders—"old, war-beaten soldiers", as a contemporary writer calls them; put out into the North Sea; touched at Denmark and Norway; then "gave a wheel round Scotland", and passing along the northern coast of Ireland, landed at Doo Castle in the County Donegal. On the voyage he fell in with ships of the enemy, and after a stout fight he captured two small vessels, which he brought with him to Donegal. He had with him a good supply of arms and ammunition of all kinds necessary in the Irish war. All were safely brought to shore, and a hasty encampment was made. Captain Don Antonio was sent back with the frigates to fetch with all speed further war materials for landing in Wexford, that towards South as towards North Owen's care might not fail; and above all, to give news to Lady Rosa of his safe landing. Meanwhile, Owen sent messengers to Sir Phelim, apprising him of his arrival, and summoning a council of war to deliberate upon all matters and concernments touching the Ulster army and its military movements. The messengers found Sir Phelim and his friends at Glasslough in the moment of their desolation, and the summons changed their despair into wonder and delight. Gathering round him on Charlemont, the old headquarters of Sir Phelim's army, the chiefs of Ulster with universal joy saluted the greatest of the O'Neills, the commander-in-chief of the Ulster forces.

In the Council at Charlemont full details were laid before Owen of all the chief events since the outbreak in the preceding October, and of the

forces and commanders on both sides. All Celtic Ireland had risen in the winter, and had almost in every case taken possession of the castles, holds, and other strong places of the English. Connaught had, indeed, moved very slowly. Lord Viscount Mayo had thrown in his lot with the Irish, and the strong house at Belcarra was the headquarters of the Connaught men. But the clans had not risen. The O'Kellys, Maddens, O'Connors, McDermotts, and O'Dowds, were watching events keenly, and would, it was thought, declare themselves only when the drift of fortune could be more clearly seen. Irregular bodies scoured the hills, and threatened the quarters of the State troops; but roving bands were only afoot, and no combined rising had taken place. This lukewarmness was due to Lord Clanricarde to whom the moderate Irish of Connaught looked up as to their principal representative—young as he was a finished diplomatist, who felt the Connaught men malleable in his hand. All Clare seemed at one time won; but Lord Inchiquin, of the great house of O'Brien, inheritor of the name and fame of Ireland's great warrior-king, opposed the rising and awed the county. Ulster had been cleared of the Scotch and their adherents; the Bann had marked the boundary line of the armies and the occupied lands; Lough Neagh had been covered once again with the boats of the O'Cahans, and the O'Hagans until the fatal movement on Drogheda which had led to such ruin. Now, however, 12,000 Scotch and English regulars were in occupation of Ulster, and there were rumours of still larger numbers coming; while only 1,500 men obeyed Sir Phelim's call to arms, and these were ill-clad, badly armed, and quite unfit for a toilsome campaign.

But the most critical and important events reported to Owen were without question the Union of the Lords of the Pale with the Ancient Irish of Ulster and Connaught, and the steps taken by the clergy to form a national government. Owen O'Neill had the blood of the Fitzgeralds of Kildare in his veins, and although the house of Kildare did not join the Ancient Irish, there were few houses in Leinster with which the Kildare family was not joined by ties of kindred or affinity. As kinsman of the Leinster lords, Owen would therefore have been by blood an impartial judge between Ulster and the Pale. But all his life longings, his hopes, feelings, and plans had centered on Ulster, and he looked askance at conversions to 'Irishy' which had been caused either by fear or by the hope of gain. Still it was no time to pick and choose. He would loyally help the Palesmen as the allies of Ulster, little as he believed in their professions of national feeling; and his resolve was made the more easy when he learned how it was that the Palesmen had been induced to join the Ulster Irish, and heard of Rory O'Moore's great services in bringing about that union. He was told how eagerly the Puritans in Dublin had seized the opportunity offered by the Ulster rising to issue a proclamation against 'Irish Papists'; how the Catholics of the Pale had protested; how the Lords Justices formally explained that they only meant

the Ulstermen, but still continued to cut off all communication with the Leinster Catholics; how the Catholics had been called upon to march against the rebels, but were refused arms for that purpose when they offered their services; how in Uowdall's house in Monkstown, near Summerhill, Mr. Moore and the Pale Lords had many interviews; how from the "Camp before Drogheda", O'Moore and his retinue rode down to the confines of the Pale, and were there met by the Lords and their retainers, how after the formal demand—"Why come ye armed into the Pale?—Mr. Roger Moore replied, "My Lords, our sufferings are grown too heavy for us to bear. We are the sole subjects in Europe incapable of serving our Sovereign in places of honour, profit and trust. We are obstructed in the ways of learning, so that our children cannot come to speak Latin without renouncing their dependence on the Church, and endangering their souls. These things we wished redressed in Parliament, and had they listened to us, or to you, we should have sat down contented. But the Lords Justices are merely bent on ruining our nation, and they involve you in the same distrust with us. Lest the brand of Rebellion, which they put upon us, may deter you, we here protest in the sight of heaven, that we fight against the Malignant Party in Parliament who encroach on the King's prerogative, and we invite you to join us in so glorious an undertaking"; how the Lords welcomed these words, and declared "Since such and no other are your intentions we will join with you"; how the Lords Justices then called a Grand Council of the Lords south of the Boyne; and how from the Hill of Tara, on December 7th, 1641, the Lords of the Pale declined to attend until "we hear from your Lordships how we shall be secured from peril", and joining hands with O'Moore bound themselves in life and fortune to be his allies, and hastened to the help of the starving Irish army in the Camp at Drogheda. Owen heard all this, and he heard, moreover, of the True Bills for High Treason found by pliant Grand Juries in Dublin against Catholic Lords and Members, the Chief Justice directing them that such Bills might be found on "common report or fame" and how these shocking Indictments hung over them and left them no chance of return. He heard of Coote's murderous march through Wicklow, of the tortures inflicted by the Privy Council on Palesmen like Sir John Reid and Barnwell who were put to the rack, and how by deliberate prearrangement the Lords of the Pale were so goaded as to have no choice left but to adhere to their countrymen-in-arms. Sir Phelim told all this to Owen Roe; and Sir Phelim coloured the recital greatly to the favour of his new allies, for his weak vain nature had been worked upon by the flattering conduct of the Lords who had willingly acknowledged him as their Commander-in-Chief at Drogheda, and already Sir Phelim was weakened and half Avon by the blandishments of the Anglo-Norman nobles. Making full allowance, however, for his kinsman's partiality Owen saw much to admire in the conduct of the men of Leinster; and he greatly rejoiced that the Boyne, "the Rubicon since the Conquest", had been bridged.

The first step of the new commander was to enforce discipline. His heart was sorely grieved at reports of the excesses into which the insurgents had run. Those against whom serious outrages were proved were condemned by him to death, and when murmurs arose he declared that he would rather join the English than allow such offences to go unpunished. Victims who sought redress found in him a ready listener and an inflexibly just judge; compensation was decreed in many cases, and the general took good care to see that his orders were scrupulously carried out. Prisoners of war who had been detained in wretched quarters were brought into his presence : if no serious acts were proven against them they were at once discharged; three English gentlemen who had been kept in prison on suspicion of being spies were forthwith liberated, and Owen sent a company of his men to see the released captives safe on the road to Dundalk. In O'Neill's glorious career of forty years not one stain of dishonour or cruelty ever dimmed the lustre of his sword.

No sooner had Owen declared the new discipline that was to prevail than he issued a call to arms, and summoned all Ulster Irishmen to his standard. “All”, we are told, “flocked to him, each man now counting himself two, and casting off all fear; he the happiest who was chosen to stay”. For unhappily stores were wanting, and Owen was inexorable in his determination to put away all “useless mouths”. “An army”, said the greatest of all captains, “marches upon its stomach”; and Owen felt as keenly as Napoleon did the need of having food and pay for even the most willing and zealous soldiers. He thought it far better to have a small efficient well-disciplined force than a large unmanageable one. He put away all thought of active offensive operations. The task of holding an army of levies in hand, and of keeping up that army permanently has always been one of the greatest difficulties in dealing with Celtic irregulars; and in O'Neill's case the problem became complicated with other troubles caused by the intermeddling of uninstructed persons in his arrangements and plans. But intrinsically the difficulty was exceedingly great, such as none but a great military organizer could overcome even were he unhampered by any external agency. And moreover Owen O'Neill's previous career in a way unfitted him for such work. He had always dealt with well-arrayed, well-appointed armies; and the Ulstermen presented a sad contrast to the proud and stately troops of Spain whom he had led. Even the Irish Regiment there consisted of men who had for the most part passed through the hands of the drill-masters before he made close acquaintance with them. Now for the first time he met the raw, undrilled levies; and his instant care was to put them under a course of real training (not mere mechanical skill, but a training in order, alertness, watchful attention, and presence of mind) so that they might not be cut down like sheep by the seasoned veterans of Leslie and Monroe. For the Leinstermen were engaged in keeping Ormond

and the English of Dublin and Drogheda occupied, and the brunt of the Ulster war came from the great Scotch army, nearly 10,000 strong, which ranged at will over eastern Ulster and by the capture of Newry had opened the flat corn-growing country to their raids and incursions. To meet such troops in the open were madness. To allow them to march over all Ulster without challenge would much depress the recruits, who looked for miracles from Owen Roe. Accordingly he set about that famous “Fabian” policy for which his panegyrists have so properly extolled him; uniting safe enterprise with constant guerilla encounters, but never until the right hour risking the chances of an open battle against the Scotch invaders. With this purpose he took steps to secure a regular supply of food. The creaghts and the clansmen were ready with all they had for his service. Cattle were plentiful; so that the soldiers were sure to have milk and butter and sometimes meat; while from the cornfields there was abundance of material for bread. Ovens were made wherever Owen encamped, and the one thing which he never entrusted to any deputy was the care of the commissariat. During the first few weeks he chose the plains of Tyrone as his camping ground, sentinels for miles keeping watch under keen officers who knew how to combine the dash of the irregular with the steady and sustained bravery of the veteran. A few trifling skirmishes only happened in these early weeks. But the men were gaining military knowledge, and all observers said of Owen O'Neill at all stages of his career that it was wonderful with what speed he transformed raw levies into capable soldiers. By inspiring respect and trust he succeeded in regulating assessments, billets, and contributions, which relieved the people from the terrors of uncertain military claims, so that the army was welcomed on its march instead of inspiring the terror and dismay which inevitably follow irregular troops. An English gentleman who had been made a prisoner by Owen's soldiers and charged as a spy, has left an account of what he saw while waiting Owen's decision, which was given in his favour. He was present at a review of the Ulster army. Most of the Ulster gentlemen were there as Owen’s officers; “and all except Sir Phelim stood bare-headed in his presence, calling him Lord-General, and being most obedient to him in all things”.

CHAPTER VII

THE MODEL OF GOVERNMENT

IN the early months of the insurrection the wild and riotous excess of Sir Phelim's irregulars had been a terror alike to Catholics and Protestants. The King's courts were closed; in more than twenty counties no judge, sheriff, or constable any longer exercised authority in the royal name; and the lately restored Catholic bishops, to whom the people now cried for protection, were helpless to redress wrong. They attempted, indeed, to improvise courts of arbitration, but for want of some compelling sanction with a competent power to enforce it, their effort was hopelessly doomed to failure; and the higher clergy, recognizing the impotence of irregular equity, became the leaders of the people in a demand for some governing body strong enough to maintain law and order in the country. Clergy and laity, too, felt the common need for a central authority which in negotiation or treaty with the enemy should evidently carry the whole delegated power of the Irish Catholics in arms.

The first step towards creating a new order was therefore taken by Primate Hugh O'Reilly, who summoned his clergy to an informal council in Armagh. They there declared their opinion that "no family, city, commonwealth, state, or kingdom may stand without concord"; and strengthened by this declaration the Primate proceeded to summon a general council of the clergy of Ireland to meet at Kells in March, 1642. But if the bishops, as the only organized body now left which could form a rallying point for the energies of Celtic Ireland, were thus forced into the position of leaders, they showed no desire to construct a purely clerical government; on the contrary, the prelates immediately joined with them in counsel the only other classes in the country who were definitely marked out from the masses of the people, and in alliance with them sought to propound a constitution acceptable to all alike. In full council assembled at Kells, the clergy first resolved that the Lords of the Pale should be taken into consultation. The Lords, who had with much difficulty restored discipline in Leinster and brought their troops under the direct control of a Council of

Generals consisting of Leinster peers, with the venerable Lord Mountgarrett as president, and who had thus formed a sort of nucleus for a governing body, eagerly welcomed the invitation of the bishops. Great Catholic lawyers deeply trained in all questions of constitutional government were called in to help in the deliberations. Bishops, lords, and lawyers accordingly proceeded to draw up for the distracted land a constitution by which the government of civil and military affairs should be settled on a firm and enduring foundation. The task was not an easy one, for in every country these three classes include the conservative forces, and an assembly thus compounded was not likely to evolve any of the tremendously simple forms of government dear to ordinary revolutionists.

To Darcy and Cusack, as the ablest lawyers among them, the drafting of the new constitution was wisely entrusted by the assembled council; but to Darcy substantially belongs the credit as well as the responsibility of this great effort of constructive statesmanship. The only scheme of government familiar to Darcy was of course the Government in Dublin with a Parliament and an irresponsible executive. To him, as to most educated Irishmen of the time, Parliament was the natural embodiment of the national will. At no time had the Upper House been obnoxious to the Irish people (save in so far as it was dominated by the intruded Protestant prelates) for the lay lords were the proper permanent leaders of the various provinces, and being either descendants of Celtic chiefs or Anglo-Norman nobles, their authority in their own sphere was willingly accepted by their followers. To discover the first order in the new state, Darcy had, therefore, but to replace the Protestant prelates by the Catholic bishops and mitred abbots, and to join with them the Catholic lay lords who had sat in the Dublin Parliament. These lords, with the exception of Lords Clanricarde and Westmeath, had joined the Ancient Irish, and having taken the national oath drawn up by Roger O'Moore were marked out by rank and lineage, as well as by popular consent, as the natural leaders of the Irish Catholics; lords and prelates therefore were held as before entitled to seats in the first order of the projected National Council. More difficulty was felt when it came to the question of popular representation. Here the only model of any value was the great Parliament of 1613, which, cleared of corruption, offered an excellent basis for representative government. Darcy accepted it; but instead of imaginary boroughs he looked to real existing cities and towns, and from these and the counties 226 representatives were to be drawn. Instead of slavishly following the Dublin model in every respect, however, he proposed, while maintaining the two ancient Orders of Lords and Commons, to unite them in one house, with no difference between them save the ceremonial difference of honour and precedence. This much of the Dublin plan, however, was retained; that, whereas the Lords in Dublin communicated their views to the Commons through the judges, the first

order of the new Assembly was allowed the right to consult in private, and make known the result of their deliberations through some judicial officer, usually through Darcy.

So far, with unimportant modifications, the makers of the constitution follow old models. Their originality, however, was brought into play when they came to deal with the executive. At a time when in no country in the world, whether monarchy or republic, had rulers or people conceived the idea of a responsible representative executive, still less of an elected one, this great principle was embodied in the new Irish constitution. Twenty-four supreme councillors were to compose the Irish cabinet. The members of the General Assembly representing each province were out of their own number to elect by ballot six councillors, or, as they are sometimes called, magistrates. They might be all bishops, all lay lords, or all commoners, or, as invariably happened, a compound of all three, such as we find in the first Supreme Council, to which were elected three Archbishops, two bishops, four peers, and fifteen lay commoners. Nine members at least were required to validate any administrative act; and of these it was necessary that six at least should give their assent, and sign every decree or order, thus ensuring the personal responsibility of ministers in the clearest manner. To the council sovereign power was temporarily delegated. But all its acts were liable to be reviewed by the General Assembly, which was to meet at least once in every year. Each province was to have its Provincial Council on the same plan, and each county its County Council; the wider the space over which jurisdiction extended the higher naturally was the jurisdiction itself, and in every grade appeals lay from the inferior to the superior, till the ultimate and highest court, the Supreme Council itself, was reached. In contemplation of law, the whole system of government was thus conceived as a system of concentric circles, having for their common middle point the Supreme Council, which like the king in previous times was the source and fountain of all authority, military and civil.

This Model of Government was adopted by the general meeting of clergy, peers, and lawyers which assembled at Kilkenny in May, and a temporary Supreme Council was chosen to act as a Provisional Government, and to issue writs to the constituencies for the return of members to meet in the following October, on the first anniversary of the Ulster rising. The country, in so far as it was articulate at least, acquiesced in the proposed basis of government. Owen Roe O'Neill readily assented, for to him any system of ordered rule was better than confusion and anarchy. Nor did he feel any objection whatever to the creation of a power by which his own conduct was to be controlled; for although the national rising had been inspired and directed by the heart and brain of Owen O'Neill, that great man looked upon himself, upon any soldier, as an instrument in the hand of

the State or nation which he served, and by the highest loyalty forbidden to resist the form in which sovereignty is cast by the people in solemn and deliberate judgment. Personally, moreover, he had no desire to criticize the prominent part played in the new movement by the priests. In the Spanish dominions he had grown familiar with a spectacle which had not yet shocked the ecclesiastical conscience or alarmed the civil administrator—the spectacle of great churchmen administering justice, governing States, commanding armies and navies; few of his own counsellors were so valuable to him as Primate O'Reilly, the originator of the Assembly; above all, a deeply religious man himself, spiritual sanctions seemed to him powerful auxiliaries to human law. O'Neill therefore willingly obeyed, and all Ulster did as he did. And so the first popular Constitution of Celtic Ireland was issued and accepted without one murmur of disapproval.

