

Darrell Figgis, The Historic Case for Irish Independence (1918)

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Contents:

Preface

1. Prelude
 2. Creation of a National Polity, 300-1000 A.D.
 3. State Stability, 360-1000 A.D.
 4. Foundation of the State, 200-1000 A.D.
 5. Re-Creation of European Culture, 600-1100 A.D.
 6. Foreign Military Invasion, 1168-1171
 7. Foreign State Assumption and National War, 1171 A.D.
 8. Nature of the National War, 1171-1315
 9. Formal Repudiation of Foreign Dominion, 1315-1318
 10. Re-creation of National State and Renewal of the Life of the Nation, 1319-1367
- Statutes of Kilkenny, 1367 A.D.
11. England's Difficulty: Ireland's Revival of Prosperity, 1319-1486 A.D.
 12. Renewal of War by Statecraft, 1486-1537
 13. Nature of the War, 1500-1541
 14. Extension of English Crown and Polity over Irish Crown and Polity: the Manner of its Accomplishment, 1541-1558
 15. The First Plantations: Their Cause, Meaning and Effect, 1558-1590
 16. Hugh O'Neill, 1590-1603
 17. Further Plantations and Uprooting of National Polity, 1603-1641
 18. Contrast of the Two Contending Conceptions of Civilisation 1550-1641
 19. Confiscation by Legal Craft, 1628-1641
 20. National Bondage, 1608-1641
 21. Renewal of War, 1641-1650
 22. "Hell or Connacht," 1653-1654
 23. The Return of the Nation to its Old Lands, 1660-1689
 24. Renewed War, 1689-1691
 25. Penal Code 1691-1795
 26. State of the Nation, 18th Century
 27. The Rise of the Garrison, 1698-1779
 28. Its Demand for Independence, 1779-1783
 29. The Character of Grattan's Parliament, and its Effect on the Nation, 1783-1800
 30. The Rising of 1798

31. Act of Union, 1800
32. Meaning of Act of Union and its Effect, 1800
33. Robert Emmet, 1803
34. The Forces Behind Daniel O'Connell, 1823-1829
35. The Failure of Daniel O'Connell, 1829-1843
36. Starvation, 1845-1851
37. Young Ireland, 1843-1848
38. Risings the Heir to Risings, 1848-1867
39. The Land War and its Significance, 1848-1903
40. War in the Enemy's Camp, 1877-1903
41. The Awakening of the Nation, 1891-1913
42. Declaration of Independence, 1914-1916

—To reach each section, search for the chapter number, or any term in the title.

In Preface and in Protest

Writers of good books and writers of bad books, according to their skill, shape their work as an architect shapes a building. In the building to which this protest is a preface an important stone near the pinnacle has been chipped away; and all the pinnacle itself, which was the crown toward which the building ascended, has been shorn off. Unfortunately, it is of no avail to protest against the vandalism: it is only necessary to indicate it; and to wait for better days of which the pinnacle might have given a hint and expressed a hope.

D.F.

Baile Atha Cliath,
Lá Bealtaine, 1918

Prelude

The history of Ireland exhibits an ancient and wise polity, attentive to individual freedom and careful for the creation of beauty, rebuilding the culture of Europe after the darkness of the barbarian migrations, invaded finally by a military organisation that thrived on the spoils of conquest, and whose only art that posterity can discover was the building of fortified abodes. It exhibits, therefore, the issue between a higher and a lower Civilisation, in which the lower held the advantage because the contest had necessarily to be fought on its own plane. For, after the invasion, Ireland became the scene of constant warfare - a warfare that intended only to uproot and to destroy. At the moment of the invasion Ireland had been distracted by dynastic dispute, but when her people appreciated the peril that threatened the State, they united in a series of wars to expel the invader that had established himself at the ports and along the waterways of the country. Publicly, and by an international document, they repudiated the sovereignty the King of England had assumed in the country, and finally they threw back the invading forces to a diminishing area of land round about the City of Dublin. At that moment England herself was rent by dynastic war, and, profiting by England's distraction, a great era of prosperity opened for Ireland. Before the State, however, could include the new elements that had been cast into it, could renew the damage that had been done to its polity, and could thus complete itself, England had adjusted her dynastic feuds and re-opened war on the nation. The new wars were marked, not only by military excesses

reprobated even by contemporary Englishmen, but specially by a statecraft that, taking advantage of the earlier unsettlement that had been caused, sought by bribes and allurements to create disunion in the nation.

Divide et Impera was the watchword. The art, literature, culture, customs, language and civil polity of the nation were, in these wars, the marks of special enmity. English enactments pronounced against them, English governors endeavoured to obliterate them, and English armies destroyed all that they could seize. The attempt was made to destroy every sign and token that such a thing as a separate Irish nation, with its own distinctive culture and polity, existed, or had ever existed. The Irish language was to be supplanted by the English language, Irish titles by English titles, Irish customs by English customs, Irish law by English law, and the Irish Polity by an English Polity. Fighting for their very existence the people rallied under the heir, by Irish law, of the old monarchic line, through whom treaties were made with the Papal See and the Crown of Spain to expel the invader and re-establish the international sovereignty of Ireland. In 1602 this alliance was defeated, and the invader took advantage of his victory to extort the utmost of his will. He had sought to obliterate all signs of a separate Irish nation; but he had found it impossible to do so, because the nation was included within its own distinctive polity. He had sought to break the polity; but he had found it impossible to do so because the polity was built upon the land in the possession of a nation of freemen. Therefore, he determined to tear out the nation by its roots by sweeping the people from the land. Area after area was marked for plantation.

The people were swept to mountain and to waste to starve as they might, while Englishmen were brought over to take their place. Some of the nation became servitors where they had been freemen, and tilled their own land for the stranger. For the most part they took to the hills in bands and looked down into the plains where the smoke curled from stranger hearths. Then they swept down and drove the stranger headlong, and the war was re-opened. Another of the old monarchic line was found to lead them; but he was harassed by new difficulties, and when again the war was lost, the uprooting of the nation took a new and terrible form. The nation was now swept out of three of its four provinces, and confined to the fourth. Yet the task had hardly been accomplished than the people began steadily to drift back across the country to the places where their fathers had been freemen, so that at the end of the seventeenth century their names are again to be found where their names had been familiar at the beginning of the century. Once again the war was opened, and once again was lost, and once again a new despotism was devised. In the name of religious persecution the nation was outlawed. In the eyes of English law, now established on military might, no such person as an Irish Catholic was presumed to exist. The squalor and misery endured by the nation in its bondage during the eighteenth century is a page of blackest horror. When its jailors arose and demanded, and won, legislative independence out of the same needs that it had known centuries before, it gave little heed. But when those jailors were struck down by England, when their legislative and economic independence was taken from them, then the nation, seeing the watchers at the gate weakened and vanishing, arose and marched into the nineteenth century to win back the rights that had been robbed from them. They won back civil and religious freedom; they won back an independent and distinctive culture, with its roots in an honourable past; and, now that the landlords had returned to England, where their rents were sent to them, they rose and won back the land on which their fathers had built the National State. In the meantime they rose in a continual series of armed revolts, the failure of each rising being the begetter of another, to win back the sovereign independence of the nation. Finally, this also was proclaimed.

1. Creation of a National Polity, 300-1000 A.D

From the dawn of the Christian era Irish history comes into the light of sharper certitude and within reach of historical criticism. A unified code of laws appear in these early centuries,

embodying and ordering an elaborate social system, that was assuredly not evolved in a few years; the remains of a literature appear, the strength of which has been acknowledged by European scholars attracted to their study; but the processes by which both law and literature came to be remain beyond the reach of criticism. From the second to the tenth centuries, however, a continual effort may be seen to perfect and render stable a National Polity. That stability was the harder to achieve because, singular in the political doctrine or practice of the time, the rights of a nation of freemen had to be considered as well as the powers of a central executive. A solution was sought to a problem that has not yet been answered: the balance between a centralised and de-centralised State; and the Law-books and History of the time shew that a success was achieved so remarkable that it is perhaps as great a tragedy to the political thought of the world as it was to the Irish Nation that a militarist system, whose only problem was conquest and spoliation, should have broken in upon that State at a moment of political crisis and such dissolution as is, in the teaching of History, the prelude to repair. It is but simple truth to say that the Polity evolved in Ireland during the first millenium displayed a political, social and economic thought in advance of anything known in Europe at that time. It held the modern problems of aristocracy and democracy in solution; and made them, indeed, to appear as false identities, each then being an interchangeable expression of the other. It dealt with the facts of national livelihood, not with theories or black-letter abstractions and pleadings: the records in the law-books only appearing after the decisions in Life. Thus the Polity was in a continual state of growth and development, was marked by great reality, and yet was distinguished by a high idealism. It was in process of answering its gravest weakness when its development became interrupted.

2. State Stability, 360-1000 A.D.

After the middle of the fourth century the hegemony that till then prevailed became changed for a central Monarchy. The political system was reconstituted. The local militia were unified in a national system; and were finally overthrown and disbanded on their attempt to create a military dictatorship. The Monarchy then, and at irregular intervals thereafter, convened large and representative Assemblies to deal with national affairs. On such occasions the Monarch presided, with the provincial kings about him. The lawyers met among themselves to codify and unify the practice of the law. Local rulers met among themselves. They unified social custom, and discussed the question of fiscal rights between ranks of authority from the Monarch downwards. The scholars met, and among such scholars a remarkable correspondence of thought must have continued to have produced the close uniformity seen in the creation of legendary as well as of actual history during the last centuries of the millenium. Also the poets met, and discussed the burthen and highly elaborate technique of their Art. They were the especially honoured of the nation, and maintained culture at the public charges. Such assemblies were occasions of national festival. Thus the rites with which these assemblies were celebrated gave the deliberations authority, and joined with them in the creation of national unity. The poetry of that time, no less than the poetry since that time, is marked by a passion of tenderness for a country personified by a number of sacred and secret names.

3. Foundation of the Irish State, 200-1000 A.D.

The National Polity was based, from the third century onwards, upon a number of petty states.

Each of these was a political unit of the State, and an economic and deliberative unit in itself. Its affairs were led by a king, or ruler, elected by the vote of its people and removable by that vote. The land it occupied was vested in itself for the use of its freemen, and could not be alienated. The people were themselves, in fact, supreme; in a fellowship based on the land; and met in the assembly of each petty state, to legislate for so much of the law as had local application, and to

hear and approve the law coordinated in the National Assembly. They dispensed hospitality for all comers. They maintained schools, at which scholars were welcomed, without payment, from all parts of Europe. They endowed their hereditary poets, scholars, historians, lawyers, and, after the introduction of Christianity in the fourth century, ecclesiastics, setting lands aside for their maintenance. And by the middle of the first millenium an elaborate polity appeared in Ireland, complete in its parts and well-devised as a whole, having grown, not by hazard, but by thought and labour of experiment - embodying a civilisation of great beauty, sprung from its own roots and distinguished throughout Europe.

4. Re-creation of European Culture, 600-1100 A.D.

Out of such an Ireland there grew a flower, the fragrance of which has remained in Europe to this day. When Huns, Vandals, Franks, Alemanni, Langobards, Angles and Saxons swept across Europe and threw the greater part of the Continent back into barbarism, Ireland remained the only country where culture, learning and scholarship kept touch with their elder sources. Alone in Western Europe during the sixth century, in Ireland a pure Latin was written, and Greek so much as understood. Alone in Western Europe, in Ireland a wide culture existed, based not only on the study of classical authors and the sciences of the time, but especially active in the creation of a national literature, legendary and historical. During these years Ireland earned her title, *Insula Sanctorum et Doctorum*. Therefore Continental scholars, flying before the barbarian hordes, passed over into Ireland with their books. They were welcomed and honoured. Being now the repository for the libraries of Western Europe, Ireland became the scene of extraordinary activity in scholarship. North and south, east and west, great seminaries and colleges of learning arose; and as the fame of these grew with the years, scholars came from far afield to study in the Irish schools. They came in such numbers that the lawyers, in National Assembly, were compelled to devise laws to knit them into the fabric of the State, seeing that it was contrary to the tradition of hospitality in the nation that they should be put to any charge for their schooling or their entertainment. And when towards the end of the sixth century peace again came to Europe, Irish scholars set forth with their books to repair the ruin that had been caused. They found a Europe that was as though it had wholly lost its memory of Christianity and culture, and where the care of civilisation was not even a forgotten dream. The link with the older world of civilisation and letters had been lost. It was only maintained through Ireland, and therefore Irish missionaries and scholars came to the peoples that now inhabited Europe as the heralds for the most part of a new theme. They were the first evangelisers of England, and instructed its first poet in his letters.

The schools founded by Charlemagne were in all cases inspired by Irish scholarship, and were in most cases prompted by Irish scholars, and founded and conducted either by them or their pupils. In Germany also, in the northern lowlands, among the Alps and in Northern Italy, schools and seminaries were established. As far afield as Iceland, Syria and Egypt, these missionaries of civilisation went, carrying their books. When, therefore, centuries later, at the Council of Constance, 1416, it was admitted that Ireland ranked as one of the four original constituent States of Europe, taking its place after Rome and Byzantium, and before Spain, this was but an accurate statement of a truth then clearly recognised. From the sixth century to the eleventh the riches of Rome and Greece flowed over Europe through the Sovereign State of Ireland. It is an axiom that modern Europe is based upon those elder civilisations. Modern Europe, therefore, owes a vast unpaid debt to Ireland, for it was Ireland that placed Europe in touch with those elder civilisations, the memory of which had been blotted out in the general ruin and disrepair. Yet this service could not have been given Europe during the critical centuries at the close of the first millenium but for the fact that Ireland was an independent State, tending and caring for its own affairs without the distraction of any serious foreign invasion.

5. Foreign Military Invasion, 1168-1171

Such was the nation that was in the twelfth century to experience the invasion of a militarist system. The invasion came at an unhappy moment. For over a century before, Ireland had been divided by dynastic dispute. The National Polity being such that it could continue its own administration, this dispute, despite the internecine wars it caused, did not profoundly unsettle the country. So much is, evident from the fact that during these years scholarship and the arts continued in the greatest activity. But the central authority was weakened; and the nation, therefore, could not react to the new invasion as it had forcibly reacted to and overthrown the attempted Norse conquest over a century before. Moreover, the new invaders came in new guise, and the instant result of their coming was that the literary output of the nation was suspended. Ireland had ever welcomed strangers, and had made them part of her body politic, and the Normans came first as single adventurers with armed followings. They established themselves on or near the coast, and along the inland water-ways, and they built themselves castles. From these, they raided the country around for plunder. Having no economic life of their own, they ravished the economic life and industry of the nation, and forced submissions to that end. The surrounding Stateships could not sustain the effort to eject them, because they had necessarily to continue their economic life and had no separate military organisation. To ensure this continuance their freemen had enacted that they could not be called upon for more than six weeks' military service at a time, and then not during spring or harvest. This made it impossible for them to compete against a close military organisation, one of the codes of which was that it was not honourable for any of its members to work, but a knightly and honourable service to plunder the work of others. Therefore, it became necessary to buy off the adventurers by the payment of plunder, and to wait until Time drew them and gave them a place within the National Polity.

6. Foreign State Assumption and National War, 1171 A.D.

The coming of Henry the Second of England, however, in the year 1171 changed the nature of the issue into one of national conflict.

It is interesting to note the steady, yet sharp, definition of that national conflict. Each of the adventurers was, according to the principle of the military organisation to which he belonged, the feudal underling of Henry of England, and therefore the areas which he plundered were, according to the fiction of that system, conquered territory, which he laid at his lord's feet and resumed as a gift, with so much more as Henry chose to add to it. Other underlings this King of England brought with him, to whom he assigned other large tracts of land, as yet unplundered, and therefore as yet unconquered. Through many parts of the country he himself carried war; and he concluded his stay in the country by a number of forced submissions that admitted him as feudal lord of Ireland, by the creation of a Viceroy to reign in his absence, by the grants of ecclesiastical offices to English clerics, and the apportionment of the country among his followers, such apportionments to be made good by the sword. Moreover, English law was declared for the country, and Irish law was held to be discontinued, was held, in fact, not to be law at all, but a sign of moral delinquency. All this meant but one thing and was at once so interpreted. A war of polity against polity was opened, in which nation was locked against nation: an ancient polity based on the moral rights of a whole people as against a polity that was less a polity than the system of a military caste; a polity created by a whole people devising their national estate, against a polity made by plundering leaders thinking for conquest and devising a scheme of efficient mobilisation to that end; a polity from which had been possible the cultural re-creation of Europe, against a polity made not for upbuilding but for destruction; and thus a higher civilisation against a lower. Henceforward, in terms of these two contents, the two nations became locked in war.

7. Nature of National War, 1171-1315 A.D.

During the next few years the nature of the conflict soon became apparent. The English barons set forth with the sword to make good the land their king had beneciently granted to them; and, according to the law their king had proclaimed, the Irish Stateships approved their moral depravity in resisting that sword. Where the barons went they built castles and raided the country; and the Irish kings, finding that they could not resist a permanent soldiery with men who, having close economic interests to maintain, could only be summoned for six weeks' service at a time, set to work to create a standing militia. The movement began in the north. From there the Hebrides and the western parts of Scotland had in earlier times been colonised, and continual contact had been maintained with the colonists. These Hebrideans were now invited to form a militia in Ireland with rights and quarterings on each Stateship according to its ability. Their presence was at once felt. At that time the English barons were attempting to ring the North with a system of castles, but in the early years of the thirteenth century these castles are seen to disappear one by one from the control of the English into the hands of the new militia. Moreover, in the face of the new danger the nation set itself to the adjustment of its dynastic dispute. In 1258, O'Brian, King of Munster, and O'Connor, King of Connacht, drew together and proceeded to O'Neill to acknowledge him as Monarch in order that he might lead them against the foe. The significance of this appears when it is seen that O'Neill came of the old Monarchic line, and that during the eleventh century the O'Briens and the O'Connors had disputed that Monarchic right. The result appeared two years later, when a concerted attack was made. This failed, and three years later an appeal for aid was sent to Hakon of Norway, who died on the voyage. Yet the contest was steadfastly maintained. By its nature it was local and scattered; it had no opportunity to join united force against united force; and the English employed, often with great skill and success, the ancient plan of dividing to conquer; stirring and prompting animosities with great care in order to maintain themselves in a position that grew increasingly more difficult. They prompted rival claimants for kingships, and espoused their cause, with no intention to keep the faith they pledged. Thus they succeeded in keeping the issue continually confused.

The whole country was torn with strife; its harvests burned, and its people put to the sword; Stateships disappeared, and, after the passing of the invader, were reconstructed with difficulty; yet through all the national confusion the contest was persistently maintained. The confusion was on both sides; for many of the English made common cause with Irish rulers against their king; but the general nature of the conflict always shone clearly through the wreck of a despoiled nation.

8. Formal Repudiation of Foreign Dominion, 1315-1318 A.D.

Early in the fourteenth century the issue became still clearer when O'Neill, acting in the name of the nation, wrote a general remonstrance on the state of Ireland to Pope John XXII, reciting the evils under which it had fallen, the vices that had been introduced into a state of early simplicity, and stating: "Let no person, then, wonder if we endeavour to preserve our lives and defend our liberties as best we can, against those cruel tyrants, usurpers of our just liberties, and murderers of our persons. So far from thinking it unlawful, we hold it to be a meritorious act; nor can we be accused of perjury or rebellion, since neither our fathers nor we did at any time bind ourselves, by any oath of allegiance, to their fathers or to them; wherefore, without the least remorse of conscience, while breath lasts we shall attack them in defence of our just rights and never lay down our arms until we force them to desist." Finally, he stated that "in order to attain their object the more speedily and surely, they had invited the gallant Edward Bruce, to whom, being descended from their most noble ancestors, they had transferred, as they justly might, their own right of royal dominion."

In so writing, O'Neill spoke not only in the name of the ancient Irish Nation, but also in the name of many of the English lords, with whom peace had been made, and who had foresworn their English allegiance and had accepted the Irish State, Law and Life. Bruce came, was crowned Monarch, and for some years a deadly war was waged, each side wasting the country before the other, and when finally Bruce was overthrown and killed, 1318, the country was reduced to a state of acute famine and distress. Yet the invader's power was broken. He was thrown back upon a district about Dublin that became known as the Pale, and that steadily from this time diminished and drew back its marches towards the coast. In other parts of the country those of the invaders who had succeeded in establishing themselves as lords of territory had by now become absorbed into the polity which they had intended to destroy. They had intermarried with the Irish nation; and most of them had forgotten or discarded the use of the English tongue and the English manner of dress. Their territories were Irish Stateships, with themselves as rulers, in many cases elective. Some of them went through a public formality of renunciation of the nation from which they had come, and reception into the Irish nation. They became the most stubborn resisters of all things English; and thus earned for themselves the title, *Hiberniores Hibernicis ipsis*.