There can be no doubt as to the singular merits of the new scheme and the breadth of mind shown by its provisions. But dangers lurked in the whole plan, some inherent in the very system itself, some accidental and external. All elective responsible forms of government are less fitted for war than for peace, and the famous Confederation, with its minute and complex machinery, was, in fact, only suited for a reign of order in a settled kingdom. But there were other perils no less grave. In the anxiety of the authors of this Constitution to respect local feeling, they unconsciously set up barriers between province and province, and fatally strengthened the old danger of halting policy and disjointed action. What Ireland needed was a National Union, not a Catholic Confederation. But the Lords of the Pale would on no account consent to any closer tie than that of alliance between themselves and the men of Ulster, and they insisted on having religion put in the fore-front as the motive and purpose of their appeal to arms. Any attempt to form a wider basis would have been immediately defeated by the lay peers; and in that time of danger the full price had to be paid for the adhesion of the Leinster Lords. And so a confederacy of Catholics and not a union of Irishmen, was announced and sanctioned—a policy which, while it had many attractions for timid men, perpetuated old lines of difference, and a painful sight was seen of an exclusively Protestant Parliament in Dublin confronted by an exclusively Catholic Assembly in Kilkenny.

Besides these two organic evils inherent in the constitution, there were others which were accidental and superinduced. The choice of Kilkenny as the seat of government was in itself disastrous, and yet no choice could seem more promising. Kilkenny was the natural metropolis of the Catholic lords of Leinster. A little outside the walls stood the residence of Lord Mountgarrett, the greatly respected president of the Council of Generals, the chief of those in the associated counties and the remoter counties of Cork and Limerick, which the extirpation of the Catholic religion and the

enslaving of the nation by a foreign power equally concerned; now verging on his seventieth year, the son-in-law of the great Hugh O'Neill, Mountgarrett claimed by age, station, and public services the willing allegiance of the Confederates. Unfortunately, however, Kilkenny was overshadowed by the Ormond influence. It would indeed be impossible to blame the framers of the constitution for seeing no danger in that fact. Ormond was bound by many ties to the Irish Catholic cause. His brother Richard was a colonel in the army of the Confederate Catholics; his two sisters were nuns; Lord Mountgarrett was his uncle, and Lord Muskerry his brother-in-law. The choice of his city as the meeting-place of the Assembly might well seem both prudent and inevitable, and only subsequent events could bring the lurking peril to light. But for mere geographical reasons alone Kilkenny was wholly unfit to be the governing centre in Ireland at that time. Placed within easy reach of all Leinster, of Ormond's great possessions in the south, and of Clanricarde's in the west, it might well serve as the capital of central and southern Ireland; but Ulster was far off, and travellers who had to face not only the hardships of a long journey but the risk of falling into the hands of the intercepting armies of Dublin and Drogheda, rather adventured the perils of the sea than the terrors of the land ; and Ulster was practically disfranchised. It followed from this that there were in course of time two political centres of gravity in Ireland: the council-room of the Kilkenny cabinet, and the tent of Owen Roe O'Neill. Had there been complete agreement in policy this might not have mattered much, but there was no such agreement. Those who circled round Kilkenny-bishops, peers, and lawyers—looked only for Catholic emancipation; religious, agrarian, tribal, and national claims united the men of the north. To use modern words the Leinster Confederates were Whigs, the men of Ulster were Nationalists. Between such diverse elements union could not be. Possibly wise and moderate administration might have lessened the points of difference, but weakly yielding to that fatal tendency which we find too often in every era of Irish history, those who held power would permit no criticism of their conduct, and in the name of union drove out all who did not fully accept their views.

All the members of the Supreme Council save those from Ulster were Ormond's friends; and as the Ulster members rarely attended, the "Ormondian faction" quickly gained supreme control. Those who resided permanently in Kilkenny managed affairs; and of these there were four of special importance. In the circle of sycophants that surrounded Lord Clanricarde, Darcy and Cusack were by far the most conspicuous. Although Cusack held the high offices of Chancellor of the Exchequer and Attorney-General in Kilkenny kg have, apart from the general opinion of his contemporaries, no definite proof of his claims to a place in history. But with Darcy it is far otherwise. He may rank as a constitutional statesman and

lawyer with the great founders of the American Constitution, and his claim to the highest legal place cannot be questioned. Lest the title of Lord Chancellor might suggest any encroachment upon the king's prerogative, it was thought better to allow Darcy while holding an innominate office to exercise all the functions usually associated with the Chancellorship. These two accomplished and learned lawyers were at worst men whose only fault was weakness; but they were unfortunately as clay in the hands of more subtle and designing colleagues, personal friends of Ormond's. Richard Belling was the Secretary of State to the Supreme Council; by far the most important office in the administration. He was the son of the man who had made up evidence against the Wicklow O'Byrnes in Faukland's time (1626-7). He had literary pretensions, wrote a continuation of the *Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia*, and gracefully toying with compliments lamented his insufficiency to reach "Divine Sidney's" height. Between him and Ormond the closest intimacy was kept up, and most of the Cabinet deliberations at Kilkenny were as well known in Dublin as they were in the Council chamber. Angry men called Belling a traitor; but Owen Roe deprecated such a charge." Belling is no traitor. Remember an oath is binding only in prose; and as Belling only talks a kind of half-mad rhapsody, he breaks no vow". Dr. Fennell angered Owen much more. Fennell was one of the tribe of persons always too numerous in Ireland, who are devoured with zeal when there is no risk to be run; who are overflowing with noble sentiments; ready to make all sorts of sacrifice in the indefinite future, but who meantime plunder with both hands. As Ormond's physician, he gave himself the airs of one who was the friend and adviser in high politics of the great, although he cared little himself, he said, for these things. He was now installed in a profitable office, and his face, weighty with the load of State cares, was to be seen daily as he drove in his open carriage from the residence of "My Lord Mountgarrett", or "My Lord Muskerry", to the offices of the Council. Mountgarrett himself being Lord President, and Muskerry in command of the Munster troops, the "Ormondian faction" was thus easily dominant in the Kilkenny counsels, even if we acquit Darcy and Cusack of anything more serious than facile acquiescence. Another scandal too common and familiar now unfortunately rose into public notice. The taxes and rates assessed by the Assembly and intended mainly for the support of the Army, were in great part diverted to the use of favourites and friends. Offices and salaries multiplied daily. "Soon there was a world of clerks and attorneys, commissioners in every county, receivers, and applotters. The exchequer was full with daily taxations, customs monopoly, enemy land custodiums, excise and many more, so that there was a world of money; but the most part or rather all was spent in daily wages of the Supreme Council, judges, clerks and other mechanical men, and little or nothing went to the soldiers".

The first business of the Council was to carry out the orders of the General Assembly with regard to the subject which had been specially urged by the bishops—the regular administration of justice. Judges were appointed, "circuits, assizes, and essoyns"; sheriffs, justices of the peace, and constables were duly commissioned; County Courts, Provincial Courts, and Courts of Appeal were established. The Supreme Councillors themselves were to hear and determine all important questions of criminal and constitutional law, as well as to hear on appeal all questions arising between party and party. One subject alone was reserved. No question involving the title to land was to be decided; de facto possession alone was to be judicially noticed, as the very question of such title was one of the causes of the rising, and could only be finally decided by the issue of the insurrection. In this matter bishops and abbots were alike agreed, although church lands were then in the actual possession of many of the lay lords who sat in the General Assembly. The Great Charter, the common law, and all safeguards of personal liberty were declared to be fundamental rights of all citizens, and the courts were directed without distinction of persons to apply their principles to all suitors whatever.

In the conduct of government, as we have seen, four Councillors practically gained the whole authority; calling in the necessary number for a quorum to ratify their acts, but otherwise ignoring the existence of their colleagues, an evil which became but too apparent in course of time, though it would be altogether unjust to hold the authors of the plan of government answerable for the perverted policy of the 'Ormondian' clique. The first official acts of the Supreme Council under their guidance were of momentous importance. They reorganised the forces, dismissing from the service most of the commanders who had taken part in the rising of October 23rd; Colonels Hugh McPhelim Byrne, Brian O'Neill, and Rory O'Moore! Then they named the generals for each province, but in their fear of Owen Roe's commanding influence they nominated no Commander-in-Chief, knowing that none but he could be invested with that great office. This step further deepened and widened the dividing lines between the Ancient Irish and their modern allies, and indeed made Ulster into a foreign country. Still, had the Council allowed the Ancient Irish to run their own course, Ulster, Wicklow, and Connaught might have worked out a common deliverance. This, however, was made impossible from the moment when they summoned Owen O'Neill and his chief officers to Kilkenny, and tendered to them the oath of allegiance. In Owen's eyes the military arm was subject to the properly constituted national government, and from the moment when the Irish people had invested the Supreme Council with sovereign authority, he felt bound to yield complete and ready obedience. He now became a mere officer of the Council, and his army became a branch of their service, his very frigates and stores were made the property of the

Supreme Council, and Owen had to sue respectfully for some arms out of one of his own ships which had just come from Dunkirk to Wexford abundantly laden. At the same time Colonel Thomas Preston, Owen's competitor in Flanders for the allegiance of the men of Leinster, landed in Wexford. The Supreme Council seemed to have centred all their hopes on Preston, Lord Gormanstown's uncle, and the special favourite of the Leinster Lords. He was an able commander, and now in his fifty-seventh year he was of ripe experience in the art of war. Partly to honour him, and partly by contrast to belittle Owen, the Kilkenny rulers received Preston with regal magnificence. Kilkenny was for weeks permanently en fête; illuminations, receptions, banquets, and balls went on in gay succession. Preston was declared Lord General of the Army of Leinster, marking off still more the northern Irish from their countrymen in the Pale. The Leinster army was admirably equipped; for Owen O'Neill had enlisted the services of Don Antonia of Dunkirk, and Captain Doran, an old Irish naval commander, and these men with Owen's frigates held the southern seas, and were engaged in a large carrying trade between Ireland and Flanders. "Arms, ammunition, and artillery came in plenty; yet though Owen O'Neill was the sole author of this so beneficial a traffic, I never heard" (says a contemporary observer) "that he ever got by it as much as thanks. Indeed, they would wish him no nearer than Grand Cairo while they sang gratulatory poems to their ne plus ultra Prestonian Blade". Preston's army, thus created and supplied by Owen, consisted of 6,000 foot and 600 horse; and Leinster was quite at ease, "not once calling to mind the bleeding wounds of Ulster, bearing on its shoulders the brunt of all the blows of bloody Mars in Ireland". Indeed, Ulster was treated as a foreign and savage country. The Supreme Council never visited it. Its members on the contrary progressed in glorious state from Kilkenny to Wexford, from Wexford to Waterford, thence to Limerick, winding up at Galway, surrounded as they journeyed by hundreds of horsemen with drawn swords, and accompanied by an army of officials; "with civil and military representations of comedies and stage plays, feasts, and banquets, and palate-enticing dishes". The Leinster soldiers were comfortably quartered in the towns and villages of the great rich central plain of Ireland, so that the whole province was really a thriving and well-ordered State. Owen neglected and maligned, was as it were banished to the distant fastnesses of the north, where without aid or recognition he laboured to recruit and furnish an army for the protection of Ulster.

The history of these unfortunate months proclaims but too loudly that the new constitution, and the administration of lords and lawyers untrained in great affairs, however, it may have been adapted for peace, was woefully unsuited for a state of war. Possibly the evil might not have proved so fatal had there been in Kilkenny really representative men; but, in addition to all

its other weaknesses, the Supreme Council merely represented the lords of Leinster; and this flaw permeated the whole political and military administration, although it very little affected the local government of counties or the administration of the law. But while in politics the Lords of the Pale and the bishops directed affairs, military movements were made subservient to political necessities.

While the lords and bishops who were more or less subservient to them were acting in this way a new and most remarkable force began to stir the masses. For outside the legitimate constituted authorities of the Model there grew up a Clergy Congregation where the lower ecclesiastics met and deliberated. They had themselves consented to the Model of Government which had given them no constituent rights in the General Assembly, though it allowed them as a congregation to meet, deliberate, and advise. In process of time, this unrecognized body dominated the regular assembly. For the lower clergy were mostly men of the people. Primate Lombard, as long back as 1627, had sorrowfully noticed how the clerical students then to be met with differed from the men of higher station and culture with whom he had passed his professional years. “They swarmed”, he said, “over Alps and Apennines, carrying their brogues in their hands, and seeking degrees to entitle them to Holy Orders, but knowing little of the world’s culture or of the knowledge to be found by long study and meditation”. All this was so; but on the whole they were better guides than the bishops, especially than the bishops of Leinster, kinsmen of the Lords of the Pale and in constant contact with worldly ambitions and political intrigue. The lower clergy had no power, of course, over the daily acts of administration, and only asserted themselves on great emergencies, often when the intervention was necessarily too late. They performed, in fact, the functions of a really powerful press arrayed all on one side.

In course of time, indeed, they came to exercise so great a political influence in the south, particularly in the cities of Limerick and Waterford that the Supreme Council was forced more than once to yield to their demands. From beginning to end these preachers among the people were entirely opposed to all secret treaties, understandings, and accommodations between Ormond and the Kilkenny Cabal, and were steadily on the side of Owen O'Neill. But such support, however enthusiastic and zealous, can little help a commander who needs the regular assistance of the constituted authorities which he serves rather than the mere sympathy of any extraneous body however distinguished and powerful it may be. The good wishes and prayers of the patriotic pastors availed little to the poor famishing soldiers on the hills of Ulster; but in later days when even soldiers had to become politicians, Owen Roe found in the Clergy Congregation his truest and most steadfast support.

CHAPTER VIII

THE ULSTER ARMY.

THE General Assembly opened its first session at Kilkenny on the 23rd of October, 1642; and on that same day at Edgehill the first considerable battle was fought between Charles and his rebellious English subjects. By this great political convulsion not only England but Ireland too was rent asunder. With a Puritan administration in power supported by the king's authority, all Irish Catholics had a common object of attack; but when between the king and the Puritans actual war broke out, those in Ireland whose motives for rebellion were exclusively Catholic naturally sided with the king. The peers, bishops, and wealthy commercial Catholics eagerly desired reconciliation, and before the elected Supreme Council had been one week in office, negotiations were opened to bring about an understanding. No doubt the unbroken series of disasters which had befallen the Irish armies during the year 1642 made the Supreme Council anxious to secure an honourable peace. In the very month before (September 3rd) Muskerry's army of the South had been shattered at Liscarrol by Inchiquin and the Earl of Cork, who had thus secured supremacy over nearly the whole province of Munster. Earlier in the year Ormond who then served as general under Parsons and Borlase, had routed the Leinster army under Mountgarrett, at Kilrush, and had made himself complete master of the Pale; and although new armies supplied with arms and stores from Owen Roe's frigates were again in the field, grave doubts were entertained of their effectiveness, as neither they nor their commanders seemed to have any heart in the work. New hopes dawned on the Catholic party among the Confederates when Ormond and Inchiquin now pronounced themselves for the king. Monroe in Ulster, and Coote in Connaught, were declared Parliamentarians, while the Earl of Cork was biding his time patiently to see on which side the greater amount of plunder lay.

In such a state of things it was evident that if the Supreme Council could bring about an understanding with Ormond and Inchiquin, an Irish Royalist army might be formed, which, having first cleared all Puritan invaders out of Ireland, might re-establish the authority of Charles, and then carry their triumphant swords to the help of the king in England. On the other side Ormond himself was equally willing to treat. His army, though victorious, was perishing of cold, hunger, and disease; the English

troops in particular having suffered grievously from the unaccustomed severity of the climate. But Parsons and Boyle were against all truces and treaties which would dash their hopes of confiscation. Had not Boyle forwarded to the English House of Commons charges of treason against eleven hundred Munster freeholders, asking due authority to proceed against them as outlaws so that he might seize their lands and goods? And was not Parsons the main promoter of the traffic in the lands to be confiscated, amounting to two million and a half of acres? Both, therefore, resolutely set themselves against peace. Under the orders of Parsons, Ormond marched to the relief of New Ross, then besieged by the Wicklow men under Colonel Hugh McPhelim, and outside the town he inflicted on Preston a terrible defeat which shook all confidence in the ability of the chosen leader of Leinster (March 18th, 1643). Agents were then hurried to the king at Oxford, where Daniel O'Neill acted as intermediary, and Charles took two steps unusually bold for him; he dismissed Parsons, and he authorized Ormond to make terms.

Months were wasted in foolish verbiage by the Kilkenny diplomatists; in dexterous delays by Ormond. At the close of summer, indeed, the correspondence seemed to promise only an abrupt and fruitless termination. Ormond's dilatory tactics were in fact caused by the first successes of the king's army, the brilliant campaigns in Yorkshire and the Severn valley making it seem that without any Irish help the cause of Charles was won; and in that case Ormond was not the man to make gratuitous concessions which might anger his Protestant allies. So all hope of a settlement seemed to fade away.

But from neglected Ulster there came the sound of battle, and the word ran from end to end of Ireland that Owen Roe O'Neill was in the field. Ill-clad and half armed as many of his men were, they had held grim old Leslie at bay during all the winter, for the very name of Owen O'Neill, as the Scotch soldier noticed, made Leslie and Monroe uneasy. When the guns were fired at Charlemount welcoming the chief to Ireland, Monroe struck his tents and retreated in hot haste to Carrickfergus to join Leslie, who refused to believe that so illustrious a soldier as O'Neill would come to lead a paltry rebellion in Ireland. Assured, however, that it was so, he led the combined army of Scots round the northern shores of Lough Neagh, making that enormous detour so as to descend unexpectedly upon the new commander. But "on the lower Bann-water" he found Owen's sentries—nothing left to chance by the vigilant general.

There in good Bobadil style, Daniel O'Cahan, a "brave linguist", the captain of Owen's scouts, proposed a friendly interchange of pistol shots, "twenty gentlemen each side", amusing old Leslie while two fleet horsemen went tearing across the country to Owen's quarters. The Irish army was

soon in order, and Leslie, far from trying to assail it, admonished the hotter Monroe, telling him, "I know Owen O'Neill and his stratagems of war, and belike he means to lead us on into his toils". Instead of attacking, Leslie, who boasted that as a soldier he was "only second to the King of Sweden", wrote a letter of expostulation to O'Neill wondering why so renowned a soldier should come to lead rebels. Owen answered that it was every man's duty to come to the help of his suffering country, taking thought of nothing else; "not as you do", said he, "coming against a people that never did you wrong, or warring as you war against your own legitimate Scots King; against whom you have joined yourself with Englishmen".