9. Re-creation of National State and Renewal of the Life of the Nation, 1319-1367

Therefore, the war of polity against polity, of nation against nation, took the new shape of enactment. Though a small and diminishing part of the country remained beyond its control, yet the higher civilisation had conquered, partly by a convulsion that had shaken the whole national fabric, partly by absorption. A long period of slow upbuilding was now to ensue. While the Pale remained with its enforced pretence of a Headship to the State outside the State, that upbuilding could not perfect itself. That is to say, the pretence, while it maintained any foothold in the country, inhibited the natural law whereby the State would once again have centred itself and have rendered itself stable by the assertion of its own sufficient authority. Yet though that final perfection was not possible without a further convulsion, yet the fabric of the polity was re-created, and all the characteristic flowers and fruits of the Irish State were again in evidence. Poets once again took up their song; historians reconstructed their broken annals; and the noise of the craftsman and of industry began again to be heard throughout the land. Such things would naturally and peacefully have flowed over the Pale, had the nation been left to itself. They would have re-wrought the national unity and have reconstructed the State. They began, indeed, to do so. Therefore, the invader decided, seeing that he was unable to advance the conquest he intended, to frustrate such an end and to reaffirm the war of polity against polity by statutory declaration.

10. Statutes of Kilkenny, 1367 A.D.

This is the real meaning of the famous Statutes of Kilkenny. They were promulgated in the year 1367, at the instance of Lionel Duke of Clarence, by an assembly, calling itself a parliament, of creatures of the English Crown, that met in the City of Kilkenny on the marches of the Pale. Since the first days of the invader, and the declaration of English law, Irishmen had been removed from any benefits under that law. It had been adjudged in a court of law no crime to kill an Irishman. That had been part of the procedure of the war to be waged. The significance of the Statutes of Kilkenny is very different. They were a new opposition of State against State, and on them, and on what they signified, all subsequent acts of a foreign government have been based. They sounded a voice that echoed in untold suffering down long centuries. By them all relations with the Irish nation were penalised. It was forbidden to speak the Irish language, to wear the Irish fashion of dress, to wear beards as did the Irish, to ride a horse barebacked, to have an Irish name, to take judgment by Irish law, to marry an Irish man or woman, to interchange children in fosterage as did the Irish, to entertain an Irish poet or minstrel, or to hear Irish history, to admit

an Irishman to sanctuary, to permit an Irishman to graze cattle, or to graze cattle on an Irishman's land, to cease at any time to war upon the Irish, or to hold any manner of commerce with an Irishman. These things were declared high treason; and the penalty attached was the forfeiture of all property and imprisonment. The Statutes of Kilkenny were ostensibly, and in immediate application, meant to protect the Pale from absorption in the Irish State, but they intimated a procedure that found its logical culmination in the Penal Code of the eighteenth century.

11. England's Difficulty: Ireland's Revival of Prosperity, 1319-1486 A.D

Yet for the time they meant nothing outside the English Pale; and that Pale was diminishing.

The Irish Stateships about the Pale warred on it continually, almost without cessation. Even the Pale at this time declared its absolute legislative independence of England, and its right to its own coinage, but beyond the Pale the King of England's officers did not venture unless backed by an armed force, and seldom even then. For now England was distracted, first with French wars, and subsequently with a bitter dynastic feud of its own. During the fifteenth century the Pale itself could hardly be said to exist. The Irish language was spoken throughout, and it would have taken very little to have won it back. But the nation had been too disorganised, both by a long war and by the absorption of new elements, for it so soon to have undertaken the unified and concerted action that this would have implied. Disrepair is more quickly achieved in a State, and more permanent in its results, than construction. The main result of that disrepair was the greater gathering of power into the heads of the larger Stateships, who had now become territorial lords.

Especially was this the case with the newer elements in the nation, amongst whom there were constant feuds. And the hand of the invader was always present to create such feuds if local occasion lacked. His very presence, as the cause of the disrepair, perpetuated the instability. Yet, now that his immediate oppression had been removed, now that his military polity was no more extended over the shattered civil polity of the nation, the country began steadily to thrive in all its parts. Its land passed again under tillage, its looms became busy again with woollen and with linen cloths, with tapestries and hangings, its minerals were mined and its guilds of metal-workers wrought wares for home and for abroad, its hides were tanned and wrought for export, the great forests that waved over the country gave employment to its woodworkers, ships were builded in all its ports, and its mercantile fleets carried the produce of the country to all the ports of Europe. Having no central government, and therefore no co-ordinated scheme for and no record of its labour, these activities for the most part cannot be discovered except in the records of foreign ports and in their contemporary repute as contained in writers of the time.

Not a little is to be discovered in the jealousies of English writers and merchants. Yet enough can be discovered to prove that this next period of the nation's history was marked by great industry, by wide prosperity, and by a considerable commerce with other nations of the world. Great difficulties had necessarily to be encountered; difficulties peculiar to a nation with no central Government or ordered State. Some of the Irish Stateships, for instance, had to mint their own coinage for the purpose of their commerce. Yet, despite the fact that the trade of the nation was conducted without the support and authority of its own State, such was its success that early in the sixteenth century the trade of the port of Galway was greater than the trade of any English port save London; and when the citizens of a western English city wished to communicate with Spain, their most speedy course lay through Galway. And even as industry prospered, so the arts and scholarship flourished. An old Irish proverb had said that "a ruler does not grant speech save to four: a poet for satire and praise, a chronicler of good memory for narration and story-telling, a judge for giving judgments, an historian for ancient lore." Such things were again heard, and none were more zealous for their care than those who had more newly avowed their Irish

nationality. FitzGerald and De Burgos vied with O'Connors and O'Neills in the nurture of the old national greatness. Great convocations were held of learned men.

The schools were re-established - one of them, for instance, in the middle of the sixteenth century, providing freely for twelve hundred scholars - in which the national learning was continued, Latin being a spoken language, and English neglected as unnecessary. Each of the great towns had such free schools and centres of learning. The period was one of wide literary activity, rivalling the activity known during the centuries before the invader's sword had stilled the nation's voice. The Poet, the Historian and the Jurist resumed their places of honour in the nation. The older learning was reconstructed, re-written and expounded. From the ripest scholar to lads at school manuscripts were accessible, and libraries were accumulated throughout the country. So deep-set was this literary revival of a culture a thousand years old, so stubbornly and passionately was it prized, that it continued throughout the dark persecutions and national upheaval that was now to follow, nor did it cease till the middle of the seventeenth century, when it flamed up in one last tragic cry loud with pain.

12. Renewal of War by Statecraft, 1486-1537

The day of England's difficulty had been the hour of Ireland's relief. But in 1486 England settled her dynastic feud, and the day of Ireland's agony was re-opened. It was now to prove an agony hardly to be surpassed in history. The first act was to purge and strengthen the Pale. Lately the intellectual activity of the nation had flowed through the Pale, and envoys of that culture had come, who, as an English State document complained, "by their Irish gifts and minstrelsy provoked the people to an Irish order." Moreover, the Parliament of the Pale had declared its legislative independence. Therefore, the first act was to remedy both these things. The Pale Parliament was compelled to pass a law that restricted it from considering any measure until the heads of that measure had first been approved in Council. Then the Statutes of Kilkenny were re-affirmed. The next step, in pursuance of the old policy, was to break the considerable prosperity and ease the nation had achieved. This was done by a refinement of the old policy of dividing the national forces, and skilful use was made of the unsettlement that had inevitably been left in the train of the first invasion.

The most powerful man in the nation was FitzGerald, with the English title of Earl of Kildare. It had hitherto been a firm rule never to appoint a Viceroy who was not of English birth and blood, but now Kildare was created Lord Lieutenant with the widest powers. He was a man of great character and dignity; but since now to strengthen the King of England's authority was to increase his own power, it was little wonder that an era of wars opened in which every man's hand was against every other man's hand. At all times, in the best of ordered States, statesmanship is fully employed in holding together the necessarily contradictory parts of a nation; and such statesmanship is counted among the highest gifts with which men may be endowed; but now Ireland was given over to a foreign statecraft whose whole skill was employed in promoting such contradictions with a view to weakening the nation whose extinction was determined. Nor had the nation recovered the unity and stability with which that attempt might have been repelled. On Fitzgerald's death his son was appointed in his stead, and succeeded so well, by continuous warfare, in strengthening himself, that he was committed to the Tower of London, while his son was driven into raising the standard of rebellion. The result was that the son, known as Silken Thomas, with five of his uncles, were beheaded in London. Thus the family was obliterated, after it had been skilfully used to weaken and disrupt the nation.

13. Nature of the War, 1500-1541

Such was the new policy employed in the war that had now been re-opened between polity and polity, nation and nation. From English State Papers it appears that a special fund was kept in Dublin to promote disturbances and to create feuds; while secret provocative agents were employed throughout the country, whose reports may be found among the same State Papers. Such efforts were worked from a compact and single directive against a nation which was at all costs to be frustrated from achieving such a directive of its own. The name and intention of governance were presumed, and, in order the better to maintain the presumption, English writers of the time wrote scornfully of the Irish nation as of barbarians and rebels; yet the result was war - not simply a war of conquest, but a war of destruction and obliteration.

The English armies that went abroad were especially careful to destroy all Irish manuscripts that came within their reach. All traces of the old culture and learning, that looked down on the vandals from an honoured heritage of fifteen hundred years, were to be deliberately obliterated in order to promulgate the new legend of a barbarian people to whom the blessings of civilisation were brought, at the swordpoint. The Statutes of Kilkenny became the guiding principle of the war: they were turned into an offensive instrument by which a whole nation, its beauties and its distinctive being were to be blotted from the earth. When Irish rulers had been prompted into a feud, or when in the continual war that prevailed feuds broke out without such direct prompting, the English military power waited till both sides were exhausted, and then, in the name of good order, fell upon each, exacted submissions, bestowed English titles, demanded that poets, historians and lawyers should be banished, and decreed that Irish children should be taken to train in the English language and in English ways. Special care, indeed, was taken to procure wards to train in England, in order thus the more effectually to extend one polity over another. An additional advantage was thus gained. For so all the lands over which a ward's father ruled, at the election of the people, was presumed by English law to pass to the son; and so a whole people's lands, held by them since before history in free Stateships, were held to come within the gift of the English Crown.

Once again, therefore, it was a question of a polity against a polity, but now with valuable property to be seized as a result. Against such a policy, naturally, the whole people rose, in the name of their ancient rights and laws; and further upheavals were caused, out of which the English Crown reaped advantage. All these things were done, however, not frankly in the name of conquest and extinction, but in the guise of superior worth and in the pretence of the blessings of civilisation to be brought to a barbarous people. Yet certain English agents at that time quite clearly saw the matter as it truly stood. The Chief Baron at Dublin, Lord Finglas, wrote, anno 1520: "It is a great abusion and reproach that the laws and statutes made in this land are not observed nor kept after the making of them eight days; which matter is one of the destructions of Englishmen of this land; and divers Irishmen doth keep and observe such laws which they make upon hills in their country firm and stable, without breaking them for any favour or reward." Another observer stated: "The Irish keep their promise faithfully and are more desirous of peace than the English; nothing is more pleasing to them than good justice." For the war between the nations was still one whereby a militarist system, desirous of plunder and under no obligation to law, sought to extinguish an ancient civilisation whose polity had been made by a whole nation and was rooted in law. Only it was now aided by all the wiles of an unscrupulous statecraft.

14. Extension of English Crown and Polity over Irish Crown and Polity: the Manner of its Accomplishment, 1541-1558

It had now been intensified by two new considerations. Henry the Eighth, King of England, had renounced the supremacy of the papal See, and had attached the Headship of the English Church to the Crown of England. Ireland, however, was in a different case.

According to the fiction that had been maintained for nearly four hundred years, the King of England was only feudal lord of Ireland. The fiction was the same as that by which the Kings of England called themselves Kings of France, except that France was a larger and more formidable fiction to maintain by sword and cannon. Yet the fiction in Ireland now presented difficulties, since it was not possible to attach a Church Headship to a mere feudal lordship. Therefore, Henry prepared to be crowned as King of Ireland. A Parliament was convened in Dublin, and carefully arranged to be completely subservient to the King of England's will. It was filled by men chosen because they represented nothing but that will; who were willing to constitute an assembly devised to give the forms of legislative sanction to that will. English State Papers betray the care and craft with which the work was done, and the moneys and titles expended in the doing of it. In such an assembly, surrounded by armed English forces, Henry, in 1541, was crowned King of Ireland and Spiritual Head of the Church. The nation, however, held aloof from this imposing ceremony.

Whatever might chance in Dublin, the national polity continued its local life both in the civil and in the religious estate. Therefore, the next step in English statecraft was decreed. For so long as that polity continued the people remained indestructible. Lands might be wasted, and people slain, but so long as the polity continued, so long was it impossible for the foreign State to be extended over and to eradicate the National State. Jurists, historians, poets, rulers and a sovereign ruling people continued its life; fragmentarily, yet in those fragments intact, with a long and ancient history behind them. Moreover, that sovereign people, continuing the National Polity, cancelled the pretensions of those of their elected rulers who had accepted English titles, and to whom, in the patents of those titles, lands had been granted, as real estate by gift from a foreign king, over which they had ruled merely as executive officers of the people. The polity was the people, and the people were the polity. Each was indestructible in terms of the other; and while either continued the nation continued, and the war of polity against polity, and nation against nation, was inoperative and finally driven to failure. Therefore, the decision was taken to eradicate the polity by eradicating the people. The decree went forth to supplant an old, wise and beautiful Order, of whose fruits all Europe had partaken, by uprooting the whole of a people and by planting strangers in their stead. The petty states of the National Polity so supplanted were to be converted into English shires.

15. The First Plantations: Their Cause, Meaning and Effect, 1558-1590

In later years, when this new policy reached its perfect flower, Bacon wrote some very philosophic considerations upon it.

"Plantations are the very Nativities or Birth-days of Kingdoms," said he. "The most part of Unions and Plantations of Kingdoms," he added, "have been founded in the effusion of blood; but your Majesty shall build in Solo puro et in Area pura ." The Solus purus et Area pura , however, had first to be made; and they could only be made by obliterating "the race and generation of men, valiant, hard and active," of which he also wrote, in order that covetous-ness might enjoy the "many dowries of Nature" and "Confluence of Commodities," "the fruitfulness of the Soil, the Ports, the Rivers, the Fishings, the Quarries, the Woods, and other materials" that stirred his admiration, the like of which, he said, "it was not easy, no not upon the Continent, to find if the Hand of Man did join with the Hand of Nature."

The first places chosen for the experiment lay conveniently near the Pale, Laoghis and O Fáilghe. Their rulers, O'Moore and O'Connor, were pricked into revolt, and an expedition was sent against them. They were taken prisoners, and the land over which they had ruled as executive officers, was held, by a fiction of treason coined in London, to be their real estate and forfeit to the English Crown. The two territories were thereupon called King's County and Queen's County, and were parcelled at fixed rentals among imported adventurers. The people who possessed the land hitherto in free states were driven to the mountains and waste places, where they were to be permitted to live. This was the first Plantation. It was, however, some time before it could effectually establish itself; for the possessors of the land approved the barbarism with which English writers charged the Irish Nation by descending continually upon the Planters, destroying both them and their virtuous homesteads, and rebuilding once again their scattered states. The work had, therefore, to be repeated, and finally the "barbarians" were driven to the other end of the country.

The second Plantation was careful to avoid the faults of the first. In it also the new religious oppression found a voice. For the Fitzgeralds of Desmond were the bulwark of the Catholic faith in the South; and became, therefore, the object of administrative attention. Harassed on all sides, they broke into revolt. The war that ensued lasted many years, and was marked by systematic and deliberate butchery. The land was destined for plantation, and was therefore to be made a waste. The Nativity of a Kingdom had to be heralded; wherefore an Area pura had to be created. Contemporary accounts, and the reports written by the military leaders in charge of the butchery, make almost intolerable reading. Death and devastation were dealt on all hands by a soldiery who, as English State Papers themselves attest, had now grown to delight in their fiendish business of making a quick end of an ancient and sovereign people. And then the land was planted by imported adventurers. The gentle English poet, Edmund Spenser, was one of those adventurers; and he has left an account of what he himself saw of those few who escaped the butchery by flying to the mountains and the bogs:-

"Notwithstanding the same (Province of Munster) was a most rich and plentiful countrey, full of corne and cattle, yet ere one year and a halfe they were brought to such wretchednesse as that any stony hart would have rued the same. Out of every corner of the woods and glynnes they came creeping forth upon their hands, for their legges could not beare them; they looked like anatomies of death; they spake like ghosts crying out of their graves; they did eate the dead carrions, happy where they could finde them, yea, and one another soon after, insomuch as the very carcasses they spared not to scrape out of their graves; and if they found a plot of watercresses or shamrocks, there they flocked as to a feast for the time; that in short space of time there were none almost left, and a most populous and plentifull countrey suddainely left voide of man and beast."

Yet he, too, advised a repetition of the process.

16. Hugh O'Neill, 1590-1603

At this moment a new figure arose, and he came of the old Monarchic line. Others had arisen in the continual wars that were waged, but they had arisen separately, and so had helped the invader. Time was never allowed for any agreement to mature; the treasury and the secret agent were ever busy to create discord; and offers of separate peace to a harassed foe conspired to break alliances. The new O'Neill, however, had been an English ward, and so had had an opportunity of studying the invader's sleight of craft. Therefore, it fell out that for a number of years English ministers found all their plans matched by perfect knowledge and a better cunning. They had always relied on provoking obduracy to a head before it could contract dangerous alliances, but they found that O'Neill's patience was never to be broken, while he gathered all the North, all the West, and much of the South under his leadership. If wars were pressed against him, he outgeneralled his

opponents in the field, and then made peace on terms that he intended to regard neither more nor less faithfully than English monarchs and ministers. In the meantime he entered into alliances with the Papal See and the Crown of Spain for the breaking of English power in Ireland and the complete re-establishment of Irish Sovereignty. The Sovereignty of Ireland was then still recognised as existing in a state of frustration and only partial suppression.

The terms of O'Neill's negotiations with the Spanish Crown supposed this as the basis of the military aid that was promised for its final and complete emancipation; and indeed throughout his life O'Neill himself was treated by the chancelleries of Europe as the leader of a nation in misfortune while under no allegiance to the English Crown. In that character he made his pact with Spain, by which he was pledged not to press to a final issue until the promised Spanish assistance came to him. Year after year he waited for this assistance, and year after year he was disappointed. It became increasingly difficult to withhold the decisive action to which the enemy pressed him, and he was compelled to engage in wars that wasted his strength and impoverished the country. When at last the promised aid came he heard of its landing in the South, whereas he had arranged for it to land in the North, where his strength mostly lay. He hastened, however, to effect a junction, and found the Spanish forces invested by an English army. Therefore he, in turn, invested the English. He could have reduced the English, but this meant also the reduction of the Spanish force; and being importuned by them not to wait, against his own judgment, moved by the appeal to his chivalry, he engaged in battle and was defeated, anno 1602.

17. Further Plantations and Uprooting of National Polity, 1603-1641

His fall meant the final downfall of the National State, and the reduction of all Ireland to a state of servitude. Henceforward the war was not the desperate defence of an ancient constitution, but the uprisings of a nation in bondage. On the discovery of a plot that threatened his life, O'Neill, some time after his defeat, fled the country, and found shelter in the Courts of Europe, that refused to surrender him to the demand of England. All the country over which he had ruled was, by English legal fiction, escheated and made ready for plantation. Throughout Ulster the States were broken up, the people driven out to waste and mountain to live as they might, and the rich and fertile plains granted to corporations and companies in London, and to favourites of the Court, for plantation with strangers. Inasmuch as these strangers had none to till the soil for them, they were permitted to employ a certain number of the "mere Irish," many of whom, loving the land that they had lately possessed, returned as servants and helots to the places where they had lived as freemen and legislators, where they and their fathers before them had built a wise polity based on the sanction of the people - a polity now only to be discovered in the books they bore with them furtively and the contents of which they told their children. Most of them, however, looked down from bleak mountains into valleys where the smoke curled from foreign hearths. This Plantation was but the prelude to others. Down the length of the Shannon, in the midlands, and in Leinster, plantation followed plantation, the old polity was broken and obliterated, and a sovereign people made slaves to a jailer ascendancy.

18. Contrast of the Two Contending Conceptions of Civilisation 1550-1641

It is a matter of much virtue briefly to contrast the supplanted with the supplanting nation at the moment when one was submerged by the physical force of the other. The literature of Elizabethan England, as the literature of a conqueror people, has achieved fame. The literature of the same period in Ireland is virtually unknown. Much of it was deliberately destroyed; what remained has been kept from attention by the ascendant Power. Yet even while the Plantations were proceeding, a poetical controversy broke out in Ireland, in which poets from all parts of the country joined. They wrote with vigour in difficult and exacting metres, that, for craft and delicacy, make all but

the foremost few among contemporary English poets to appear cumbersome, crude and intolerably verbose. The difference was as between lithe skill and heavy experiment. That difference was, however, historic; for one wrote as the heirs of a finished and ancient culture, the other as men who had just learnt the art of numbers. Moreover, finding that their old order was doomed, the traditional historians of Ireland began now in a frenzy of labour to collect the older records and to re-write and to re-cast them. None of these things were printed. At a time when the printing press had opened the gates of knowledge to Europe, it was forbidden to Ireland, and such histories had to be written and copied furtively by hand, and as furtively passed through the country. Many of them have perished, but those that remain display a monumental learning and care that need yield priority to none.