Neither by letter nor by arms was the argument further prolonged, and Leslie, the newly created Earl of Leven, soon returned to Scotland ("for, indeed", says Sir James Turner, "the Earl of Leven was less a soldier than General Leslie had been"); warning Monroe before he left to be on his guard, for "if O'Neill can once succeed in getting an army together, he will most surely worst you". All through the autumn, therefore, the Irish were unmolested in their cornfields, the creaghts were safe in their fastnesses, and O'Neill's army was steadily transformed from an irregular multitude into a well-disciplined army. In these months his great anxiety was for the unfortunate people on whom his men had to be quartered; deeply touched as he was by the poor condition of the clansmen, and keenly alive to the heavy burden which an army at the best of times must be. To lighten as far as possible the troubles of the people he disbanded most of his levies after a few months, keeping only about 600 men at Charlemount in addition to the garrison, and dispersing all the others to their homes to remain there until he should recall them, while each county was charged to look after its own defence and warn the neighbouring counties of impending danger.

At the end of the winter O'Neill was summoned to Kilkenny to confer with the General Assembly on matters of grave importance. A respecter at all times of strict constitutional forms, Owen replied that being neither Lord of Parliament, nor knight of a shire, nor representative from any city or borough, he could only come if duly commanded by the Supreme Council or by the General Assembly in its sovereign capacity. The General Assembly thereupon summoned him to attend and advise them. Clandestine negotiations were on foot between the Supreme Council and a foreign Power, by which the Council proposed that a few Irish towns (Wexford and Waterford were named) should be assigned as fiduciary pledges, and that in consideration of these, money, arms and ammunition should be advanced by the foreign prince, and an informal protectorate inaugurated. Owen warned the General Assembly against this proposal, and reminded them that Ireland would not be bettered by changing one set of chains for another, "and", said he, "in my time, and in all other times of which books tell us

anything, foreign fingers close tightly on whatever comes within their grip". "Besides", said he, "we are not mercenary soldiers and may well be satisfied with what our own people are willing to give us".

A few days before Owen's appearance in the General Assembly, Lady Rosa and Henry Roe O'Neill reached Wexford in the frigate of Don Antonio, which Owen had sent back from Doo Castle to carry them tidings of his landing. At the first news of his arrival Lady Rosa had sent a letter in Gaelic to an Ulster priest, asking if the Campmaster had indeed landed, if all munitions were brought safe to shore, what chiefs had joined him, and "how stands Tyrconnell?" She and her sons were waiting for news; they longed "to come to Erin". At the first chance they set sail, and met Owen in Kilkenny, to return with him to Ulster. And as at Brussels, so in Ireland, too, that devoted and heroic group became the head, heart and soul of the struggle for liberty. Even in the chief's short absence trouble had fallen upon Ulster. Two Scotch armies marched through Armagh and Monaghan, plundering, burning, and laying waste the homes of the people. Unable to restrain his hot impetuous spirit Daniel O'Cahan, Owen's lieutenant, boldly faced them with a totally inadequate force, and after a uselessly brave resistance the Irish were driven back with severe loss, O'Cahan as became him dying in the thick of the battle. It was with difficulty that Owen again brought his men into line, and fixed his camp at Anaghsawry, near Charlemount. Here he was unexpectedly assailed by Monroe, who marching by night across the hills hoped to fall upon the Irish camp and cut the army to pieces; but O'Neill himself, curiously enough, first observed the enemy's approach and took instant steps to meet the Scotch. He was hunting abroad with a few favourite officers when he saw Monroe's cavalry galloping towards Anaghsawry. Owen and his companions turned their horses' heads for the Irish camp, and near that camp, in a pass through a quaking bog, with a few hundred men he held Monroe and his whole army at bay, "with the experience of a knowing soldier", until he gradually got off his men by "a narrow quickset lane" which favoured their retreat. Monroe's men tried to force this lane; but they fell back from the Irish pikes. Monroe himself jumped from his horse and, pike in hand, tried to break through the Irish line. While so engaged his own cavalry gave way in disorder, and Monroe, exasperated, yelled out at them : "*Fy, fy, fy! run awa frae awheen rebels*!" But his men were driven back and O'Neill's little force was saved.

Monroe, however, was a dangerous neighbour, and as he made another attempt in June to beat up O'Neill's quarters, Owen ordered his men to march for Leitrim, where his eyes had fallen upon choice camping ground near Mohill. Each county was, as before, to organize its own system of sentinels. All went well for some months; but the Fermanagh gentlemen having set no watches, two armies under Sir Robert Stewart and Sir

Willliam Stewart appeared at Clones, just as O'Neill was on his march with his creaghts back to his Ulster quarters. O'Neill had barely 1,600 men. He was against accepting battle. But his officers told him that the men grumbled about the over caution of their general and clamoured loudly to be let out against the enemy. Mutiny was impending if battle were not offered. He chose the less shameful evil; but he admonished the soldiers that they had to face a hardy enemy and that they should bear themselves courageously. They answered with loud shouts on which Owen did not set much value. Calling his old comrades of the foreign wars round him he solemnly enjoined them to stand firm and guard the retreat (for he knew that retreat was inevitable) of these hot misguided men. He placed Colonel Shane McBrian O'Neill at a ford, with instructions to stay there until further orders; as this ford was the key to one of the best routes of retreat, and with it in his hands Owen felt fairly secure. But scarcely had he set out with some of his officers to take a view of the enemy's strength, when they were suddenly assailed by the Scotch, who issued from a lane shouting out (for they were almost mad drunk with usquebagh) "Where's McArt? Where's McArt?" meaning Owen Roe. Colonel Shane O'Neill dashed forward from his post at the ford—"an argument and proof rather of his courage than of his conduct, for which error and rashness he fell ever after into the General's ill opinion". A terrible encounter of an hour's duration took place. The Irish were beaten, and Owen lost many of his bravest and best officers. Some were made prisoners, including Hugh McArt Oge O'Neill, and that splendid soldier remained in a Derry dungeon until his uncle's glorious victory at Benburb restored him once more to freedom. The rest fell back again to the Leitrim fastnesses.

In the shelter of the hills Owen once more turned to the new building up of an army. He recruited his forces from the Connaught clans. He enforced an iron discipline. He punished some negligent and drunken sentries with instant death. He innured the men to skirmishes, night marches, and camp life. At last, towards the end of August, he had a force of nearly 3,000 men ready for the field. At this time, as we have seen, the three armies of Leinster, Munster, and the centre were broken and beaten. The garrison of Drogheda under Lord Moore had swept down upon Meath and, assisted by Colonel Monk, had driven out Lord Slane and Gormanstown. In the extremity of their need the Supreme Council now summoned O'Neill to the Pale to confront the combined forces of Dublin and Drogheda. Summoning to arms all the Irish that lay in his line of march, Owen set out from his encampment with a small but gallant army. As he marched southward his numbers grew, and from the O'Farrells of Longford and the O'Reillys of Cavan small bands of eager recruits presented themselves to join his regiments. Still in numbers and equipment he was no match for the armies of Monk and Moore. The Supreme Council however bade him have

no misgiving, as Sir James Dillon with two thousand well-armed men was on the march from Killucan, and would be with him in the hour of need.

So Owen and his fearless followers pressed on. With their rations of oaten cake slung on their shoulders, their loose mantles gathered round them, and their cowhide "pampooties" on their feet, they outmarched all enemies, and never was heard one murmur from their ranks. When they came to the rich plains of Meath O'Neill selected a camping ground, and chose Portlester for his headquarters. Henry Roe at the head of the light horse scoured the country within two miles of Dublin; while the creaghts for once lived abundantly under the protection of the main guard of the army. Soon, however, the well-arrayed armies of Monk and Moore were seen by the scouts; an attack in force was to be made, for Lord Moore had rashly boasted that no wild creaghts or kernes from Ulster could stay such an army as his. These foolish words had reached O'Neill, and he determined to profit by them. The Portlester garrison, by Owen's orders, retired tumultuously towards the Irish camp; and Moore, fearing that the whole army might escape, hurried on his men by a narrow path leading to an old disused mill which covered the "very descent of the only ford". In this mill O'Neill had placed sixty sharpshooters and a number of pikemen, while near it under cover were the few guns in his service. As Moore's men came rushing on they were assailed by cannon shot and musket shot; and while still reeling under the shock they were furiously charged and driven back by the pikemen. Forming bravely they returned again and again up to the very walls of the mill, and at last burst into the ford, but only to be assailed by Henry Roe and the light horse, who cut them down before they could come to land. Numbers were unavailing as the passage only admitted a few at a time, so Moore threw forward a few companies across "an open plain field" to turn the flank. These were attacked so violently that "they were very glad to be rid of the fury of the fairies", and retreated; and "some of their horses stayed ever since in that field". As Lord Moore tried to rally his men he was struck down by a cannon-shot and killed, and the tradition ran that Owen Roe himself, displeased with an incompetent gunner, had with his own hand fired the shot which killed Lord Moore; fact or fiction, the story was commemorated in dogged Latin verse by some friend of Owen's :—

Contra Romanos mores, res mira, dynasta

Morus ab Eugenio canonizatus erat.

Sir James Dillon and his men arrived when all was over. “They came”, says the *Aphorismical Discovery*, “the day after the fair”. Owen Roe despised Dillon heartily. “Sir James”, said he, “war is an ugly, coarse kind of work. I think glory awaits you in withdrawing rooms rather than in the rough life of the camp”.

For the moment it seemed that all things had gone well. The engagement cleared Meath and Kildare of the enemy. Owen was now master of both. The Leinster men enthusiastically called out for O'Neill and promised to follow him wherever he should choose to lead them. With Ulster and Leinster so rallied, what might not be done? But at the crisis of the country's fate, the hope of union was again dashed to the ground. Ormond shrank from seeing the “Ulster army in the field triumphing, ranging at will over the counties of Meath and Dublin”; and it is likely that O'Neill’s close neighbourhood was not welcome to the negotiators of Kilkenny. The fruit of the great general's victory was plucked from his hand.

Only a few days after the victory at Portlester Owen was informed that the Supreme Council had made a truce with Ormond which was to last at least a year: O'Neill and his army were sent back to Ulster. This ill-omened “Ormond Cessation” was signed September 15th, 1643, changing the whole direction and prospect of affairs.

CHAPTER IX

THE PAPAL NUNCIO.

BY the Cessation agreed upon with Ormond, the Confederates in effect declared war upon the English Parliament, and bound up the fortunes of Irish Catholics with the cause of King Charles. The negotiators are not to be blamed for their errors of calculation with regard to the chances of the two contending parties in England. In extenuation of further errors, moreover, they might, perhaps, plead their belief that they were dealing with a king whose word might be trusted, when they were in fact throwing themselves into the hands of a royal liar. Nor did they believe that in joining Charles they were opposing free institutions; for in their brief and unhappy experience no example of a free parliament as the bulwark of popular liberty had ever arisen to kindle in them that veneration which Englishmen had learned to feel for their national assembly. But these excuses leave the real question untouched. The Kilkenny Confederates must not only be blamed, they must ever be grievously condemned by history for not having more fully appreciated the nature of their bargain—a bargain which was not only politically contemptible, but which was as ignoble as it was selfish and treacherous.

By the terms of the Cessation all lands, fortresses, and towns were to remain in the same hands as happened to hold them at the moment of its signing, and on both sides all prisoners were to be liberated. The Irish Confederates were not only to abstain from acts of hostility against Ormond and the Royalists in Ireland, but they were to send ten thousand men to the king's assistance in England, and to supply a large sum of money for the cost of maintenance In return for all this they were to receive from his Majesty gracious promises of future relief, while in the meantime they were to bear the brunt of battle against Inchiquin who now declared for the Parliament, the Puritans under Coote in Connaught, and the garrisons of Duncannon and Bunratty which soon raised the flag of the Parliamentarians. Moreover, if they and their Royalist allies succeeded the net result could only be that Charles, absolute king in a more “thorough” sense than Strafford ever dreamed of, would have lorded it over the three countries alike, trampling under foot the Parliaments of Scotland and

Ireland as by the very conditions of success he must necessarily have trampled upon the Parliament of England.

Obvious as all this looks in the light of history, however, no protest was raised against the treaty by the obedient Council. Lords and Commons hastened to a settlement of peace for their own immediate interests in the Pale. But Ulster, which opened the war, which urged these trembling peers into action, which staked everything on the result—Ulster was not taken into consideration at all by the Kilkenny diplomatists. With Ormond alone had peace been made for a year. Monroe and Stewart with their 10,000 Scotch were in no way parties to that compact, and Owen Roe O'Neill and his poorly armed soldiers were left to contend as best they might with the finest troops in Europe under experienced and able commanders.

All these considerations lay on the surface, and we may not acquit the Kilkenny Cabal of responsibility on any of these heads. But there were other grave circumstances which they could not then take into account, though very keen observers had seen the signs of change. Exulting in a brief success the royal army in England went "Essex-chasing", as Daniel O'Neill humorously called it; but soon two terrible powers unlike Essex and his riff-raff were to meet the cavaliers of Rupert—the Scotch under Hamilton and the new-modelled Roundheads under Cromwell. These were destined to tread the king's crown and sceptre into the dust, and their growing power showed itself almost at the very hour when the ill-fated peace of '43 was signed. And at this unfortunate crisis not only were the Irish Catholic Confederates bound up helplessly with the king's fortunes, but they had to discover that with the king himself it was impossible to come to definite terms.

Lured by Ormond, who became Lord Lieutenant on New Year's Day, 1644, the Assembly now entered upon solemn arguments and constitutional debates which seemed unending; Darcy, Dillon, and Cusack expounding the true intent of Poynings' Law and Premunire, while the Lord Chief Justice and the Prime Sergeant delivered exercitations on the other side. All this would have been most instructive in a time of calm, but such dissertations were not the business of men who in time of danger had to bring practical affairs to a speedy issue. Ormond in fact was using the Council as puppets to play his game. He wished to consume the year of the Cessation in idle talk, that the "soft waxen babes" of Kilkenny would have no choice but to accept any offer proposed to them for another year, leaving him and Charles altogether unhampered by pledges and promises. And so the protocolling and perorating went on. To those interested in pure intellectual controversy these debates are of great value; discussing, as the speakers do, many constitutional matters of great nicety—how far the indictments found against those in arms ousted the prerogative of pardon before conviction;

how of two parliaments, both created by royal writ, and in each of which the plenary power of the same sovereign resides, one can be inferior to the other; with many such scholastic disquisitions. But these fine arguments led nowhere. King Charles at Oxford, no longer Essex-hunting, pressed on the negotiations, and Irish agents went over to his Majesty with a statement of the claims which would satisfy the politicians of Kilkenny.

Unskilled as these agents were, some of them had eyes and used them. “There is none but rogues here” (at Oxford), wrote Sir Brian O'Neill, “as false as the devil, and they intend nothing but the destruction of you all. The Penal Laws are not to be taken off; you must take his (Charles's) word for it. That cogging knave Taafe is here; and Daniel O'Neill wanted much to know what that smooth person was doing at court”. Royal compliments rained down on the Catholic agents; they were to have all they asked for, and they returned home promise-crammed. Their backs were scarcely turned when agents from the so-called parliament in Dublin arrived in Oxford, suggesting an easy method by means of a “Great Protestant Army” to hold the Papists down. Charles temporized, vacillated, equivocated, lied. He promised to do nothing without the consent and approval of his Protestant subjects; and then recalling the Catholic agents he assured them that they had their sovereign word, and that there must be a full and unconditional surrender of the Confederates confiding in the royal grace and clemency. This, however, was too much for the Clergy Congregation, who loudly opposed any such submission. Rumours were running, too, of new instances of the king’s duplicity. Chafing at the delays of Ormond and sorely needing an Irish army to meet the victorious Roundheads, Charles had despatched Lord Glamorgan, who was bound by ties of blood and marriage to the O'Briens of Thomond, with powers to grant terms far more favourable than those proposed by Ormond; but these proposals being accidentally made public, Charles eagerly disavowed them, and the solemn farce was gone through of arresting Glamorgan in Dublin to release him again when the storm had blown over.

The good easy men of Kilkenny were somewhat disturbed at all this. But besides Ormond in Dublin and. Charles in Oxford, their eyes were fixed on other political centres. Agents were despatched under lofty titles to the chief Catholic courts of Europe, and especially to the poor mock court of Queen Henrietta Maria in Paris. The queen sent agents in return, and Kilkenny was graced with the presence of Lord Antrim’s wife, the widow of Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, to whom the “poor queen’s” heart lay open, so that “Katherine Buckingham” became another potent influence in the wise counsels of the Irish Confederation. A very different negotiator came from Oxford, Daniel O'Neill. He sincerely desired an honourable peace between the king and the Confederation; or, as Ormond loved to say, between “his

Majesty's Protestant subjects and his Majesty's Roman Catholic subjects". Daniel was no unfit instrument for such an accommodation. But on his arrival in Kilkenny he found the place aflame with detestation of Owen Roe; and Daniel, as in duty bound, communicated every wild charge to his uncle; they knew him to hate all the Palesmen, and to be aiming at the crown of Ireland. "As for some of these things", Owen answered, "they are too light and foolish, as no man who knows the world would believe me to be such a fool"; but the charge of hating his countrymen was not light.

"Nephew", said he, "I hold him to be no better than a devil who will make these distinctions but call all Irish alike". On the peace proposals he offered no opinion beyond urging that the safety of the poor province which entrusted him with leadership should be secured. Daniel faithfully conveyed all this to Kilkenny and Dublin, warning the statesmen in both places that they had better be frank with Owen O'Neill "as he is a deep, subtle man who sees through men's designs".