The very Englishmen who were sent to prosecute the Plantation of Ulster bear testimony to the scholarship they found. Those who were engaged in making an English county of the country of the Maguires reported: "The natives of this country are reputed the worst swordsmen of the north, being rather inclined to be scholars or husbandmen than to be kern or men of action, as they term rebels in this kingdom." Irish literature of the time, in prose and poetry, remains a mine unsearched, but even so much as has been revealed shews that it need give precedence to none of its contemporaries in Europe. Its excellence and skilled craftsmanship were the possession of all its writers, sprung as they were from the loins of an ancient tradition, whereas English literature of that time lives only in the skill of a few inspired writers. However, Irish literature comprised a culture spread through a whole people, and was not, as in England, confined to a few learned centres. The same was true of music. As for law, in England this had been degraded into a trick or craft of pleading.

The English conception was well expressed by the poet Spenser. "In the last general war over there in Ireland," he says, "I knew many good freeholders executed by martial law whose lands were thereby saved to their heirs which should otherwise have escheated to her Majesty." He was alluding to the English law of treason, which was developed as a plot for the capture and ensnaring of property. Nearly all the monstrous Plantations of the time were carried out in the guise of law; and to study the practice whereby this was accomplished is to study as perverted and cynical an instrument of what is conceived as the search for equity among men as it is possible to discover in history. Whereas there is not a single instance in Irish history to shew that Irish law was not meant by its jurists as an honest intention towards equity, abstract and disinterested, or was otherwise than so conceived by the people. Without any central executive to enforce obedience, the people kept the "laws made upon hills firm and stable, without breaking them for any favour or reward." Even the most venal English lawyer of the time, the Attorney-General, Sir John Davies, under whose crafty manipulation of law the plantations were prosecuted, was compelled to admit: "There is no nation of people under the sun that doth love equal and indifferent justice better than the Irish." As for the Social System and National Polity, these have been examined. One system was based upon a free and legislating people, in which authority was broad-based upon the people's will: the other was devised and administered for the aggrandisement of an arbitrary king and his court favourites. One civilisation fell before the force of arms of the other; but the higher fell before the lower.

19. Confiscation by Legal Craft, 1628-1641

The greater part of Ireland was now planted. In some cases the undertakers were forbidden to employ Irishmen on the land, or to permit them to reside on the land. This it was found impossible to enforce. In other cases permissions were beset with careful restrictions. Sometimes the poorer parts of the land were set aside for its one-time possessors; but the Commissions appointed to administer such divisions left little remaining once their share had first been gathered. At first the province of Connacht was left untouched, till English law could prove its devious skill. In the

closing decades of the fifteenth century, an English governor had undertaken a composition of that Province, and had granted its people titles in English tenure as part of the process of breaking the old polity. Therefore, the King of England now found himself opposed by titles apparently good in English law. Yet it was soon discovered that these titles, though good in themselves and quite clear as to their intention, had not been properly enrolled, owing to the fault of clerks in the Court of Chancery. Hence they were held invalid. Greatly alarmed, the people of the province offered a very large sum of money to make their titles good, seeking also that they should be relieved from the religious disability placed upon Catholics against practising in the courts. As the sum of money offered was about twelve times the amount likely to accrue from a Plantation, the offer was accepted. The money was paid, and duly received by the King. A few years afterwards the original claim on the ground of defective titles was renewed, despite the hard bargain that had been struck. The formal procedure of the law was, however, maintained. Actions at law at the suit of the Crown were entered against those who held land in Connacht. Jurors who failed to find for the Crown were thrown into prison and fined heavily. The sheriff who had chosen his jurors so unwisely was also thrown into prison, and died there. Then and thus the Crown came into possession, and the Plantation was ready to proceed, not this time by conquest, but by the strict letter of the law.

20. National Bondage, 1608-1641

The whole nation was in bondage. Neither in matters civil nor in matters religious had it a name or a right. Wandering in wild bands among the hills its people looked upon their own lands in the possession of strangers; or they laboured on those lands as hewers of wood and drawers of water to the stranger. The practice of their faith was forbidden in public; and leading dignitaries of the Church were imprisoned, altars profaned and images hewn down. An oath admitting the English King's religious supremacy in Ireland being required before any public office could be accepted, the nation was excluded from such offices and from the practice of the law. Other devices were employed to complete the subjection. For example, the manufacture of woollen cloths was to be discouraged, because, as Lord Strafford, the English Governor in Ireland, wrote, anno 1633: "In reasons of State, so long as they did not indrape their own wools, they must of necessity fetch their clothing from us, and consequently in a sort depend upon us for their livelihood, and thereby become so dependent upon this Crown, as they could not depart from us without nakedness to themselves and children." "I can now say," wrote the same Governor, "that the King is as absolute here as any prince in the world can be."

Oppressed and enraged the nation only waited for a day of retribution. They established communication with those of their race who had fled the country, and had won distinction in the armies of France and Spain. Preparations were made for a national rising. Their plans were betrayed so far as the City of Dublin was concerned; yet in the Autumn of 1641 and during the winter following every part of the country rose. Wherever there had been plantations there the shock was first felt. The hewers of wood and drawers of water joined with those who swept down from the hills, and the Planters were driven headlong. There were fierce and bitter reprisals, which the contemporary Broadsheets in London represented as great massacres. It is surprising that the reprisals were not more extensive than they were. In Ulster, in Connacht, and in parts of Munster the Plantations were undone during the course of the winter, and the war between the nations was resumed.

21. Renewal of War, 1641-1650

That war continued for eight years, and once again the land was trodden under foot by soldiery and its harvests burned. It was marked, however, by a certain fatal confusion of purpose that was

the heir of earlier confiscations. The national forces were once again led by an O'Neill. He came with a distinguished European record behind him, and intended, as those who rallied to him intended, the final restoration of National Sovereignty. In the later stages of the struggle he collaborated with the Papal Legate, Cardinal Rinnucinni, for the achievement of this national purpose. But the rising partly sprang from immediate and grievous forms of oppression, chief of which was the prohibition of Catholic Faith. This prohibition mainly affected those who had benefited by the earlier spoliation of land, and these men, therefore, joined the heirs of the national tradition. They made the stipulation that their possession of land should not be opened to question, and thus the first confusion was created, for the ranks under O'Neill desired the restoration of the National Polity together with the establishment of National Sovereignty. The real confusion, however, lay deeper.

For these lords, in accordance with their separate tradition, owed and gave allegiance to the English King, and that King was held in civil war by an insurrection in England. They therefore negotiated with him, and he negotiated with them, giving them liberal promises that, as his letters testify, he never intended to fulfil, for his sole desire was to procure forces to help him in his war by the speediest means. While such negotiations continued, by the conditions of the Confederation that had been made, the war was interrupted, if not wholly laid aside. Had their assistance been refused, or only accepted under the conditions of a distinct national allegiance, the nation's purpose would have shone clearly from the outset and the war could have continued vigorously while England was torn by insurrection. As it befell, though O'Neill won several brilliant victories in the field and proved as just and wise a Statesman as he was feared as a General, his strength was continually baffled. It was baffled by the conditions of an unnatural and impossible Confederation, and it was also baffled by deliberate intention, for the lords of the Pale feared their religious disabilities less than the meaning of the war waged under his direction.

When finally the Confederation broke, and the national war under O'Neill stood clear of all confusions, the fortunate hour had passed. The civil war in England had ended with the triumph of the insurrectionaries and the execution of the King, and England was free to give undivided attention to Ireland. Then Ireland proved that if English kings had wielded whips an English democracy was to lash with scorpions. For Cromwell came with a holy psalm upon his lips, and a sword of slaughter and ruin in his hand. He and O'Neill never met, for at this critical hour O'Neill died and left his people as "sheep without a shepherd when the snow shuts out the sky"; and Cromwell met with no organised resistance. He besieged Drogheda, and put its inhabitants to the sword in an infuriated massacre. He did the same at Wexford. He dispensed with the mere formalities of war, and shot his opponents in the field when he had overcome them in battle. Some years earlier the Lords Justices representing the forces he commanded had declared: "No peace could be safe or lasting till the sword have abated these rebels in number and power"; and Cromwell now proceeded to put this gentle maxim into practice. Women and children were slain deliberately and indiscriminately as in the ordinary course of war. "Nits will be lice," he said, with his usual delicacy of phrase; and so his warriors snatched babes from their mothers' breasts, and flung them into the air, impaling them on their pikes before their mothers' eyes. And having decimated the nation by the sword, he prepared to make a speedy end of it by more elaborate organisation.

22. "Hell or Connacht," 1653-1654

The land of three of the four provinces was prepared for plantations among Cromwell's soldiers, and the whole nation was to be removed to the fourth. The famous watchword was: "To Hell or Connacht." To ease the burden of those who would be compelled to travel the road, Bristol traders were given license to choose men and women for transshipment as slaves to the West Indies. All priests who had not been killed at sight during the war were to leave the country by a given date.

Over 600,000 men, women, and children had perished during the war. About 850,000 remained; and for these, or so many of them as were not transhipped as slaves or hanged, the decree went forth that if they were found east of the Shannon beyond a certain date they were also to be killed. The date given was May the first, 1654; and so through the winter months the roads of Ireland were lined with the families of a stricken people, hunted from the places they knew, going they knew not whither. There were none to guard or house them on their way, and none to house them where they went. Ironically enough, some of those who took the road were the descendants of earlier Planters, and were now to be kneaded into the Irish nation. There was peace in the land, but it was the peace of a vast desolation. The howl of the wolf could be heard from the City of Dublin. And then the land of the three Provinces was divided out as spoils among the soldiers of Cromwell's armies.

23. The Return of the Nation to its Old Lands, 1660-1689

When, after the death of Cromwell, the Stuart dynasty was restored in England, the dispossessed nation confidently expected the restoration of its lands. The new Planters had executed the new King's father, and could scarcely, it was thought, expect his care. At first, indeed, some such scheme of restoration was contemplated, but at the thought the whole English nation was stirred to its depths. Fury and indignation rent the air, and quenched the acclamation with which the royal line had been welcomed back among its people. Therefore, the proposal was diluted till it meant nothing at all. The King stilled the tumult by asserting that he was for "an English interest to be established in Ireland."

The Cromwellian Planters were to retain what they had received. Many of the English who had accompanied the King into exile were also provided with land. And some of the Catholic lords, both those who did and those who did not represent old Irish families, received back the lands, or a part of the lands, they had once held; but this was only done in cases where it was clear that such lords were pledged to stand for the English interest and foreswore their National roots. However the shuffle went, the Irish nation of freemen was excluded. Nevertheless, during this time a remarkable change proceeded, unseen and unrecorded, and that change was to re-create the future. Back from Connacht to the lands they had known and loved, in which their roots were set, and which they owned by ancient possession, the people of the nation steadily and persistently drifted. How it was accomplished, none can tell, since there are no national records of the time: only that it was accomplished by an indomitable resolution and by a love that determined to lay fast hold on the very places where their fathers had aforesaid built a free and desirable polity. Whatever the future was to bring, the people were determined they would be in their rightful places to receive it. That determination, and the instinct and love that prompted that determination, are clear; for within two decades from this time their names are found on the very lands on which their forefathers of that name had built their ancient Stateships, despite the efficiency of Cromwell's clearance.

It was almost as possible to locate a man's district by his name in the closing decades of the seventeenth century as it would have been in the fifteenth century. Most of those to whom land had now been granted were not, as before, Planters who themselves farmed the lands they held, but large landowners who lived in England and looked for a rent-paying tenantry. Whereas the men who now returned were willing to pay rents that meant their destitution of everything except the bare right to live on the lands they knew. They, therefore, became a rent-paying tenantry. Only in one part of the country were they unable to win this place. In Ulster the old plantations had been re-established, and the Planters still, for the most part, farmed their own holdings. Therefore, in Ulster the returning nation became tillers of the soil for them, or broke up the hard mountain lands for themselves. Hence in after-years, when the nation rose up as tenants to win back by war

the land that it once had owned, Ulster was the only place where a patchwork remained to vary the unbroken re-possession of an ancient and Sovereign Nation.

24. Renewed War 1689-1691

Yet, before these things could be reached, further tribulations were in store. The nadir of oppression had not yet been discovered. The owners of Irish land being now Englishmen, or wealthy Irishmen suborned by that ownership, the nation at large, as their servants and tenants at will, were tied to the English State chariot, and any struggles that took place within that chariot for possessions of its reigns had an unhappy effect on those who were harnessed in its train. So when the English deposed their King in 1688, and called in a Dutch prince to take his place, Ireland was once again thrown into the midst of warfare. England escaped the war, because the deposed King fled that country, and Ireland became its cockpit because the King settled himself within its shores. A curious spectacle was therefore to be seen. Irishmen had in times past been called "rebels" because they admitted no allegiance to a foreign monarch. Now they were called "rebels" because they did for the first time espouse that allegiance.

For the King was a Catholic; he had, while King in England, appointed representatives in Ireland who annulled the oppression of the Catholic faith, thus winning an answering gratitude; and now that he was King only in Ireland, acting under the counsel of these same representatives, he set in motion the forms of the accepted English constitution. He called a parliament that remains the only representative assembly that every day in Ireland since the obliteration of the elder National State. To that parliament came men of Irish names, names that connoted in the districts from which they came the old Stateships. Such an assembly had never met before; nor has it ever met since. It is not, therefore, remarkable to find it setting itself to annulling some of the grievous injustices of the past, and to the protection of National welfare. An act was passed asserting the absolute legislative independence of the nation; another to cancel the recent settlements of land, and to recreate as nearly as possible the state as it had existed in 1641; another to subsidize a National marine and to encourage mariners; another to declare freedom of faith for all sections, each section to collect church tithes from its own people; and sundry others, to the total number of thirty-fives, that intended to found stability on prosperity, equity and independence. The proceedings of this assembly, however, proceeded no further than the Statute Book, and were afterwards even expunged from that insecure retreat, for war once again swept over the land.

25. The Penal Code, 1691-1795

The Treaty of Limerick was a compact solemnly ratified between victor and vanquished, on the faith of which an admittedly brave and chivalrous foe marched out from a beleaguered city with all the honours of war. Within a few years that Treaty was a worthless scrap of paper, with all its articles deliberately violated. The first article of that Treaty stipulated that Catholics in Ireland "should ever enjoy such privileges, in the exercise of their religion, as they did enjoy in the reign of Charles the Second," and the Crown pledged its word to endeavour to procure them "such further security in that particular as may preserve them from any further disturbance on account of their religion." The ninth article specially stipulated that no oath was to be administered to a Catholic other than the Oath of Allegiance. That is to say, the Oath of Supremacy was especially debarred. Other articles guaranteed that Catholic landowners in arms at the time of the making of the Treaty were not to be molested in their possession. It is but just to say that the Dutch King of England desired to preserve his pledged word of honour; but he reckoned without his new subjects.

For now the Irish nation was finally reduced to bondage; and what may be literally described as a yell of triumph went up from the victor nation. Matters were now so to be ordered that the Irish nation should never again lift its head, and, to effect this, the famous Penal Code was planned. As an instrument of subjection it remains without a rival in history. For cunning and malignancy it cannot be matched in the records of the perverted wit of man. The spirit that inspired it was expressed by the Lord Chancellor from the Bench: "The law," he said, "does not suppose any such person to exist as an Irish Catholic." Catholic Bishops and members of religious orders were banished, under pain of death. Secular priests were forbidden to exercise their office, under pain of deportation, unless they took certain oaths which their discipline forbade. Every Catholic was ordered, under pain of fines, to inform against his priest; and the price for such informations was £20 for an unregistered priest and £50 for a bishop. Catholics were not permitted to act as teachers, under pain of banishment, or of death if they returned from banishment.

On the other hand, Protestant free schools were established in each parish. Catholics were excluded from all public offices, and from all professions but that of medicine. They were excluded from the franchise as a matter of course. They were not permitted to hold property in land, or to take land on any lease exceeding thirty years. They were forbidden to intermarry with Protestants, and any priest celebrating such a marriage, even though he did so inadvertently, was to suffer the death penalty. Catholics were refused primogeniture - all property being equally divided among their children - the intention being to dissipate any fortune that Catholics might amass to the danger of the Protestant ascendancy. Catholics were forbidden arms; and if a Catholic were possessed of a horse that exceeded the worth of five pounds, a Protestant might take it from him at that price. If a son of Catholic parents foreswore his faith, all his parents' property became vested in him, and those parents could only claim a life estate. However or wherever a Catholic might turn he was gripped in a vice. He was held in what Edmund Burke described as "a complete system full of coherence and consistency, well digested in all its parts a machine of wise and elaborate contrivance; and as well fitted for the oppression, impoverishment and degradation of a people, and the debasement in them of human nature itself, as ever proceeded from the perverted ingenuity of man." Yet though this code bore all the outward semblance of religious fanaticism, its intention was far otherwise. At the beginning of the period during which it operated, in 1685, Lord Clarendon, the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, wrote: "The contest here is not about religion, but between English and Irish, and that is the truth." At the conclusion of that period, in 1824, Lord Redesdale, sometime Lord Chancellor, wrote: "If a revolution were to happen in Ireland, it would, in the end, be an Irish revolution, and no Catholic of English blood would fare better than a Protestant of English blood."

26. State of the Nation, 18th Century

The war of polity against polity seemed concluded with the Plantations. The war of nation against nation seemed concluded with the Penal Code. The Statutes of Kilkenny had outlawed the Irish language and every sign that there was such a thing as an individual and distinctive Irish nation. The Plantations and Confiscations had stripped that nation from the land on which, in free possession, it had built its National Polity; and so had broken that polity. The Penal Code outlawed the people of that nation from any right to its faith, or from any civil existence on the earth. It might well seem that the long war between nation and nation had now finally ended. Any thought of a nation so bound and so reduced as being sovereign and free would, without doubt, have seemed to the jailer ascendancy as a foolish jest.

Throughout the eighteenth century the state of that nation was inconceivably wretched. It was rack-rented mercilessly, without let or hindrance or prospect of remedy. An alien and hostile church took tithes of all its produce. It had furtively to maintain the clergy of its own faith. The commercial and industrial restrictions imposed on Ireland by England, while intended to harass

the ascendancy into whose hands the trade of the country had passed, re-acted on the suppressed nation. Its people lived in a state of unimaginable squalor and misery.

One of the fiercest and bitterest haters of the Irish race at that time, Archbishop King, thus described their estate: "The misery of the people here is very great, the beggars innumerable and increasing every day by the restraint on their industry by your English laws and the tyranny of landlords one-half of the people of Ireland eat neither bread nor flesh for one half of the year, nor wear shoes or stockings; your hogs in England and Essex calves lie and live better than they." Those that were housed at all, and were not driven forth to beggary, lived in mud hovels. If they built anything more substantial, it was accepted as a sign of prosperity that at once caused their rent to be doubled. For food they bled the cattle, and boiled the blood with sorrel gathered in the fields; for their crops went to the landlord and the tithe-gatherer, aliens and enemies both of them. "The poor are sunk," wrote Sheridan, "to the lowest degrees of misery and poverty - their houses dunghills, their victuals the blood of their cattle, or the herbs of the field." In bitter irony Swift wrote: *A Modest Proposal for Preventing the Children of Poor People from being a Burthen to Their Parents or Country, and for Making them Beneficial to the Publick*. This proposal was that all children should be taken at a year old, a certain percentage kept for breeding purposes, and the rest "offered in sale to the persons of quality and fortune throughout the kingdom, always advising the mother to let them suck plentifully in the last month so as to render them plump and fat for a good table. a child will make two dishes at an entertainment for friends, and when the family dines alone the fore or hind quarters will make a reasonable dish; and, seasoned with a little pepper or salt, will be very good boiled on the fourth day, especially in winter." "I grant," he adds, "this food will be somewhat dear, and therefore very proper for landlords, who, as they have devoured most of the parents, seem to have the best title to the children."