But now there started into life yet another element of discord. Hitherto the lords and bishops had acted in conjunction; governing, judging, negotiating, in perfect harmony. The clique of managers in Kilkenny had been able to pack the General Assembly with their parasites, while the various offices in the administration were bestowed on the most consistently slavish upholders of the dominant *junta*. As long as peers and prelates agreed all went well; but a grave disintegrating question soon arose with regard to the possession of church lands and institutions. At the beginning of troubles the bishops had allowed that matter to lie in abeyance; and the poorer priests, in their desire to assist the soldiers, cheerfully allowed the tithes to go to the general treasury, declaring that they had lived up to this without tithes, and so they could live still. But now that the war was about to close, very different considerations applied. Were the Catholic cathedrals, churches, abbeys and lands to go back into the hands of the Protestant clergy or of the lay impropriators? Lawyers cited the precedent of Cardinal Pole's dispensation in Mary's reign by which the laymen were left undisturbed, and Lord Clanricarde, who emerges at this time into great diplomatic prominence, repeated the formula of St. Ambrose of Milan:—"We may not deliver up our churches, but neither may we retain them by force". Lords Taaffe and Dillon welcomed this dictum. "Taaffe and Dillon would not adventure, I do not say their lives, but one acre of glebe land for church or country". The bishops, however, did not see their way; the more timid being for compromise, and only a few for insisting on Church claims. Their halting counsels mattered little now. A new power was at hand, a power which was to overshadow all bishops alike, which was to turn the whole episcopacy into its pawns, and which, despising all "accommodators" as heartily as Owen

himself, was to open a way for Ulster to assert herself in the National councils. Rinuccini arrived as Nuncio in October, 1645.

Trumpeted and heralded by Belling, who "leaped with joy" when the Pope agreed to send a Nuncio; welcomed from Kinsale to Kilkenny by prostrate multitudes kneeling for his blessing; received at the gates of the marble city with regal magnificence; brought in state to Ormond Castle amid the acclamations of prelates, nobles, priests, and people; seated in majesty beside Lord President Mountgarrett in the great gallery of the noble old mansion; graciously communicating the views of his august master, the Sovereign Pontiff, who had set his heart on three things— the propagation of Catholic faith, peace and amity among the Confederates, and due allegiance to their sovereign lord the king—to the smooth moderators who could come with more welcome words?

But their hopes were short-lived. With the gorgeous and resplendent ceremonials of Continental cathedrals fresh in his mind, Rinuccini despised as poor cravens prelates who for one moment faltered upon the issue raised about Church lands. Calling the bishops round him in his house, he extracted from them a solemn promise that they, as spiritual lords, would never agree to any treaty which he, as representative of the Holy Father, did not consider a sufficient guarantee for the full protection of the Church's legitimate claims. Next, in council with the bishops he solemnly promulgated the disciplinary decrees of the Council of Trent, and acted not as an accredited political ambassador, but as the sole dictator of ecclesiastical affairs in Ireland. Historians differ widely as to the true effect of this strange prelate's action in the government of the Church in Ireland; eminent writers holding that he merely restored discipline, equally eminent writers contending that he struck a deadly blow at the liberty and franchises of the Church in Ireland. These grave questions need not detain us here; but it is quite certain that the Nuncio insisted on being the sole channel through which all recommendations from the Supreme Council of nominees for vacant sees should be transmitted to Rome; and by so transmitting thirteen nominations of his own adherents, he secured to his obedience a majority of the Episcopate.

Were these acts of no importance outside the government of the Church, their enumeration here would be irrelevant; but they went to the heart of Irish political affairs during the Nuncio's stay in Ireland, Haughty, formal, and magisterial, Rinuccini undoubtedly was; but he was at any rate a reality, not a shadow moving among the shadows of Kilkenny. His strong will impressed the bishops, and between them and the Lords of the Pale a great schism took place. Little wonder that parties and factions arose. Agents from the Pope, agents from the King, agents from the Queen, agents from the Prince of Wales, Ormond, Clanricarde, Antrim, and Digby to boot;

what earthly assembly, what human head, could stand fixed and calm in the midst of such commotion Rinuccini made a great effort to subdue the boiling surges and to restore peace. In a solemn session of the General Assembly he reminded them that the Holy Father, netted round with many troubles, had turned away for a moment from the Turk's menaces and the growing power of the Swede to fix his fatherly eyes on Ireland, and he implored all his hearers to wait until the Kalends of May, since before that time the Holy Father would have procured, by his intercession with the Queen of England, larger and richer benefits (*ampliora et pinguiora beneficia*) than any which Ormond or the King would give. The appeal was respectfully heard; no resolution was adopted; but it was the general sense of all concerned that the Nuncio's advice should be followed.

So, outwardly, the situation remained up to June, 1646, when once more Owen Roe precipitated the plans of Ormond and the Supreme Council.

CHAPTER X

THE FRUITS OF CESSATION.

FROM the signing of the first Cessation, in September, 1643, until the arrival of the Nuncio in November 1645, Ormond and the Supreme Council were like members of one political family. No higher recommendation could be given to any candidate for office in Kilkenny than a friendly word from the Viceroy:—"All their chief clerks, attorneys, and judges, were the greatest knaves, and cheatingest rogues they could hit upon, new comers from Dublin for whose reputation they cared not so they be obedient to the council and to great Ormond". The orders from Dublin Castle were cheerfully obeyed by the Confederate authorities; armies were moved as Ormond directed, and Ormond took good care to direct nothing that could tend to the advantage of Ulster or of Owen Roe O'Neill. To the residents in Kilkenny this was a pleasant time. Taxes, rents, and tithes poured in, but the pomp and state of the Confederate court and its army of officials could hardly be maintained even on such a revenue. No one, however, dreamt of calling for an account; bishops and peers were satisfied; the spotless patriots—Cusack, Fennell, and Belling—controlled the exchequer, and there was none who dared to say a word.

But beyond Kilkenny and the rich estates of the Pale, sorrows multiplied in Ireland. Obedient to the mandate of the Supreme Council, O'Neill had marched away from the fat plains of Meath, and led his men back to the rude northern hill-sides. While prancing cavalcades encircled the carriages of bishops and peers as they progressed in state through the cities of the south, Owen and his devoted creaghts were left to find their bitter shelter in the most inaccessible mountain nooks, where guarded by quaking bogs they clung to the natural citadels of Ulster while the soldiers of Monroe and Ormond ran riot over the plains. During this same time of ease for the sleek accommodators of Kilkenny the Catholics of Cork were mercilessly expelled by Inchiquin; Belfast was seized by the Scotch; an Irish contingent was cut down and butchered in cold blood at Nantwich by order of the English Parliament; the fearless islesmen of McDonnell, after

shedding glory by their valour on the standard of Montrose, were butchered in cold blood at Edinburgh by order of the Scotch Parliament; and the wretched king for whose cause they were sacrificed was at that very time ready without one qualm of conscience to hand over Ireland to her fullest enemies. And while Ormond held high state in Dublin, receiving his rents out of his Tipperary estates by the obedient assistance of the Catholic Confederates and their august Council, courted by the Leinstermen who flocked to Dublin to salute him,— "the ways full of beeves, muttons, hogs, turkeys, geese, capons, pheasants, and all kinds of dainties",— this scene was taking place at Tyburn:

The Sheriff.—Your case is desperate. Tell us who were actors and plotters with you or gave you a commission?

Lord Maguire.—For God's sake give me leave that I may depart in peace.

Sheriff.—Had you some Bull or pardon from the Pope?

Lord Maguire.—I saw none and knew of none. I believe the Irish were justified in what they did.

Dr. Sibbalds.—The question is was it a sin or not, do you think, to shed innocent blood?

Here he answered not but continued poring over a paper as he had done from his coming.

Dr. Sibbalds.—He makes use of that paper to pore on.

Sheriff.—Search his pockets whether he hath no Bull or pardon.

Here his pockets were searched where they found some beads and a crucifix which were taken from him.

Dr. Sibbalds.—My Lord, no more of these; it is not your Ave Marias nor these things will do you any good.

Then the Lord Maguire read out of a paper as followeth :

"Since I am here to die I desire to part hence with a quiet mind, asking forgiveness first of God and next of the world. I forgive all my enemies from my heart, even those that have a hand in my death. I die a Roman Catholic, and although I have been a great sinner yet do I confidently trust to be saved, not by my own works but only through the passion, merits, and

mercies of my dear Saviour Jesus Christ, into whose hands I commend my soul. I beseech you, gentlemen, let me have a little time to say my prayers".

The sheriff and Dr. Sibbalds were too robust for that; they still tortured the hapless young man.

Dr. Sibbalds.—If this be all we can get of you, you must stand or fall to your own master.

Here he expected to be suddenly turned off and thereupon fell to his prayers : uttering the word 'Jesus' about twenty or thirty times altogether.

More questionings follow and more appeals for a little time to pray.

Lord Maguire.—I beseech all Catholics that are here to pray for me : I beseech God to have mercy on my soul.

Here when the cart was going away notice was given that a Lord was present.

Alderman Bunch.—Here is a Lord of Ireland who sat in Parliament with your Honor, have you anything to say to him?

Lord Maguire.—I have nothing to say.

After this the executioner did his office. . . .

In the hands of the poor dead man were found two papers; one a prayer and religious exhortation in Latin, a wonderful composition; the other a farewell letter from his heart-broken footman.

"By the grace of God you will know my coach with two whitish grey horses. Pray earnestly for your country and I humbly entreat you to pray for me. My thousand blessings upon you, son of my soul".

YOUR POOR OLD GREY.

So died one of the nephews of Owen Roe O'Neill after a trial which is a disgrace to the history of English law. But Lord Maguire's illustrious uncle had to pass through worse than the bitterness of death: he had to look on while his heart's hopes were wrecked by imbecility and cowardice. O'Neill still held to his fortress home in Charlemount. That eyrie withstood all shocks; Leslie, Monroe, the Stewarts, Chichester never dared to assail it. Ensconced in his stronghold the Irish leader kept watch and ward over his

creaghts and their cattle, and he saved his people from open plunder. But too often, led by miserable spies, the Scotch foraging parties stealthily came over the "toghers" and drove away "countless herds". In O'Neill's mind the determination deepened that if Ulster had to suffer the burden should be shared by the other provinces, and so leaving his troops under the command of General O'Farrell he journeyed to Waterford and appealed for help to the National Assembly. He enumerated the grievous woes of the Ulstermen, who without winter quarters had to withstand the constant harassing attacks of three Scotch armies, ably led, abundantly supplied, and strongly entrenched behind a great line of eastern towns and castles. To this petition for assistance the General Assembly—an Assembly carefully nominated by the Kilkenny Junto—made no sympathetic response. Then the General raising his voice declared that he would no longer guard the passes into the Pale, but would leave open the broad way by which, save for him and his soldiers, Monroe could pour down his vast army on the Leinster plains. This argument, we are told, impressed the Assembly much more than the former one had done, and after much foolish talk they voted for an expedition to Ulster, in which 6,000 foot and 600 horse were to take part. Inquiring of O'Neill what his forces might be, they were informed by him that he could bring together 4,000 foot and 400 horse, and that the united armies of north and south would be more than ample, not only for the relief of Ulster, but even for the total clearing out of the Scotch. All were pleased and the matter seemed settled.

But now an unexpected question presented itself;— who was to command the joint forces during the campaign? The question, one might suppose, would have answered itself; but the wise men of the Council shook their solemn heads at the name of Owen O'Neill, and pronounced him to be of very questionable loyalty to our sovereign lord the king. And so this historic scene took place :—

"The Assembly sitting, those they thought fit to come in competition they wrote their names down one under another, and from each name a long line was drawn; then at the table where the clerk sat every member of the general assembly, one after another, put a pen dash on the line of him that he would have to be general, and to the end that none should mark more than once four or five supervisors were chosen (two of whom were bishops), being upon oath to overlook this marking. Now, contrary to Owen O'Neill's expectation, who had designed this generalship for himself as generalissimo, I happened (!) to be chosen, which Owen Roe took extremely to heart, as I have reason to believe. However, he carried it fairly, and came to congratulate me and wish me good success, assuring me of his readiness to serve me to the utmost of his power".

Thus, by austerest form of open free election, was Lord Castlehaven-Audleyput in command of Owen Roe O'Neill. The poor babbling narrator who described this inspiring scene had not sufficient military skill to lead a corporal's guard; and Lord Orford slily says of him that had he not enlightened posterity by recording his own actions we should have known nothing about him, "our historians scarce mentioning him". In chronicling his great deeds he took pains to inform his beloved sovereign, Charles II, that never for one moment had he any sympathy with the Ulster rebels, and that his extremity of suffering alone drove him to side with the Confederates, while at heart he was ever devoted to the throne. Young, weak, capricious, as vain as he was ignorant, his worthlessness already openly manifested by his conduct of the war in Munster during the past year, and even later when he had lain helplessly cooped up in a corner until Owen's army had cleared Leinster by the victory of Portlester—in spite of all this Lord Castlehaven was now Commander of the whole Confederate force in Ulster.

With his picked army increased by 400 dragoons more the "Tyro-General" first marched to Connaught—not against Puritans or Parliamentarians, but against Lord Mayo, who refused to abide by the Cessation until the Cootes and Ormsbys submitted too. Castlehaven was allowed free passage by Clanricarde; he marched to Castlebar and Castlecarrow and forced both into compliance with the "Ormondian" policy. Then learning that O'Neill was at Portlester he set out to form a junction with him, and fixed Granard on the line of march for a meeting-place of all the Leinster forces under his command. Reviewing his men he found that they numbered over three thousand. That evening, he tells us, he was informed that the Scots were "three score miles off on a certain mountain"; that they numbered over 17,000 men, and that they had provisions for 21 days. Feeling safe he was about to "rest himself", when a spy came with sure tidings that the Scotch were at Cavan, only twelve miles off, and thereupon, "I packed away as fast as I could and gained Portlester, having ordered the rest of the army to follow, and commanded a colonel with 700 men to guard the bridge of Finea, and so protect my retreat". Monroe drove off the guards, captured much booty in the Irish camp, pushed on to Portlester, and retreated suddenly; awed, Castlehaven assures us, by the immense works he had constructed after his headlong flight. But Monroe, who had not 17,000 but about 7,000 men, makes no secret of the cause of his retreat; he had no intention to fight Owen O'Neill on a field selected by that "vigilant and adventurous man".

All danger being over, Castlehaven tells us, "I was now at leisure to call upon Owen O'Neill for his 4,000 foot and 400 horse"; and to O'Neill's urgent advice, "Come on to Ulster", this worthless poltroon only answered

by enumerating all the dangers in his way. The country was unknown to him, there were no fortified towns, no base of supply, the Irish could not fight the Scotch. Unwittingly at last he entered the northern province with 6,000 foot and 1,000 horse and dragoons. Again he whined to O'Neill, “Where are your 4,000 foot and 400 horse?” His soldiers, said Owen, were guarding the creaghts and maintaining supplies and lines of communication. With over 4,000 men Castlehaven then pushed on to Dromore, where his cavalry had an encounter with Monroe's horse; “the enemy drew off and I drew off too”. Turning helplessly to O'Neill for advice, he was told to fall back upon Charlemount for the present, and while Owen’s hardy followers camped on the hills, Lord Castlehaven’s forces lay sheltered in the safe fortress which O'Neill had erected, and the Leinster cavalry were pleasantly quartered at Benburb. Owen Roe was at this time very ill, but he was ever ready with soldierly advice when Castlehaven condescended to listen. “My men are angry”, said Castlehaven, “they say you called them cowards”. “Yes, I confess I did”, said Owen, “when I saw my brave fellows deserted in the fight by this cowardly cock with the feather in his hat, Colonel Fennell; but, my lord, we shall answer for these things before the Supreme Council which employs us both”.

Not one offensive step was taken by that powerful army gathered under Castlehaven during its whole time in Ulster; and this is how he describes at last the cause and course of its departure:—

> “During this idle time I went often to see my horse quarters, and being one day merry with the officers several soldiers came about us, and in a pleasant way I asked them what would they give to come to a day's work with the enemy. They answered they would be glad of it if their doublets and skins were made proof against the lances of the Scotch, of which they had many squadrons. Seeing their fears, I passed off the discourse and resolved to march away. Which to effect (for I did not desire fighting) I caused a togher to be cut and made as if we were to march straight against the enemy, and then leaving our cannon and luggage behind us in the fort, we marched off that night and all next day."

So ended Lord Castlehaven-Audley’s memorable campaign of 1644. “But after all”, as he says, “the other three provinces had no reason to complain of this campaign, for this army that they sent kept them from being troubled by Scots or Ulster people that year”. But Ulster was not without a guardian. With or without Castlehaven, Owen O'Neill looked to the safety of his people and sheltered them from the marauding bands of English and Scotch soldiers who, under cover of the Cessation, claimed to hold military occupation of the most fertile fields of the North. When

harvest ripened Chichester led his troops into Monaghan and Armagh and began to reap. Owen called upon him to withdraw. He declined, saying that these places had been in his occupation on the eve of the Cessation. Owen again told him that "his continuance within the Irish quarters and daily spoils of corn and cattle should cease". To this Chichester replied:—"Our forces do claim all Ulster for their quarters, which if you interrupt us in you are breakers of the Cessation. For the corn reaped it is all ours". Owen answered :—"Your pretence that open fields and plains are yours I certainly did admire, which truly is as much as to leave one man upon every hill in Ulster, and call that a possession at the time of Cessation". Chichester, in the accredited English style, prolonged the negotiations, sorry there should be any misunderstanding, politely wearing out, as he hoped, the precious harvest time. But he was dealing with a man who saw through such schemes like glass. A week later he wrote:—"Owen McArt O'Neill came with about 3,000 men some days since to Loughall, and possessed himself of all our quarters. Most of our men were reaping, and McArt ordered them to march away, and not to come near these corn fields any more. Some of our captains expostulated, and said they had no orders to quit their quarters, and much debate arose between them and McArt's officers; but McArt himself came up and gave orders to his officers to expel us by force, which was accordingly done, and our men marched away to Port of Down, the next garrison town".

After this Chichester became most reasonable, and the Irish quietly took possession of all the corn up to the Bann river, and the rich valleys of Armagh and Tyrone. Nearly three years later, in April, 1646, Owen's deep indignation sounds in his vigorous protest to Major Harrison, a resolute raider who in the happy peace of the Cessation only discovered welcome opportunity to seize cattle and corn at will—

"Sir,

I am informed that some of the horsemen residing the last week in your garrison, contrary to the Articles of Cessation, have taken horses from Shane O'Neill, which, if you obey the said Cessation, I desire to be restored; otherwise assure yourself I will take a course to see them redressed. It were better for us to have absolute wars than this corrupted Cessation. Expecting your answer,

I rest, Your assured friend,

Owen O'Neill".