Yet even at those depths, incredible as it may seem, the nation regarded its past with clear and intelligent eyes, treasured its books, and found scholars to teach their children furtively on the hills and along the hedgerows. At such schools Latin was taught as a spoken tongue, and its classics read in broken fragments of texts. The people told one another of the splendour of their past as a nation, and prophecies ran current that that splendour would yet be revived. Out of their miseries and memories a literature was created even during these terrible years. The Poet and the Scholar still held their honoured places in the nation, and were maintained by its people, even though that people lived in stricken hovels and ate the blood of cattle and sorrel boiled together. And where, in remote ends of Connacht, the people lived unmolested in a wild country, they built again the nearest approximation they could to their old polity. Suppressed the nation might be, and reduced to a squalor and misery hardly to be equalled, but it was not defeated. The thought of a nation fallen to such a depth, though fallen from such a height, as a nation sovereign and free, might have seemed only a theme for mockery to its jailers, but it was no strange thought to the nation itself.

27. The Rise of the Garrison, 1698-1779

Yet during these years of misery and savage repression a remarkable event came to pass in the country. For the jailer ascendancy arose and, out of their political and economic necessities, voiced the same demand for National Independence as had the ancient Irish nation over whom they had been placed in guard. They were driven to this breach of their tradition by the inevitable logic of circumstances. The oppression of Ireland by England was not only national; it was also and inevitably political and economic. The ancient Irish nation might be submerged, and its distinctive culture made a theme for furtive reminder by its people, yet the geographical, political and economic necessities of the country inevitably made the English settlers of one century the Irish patriots of the next; and therefore in each century, since the battle of Kinsale, England was compelled to strike down the class she had previously placed in the country as a jailer ascendancy. Not only, however, was the new ascendancy compelled by the hard necessity of their case to voice

the same demand as the nation over whom they were in guard, but they were compelled to voice that same demand in precisely the same way, by the force and threat of arms.

At first persuasion and argument were attempted. In 1698 William Molyneux wrote a brochure in which he stated, and proved by argument and by precedent, that the parliaments of the Pale had always been independent parliaments, and that the English parliament held no jurisdiction in Ireland. He had fled the country on the arrival of James, returning with the Prince of Orange; and he neither loved nor for a moment considered the Irish nation; yet his book was ordered in the English parliament to be burnt by the public hangman. The Irish parliament was the pawn of the English parliament. Most of its seats were in the gift of landlords who lived in England; and, though it was called a Parliament by courtesy, it was but a meeting of Government nominees. Underlings of those landlords were given sinecure positions at good salaries, and lived in England. Continental monarchs, Court favourites and the various kings' mistresses were provided with considerable pensions out of the Irish exchequer to avoid the criticism that would have been aroused had the English exchequer been taxed to provide for them.

Irish trade and industry were harassed, harnessed and brought to nought in all their departments in the interest and at the demand of English traders. Navigation laws were so devised that Irish trade was broken. "The conveniency of ports," wrote Swift, who, in his turn, took up the Irish cause, "which Nature has bestowed so liberally upon this kingdom, is of no more use to us than a beautiful prospect to a man shut up in a dungeon." In whatever direction an attempt was made to escape by the creation of new industries, the outlet was at once stopped and the industry broken. Woollen goods, cotton goods, glass manufacture, the brewing industry, the sugar-refining industry and the fish-curing industry were each in turn broken, though Ireland was permitted to send manufactured iron to England to help the growing manufacture there of the finished product. Ireland, however, conducted a fair provision trade with the new English colonies, and it was as well that she did, for there were few in Ireland who could afford the purchase of provisions. The only industry that was not broken was the manufacture of certain kinds of linen cloth, where no English rivalry was encountered. This, however, was mainly confined to Ulster, and on it Ulster built her prosperity while the rest of Ireland starved, and was reduced to futility.

28. Ireland's Demand for Independence, 1779-1783

Therefore the Ascendancy arose to demand the economic and legislative independence of Ireland.

At first their demand took the form of argument; and some of their arguments were actually drawn from the sovereign independence of the nation whom they held in submergence; but those arguments were either burnt by the public hangman by the order of England, or simply neglected. With Swift's withering satire and bitter invective, argument came as near to the force of blows as words may ever do; but it proved as unavailing as before. Then a new form of persuasion arrested attention. The English colonists in America rose and declared their Independence, and it appeared that what colonists in one part of the world could do was also possible for colonists in other parts of the world. Moreover, the English Government had withdrawn most of its troops from Ireland for the American wars, and in fear of a French invasion a large volunteer force had been enrolled. This force now held the attention. Its officers held meetings and conventions to demand Ireland's entire freedom of trade. They paraded their cannon outside the parliament house with menacing legends slung about them; though they were comprised almost wholly of Protestants of the Ascendancy, and were commanded by Lord Charlemont, a considerable landlord.

So menaced, the Government gave way, and freedom of trade was granted. Yet, though the economic bond was broken, the political bond remained. That is to say, the freedom that had been won could at any moment be annulled; and indeed within a few months the attempt was made to annul the meaning of the victory. Therefore the agitation was continued, and was continued by

the same threat of violence. Within parliament Grattan led the demand with noble eloquence, and he was supported by Flood. They were both supported by Charlemont and the Volunteers. Grattan framed a resolution in which he declared: "that the kingdom of Ireland was a distinct kingdom, with a Parliament of her own, the sole legislature thereof. That there is no body of men competent to make laws to bind this nation except the King, Lords and Commons of Ireland, nor any other Parliament which hath any authority or power of any sort whatsoever in this country, save only the Parliament of Ireland." That resolution was carried; and the Viceroy wrote to London saying that if there were any delay in putting it into effect, "there would be an end of all government." England was weak, and could not resist, and so in 1783 the English Parliament passed an Act whereby it renounced all authority in Ireland "in matters of legislature and judicature." The victory was won. Hussey Burgh had declared in the Parliament in Dublin: "Talk not to me of peace; Ireland is not at peace. It is smothered war. England has sown her laws as dragon's teeth, and they have sprung up armed men." The result of those armed men was that those for whom he spoke were now politically and economically free.

29. The Character of Grattan's Parliament, and its Effect on the Nation, 1783-1800

Grattan's Parliament, as it has deservedly been called, was now, for a short term of years, absolute in Ireland. It was, indeed, virtually a Sovereign Parliament, under a Dual Monarchy. Yet, it is necessary to examine that Parliament. Not a member of the ancient Irish nation was present in it, or represented in it. Grattan declared: "I am now to address a free people. . . . Ireland is now a nation. In that new character I hail her, and bowing to her august presence I say, *Esto perpetua* ." But the words he spoke were untrue. He himself had no thought of permitting within the walls of the house wherein he spoke a single member of the Irish nation." Flood, his colleague in the battle that was won, stood avowedly for the jailer ascendancy. The Earl of Charlemont, who had provided the sinews without which that war would have ended with indignant words, and the Duke of Leinster, who commanded the Volunteers outside the Parliament House, would have greeted with horror the civil or religious liberty of the submerged nation.

The parliament which Grattan eulogised was filled with placemen who represented nothing; it made claims for a small and decreasing ascendancy that did not, for the most part, even reside in Ireland; and the ancient Irish nation, who now formed the overwhelming majority of the population, was left outside its doors. Yet it cannot be thought that such vivid happenings would be without their effect. An object-lesson so apposite could not but stir a nation lying in a bondage beside which the captivity of their jailers was as a silken robe to a chain of iron. It could not but remind them of the memories of their national greatness of which they had spoken in their misery. They were now, not only the historic nation, but the overwhelming part of the population of Ireland. They had multiplied greatly; whereas those to whom their lands had been granted had removed to England, where they spent the hard profits won from the soil of Ireland. Also, they had never relinquished their hope of national freedom. For fear of evil consequences, Grattan disbanded the Irish Volunteers, when they had taken him as far as he wished to go; but the lessons of that organisation were not forgotten, and many of its leading spirits were ready to continue the work it had begun. The nation was ready to hear. It only awaited a leader who would give the one signal it would heed: the signal for a rising to win entire freedom for the whole nation.

30. The Rising of 1798

That leader arose in Wolfe Tone, a Protestant. He wrote a searching analysis of the Parliament in Dublin, shewing by its constituents that it represented nothing. As for the Revolution of 1782, "it was," said he, "a Revolution which, while at one stroke it doubled the value of every borough-monger in the kingdom, left three-fourths of our countrymen slaves as it found them." His

pamphlet sold widely. He established the Society of United Irishmen, which pronounced for the equal representation of all the people of Ireland, and recognised none of the religious distinctions by which the people had been divided. Large public meetings were organised, which found a ready ear; but in 1794 the Government arrested some of the leaders and sought to suppress the organisation. It became, therefore, a secret society, and enrolled members by a close and elaborate organisation covering the whole country. Its aim was now to assert the absolute and sovereign independence of the nation; and in that it voiced the national desire.

When Wolfe Tone was compelled to fly the country he went to America, thence to France, to solicit aid in furtherance of that aim. In the meantime the work in the country was continued by other leaders, foremost among whom was Lord Edward FitzGerald. Wolfe Tone succeeded in winning the French Government to his support, and twice French fleets set sail for Ireland with a considerable force, but were hindered by unfavourable weather from landing their armies. That latter of these fruitless expeditions was in 1798. In the meantime the Directory of the United Irishmen had been maturing its plans. In 1797 the whole country had been placed under Martial Law, and troops were moved into the country; nevertheless they made arrangements for a national rising for the following year.

The war of nation against nation was to be resumed, and resumed it was, in the first of a new series of risings that were to keep alive the soul of a sovereign nation; but all plans miscarried. French aid had failed, and by the help of spies the Government had sent into the Society, its leaders were arrested as they were about to meet to concert a general plan for the rising. Therefore, the country was left to rise as it might or would, without plan or central control. The Province of Leinster was the first to rise, and there the descendants of previous Planters rose shoulder by shoulder with the men of the ancient nation. Ulster was the next to rise; but there Martial Law had been executed with such severity that the rising was but partial. A portion of the second adventure of the French fleet landed in Connacht, and the French troops were joined by an untrained peasantry in a short and brilliant campaign. In Leinster the rising assumed serious proportions, and was suppressed with the brutality that England never failed to exercise in Ireland. General Abercrombie, commanding the troops in Ireland, reported: "Every crime, every cruelty, that could be committed by Cossacks or Calmucks have been transacted here." The rising failed; but it reopened the war between nation and nation, and it bequeathed a new tradition that was not to be suffered to perish.