Little wonder that this great-hearted man of genius, pining in ignoble fetters, the daily witness of his country's humiliation and sorrow, should hail the coming of Rinuccini, and welcome in the messenger of Rome a power which might even now break the unhallowed spell under which Ireland had lain for four miserable years.

CHAPTER XI.

THE BATTLE OF BENBURB

FOR three weary and miserable years Ireland had been held in the bonds of foolish treaties and arrangements; Scots overrunning Ulster Inchiquin desolating Cork, and the Cootes and Ormsbys holding Connaught by a line of fortresses stretching from Sligo to Athlone New hope, indeed, had dawned with the coming of the Papal Nuncio. From Limerick he summoned all Celtic Ireland to war. Absolute master by virtue of the stores of arms and of gold which he had carried from Rome, the Nuncio had for a time power to direct the whole campaign. No longer in the relaxing air of Ormond's city but in the western capital the Supreme Council sat; and instead of weary hypothetic talk, men were called to action. Maintained by Papal subsidies three armies were put into the field one under Rinuccini's own eye to reduce the strong Castle of Bunratty; another, under Preston, to break through the barrier fortresses which hemmed in Connaught; and the third for the relief of Ulster under Owen Roe O'Neill. Years later, in making a final report, Rinuccini declares that he had personally desired to spend all the money on the Ulster forces, but that yielding to great pressure he had really distributed it in the proportion of two-thirds for Leinster and one-third for Ulster; and in explanation of the disparity he tells the Holy Father that the men of Ulster care little for food or money and only think of their muskets and spears, while Preston's army, moulded on the Flemish model both as to accoutrements and pay, had to be maintained in a high degree of comfort. The explanation was quite accurate; but Rinuccini at the distance of years was entirely mistaken about his own views at the actual time of these events. Poisoned by the calumniators of Kilkenny, the Nuncio long looked upon Owen O'Neill as "a strange grasping man", with whose services, however, he unhappily dared not dispense, and it was only by slow degrees that he came to a true understanding of Owen and Preston and Castlehaven, and by terrible experience learned on whom dependence might be placed.

For the moment his mind was fixed upon the relief of Limerick and Connaught, and while his own army undertook one duty the other was given to Preston. Bunratty Castle, a huge fortress capable of holding thousands of men, fell after a spirited siege of ten days; and Roscommon, the key of Connaught, was yielded up to Preston after a vigorous defence. Trifling and insignificant, however, were these achievements compared with Owen's glorious triumph in Ulster. For the first time since that great master of the art of war landed in Ireland he found himself, by the assistance of the Nuncio, able to maintain an army in a regular manner, with fixed pay and permanent quarters. Summoning the clans of Ulster, Connaught, and the Midlands, the great chief fixed his camp on the Hill of Gallinagh, far away from the demoralising little country towns with their whiskey-shanties, and there, looking down on the beautiful waters of the Inny and of Lough Sheelin, the clansmen spent seven weeks in unceasing drill. Owen was the strictest of disciplinarians, but he was also the most punctual of pay-masters; and the strange spectacle of an Irish army under native authority in receipt of regular pay so impressed the people of the Midlands, that they unconsciously bore testimony in their own way to Owen's fulfillment of his trust; for they ceased to call the hill by its ancient name, and spoke of it only by the name it bears today—Knockanoer, the Hill of Gold.

The spring and early summer of 1646 were spent in forming the new army. At last, when all was ready, it set out under O'Neill's orders for Cavan. In the Franciscan monastery where the General took up his quarters an amusingly impudent letter reached him from the Lord Lieutenant, under whose orders he had been placed by the Cessation. The Scotch were threatening Connaught again, said Ormond; Castlecoote was strongly fortified; Clanricarde's mansion at Portumna was in serious peril. "Certainly something is expected from you, but I am not able to advise what is fit for you to do". The wrath and scorn of O'Neill's great heart seethes through his strongly restrained answer:—

> "My lord, at my arrival in this province, where I came obeying order, I found all things unready. Some of my horse, too, obeying order, are scattered in Munster, which, if I had here now, I would, my lord, spoil the homes of those that went for Connaught that all the booty they could light upon could hardly countervail their losses. Please Your Excellency, I have in the fourth article of my instructions orders to receive such directions and commands as Your Excellency may impart, and any such orders for the annoyance of the common enemy I shall with all alacrity be willing to observe and obey. In five days, my lord, I shall be in a posture for service. Before I left Kilkenny I sent a thousand pounds to lay up

> provision in a magazine for this army; but no part has been taken up or done; still, my lord, within five days at the furthest, I, for all that, shall have men and provisions in readiness. I shall be glad to learn your Excellency's pleasure. But, under favour, my opinion is that I should advance to the quarters of these Scotch rebels where, with God's helping hand, I hope to be strong enough for them. To march into Connaught, Your Excellency's forces not yet in the field, leaving passage clear for the enemy, would only bring destruction upon Meath and Westmeath. I should have long written to your Excellency" (note this) "had I not been assured that you were daily expected with forces towards the frontiers at Dundalk. If my forces were together I would be 3,000 foot and 4 or 300 horse; which I conceive of good hopeful men to be a considerable strength?—Cavan, 10th May, 1646".

Connaught, no doubt, was in danger; but soon Kilkenny and Dublin heard the rumble of less distant thunder, and learned with terror that the Scotch were in full march for Leinster, their ultimate destination being Kilkenny. Into O'Neill's hands his ancient enemies and detractors now hastened to commit their safety: if with his 5,500 "good, hopeful men" he can save the Pale from Monroe, all may be well again for the courtiers of Dublin and Kilkenny. Of these courtiers Owen thought little, but he thought of the common fatherland, and resolved to baulk the Scotch in their enterprise. The task was one of the utmost difficulty and danger. From Derry, from Coleraine, from Carrickfergus, a preconcerted movement was planned by the enemy. Three Scotch armies with English auxiliaries were to meet on a fixed day at an appointed place. General Robert Monroe set out from Carrickfergus with 6,000 foot and 800 dragoons, marching by Lisburn to Armagh, from which point he was to reach Glasslough on the 5th of June, and form a junction with his brother George, who marched from Coleraine with 500 men; thence both were to advance to Clones and meet the Stewarts with the "Laggan" or Derry army, comprising over 2,000 soldiers. Once united they might defy all resistance, so great were their numbers and so perfect their martial equipment and preparation. In presence of such forces, it was only by taking them in detail that the Irish troops could have even the shadow of a chance of success.

Choosing the boldest plan, O'Neill determined to cross Robert Monroe's path and prevent his junction with his brother George. To effect this he marched rapidly from Cavan, "going on the defensive", and reached Glasslough on Thursday, the 4th of June, when Monroe had just come within sight of Armagh and pitched his tents at Dromore. Leisurely and quietly the Irish army marched on that same day for Benburb, and at night

stretched their tents and coverings along the meadows and sloping banks of the Blackwater, while the light horse under Henry Roe O'Neill pushed on beyond Bagnal's bridge towards Armagh. All was order and repose within the Irish camp as the army lay down to rest that lovely summer night. Representatives from every region of Celtic Ireland were gathered there under O'Neill's command—O'Connors, O'Rorkes, McDermotts, and O'Kellys from Connaught, every great clan in Ulster, and contingents from Wicklow and Longford. They saw the great fires on Slievegullion, and knew that the next day they should cross steel with the soldiers who were even then wasting and desolating the line of march from Lisburn.

But on Monroe's side intelligence of Owen's march was only brought at ten o'clock that Thursday evening, and the worn-out troops were already sleeping when the impatient general suddenly ordered them under arms and set out on a night march for Armagh. Late that night his horse reached the old cathedral city; but the infantry remained for a few short hours' sleep at Hamilton's Bawn, and at the dawn tramped into Armagh to join the cavalry. In the early June morning 6,000 foot and 800 horse in brave array passed through the streets of Armagh marching towards Dungannon. Midway in the line of march at Benburb lay the Irish troops, compact, well-ordered, and fresh for fight. In the open air Mass had been celebrated, and the whole army had knelt in silent worship. Then O'Neill addressed them; and his words, we are told, so wrought upon them that they seemed to seek death. Reminding them of Ireland's long sorrows and the special woes of Ulster, he bade them acquit themselves that day as men—and "remember whoever retreats deserts Ireland and deserts me". Between the armies still lay the Blackwater, and as Monroe marched along the eastern bank of the river seeking a ford, O'Neill kept pace on the western bank as it were watching his movements, and so step to step until Kinard or Caledon was reached. There Monroe led his army across, and the forces at last stood face to face on the Tyrone side of the river.

But Owen had already chosen his place of battle—the spot where the little river Oona flows into the Blackwater. Early that morning Owen O'Dogherty and Brian Roe O'Neill had been despatched to hold George Monroe in check as he came on by the road from Coleraine; and the general taking a map pointed out a narrow pass and said, secure that strait and hold it. His own movements and feints were all directed to the wearing out of the long summer day, and the bringing of the Scotch very slowly on from Caledon to the chosen ground. Monroe, however, was on fire with fear that even now when he held O'Neill thus in his hand, that astute strategist might in some way escape him and retire to the lines of Charlemont. Knowing all this Owen pushed on his own regiment of foot under the command of General O'Farrell to the pass of Ballaghkillagwill through

which Monroe's army must advance on its way to Benburb, with orders that O'Farrell should hold the pass only so long as he could safely harass the enemy, and when hard pressed should retreat firing. O'Farrell was a most able officer. Lord Ards and the English cavalry attacked the lines, but they were driven back in confusion. Monroe hurried up reserves; they too were hurled back. Five hundred musketeers at treble quick were flung forward, and then O'Farrell in perfect order retired, his musketeers covering the retreat with well-directed volleys on the worn-out enemy. Quickly forming beyond the pass the Scotch and English solidly and steadily fronted the main lines of the Irish; but Owen ordered up strong reinforcements to O'Farrell, and thus consuming time, and still leading the enemy on, he slowly fell back on the hill of Knocknacloy.

Here Owen Roe had determined that the battle should be fought. Almost instantaneously his troops took their positions; the centre resting upon the hill, about 100 feet high and "covered with scrogs and bushes", the right wing protected by a bog, and they left by the waters of the Oona and the Blackwater. Four columns formed the front line, stretched out with large open spaces between them; the second line in three columns, at convenient distance, could easily form an unbroken front by filling up the open spaces should need be; while the cavalry on the wings, massed behind the column in front, stood ready to repel the attack of the enemy or to charge through the gaps in the front line. The infantry were armed half pike and half musket, and the pikes were longer by a foot in the handle than the ordinary weapons, while the square heads with no axe or hook were deadly in the charge. The Irish had no cannon, and the British carried, as field service went then, a powerful park of artillery. Now, however, in the scroggy slopes the Irish were in little danger from the guns, and as attack on either wing was impossible the whole afternoon was spent in repelling fierce assaults upon the centre. Lord Blayney seized a little hillock something more than a quarter of a mile from the central elevation of Knocknacloy, and there planting his cannon and opening fire upon the Irish columns, he pushed forward under shelter of the fire of the Scotch musketeers along the banks of the Oona. When the Irish saw them coming they raised deafening cheers, rushed upon them with the pike, and flung them back in terrible disorder. One of the Irish captains, O'Cahan, dashed across the field to the general, imploring him to give the word and the enemy would be soon cut to pieces; but Owen gently directed him to return to his post. The British bravely rallied, and a little after six o'clock Lord Ards and the cavalry made a bold attempt to force a way across the Oona and turn the left flank of the Irish. But they were met by Henry Roe and the Irish horse, and soon routed and torn asunder, they fled back to the main body. Monroe's army was now jammed into a very narrow space. He had five columns closely packed in front and four behind, with no shelter for his wings "in the large open

campagnia" encircling him around; and when the last charge of Lord Ards failed he was preparing for another attempt, and had concentrated his cavalry for a desperate assault.

But Owen's time had come. A masterly series of movements revealed his great design. Massing his forces strongly on the right wing he took the offensive, committing to O'Farrell the brilliant task of urging gradually by continued pressure the forces of the enemy ever onwards towards the angle where the rivers Oona and Blackwater meet. The ground favoured the Irish so long as they kept strictly on the defensive, Oona protecting the left wing, and the uneven bushy ground assisting the centre. Seeing this advantage, O'Neill despatched his best troops, including his own regiment, to the right, so that by striking heavy blows in that quarter the British forces would be compelled to change their front, and in so doing must be inevitably forced towards the junction of the rivers, where packed and impeded by their very numbers they would lie open to the onset of the Irish. The Irish army hanging as it were on Knocknacloy may be likened to a hand poised on the wrist, with outspread fingers representing the various columns; moving on the axis of the hill as the hand moves upon the wrist, the whole force swung slowly round from right to left jamming the enemy between their lines and the waters of the two rivers. Hotly contested as the battle was on both sides nature and skill alike aided the Irish. The sun and wind were now favourable to them, the British were thrown into confusion in trying to change their front, and impatient cries were raised, "Let us advance and cut them down". But the soldiers were held back by Owen; and to Sir Phelim's frantic demand, "Give the word now!" the general calmly answered, "Not yet". Suddenly a great deafening cheer went up to the sky, as the four squadrons of horse under Brian O'Neill and Owen O'Dogherty were seen galloping at full speed along the road from Dungannon, spears and swords flashing in the June sun. It was now past seven o'clock, and the sun shone full in the faces of the enemy. The general raised his hat, and those near him saw his lips move for a moment. Then, summoning his staff round him, "Gentlemen", said he, and he pointed to the enemy's centre, "in a few minutes we shall be there. Pass the word along the line. Sancta Maria, and in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, charge for the old land". One mighty shout of exultation, and the Irish line extending from Oona to the great bog flung forward like a drawn bowstring suddenly let loose. At the first furious impact Monroe's men reeled, but his cavalry charged down the slope upon the Irish foot; when to their amazement, through the "open spaces", rigidly preserved in the hottest fury of the fight, the Irish horse dashed forward and with one tremendous shock carried Monroe's first line of defence, while the foot soldiers, "body to body with push of pike", fought stubbornly up the slopes, none wavering none pausing—"the best pikemen on both sides there now be". Over the tumult the general's voice now rang—

“Redouble your blows, and the battle is won!”. Colonels sprang from their horses, and pike in hand led their men forward up the slopes, as the infantry column dashed on to the capture of Monroe’s guns that crowned the hillock. Like a living wall O'Neill's forces came on in most excellent order, flinging back the Scotch and English like foam, climbing the hill and at last with a wild hurrah rushing at full speed upon the battery. Then indeed, as Owen had said, the battle was won. The Scotch and English broke and rushed frantically from the field, while Sir Phelim and Henry Roe and “Myles the Slasher” tore down upon them sabreing and smiting the desolators of Ulster. In the blaze of the setting sun the Ulster plain looked like a sheet of blood, 3,248 dead bodies lying upon the field, and the whole proud array of the invaders wrecked, mangled, annihilated.

Never was victory more complete. Tents, baggage, cannon, 1,500 draught horses, 20 colours, provisions for two months, prisoners of war, with Lord Ards himself among the rest, fell into O'Neill's hands; while Monroe fled off, deserting Portadown, and with a few horsemen rode madly for Carrickfergus. The Coleraine forces retreated; and the Stewarts, who three years earlier had fired in their fierce raid friaries and homesteads, fell back hurriedly, leaving the country clear of invader or enemy. So well covered had all Owen’s movements been that only 70 Irish were killed in this extraordinary battle; and the army summoned by bugle calls lay down to rest for a few hours on the meadows of the Oona and the Blackwater. The camp of the enemy was left untouched until morning, when a strict inventory was made, and with all due formalities possession was taken. Then was witnessed a memorable sight. The bodies of Lord-Slayney and Captain Hamilton were carried in solemn procession with military state to the church of Benburb, and laid to rest by their chivalrous conqueror, as became soldiers and gentlemen dying bravely on the field of battle. But if Owen O'Neill paid his debt of honour to his enemies the English Parliament was in no mood to reciprocate. By special order of the House placards were posted over London inflaming English Puritans with the news that 5,000 Protestants had been put to the sword at the Blackwater by Irish Popish Rebels. The soldierly Monroe described the battle as a soldier should; an officer in Sir John Clotworthy’s regiment has given us the fullest and fairest account. They tell us indeed what O'Neill had no thought of mentioning, for if we only knew the story of Benburb from Owen’s own despatch, however we might marvel at the victory, we could never conjecture that the triumph was solely due to the skill of the great Irish general.

At the news of this astounding success, breaking the long spell of national disaster, Celtic Ireland went wild with delight. With abundant supplies, Owen was able to equip a large army, and in a few days 10,000 men were under his colours. On to Carrickfergus was now his plan, and he

had already reached Tanderagee when a hasty summons from Rinuccini called him back. As he loved Ireland, the Nuncio implored him to march with all haste either on Dublin or on Kilkenny. Once more Ormond and the Supreme Council had made a treaty by which the great work of deliverance had been undone. After anxious council, Owen and his officers thought it their duty to respond, and turning from the pursuit of Monroe, the triumphant Ulster forces marched against the Kilkenny traitors.

CHAPTER XII.

OWEN AGONISTES

FROM the *Instructions* of the Papal Court to the Nuncio, and from the Nuncio's own letters and reports, we may infer that Rinuccini's policy in Ireland was not directed in favour of King Charles, nor of the new English sovereignty created by the Act of 1542. Imbued with the strictest legal conceptions, the Roman Curia continued to look upon the English occupation of Ireland as founded upon, the Bull of Adrian IV; and it may well be that Pope Innocent X and his advisers saw in the Act of 1542 a substantial repudiation of the Papal suzerainty which worked a forfeiture of Pope Adrian's grant. At the very least, therefore, Rinuccini aimed at the annulment of the Act of Henry VIII by which England and Ireland were declared subject to the one crown; and it is possible that his aim went farther, even to the total separation of Ireland from England. Different as were the paths by which results were reached, it is clear that between Rinuccini and O'Neill there was much in common. Between the Nuncio and the lords of the Pale the case was very different. The lords only desired the removal of disabilities and the repeal of penal statutes, leaving unquestioned all the prerogatives of the Crown on which their own titles to church lands rested. Although claiming more immunity for the Church, and desiring the restoration of Church property, the bishops, especially those of Anglo-Irish descent, stopped short of all intention to disturb the rights of the Crown. By the natural drift of events, therefore, Rinuccini was brought more and more into close alliance with Owen O'Neill and the bishops like Heber M'Mahon and Art Magennis who were adherents of Owen. United in purpose and in sympathy, the Nuncio and the Irish leader alike loathed the halting and wavering policy of the Kilkenny administration, and both alike' steadily set their faces against secret negotiations and understandings. Elated, however, by the successes of 1646, the Nuncio began to lord it a little too imperiously, and assumed the functions rather of a Papal Viceroy than of a mere ambassador. When the victory at Benburb was made known at Limerick Rinuccini, accompanied by Edmond O'Dwyer, the bishop of Limerick, Nicholas Donnelly, bishop designate of Clonfert, and a host of priests and friars proceeded in solemn state to the cathedral to celebrate a *Te Deum* in thanksgiving; and in communicating the great news to Pope Innocent, the Nuncio spoke of the brilliant triumph won "by the army of his Holiness". It seemed, too, as if O'Neill himself acquiesced in this claim of

Papal overlordship, for he emblasoned the arms of the Holy See upon his banners and, so at least Rinuccini says, sought for the title “Protector of the Faith”.

But neither Nuncio nor General anticipated the black betrayal by which the interests of the Church and the native Irish were bartered away in the treaty made with Ormond in 1646. At the time when all Celtic Ireland was thrilled with the great news of Owen's achievements, Belling and Fennell and Muskerry and Mountgarrett, with the support of some pliant bishops, were purchasing their own safety at the cost alike of Ulster and of ecclesiastical institutions, both of which they delivered into the enemy’s hands. All the Confederate forces were to be placed under the command of Ormond’s nominees, Clanricarde and Castlehaven. The Confederation was to act under Ormond’s orders, and to become a mere branch of the Dublin Castle administration. Mr. John Dillon, Mr. Richard Martin, Mr. Browne, and Mr. Lynch were to be Judges; Sir Thomas Esmonde, Belling, and Lord Muskerry, Privy Councillors; Cusack, Chancellor of the Exchequer; and Sir Piers Crosby, Marshal of Ireland. A Catholic University was promised; the Act of Uniformity (2nd Elizabeth) was to be repealed as soon as possible; Inns of Court were to be established in Dublin; all existing titles to land were to be confirmed, and all rebellious offences committed after October, 1641, were to be pardoned ; but the landless outcasts of Ulster were to remain on the mountain sides, and the promoters of the insurrection were to answer the charge of high treason. Even Belling admits that Ulster had some reason to complain; still, as practical men what were they to do but make sure of the best terms they could get?

When this treaty, the dishonorablenest and most disadvantageous that could be heard of, was made known to the Nuncio, indignant at the shameful betrayal of himself and his august master he pointed out that the Confederation had been formed on the basis of religion, while this treaty entirely ignored religion and sought only for the temporal advantages of the Anglo-Irish. Imploring O'Neill to march to his assistance, Rinuccini and all the priests, who were at that time in Limerick set out for Kilkenny; but when he came near the town he learned that Ormond had already arrived, that the place was one scene of illumination and joy-making, and that the armies of Munster and Connaught under Muskerry and Preston were close on Kilkenny, having welcomed the treaty with drum, trumpet, and salvoes of artillery. Rapidly changing his course Rinuccini set out for Waterford, the freest and most fearless of the Irish cities, and the most Spanish in character and habit. There, calling together all the clergy of Ireland, the Nuncio proclaimed the iniquity of the treaty from the standpoint of the Church, and asked for authority to issue a general decree of condemnation.

Consent was freely given: few bishops were present, but those who were assented. Rinuccini issued the decree, and called upon all civil and military officers to withdraw allegiance from the "late Supreme Council". Limerick, Waterford, and Clonmel rose enthusiastically on behalf of the Nuncio, and when heralds came from Kilkenny to proclaim the "Peace of Forty-six" they were chased out of the three towns by the indignant populace.

Meantime in Kilkenny itself a round of festivities went on, with all manner of stage plays, poetical addresses, and gratulatory odes, when suddenly came news that Owen Roe O'Neill had entered the Pale and was advancing by forced marches on the city. Then Ormond and his train of peers stayed neither for horse nor foot, but breathless and fearful arrived in Dublin as to their sanctuary. Side by side the Irish general and the Papal ambassador entered Kilkenny : and all government being now dissolved by the great betrayal, Rinuccini, supported by O'Neill, established a Provisional Administration, consisting of two laymen and one bishop for each province, with the Nuncio as President and the generals as ex-officio members. Preston at once submitted, swore allegiance to the new Council, and became one of the Executive. This revolution accomplished, the Nuncio and O'Neill took steps for a vigorous renewal of the war. In justice to Rinuccini it must be said that he never claimed or exercised any special authority as President, and all decrees and orders are signed by him jointly with his colleagues. A command was issued to both generals that Dublin should be instantly besieged, and two armies were ordered out for the service, one under O'Neill marching by way of Maryborough, the other under Preston by way of Carlow. Taking every town and castle that lay in his way, O'Neill reached Harristown, and threw out skirmishers up to the environs of Dublin. Preston, on the other hand, moving very slowly, and yet leaving Carlow in the enemy's hands, delayed for weeks, allowing Ormond ample time to repair the fortifications of the capital and to bring in supplies of food. Indeed the Leinster general was the Bazaine of this expedition, and although not intentionally a traitor his acts were as baneful as those of the basest traitor could be. Under repeated appeals he at last reached Lucan, and, in accordance with what he made an essential condition of his service, Ormond was summoned to treat on a defined basis submitted to him jointly by Preston and O'Neill. In his taunting reply Ormond begged to know what authority they held to make conditions, and reminded them that their governing body had made peace with him and that Preston had assented to that peace, in spite of which they were now in arms seizing the king's towns and making war upon the king's subjects. The generals answered separately, and Ormond acknowledged that, although General O'Neill had never consented to the peace, his reply was moderate and well-reasoned, while Preston's was violent and offensive. Negotiations ceased, and Owen prepared for war in real earnest.

But Preston would not move. Every day messengers passed between Dublin and Lucan, and Lord Clanricarde had many conferences with Preston in his tent. Doubts grew in O'Neill's mind, although he did not suspect unsoldierly conduct from so accomplished an officer. One dark, rainy night, however, he heard terrible news. Colonel Hugh McPhelim Byrne, wet to the skin and covered with mud, came to Owen's tent with the intelligence of Preston's treason. Influenced by Clanricarde, and wounded by the taunts levelled against him, the Leinster general had made peace with Ormond, with whose forces he undertook to join his own. Summoning his officers to his tent he had called upon them to sign an agreement binding themselves to adhere to this treaty. But all the officers refused, saying, "We do not see the signature of your co-general, Owen O'Neill". "You see mine, and that is enough for you", said Preston; "to which we answered that we wanted something more than that, and so departing from the general's tent left him there alone". It was close on midnight when O'Neill received this news—a frightful night, rain falling in torrents, and a bitter October wind blowing sleet as keen as blades of ice in its course. But in one half-hour swift couriers were already on the road for Kilkenny; Henry Roe and the light horse had set out for Leixlip to seize the stores; the whole camp was roused and the men ready by daybreak to march for the entrenched lines at Harristown, while a detachment Under O'Cahan was ordered forward from Maryborough to block the road to Kilkenny and protect the seat of government.

Preston was thunderstruck. Dreading to be called a traitor, he explained his conduct in a wordy letter to the Mayor of Kilkenny, and solemnly promised to abide loyally in the future by the Nuncio's orders. He was received back into favour, but the new jibes and taunts with which Ormond now assailed him were keenly felt by this impulsive and changeable man, who assured Ormond that he had no choice but to yield as his army "was not excommunication-proof". Dublin however had once more escaped, through the weakness of one of its assailants. Ormond took advantage of the occasion to secure its continued safety by delivering the city up to the King's Parliamentary enemies, abandoning his place as Viceroy, and leaving the Confederates face to face with the joint forces of Royalists and Puritans, united now in common hostility to the Catholic "rebels". But although a refugee at the French Court, Ormond still remained "the knave of the cheating pack", and for two years all the efforts of the Kilkenny politicians were directed to procuring his return and the re-establishment of the ignominious treaty of peace. Meantime, however, these politicians had little opportunity for doing evil. Detained by order of Rinuccini's Council in easy captivity, the framers of the Ormond peace were powerless and despised. But they trusted, and not in vain, to their own wiliness, and to the chances of sudden opportunities in a popular assembly; and husbanding their

strength, confined themselves mainly to calumnies of O'Neill, whom they charged with measureless ambition and with hatred of the Leinstermen whom he cruelly oppressed by letting his Ulster Barbarians loose on the civilised counties of the Pale.

With these tactics they hoped to shape public opinion. But when on the 10th of January, 1647, the General Assembly met, it was found that in spite of factious efforts such as these free and fearless representatives had been sent up by the constituencies. The Ormond peace was rejected by 288 votes against 12 : in the true spirit of parliamentary purity the Assembly went on to declare that the continued practices of returning base and servile persons by nomination and official patronage should cease. For the first time it seemed as though Ireland had chosen a National Council to which she might look with reverence and hope. But again the fatal obstacles which had made it impossible for Kilkenny to become the centre of national counsels declared themselves. Geographical barriers still isolated it from North and West. The 73 Ulster members were obliged to return home after a few months, and most of the Connaught, Clare, and Kerry members were also absent, when, seizing their chance, the Ormondian clique pressed forward the election of a new Supreme Council by an Assembly at that moment made up mostly of their own personal followers. Angry discussions growing at times to tumults broke out, the clergy and the few Old Irish members dividing over every name until at last, as it seemed, a compromise was reached. The Supreme Council, as we have seen, originally numbered twenty-four. Later on, under pretence of giving advice, others were added until the number swelled to close on forty. When the secret correspondence with Ormond began, the Supreme Council of its own act cut down the number of its members to nine, and at that number it stood when Rinuccini declared it to be ipso facto dissolved by its betrayal or trust. Now by common consent it was agreed that twelve members, fairly representative of all sections, were to constitute the governing body. But a few days later the plotters sprang a new proposal on the Assembly, to the effect that whenever by absence or death the full number of twelve could not be brought together, the lacking councillors might be replaced by men co-opted out of a permanent "Grand Council" which consisted of forty-eight members of the General Assembly, and which was at that moment, none but Leinster members being then in Kilkenny, altogether composed of either declared Ormondians or the intimate friends and dependents of the official gang.

By this move the revolution carried out by Rinuccini in Kilkenny was entirely undone, and through the ingenious expedient of the Grand Council the administration was once more made in practice purely Ormondian; but O'Neill, however much he might be opposed to the persons of the Councillors, had far too high a respect for constituted authority to take any

steps for displacing a Council regularly established in accordance with constitutional usage. The winter of 1647 was spent in making due arrangements for embassies and missions to foreign Powers, and above all to the court of Henrietta Maria in Paris where Ormond was sojourning at this time. But military events hurried on the intriguers of Kilkenny with their compromising schemes. After the abandonment of the siege of Dublin Owen Roe quartered his army in Leix, and capturing all the towns in the Midlands fixed his headquarters in front of Athlone, which was held in his name by Captain Gawley, into whose hands it had been delivered by a friar who feared the duplicity of the Dillons, then governors of the fortress, and at all hazards delivered it up to the Irish. O'Neill's area of occupation thus formed a great triangle, with Athlone, Maryborough, and Trim as corner points, where in comfortable billets the Ulster army might be sustained on the abundant stores of the Midlands. To ease Leinster of this burden, the Supreme Council ordered O'Neill to complete Preston's work in Connaught by clearing out all the Scotch garrisons which had cut off communication between Connaught and Ulster. The Irish leader made ready for the enterprise, determined not only to clear the road from Athlone to Sligo, but to carry his arms northward by Enniskillen into Derry. Obstacles as usual were put in his way, the Council sending Commissioners to accompany him in the campaign by whose orders only payments were to be made for military purposes. Having constructed a great road over the Curlews, O'Neill was ready to throw himself on Sligo, but he was foiled by the miserable policy of the Commissioners, who while every hour's delay was worth untold gold to the garrisons of the threatened towns, doled out scanty driblets from the money voted by the Assembly. Chafing under this squalid yoke the Irish general was held for weeks chained up in the Sligo mountains, when suddenly a pressing summons called him, setting all other duties aside, to march forthwith for the protection of Leinster which again lay at the mercy of the enemy.

Although the new Council had set on foot a magnificent army under Preston, although by inducements of pay and promises they had persuaded many of Owen's soldiers to join Preston's force, the only result was shameful and crushing disaster; on the 6th of August, 1647, Michael Jones, the Puritan governor of Dublin, had defeated Preston so terribly at Dungan's Hill near Trim that for all serious purposes the Leinster army ceased to exist, and Kilkenny lay exposed at once to Inchiquin from the South, and to Jones from Dublin and Drogheda. In the hour of peril O'Neill was always appealed to; with amazing celerity he carried his troops from Boyle to Kilbeggan. It was only when they reached Kilbeggan that the Irish officers discovered the work to which they had been summoned. Remembering how many times, with what dark ingratitude, they and their general had already been betrayed by the Leinster trimmers, they swore they would not move

one step further on their behalf. At a great meeting in Kilbeggan church the officers peremptorily declared that they were not willing to risk their lives in defence of Leinster; all appeals to their sense of general and wider patriotism failed before their wrath. On occasions like this Owen's character rose to its full majesty. He called upon his officers to disperse; when they expostulated he ordered up the artillery, and was about to open fire when Bishop Heber McMahon implored him to wait a little until he, the bishop, had once more reasoned with the men. As he urged the cruel embarrassment that their conduct brought upon their general, they loudly protested their readiness to follow their beloved commander wherever he asked them to go, declaring that their anger was solely caused by the insults which the Council at Kilkenny had cast on General O'Neill. Owen addressed them in grave and dignified words; reminding them that they and he were the sworn soldiers of Ireland, and that all Irishmen were entitled to their protection against the common enemy. Forthwith the army set out on its march. When they reached the awful field of Dungan's Hill, O'Neill in a solemn charge bade his men remember that every whitening corpse which lay there silently called upon them to avenge the disaster of that unfortunate field. "Hold fast together", he said, "and we shall overcome Jones as we overcame Monroe".

In a letter to the Nuncio the great general compared himself and his army to the dolphin attacking the crocodile; the scales of Dublin and Drogheda were too strong and too hard, but like the dolphin, "we shall dive and wound Jones from below". So the great "burning expedition" of 1647 was begun. In a season of terrible rains the citizens of Dublin saw from St. Audoen's steeple two hundred fires blazing from Castleknock to Howth, and they knew that one man only in all Ireland would dare to throw himself between the garrisons of Dublin and Drogheda. Had Preston with 20,000 followers ventured on such a march, Jones would have sallied forth to dispute his progress; but O'Neill, with forces hardly equal to the garrison of either city, held Jones and his armies cooped up in their strongholds while he seized or destroyed all food and fodder on which the garrisons could be maintained. Then falling back to Trim, on the very spot where Preston had been defeated this consummate general remained entrenched during the winter of 1647, protecting Kilkenny from the northern armies of the Parliament, and setting free all the other forces of the Confederation to confront Inchiquin from the south. This was the very zenith of O'Neill's career in Ireland. Rinuccini, who had for some time looked upon him as an obedient and pliant champion of the. Church, presently discovered that he was sorely mistaken in his opinion of Don Eugenio, who, as the excited Nuncio now interpreted matters, threw off the mask after his Ulster victories, and chose no longer to be considered the general of His Holiness but the leader of the natural Irish. Owen had raised armies without warrant

from the Supreme Council; he had refused to yield up Athlone to Lord Dillon of Costello, after his lordship in the most solemn manner had been received by the Nuncio himself into the Catholic Church; and worse than all, the Irish had now ceased to call him by his name and only spoke of him as The Liberator.

While these anxieties corroded the mind of the Papal Nuncio, the Council at Kilkenny were disturbed with still graver fears. They too saw the growing power of the great chief, and they feared lest his enormous influence might be too strong for them to resist. All the winter of 1647-48 was passed in cares and misgivings; one man only standing like a great sea-mark over the tossing surges. The Munster army under Taafe—"a good potator of any liquor you please"—were shamefully defeated at Knockanoss in November, Alexander McDonnell and his islesmen having swept the forces directly opposed to him only to be cut down by Inchiquin's main body, who had chased the wretched Taafe and his Munstermen from the field. How were the Leinster nobles to act under these circumstances? As Ormond had betrayed Dublin into the hands of Jones rather than allow it to fall into the hands of the Kilkenny 'rebels', so Muskerry and Belling determined to make peace with Inchiquin rather than be at the mercy of O'Neill and the Ancient Irish, of whom he was now the acknowledged leader. Three events confirmed them in this policy. By unanimous vote of the Connaught Provincial Council, Owen O'Neill had been elected Commander-in-Chief of the Irish forces in Connaught; and Lord Antrim's followers having also ranged themselves under his banner, the Irish general was now in reality the head of a great Celtic League. At this time too a remarkable book appeared: printed at Lisbon, and probably written by an Irish priest, the *Disputatio Apologetica de regno Hiberniae* called upon the Irish to cast off heretical rule and to choose a native King. And finally, at this critical moment came the sword of Hugh, the great Earl of Tyrone, sent by Luke Wadding with the blessing of the Holy Father from Rome. Rumours now ran high. He that sent the sword will also send the crown; "Hy-Niall once more will reign"; and all through Ulster and Connaught the welcome tidings flew that the people would no longer be called upon to fight by Kilkenny lawyers and doctors, but would have at their head Ireland's Ard-Ri, King Owen.

And while a great man was thus rising into supreme importance in Ireland, another great man had risen in England, and Royalists and Parliamentarians, Independents and Fifth Monarchy men, Levellers and Presbyterians, were alike prostrated before Cromwell. Were these two great soldiers ever to meet as leaders of the two warring nations? They, at any rate, represented realities, when the reconcilers and negotiators of both countries were shams and shadows. Violent and overbearing Oliver trod his adversaries under his feet; but Owen, chivalrously loyal to constituted

national authority, so necessary for a country struggling into existence, had to pass through further bitterness and to wear out the close of his life in battling, not with the foreign foemen, but with the traitor at home. For, shrinking in horror from the idea of an ascendancy of O'Neill and the native Irish, the Kilkenny Cabal under pretence of extreme pressure opened correspondence with Inchiquin, the most merciless enemy of the Irish Catholics. When the Munster forces were overwhelmed at Knockanoss, Inchiquin advanced to the borders of Kilkenny, proclaimed himself on the king's side, and was warmly welcomed as a convert by Mountgarrett, Muskerry, and Belling. To the horror of Rinuccini, who had been inclining in favour of the Council, a new treaty was made—a treaty which once again threw the Nuncio and O'Neill together in defence of the Church and of the Old Irish against the selfish Leinster leaders, who were ever ready to fling over both alike whenever their own interests might be so advanced. On the 24th of April, 1648, the Cessation with Lord Inchiquin was proclaimed in Kilkenny. The forces of the Confederates and of the Munster Parliamentarians were to be united, nominally to the King's side now when the king was no longer able to assert himself; two counties were yielded up to Inchiquin, and the tithes of ecclesiastical benefices within these two counties were to be paid into his war-chest for the sustaining of his army pending a permanent peace.

Such terms, as Rinuccini pointed out, could have no meaning except one—all factions were to unite against O'Neill. The Nuncio, who had been invited to Kilkenny in the earlier stages of the treaty-making, when he learned the true nature of the negotiations fled secretly from the city and took refuge in O'Neill's camp at Maryborough; there summoning a Congregation, he put forth a proclamation condemning all who had taken part in the correspondence with Inchiquin, or who supported the treaty; and a few days later from Kilmensie House (the residence of Sir Luke Fitzgerald, Henry Roe O'Neill's father-in-law), he issued, with the approval of the bishops, a solemn Decree of Excommunication against all the framers and abettors of the "pestilential Peace". Again as in 1646 factions arose in Kilkenny. Truculent agitators came forward on every side, Dr. Fennell easily beating all competitors. As long as bishops and archbishops had voted his salary as Supreme Councillor, Fennell denounced all who dared to question the wisdom and patriotism of the prelates of Ireland, or to criticise the policy of the venerated representative of the Holy Father. Now, carried away by zeal, he tore down the Decree, scoffing at the commination—"*lacerentes et amoventes excommunicati sint*"; and at St. Mary's Church he tore down the door on which the Decree was posted, and trampled door and Decree under his patriotic feet. Another pious upholder of the clergy in their day of power, Lord Castelhaven, let loose his soldiers on the multitude who opposed the peace with the heroic order, "Kill, kill, kill", and when a priest,

Father Brennan, in accents too familiar to Irishmen, dared anyone to lay a hand upon his “habit”, Castelhaven seized his habit at the shoulder with the mocking cry, “What, lies the enchantment there?”. So deep seated was the orthodoxy of the nominees and favourites of the temporising Anglo-Irish bishops. He who least professed was now foremost in defence of ecclesiastical authority; for although O'Neill deeply resented many of Rinuccini’s high-handed acts, he recognised that the Leinster intriguers had betrayed the fundamental principles on which, by their own showing, the Confederation had been established, and in securing their own safety had allowed the legitimate claims of the Catholic Church to be entirely ignored.

While the Nuncio and the General were deliberating in Maryborough the Supreme Council showed an energy in collecting armies against O'Neill such as it had never displayed against English or Scotch invaders. At Maryborough there were only 600 men under Owen's orders, all the rest being scattered through the towns of Leinster, or stationed in the entrenched places of Ulster and Connaught. Yet so great was the terror of his mere name that Preston with 4,000 men whom rumour multiplied threefold, remained loitering on the road from Carlow until O'Neill collected some of his regiments, and above all, until Rinuccini on the 27th of May issued a solemn warning to Preston's soldiers not to serve under the banner of an excommunicated general. Although eight bishops and many doctors of divinity and heads of great orders declared the “Excommunication Decree” null and void, Preston’s army melted away, two thousand of them actually deserting and enrolling themselves in the ranks of Owen Roe. Upon this a solemn proclamation was issued by the Council, declaring Owen Roe O'Neill to be a public enemy and a common disturber of the peace of our Sovereign Lord the King, ordering the Nuncio to quit the country, and threatening any bishops who might adhere to the Papal ambassador with deprivation of their ecclesiastical benefices. Many of O'Neill's lukewarm adherents gave way. Poor weak Sir Phelim since his marriage with Preston’s daughter had been as changing and ‘voluble’ as Preston himself, and in this supreme moment he deserted the deliverer of Ulster. To save their estates, if possible, Lord Iveagh and some of the McDonnell's did the same; so that Owen with his scanty troops, weakened and disheartened by the desertion of the very men whom he had protected in 1646, had to face single-handed the whole host of the confederated enemies. Five armies were set against him: Clanricarde’s, Inchiquin’s, and Preston’s in the South, and the armies of Jones and Monroe in the North; besides the many smaller bodies under Coote and Stewart, against whom none but himself had ever shown the semblance of resistance. An eye-witness describes him in this fatal summer of 1648 :—

> "As often as I revolve this business in my memory, I stand confused, considering with myself the use wherein this noble warrior did stand; three kingdoms now his sworn enemies, his own army scattered, distracted, and divided; four regiments revolted from him, adhering on to the council; without lieutenant-general or major-general, one in Clonmel the other in Connaught; with only four regiments of foot and the name of two of horse, in a nook of the country circumvented with strange foes, gathered round him like a great herd of wolves. I saw and observed all this to my grief and wonder and would think, nay swear, he could not be rid of that imminent danger other than by a miracle. But with all this fresh in his memory he gave not the least semblance of discouragement, rather indeed seemed as in the very best fortune he ever yet enjoyed".

The address to the Irish people which he issued sounds like a trumpet blast:—

Declaration of Owen O'Neill and Ulster Party Against the Cessation, 1648.

By Eugenio O'Neill, General of the Confederate Catholics of Ireland, of the Ulster Forces, and by the rest of the Commanders of the same Forces.

We might be held prodigal of our own honour and give occasion of suspicion if, in the midst of the multitude of calumnies and impostures which have been belched forth against us, we should neglect to apologise for our integrity.

We have, by free and full consent, without any reluctancy in the face of the world, taken the oath of association appointed by universal votes. This oath we have as often as any of the rest of the Confederates frequently and freely iterated.

Such as boast most of loyalty, but are most conscious of disloyalty, have by this Cessation given unto the King's enemies two entire counties of Munster, which were within the possession of the Confederate Catholics, without receiving any guarantee or assurance of restitution at the expiration of the Cessation. Kilkenny and other quarters belonging to the Confederate Catholics they have actually delivered over unto the great personage whom in their souls, they know to be wholly disposed to betray the kingdom unto the Parliament.

Unto this great personage they still adhere, notwithstanding those horrid treasons committed in delivering over unto the Parliament the Castles of Dublin, Drogheda, Trim, Dundalk, and all other garrisons remaining in his quarters.

Yet these men would needs be held loyal subjects, and all others who oppose their sinister practices must be held disloyal.

We provoke to the whole world to charge us with the least act of disloyalty committed since these commotions, unless it be indeed disloyalty to defend with Christian resolution the freedom of our religion and the liberty of our tree-born nation, whereunto by oath we are obliged.

Others may take more hold upon state policy, and continue in allegiance only whilst they are necessitated : *Vae duplici corde*.

Unto such we may in no way adhere without sound assurance of their fidelity, for which the late Cessation hath not well provided, where an endeavour is made to blemish our integrity, and, not being capable of moving the Heavens to their design, they made recourse to Acheron.

Unto those who thus seek to avoid our forces we may not adhere, but, bound by our oaths, we deny to yield obedience unto this unwarrantable and prejudicial Cessation.

Our arms have been taken up to defend ourselves and distressed exiled Catholics that depend upon us, and we beseech the Lord of Hosts never to bless our designs longer than we unfeignedly observe (without respect to private ends), and continue real and faithful unto that resolution.

We, therefore, conjure all the Confederate Catholics to join with us against all Parliamentary revels, and all factionists who comply unto them to the violation of their oath and the injury of our distressed nation.

Signed by the General and Commander at Athlone.

Owen O'Neill.

17th June, 1648.

Within three weeks ten thousand men were round him exulting in the opportunity of serving under the greatest Irishman of the century. In leading these raw levies from Connaught all the great qualities of O'Neill were called forth, and the defensive campaign against the combined forces of

the allies in the autumn of 1648 may be compared without extravagance to Napoleon's wonderful feats in 1814. Knowing the moral effect of mere numbers he advanced with nearly all his forces, though but few were armed, up to the very gates of Kilkenny, and, when Inchiquin by forced marches hastened to the protection of the city O'Neill sent off the main portion of his army by night to make a demonstration against Clanricarde, while he himself with a picked body retreated in Inchiquin's view as if in full flight to the mountains. Headlong Inchiquin, a brave but merciless soldier, eagerly pursued O'Neill until to his amazement he found himself face to face with the great strategist posted in "Owen Roe's Pass", as it is still called, which was absolutely unassailable, while rivers, bogs, and woods surrounded him on all sides. With such tactics O'Neill paralyzed the combined armies; while he raised the spirits of his own men by the lofty boast that "We and our royal allies, the hills" were a match for any number of opposing forces. He held his triangle of fortresses unbroken, and even relieved Connaught by sending expeditions to Leitrim and Roscommon. No toil was too exhausting for his hardy soldiers. Over bogs, rivers, marshes, and swamps they marched, up the steepest mountain paths they climbed unmurmuringly unsheltered they met rain and storm and want, at the word of their great leader. When at last, having worn out the necessary time for preparation in Ulster, the commander gave the orders for setting out on the northward march, the motley army moved steadily under his guidance as it wound its tortuous way to evade the encompassing forces, and without the loss of a man came safely to Belturbet.

The Confederates and their allies were foiled by arms; they now tried calumny. Owen was charged with three distinct offences. By a forged letter it was sought to convict him of treasonable correspondence with the enemy. This letter, addressed to the Protestant Bishop of Clogher, Dr. Jones, the brother of the Parliamentary Governor of Dublin, had, they alleged, been intercepted on the 20th of August; the body of the letter was said to be in the handwriting of O'Neill's secretary, Father Edmund O'Rielly, and the signature in the handwriting of O'Neill himself. In tone and in signature it is clearly a clumsy forgery.

At the very time that the Confederates were throwing out copies of this precious document they were themselves in correspondence with Jones, endeavouring to procure his help against O'Neill, and in a solemn proclamation signed by the leading lords all *Englishmen* were called upon to combine against the enemy of the British Nation :—

> "Letters have been intercepted which beget in us a just suspicion of Owen O'Neill and his party, which brought the British Nation to their now sad condition, and who purpose to themselves at the end of this total subversion and ruin which,

being made manifest, we have taken arms to reduce him and his adherents.

"We are of opinion no true-hearted Englishman, or any of that extraction, will join with such a party against us, whose intentions never swerved from maintaining and submitting unto the Government, his intentions and proceedings being so well known to be averse unto that end, that the best and most of those of the same extraction as himself do abominate him and his actions, and are as active as any towards his reducement, and so we warn you against so false and perfidious a man as he is".

Signed by Dillon, Iveagh, Esmonde, Thomas Preston, Trimblestown, Talbot, Butler, Slane, and others; and endorsed by Anthony Geoghegan, Prothonotarius Apostolicus, who had signed Rinuccini's decrees from Kilmensie a few months before!

They next charged O'Neill with the embezzlement of £9,000 out of the moneys voted to him for the Connaught campaign of 1647. Pressed by members of the Assembly the Council was obliged to order an inquiry, when it was discovered that Owen had been left forlorn in the Curlews for want of this very sum, which, though voted, had never been paid to him, and that he had been obliged to pledge his own personal credit for a few hundred cattle to feed his men, and also that he had never drawn his pay as Lord General but had always taken arms and ammunition instead. The third charge brought against him proclaimed him a manifest traitor to the king, for that loyal Inchiquin had discovered this dark crime. Owen "hath employed Roger Moore unto the Lord Baron of Inchiquin; but his lordship did discover by discourse with the said Roger Moore that the designs of Owen O'Neill and his adherents are so traitorous and pernicious as to be altogether inconsistent with loyalty or obedience. Then they indignantly ask: "Will any man be so stupid as to aid them in framing and setting up a form of government allowing his Majesty no other interest than such as shall be arbitrary and at the discretion of their faction?"

Finally, to guard all people against O'Neill, Rory O'Moore, and Bishop McMahon, a proclamation was issued in the name of "our Sovereign Lord Charles, by the Grace of God King of England, Ireland, France, and Scotland". Having enumerated Owen's many black transgressions, they charged him with the design of alienating Irish subjects from the Crown of England, and in consequence of all this wickedness "it is this day ordered, decreed, adjudged, and established that the said Owen O'Neill is hereby declared a traitor and a rebel, and a common disturber of the peace", and all

generals, high sheriffs, and other officers, civil and martial, are directed to proceed against and destroy the said Owen O'Neill. By a later decree the General Assembly in mercy fixed a day (25th October) up to which any one departing from Owen O'Neill and humbly asking forgiveness might be again received into favour by the grace and pardon of the Assembly, and might be from thenceforth "remitted pardon and forgiven all their crimes", always, of course, excepting "Colonel Owen McArt O'Neill, Emer Lord Bishop of Clogher, Edmund Reilly, Priest, and other incorrigible offenders". In answer to these shameless decrees and orders, a letter was addressed to the Kilkenny Junto signed by O'Neill and his chief advisers, denying the authority of the Kilkenny clique to issue any decree or order on behalf of the Confederates. To this protest the "Zeudo-General-Assembly" on October 4th, 1648, replied by declaring that "Whereas a letter hath been presented to this House, signed by Owen O'Neill, Roger Moore, Richard Farrell, and others, now in arms against the government", it is ordered that "such letter, or any other of the said Owen O'Neill shall not be received or taken into consideration in this House without a fit, decent, and submissive application made by him to and by the name of the General Assembly of the Confederate Catholics of Ireland".

Six days later it was decreed, with eight assenting bishops present, that "Owen McArt O'Neill was a traitor and a rebel", and all who adhered to him were "put out of our protection". "We cannot believe", they add, "that any Confederate Catholic who affects religion, king, or country, will suffer himself to be so deluded as to promote the designs of Owen O'Neill". Then they turned to Rinuccini. Transcendent crimes and capital offences are charged against him—the pious councillors had heard it reported that the Nuncio had said, "the successful party will be considered orthodox in Rome". Having thus dealt with the dangerous offenders, O'Neill and O'Moore and the Nuncio, the Archbishop of Tuam at the head of a delegation of nobles and clergy went in state to Carrick to welcome "the five fingers of this treasonable pack" to Ireland; for Ormond was coming with plenary powers from the Queen to treat with all parties in Ireland—Scots, English, Inchiquin, Clanricarde, the Supreme Council, and Owen O'Neill. Great were the rejoicings of the Kilkenny loyalists. Commissioners implored Ormond to take upon himself the supreme direction of affairs, to which with becoming reluctance he graciously consented. On November 15th, 1648, he made a semi-royal entry to Kilkenny, the whole Assembly and all the bishops, nobility, and officials meeting him obsequiously at the city gates; and throned in Kilkenny Castle he received at the hands of the Archbishop a further petition to take up the reins of government.

The first act of the Confederates' new master was to declare the Confederation dissolved. Gracious promises then flowed in abundance, and

the captive king's sufferings touched the tender hearts of his devoted lieges. But the king was still the same selfish and heartless liar that he had ever been. To Ormond he mote as to a worthy lieutenant:—

"Ormond,

"I must command you two things—first to obey all my wife's commands, then not to obey any public commands of mine until I send you word that I am free from restraint. Be not startled at my great concessions concerning Ireland, for they will come to nothing.

Your real, faithful, constant friend,

Charles R".

In all Ireland three men only stood out against Ormond: Jones, in Dublin; Coote, in Derry; and Owen O'Neill in Belturbet. Daniel O'Neill was once more despatched to his uncle with effusive promises of personal advancement. In writing under his own hand Owen stated his terms:— "Whatever gives satisfaction to the General Assembly in what concerns the interests of the nation, the safety of religion, and the poor provinces which have entrusted me with their arms, I shall with much joy accept". But Ormond had dissolved the General Assembly, and Owen modified his claim by saying that he would abide by what "the whole gentry of our province shall accept". The heads of a treaty were submitted to him. The Irish leader had the benefit of Roger O'Moore's advice, as O'Moore was now "of the General's Cabinet Council". Having gone carefully through the proposals of Ormond, both agreed that "promises made subject to ratification by Parliament were null, mere air, and of none consequence". Correspondence ceased, but the year 1649 drove Ormond again to seek succour. King Charles had been beheaded; Cromwell was coming with a terrible army; and Ormond himself had suffered an overwhelming defeat at Rathmines in the end of July at the hands of the very Michael Jones to whom two years before he had yielded up the capital of Ireland. Now indeed Owen O'Neill was needed and Ormond eagerly sent envoys to him with tempting promises of favour.

At this time the great leader was himself in sore straits. Against both English parties he could not fight; with one or the other he must ally himself. But such a thought was hateful to him. "I am", said he in a letter to Rinuccini, who had gone back to Rome, "on the very point of desperation:

Ormond and his faction on one side, and the Parliamentary faction on the other, appealing to me to join them. Both, God knows, I equally hate, but unless succour come I must close with one or the other". And to Cardinal Cuena he writes—"Ormond is the head of all our evil and the mover in every perfidy". On the other hand Monck, Monroe, and Coote were frank soldiers. "By my own extraction", said Monroe, in a memorable letter to O'Neill in August, 1649, "I have an interest in the Irish nation. I know how your lands have been taken, and your people made hewers of wood and drawers of water. If an Irishman can be a scourge to his own nation, the English will give him fair words but keep him from all trust, that they may destroy him when they have served themselves by him". And he reminded Owen of the deluded Catholics who on the fatal day of the great Earl of Tyrone's ruin at Kinsale had fought on the English side, and whose bitter cry had arisen later in days when they suffered cruel persecution for their creed—"You did not ask us our religion on the morning of Kinsale". Such considerations as these make Owen's conduct in 1649 more intelligible. Within that year he opened negotiations for the first time with a British party. Between him and Monck much correspondence passed, and Owen's draft conditions were submitted to Cromwell, who had just been appointed Lord Lieutenant for the Parliament of England. By vote of the House the negotiations were ordered to be discontinued, and in this way an end was put to what might have been a great international settlement by two great soldiers and statesmen.

During these negotiations Monck sent to O'Neill much-needed supplies, which were lost through the drunkenness of a few Irish soldiers. Falling back upon Tyrconnell Owen for a brief time refreshed his army and procured a few scanty stores. At this moment the allies of Ormond, under the command of the Lord Montgomery of Ards whom Owen had captured at Benburb, were laying siege to Derry, which was held by Sir Charles Coote for the Parliament; and Coote appealed to O'Neill to raise the siege, promising abundant arms and military stores as his reward. To relieve his starving army Owen consented, raised the siege, and entered Derry in triumph. But at a splendid banquet of the visitors, the general was struck down with sudden illness, "and Dr. Owen O'Shiel was unhappily not then present in place". In his mortal sickness he witnessed the awful vindication of his policy, and saw the black clouds of disaster settling over his native land. Ormond, finding no way to meet the coming storm without O'Neill's aid, asked the Irish leader to state his terms. Owen did so with his usual clearness and brevity. He made four demands :—

1. Amnesty and oblivion for all offences since October 20th, 1641.

2. Full participation for Ulster in any terms of peace made with the Kilkenny Council.

3. Restoration of the Tyr-Owen lands to the clans, and the Earldom of Tyr-Owen to be conferred upon' himself so that all his uncle's forfeited rights should revive.

4. Full liberty for public worship, and participation by Catholics in all rights of citizenship.

As guarantees of fulfillment he demanded three securities:—

1. The Kilkenny Council must be made a party to any treaty between him and Ormond

2. The Ulster troops were to remain under his command, and the Wicklow troops under the command of Colonel McPhelim Byrne.

3. And in case of death the troops themselves were to elect a successor.

After wearisome delay Cromwell's guns hurried Ormond, and he signed the treaty in October, 1649. Owen Roe made ready to march, but his illness increased and Daniel saw signs of mental debility. "God help him", said he, "he talks of freeing Ireland first, and afterwards expelling the Turk from Europe"— glorious boyhood dreams on Tyrone hills flashing back after fifty years on the darkening intelligence of the great old warrior. The world and its cares were passing away, and on the 6th of November, 1649, the news was borne to a doomed Ireland, that the greatest of her sons was dead.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE NATIONAL RUIN

MERCILESS and blood-guilty as Cromwell was in his Irish campaign, one turns with something like relief from the paltry intriguers of Dublin, and Kilkenny to the terrible destroyer of Drogheda and Dublin. It has been the sad lot of Ireland that while her oppressors have been men of iron, such English rulers as professed themselves her friends have been mostly men of lath; cheats, quacks, and cowards. By Charles and Ormond she had been duped, and now she had to face the wrath of their great antagonist. The edge of Cromwell's sword smote the cities of the Pale and the Anglo-Irish defences fell before him as if they were pasteboard. Already, even while Owen lay dead in Cavan, Cromwell announced to the Parliament that his army was on the "edge of Munster" and, still ignorant that his great opponent had been struck down out of his way, he declared that he looked for fierce fighting from none but the "Ulstermen of Owen Roe". These Ulstermen, indeed, full of hope and courage, we're on the march to meet him when their hearts were appalled with the news of their great commander's death. They were now to range themselves under Ormond's colours and to face the grim conqueror who had already cleft in pieces the armies of the Pale.

From his death-bed Owen had sent warning words to Ormond:—"The precipitation of fighting with Cromwell, whereunto your Excellency is persuaded by many, is of a most dangerous consequence; for if any disaster should now attend your army the country would doubtless be betrayed into the hands of Cromwell, so few are those on whom in prosperity and adversity you may depend. The country must supply food, else a course must be taken with it; but should the worst come and food be scanty, it is better to see the soldiers fast a little while than lose them desperately in rash warfare, and indeed they will always make some shift to live. If God gives me grace to recover, I hope to make up as good an army as your Excellency has had any time this twelvemonth. I pray and desire your Excellency to have patience for two months, and to be circumspective and

careful of the few men your Excellency hath already together, whereon depends (under God) the preservation of all the interests, both of the King and of the Irish nation". We can see how the plan of defence shaped itself in the mind of the great strategist, and had he lived a military drama of enormous interest would have been developed, in which the Ulstermen would have borne the leading part. But Owen's voice was now silent, the voice which had never failed to rally the Celtic clans from end to end of the island, and the troops held together for seven years by the force of his will and genius were delivered over without appeal to the incompetent hands of Ormond.

Under Ormond's orders the Ulster forces were scattered over the whole country, their cohesion broken, their strength sapped, and the army as a united host destroyed. As the people of Waterford had refused to allow Castlehaven's soldiers within the walls, Ormond despatched Lieutenant-General O'Farrell and a portion of the Ulster army to serve under Preston in the defence of the city; while Hugh O'Neill was ordered to Clonmel with another detachment, and the rest of Owen's soldiers were dispersed in little parties to castles, towns, and military stations, never again to be united in one body under one commander. But the arrival of the Ulster army had checked Cromwell's career. After a vain attack on Waterford the forces of the Parliament, worn out with disease and fatigue, retired in the middle of December into winter quarters. Cromwell was under no delusions. Well-fed and well paid as his troops had been, "the wet marches and ill accommodation" had proved too much for them, and Cromwell's sole rival in military renown, the victor of Dungan's Hill and Rathmines—Colonel Michael Jones, now Lieutenant-General under the Parliament—died of cold and fever in Dungarvan. Celtic Ireland met the shock in another spirit than that of the Pale. The Ulstermen kindled new life and fire in the south, and all Connaught was in arms ready to repel attack.

While military affairs were in this position, Ormond was busying himself in devising a new scheme of Government. Dublin was in the hands of Cromwell, and on all other cities the Lord Lieutenant looked askance. Besides he had no wish for a representative popular assembly: he merely desired some instrument of taxation which would be respected by the people. Naturally he looked to the bishops; and as Primate O'Reilly summoned the congregation of Kells in 1642, so at Ormond's suggestion did the bishops meet at Clonmacnoise in December, 1649. In fervid language they expressed their trust in the Lord Lieutenant, and declared their readiness to support his Viceroyalty. Henceforth Ormond made Connaught his dwelling place, sometimes holding state at Gort, and sometimes at Portumna or Loughrea; Clanricarde and Castlehaven served under him, and far away from danger the three peers, surrounded by a court of bishops and

lords, revelled and caroused while the brunt of battle had to be borne elsewhere. The Connaught bishops were all Ormondians, John of Tuam being Clanricarde's cousin and bishop Kirwan of Killala one of his most devoted followers, so that the Anglo-Irish government in its worst form was now transplanted beyond the Shannon. Fennell and Dillon and Muskerry soon joined the new cabal, and Loughrea became for a time a faint copy of what Kilkenny had been but a few years before.

Meantime in pursuance of the fundamental terms of Owen Roe O'Neill's treaty with Ormond the Ulster army proceeded to elect a successor to their dead chief. Scattered as the forces were a new army was already in course of formation, needing only a directing hand to complete Owen's task of organization, and the dispersed soldiers and commanders flocking home by degrees for the occasion a Provincial Assembly was summoned to nominate and appoint a new General. There were many competitors; the Marquis of Antrim, Sir Phelim O'Neill, Lord Iveagh, Daniel O'Neill, Colonel Hugh O'Reilly and Henry Roe, the late general's son; but above all two great soldiers—Lieuenant-General O'Farrell and Major-general Hugh O'Neill—by skill and service stood out pre-eminently as best fitted for the supreme command.

It was the wish of the army that the Ulster forces should still be led by an O'Neill, and of all the O'Neills Hugh was marked out beyond all competitors for the post. Although with a noble modesty he himself urged as his sole claim that he "knew the mind of Owen O'Neill and his way of managing his men", he was recognised by the troops as the very greatest of all Owen's coadjutors. Daniel O'Neill and Henry Roe proclaimed their readiness to serve under their cousin; so, notwithstanding his higher military rank, did General O'Farrell; while both Hugh and Bryan MacPhelim declared that all their devotion to Owen Roe would be willingly given to his nephew Black Hugh. But the foolish brain of Sir Phelim was fermenting with wild ambition. The dazzling prize which so deluded him in 1641 beckoned him on to folly and revolt. He aspired to be O'Neill, President, perhaps Prince, of Ulster. Compromise was impossible, and a leader outside the O'Neills must be sought. O'Farrell, however, was objectionable to Lord Antrim and Lord Iveagh; and finally, to set rivalries at rest, the choice fell upon the bishop of Clogher, Heber M'Mahon.

No more disastrous choice could have been made. Passionate, ill-tempered, and headstrong as he was, the bishop under Owen's guidance had been an active champion of truth and straightforward policy; left to himself he proved weak, wavering, and foolishly vain. No sooner did he receive from Ormond the ratification of his election and his commission of commander-in-chief of the Ulster forces, than his poor arrogant nature led him into strange betrayal of his trust. Solemnly presenting himself at Ormond" viceregal

court at Loughrea, he placed himself absolutely under the Viceroy's orders, undoing by that single act the whole purpose of Owen's guarantee, the real object of which was to secure that the Ulster army, while allied indeed with the forces of the Lord Lieutenant, should yet remain perfectly independent of them and free from official interference. As the Ulster troops scattered through the country had been incorporated into Ormond's army, the only semblance of separate action lay henceforth with the men who remained in arms in the north. There Owen's fortress of Charlemont still withstood all storms, and round this stronghold a rude army was collected, the few veterans of Owen's army left in Ulster forming the nucleus.

Meanwhile in the south, while Cromwell was forcing his way over the Tipperary mountains and making ready for the siege of Clonmel, the bishop and his troops were engaged in futile and paltry expeditions to the Bannside, which, unhappily, were neither brilliant in design nor perfect in execution. In other ways, too, the prelate's presence at the head of an army was found damaging to the efficiency and strength of the national forces. Sir George Munroe, reconciled to the king's cause, was willing to serve under a great commander like Owen O'Neill, but he declined to take orders from a Bishop-General. "The people of our profession", said he, "are averse to it, thinking it a church business". Quitting Ireland he and his Scots sought service elsewhere, and all bonds of confederacy between Scotland and Ireland were broken. For Lord Antrim, and still more "his duchess", were deeply angered, and the duchess bitterly urged on a breach with the "ungrateful" northerners.

While the Ulster army was thus depleted by the secession of its allies, events moved rapidly elsewhere in Ireland. On the 30th of April, 1650, an obsequious clerical assembly sat in Loughrea, where seven nobles and seven bishops requested Ormond to appoint commanders for the several provinces, and on behalf of the clergy promised "zealous incitements of the people" from the altars, and the warmest promotion of Ormond's interests. In compliance with this request, the Bishop of Dromore was appointed governor of Carlow, and later on General of Leinster; while Lord Dillon of Costello, a worthless craven, got an important command in Connaught. Loughrea was made the chief seat and "habitation" of Ormond, where, surrounded by Castlehaven, Clanricarde, Dillon, and Taaffe, he presided over "a synagogue of perjury, a sphere of injustice, a congregation of bankrupts, and a conventicle of treacherous thieves". Clonmel meanwhile, far from the "carousing pastimes" of the peers, was covering itself with glory. Behind old crazy walls a true soldier stood at bay, and Black Hugh O'Neill "behaved himself so gallantly that Cromwell lost near 2,500 men before that town". When Cromwell had called upon him to yield up the place "on good conditions", Hugh, in words that sound like an echo of his

illustrious uncle, answered that he "was of another resolution than to give up towns and places till he was reduced to a very much lower condition, and so wished him to do his worst". After terrible cannonading a breach was made; but Hugh formed a lane a man's height and eighty yards long on both sides from the breach, with a foot bank at the back of it, and set two guns opposite the breach and made all things ready for a storm. On the 8th of May the Ironsides rushed forward to the breach clad in panoply, "helmets, back breast swords, pistols, and musquetoons". No opposition was offered; seizing the breach they dashed headlong into the town, when to their amazement they found themselves "jammed and crammed" in a narrow lane, while from either side "shots, pikes, scythes, stones, and great long pieces of timber" came crashing upon them, and "the two guns slaughtered them with chained bullets". The troops from behind pressed into the narrow way over the corpses of their comrades only to meet death in their turn. Terrified and disordered the Cromwellians were chased from the breach, and Oliver in his math declared that since "he donned helmet against the King he had not met such a repulse before". Black Hugh brought off his men by dead of night to Waterford, and later on to Limerick, which he defended against Ireton with the same high soldiership that had won the angry admiration of Cromwell.

But these exploits were only gleams in the surrounding darkness. Relying on vain promises of assistance from Ormond and Clanricarde, the "Prelate-General", McMahon, marched away from his Tyrone strongholds into the fastnesses of Tyrconnell. With his base resting on Derry, and leading troops well used to the passes of Donegal, Sir Charles Coote eagerly followed the brave prelate but ignorant general until he overtook him at Letterkenny Battle was not inevitable, for the passes still under control of the Irish offered easy exit and admirable defence. But the bishop was burning for glory. In vain Henry Roe expostulated, warning him of the danger he was about to run :—"My father", said he, "would protract time and make a thousand wheels and turns to save the life of a single soldier, much more would he do for the safety of a whole army. It is no disparagement unto your lordship to ask you to give place unto practitioners. You have here the Lieutenant-General and others who have acquired the science and theoric as well as the art, an art (under favour) not to be learned in a day like a *pater-noster*. We are now the only army left; the country is at our devotion, provision we cannot want, and forage is plentiful. If we fail we can never again be recruited, if we win the enemy may easily restore himself out of the resources of the three kingdoms. Delay is often braver than wild courage and this is such an occasion. This, sir, is the sense of all and singular our commanders, and from them I, *minimus apostolorum*, bear the message". Fuming with foolish anger, the bishop responded with brutal insult:— "Such language is not suitable for the

courage of true soldiers, but of cowards who are afraid even to look on blood, and tremble at the very thought of a scar". Wounded by "this corrosive language" and "beyond the limits of reason transported", the commanders consented to offer battle, "oblivious of all military advantage".

The battle was a mere rout. So ill-arranged had the bishop's dispositions been that the horse were quite unable to assist the foot; and although Henry Roe fighting like a lion among inferior beasts made a havoc of all that came in his way, the conflict was hopeless from the outset; all soon fled away or were there slaughtered. The poor blundering Prelate-General escaped from the fields only to be captured and carried into Enniskillen, and there hanged and quartered. The brilliant young soldier, Henry Roe, was brought to Londonderry where after quarter given, he was beheaded by Sir Charles Coote, who, less than twelve months before, had welcomed him and his illustrious father into the city.

And so by that one day's wild work at Scariffhollis in July, 1650, this army, ever yet victorious under General Owen O'Neill, of blessed and famous memory, by the ill manage of one man too much given to his own opinion, was for ever destroyed; a loss, indeed, no less than to be expected on the death of such a general. On that bloody field all the captains and officers save very few were killed, and Ulster was left 'a dowager of moan and grief both day and night renewed. Among the dead lay the friend and confidant of Owen Roe, his devoted physician, Owen O'Sheil—a brilliant graduate of five Universities, he was absolutely the very best of his science in these three kingdoms. His wife, the niece of Hugh O'Neill's dashing lieutenant Tyrrell, the hero of Tyrrellspass, had herself been nobly distinguished by her defence of a castle against Preston, when in 1648 he warred against Owen, and by her brave answer to his appeal that in the name of religion she should yield up the place:—"To none but to General O'Neill I deliver up this house. If the Holy Father Himself—may God guard me from sin—demanded this castle I should refuse to yield it up without the orders of the General".

Touches like these light up the tragedy of O'Neill's life with a strange beauty. But the life and the life-work were now alike lost to his unfortunate country. The poor deluded bishops, horrified by Ormond's cynical indifference after the slaughter induced by his hollow promises, met at Jamestown in August, 1650, and now when it was of no avail uttered their belated denunciation against the "common enemy of God, king, and country". But Ormond was beyond the range of their shafts. He fled, leaving Clanricarde as his Deputy. Then came a new beginning of foolish negotiations; semi-imaginary arrangements with the Duke of Lorraine and other exalted persons, all ending in darkness, devastation, and despair. Defeat and disaster swept over the land. The light faded out save where on the cliffs of Innisboffin the national struggle was maintained for two years

more. There, on that strand where the last flicker of the fight for freedom died, Roger O'Moore, faithful to the end, was found among the bravest, and escaping through the waves he passes from the eye of history.

Lady Rosa outlived all her kinsmen, and for ten weary years more was the witness of her country's sorrow. That lofty and tragic figure, fit peer and helpmate of the "majestic, stately, stainless cavalier", comes once into view when her nephew, Black Hugh, asked in 1650 for a safe conduct for "my aunt, the Lady of General Owen O'Neill". Ten years later she died in Brussels, having survived husband and son, and as it seemed fatherland as well. In a strange land she sleeps in the grave of her firstborn beneath the epitaph which proudly announces the "widow of Don Eugenio O'Neill, the General of the Catholic Irish".