31. The Act of Union, 1800

Having crushed the rising, England next proceeded to annul the Parliament. Already plans had been in operation for this to be accomplished under the specious title of a Union of Legislatures. Three years before the ground had been prepared by the deliberate incitement, carefully yet licentiously directed, of religious rancour. In May, 1797, the Protestants of County Antrim met in assembly, and through their Sheriff complained: "Your ministers have laboured with the most remorseless persistence to revive those senseless and barbarous religious antipathies, so fatal to morals and to peace. They have abrogated the people's rights, filled the land with spies and informers, and let loose upon your subjects all the horrors of licentious power and military force." The Protestants of Co. Armagh complained in like sort; but the merry work had proceeded prosperously. Now the scene shifted to the House of Parliament itself. The rights of a resident ascendancy were to be cancelled almost as completely as the right of the nation it guarded; and the parliament in which those rights were expressed was to be blotted out of being. The constituency of that parliament was such that the Government could rely on its doing whatever it was bidden, even to the cancelling of its own existence. Yet to make assurance doubly sure, and to recompense members for any patronage they might otherwise secure, the Government was prepared to distribute largesse freely. Positions and offices, and doles of money, were given freely

to members. The barter of honour had always with this parliament been a profitable trade, but it now became lucrative beyond all dreams. Those who had seats in their gift, however, were the most fortunate, receiving £15,000 for each borough in some cases. Peerages were to be won with moderate ease. Bloods were ennobled by no more than a vote.

Apart from titles and offices, up to a million and a half pounds sterling was expended, in moneys that were far more valuable than they now are. And thus the parliament cancelled itself, at the instruction of English ministers. Those who perpetrated this, however, were the descendants of Plantations and Confiscations. None of the Irish nation was committed in the deed. Grattan had retired from the Parliament when the nation arose with arms. He had found he could not support the Irish nation; but, on the other hand, he could not support the Government. Now he returned, and fought with noble eloquence in a foredoomed battle. He could but utter his protest against an utterly unscrupulous and nefarious transaction inevitable the moment he agreed to the disbandment of the Volunteers. In the words of a modern English Statesman, the Marquis of Salisbury, England was entitled to take back in her day of strength what she had, perforce, granted in her hour of weakness. And she did so.

32. Meaning of the Act of Union and its Effect, 1800

At the time the loss seemed considerable. Yet the Irish nation had never regarded that parliament with interest or concern. All that had happened was that once again England struck down those whom she had placed in the position of jailers of the Irish nation. The keepers of the gate being now stricken down, in the year 1800, the nation came through that gate into the new century to occupy that century in reclaiming, one after another, its lost rights, and in stating in each generation its demand for Sovereign Independence by the offer of blood. Moreover, that reclamation was to proceed in a significant order. In the past the nation had been submerged thus: first, its Sovereign Independence had been overthrown; secondly, its language, culture, and customs had been outlawed by the Statutes of Kilkenny and their subsequent enforcement over the whole country; thirdly, by the seizure of its land, and the disruption of its polity; and fourthly, by the penalising of its faith and the denial of civil rights. In the nineteenth century the nation, in marching forward, inevitably retraced its steps. Its progress took it back along the road it had come. The inverse process now operated, and the nation won back its losses in the following order: first, it won back its freedom of faith and its civil liberty; secondly, it won back its land; thirdly, it reclaimed its language, culture and distinctive mind by an organised effort; and finally it re-asserted its Sovereign Independence.

33. Robert Emmet, 1803

Hardly had the century opened when, in 1803, the first rising occurred. It was organised and inspired by Robert Emmet, whose elder brother had been one of the leaders of the United Irishmen. He had been in France on behalf of its executive; and, failing to procure the help he asked, he determined to undertake the rising unaided. He was supported by no organisation in the country; therefore his plans were confined to an attack on Dublin Castle. Those plans were skilfully laid, and had been matured with great secrecy. By this means a signal was to be given to the country. But the plans miscarried, and only a hundred men went out with Emmet. They were, of course, overthrown, and their leaders executed. As it befell, the rising was small in its immediate consequences; but its after-effect was considerable. Its very failure bequeathed its tradition; and its aims, as expressed in Emmet's last words, that his epitaph should not be written till "my country takes her place among the nations of the earth," have hallowed that tradition with a peculiar symbol. The rising was extinguished in a night; but its spirit has made more history than many momentous decisions taken by grave assemblies. At this moment the actual and

immediate influence of Emmet, by reason of his dying words, is as potent as the influence of living men.

34. The Forces Behind Daniel O'Connell, 1823-1829

Yet, despite the immediate failure of Emmet's attempt, the country was in a state of deep unrest.

That unrest only awaited the expression and organisation that could alone be given to it by effectual leadership.

A leader now arose who raised the cry of Catholic Emancipation. During the last years of the Dublin Parliament the franchise had been granted to Catholics on the same basis as to Protestants, but it had effected nothing. It had, in the first place, no opportunity of exercise before that Parliament was annulled. Moreover, the constituency of the Parliament was mainly of borough seats that lay in the gift of single landowners. Lastly, inasmuch as Catholics were unable themselves to sit in Parliament, they could but have been represented by men who, under the circumstances, signified nothing to them.

Neither then, nor in the elections for the London Parliament early in the new century, did they evince the least interest in the matter. Parliaments after the English model were foreign to their instincts of a National Polity. Their thoughts were towards other things; and when Daniel O'Connell arose, with the voice and instinct of leadership, they rallied to him. Through that whole period it is clear that leader and people meant different things. He created an organisation through the country that gave the people a sense of power. He sought to focus their immediate demand upon religious and civil freedom. Supported by his organisation, the Catholic Association, he stood as candidate for a parliamentary election; and the electors, trusting his leadership, came now to record their votes for him. To an open ballot, that meant almost certain eviction, they came, despite the threats of their landlords. And they returned their candidate, so pronouncing an open challenge.

Once again the difference between leader and people was manifest. His challenge was for an immediate end, which he had defined to himself. That end, however, conveyed little to the nation. For the first time most of them had exercised this right in a new polity, and to send their leader to an assembly in a foreign capital signified little to them. Therefore, their challenge was menacing and symbolic; and the Viceroy wrote to London saying he could not answer for the consequences if Catholic Emancipation were longer delayed. Reluctantly then, and perforce, in 1829, the measure was granted, and Catholics were admitted to the English Parliament and all but the highest positions. The first step on the road had been won. It had been won, not by assent to the forms of the English constitution. That to the nation had been but the symbol of a revolt that, reacting from the uplifting of a symbol, had aroused the whole people, who looked to the new leader for guidance. As the Duke of Wellington asserted in giving his reluctant consent to religious and civil emancipation, he was compelled to do so by the prospect of facing "civil war in Ireland" as an alternative. For, said he, "that agitation really means something short of rebellion; that and no other is the exact meaning of the word. It is to place the country in that state in which its Government is utterly impracticable, except by means of overawing military force." In a word, English ministers for the time baffled the people's larger expectation by granting their leader's immediate demand.

35. The Failure of Daniel O'Connell, 1829-1843

O'Connell passed to the Parliament in London, and passed out of the nation's cognisance. The leader, in short, had failed the nation. He there opened a campaign for the Repeal of the Union; but there is no sign that this evoked any national interest. The nation was thinking of other things. By risings through the country the people compelled the Government to disguise the payment of

church-tithes by commuting them into a rent-charge; but they took their course as though they had no leader. Therefore, O'Connell returned to undertake a campaign in the country. Again the difference between leader and people was manifest. He desired the revival of Grattan's Parliament; they thought only of National Freedom.

In 1843 he convened vast meetings through the country, to which people came who could not possibly hope to hear the sound of his voice. Men travelled a week to the meetings. Their volume swelled with their progress. The people came, not to hear speeches, but to hear the one word they awaited, and for which they had put aside the war they had opened against their landlords. O'Connell even evoked memories which he did not mean, but which the nation literally interpreted. He convened a great meeting at Tara, the seat of the Nation's Monarchy in its day of Sovereignty. The people sprang to the symbol; the sickle was cast aside; the people slept hungry on historic ground; and a concourse assembled not a thousandth part of which could hope to hear their leader speak. They came as to an ancient hosting. They meant much more than the words of their leader; but he meant much less than the words he spake. Therefore, when the Government proclaimed his next meeting, at the historic site of the battle of Clontarf, and caused cannon to be trained upon it, he cancelled the meeting, though the people were willing to rally to his word, and had long awaited the day. From that moment his power was broken. He shrank from bloodshed; but there was a horror awaiting the nation that bloodshed at Clontarf could have prevented, and beside which a massacre would have appeared a trivial thing.

36. Starvation, 1845-1851

In 1845, what has been called a Famine broke out in the land. It has been wrongly so described.

The exports of corn during that year, and the years before, and the years thereafter, were considerable. There was food enough grown on Irish soil to sustain the Irish nation. But that nation had not known the taste of corn since the extinction of its polity. The food grown on Irish soil went for the payment of rents to the Ascendancy then planted in the country, and those rents were spent in England, where that Ascendancy had now removed. Moreover, since the beginning of the century, although after the European war the condition of agriculture had become infinitely worse, rents had increased by three and four, and in some cases five, hundred per cent. through persisting rack-renting. All holdings were small, though vast tracts of the best land were held by landlords as grazing farms, supporting cattle for export instead of maintaining the nation as it once had done. On an average it took a man 250 days of the year to clear his rent. In the best of years this meant that the people could only live on such of their potatoes as were unmarketable so long as they lasted, with, in the better parts of the country, occasional supplies of milk. When the potatoes were finished, there remained the herbs of the field and blood let from the living cattle. In bad years the people starved in their miserable cabins, too proud to beg. There was no employment to which they could turn, for since the Union every industry in the country had been killed, and English traders were without the rivals whom they had once so hated and feared.

Starvation was, as English Commissions have proved, an habitual thing in the country. But now it reached colossal proportions. A bed or a blanket had been an inconceivable luxury; now a morsel of food was to become an equal luxury. For a blight came on the potato crop, and the people lay in their wretched cabins, or along the roads, and died in their thousands. Some dug up and ate the diseased potatoes; and pestilence stalked abroad. Others ate the diseased corpses of asses and horses. Yet all the time food passed steadily out of the country, to pay for the luxuries of those whom Conquest and Confiscation had placed as jailers over a starving nation. The scenes that Spenser described at the beginning of the period when one nation was placed on the neck of another, became a little thing by contrast with the scenes enacted in the day when that submergence achieved its finest and most characteristic flower. With famine and pestilence

stalking through the land, the people fled in terror. They fled to America, and England, realising the opportunity to be rid of the Irish nation, organised and encouraged their passage. Herded into the holds of ships, they died there; but they began an emigration that became a habit and drained the nation of its best. Relief works were undertaken, but these were so prosecuted that they could never be of any use to the nation. That was deliberately so ordered by the English Government. During 1846 not less than 300,000 persons died from hunger or pestilence, to say nothing of those who left the country. The year after, this increased to 500,000.

During Cromwell's wars over 600,000 people had perished, mainly by the sword. Between 1846 and 1851, under the more refined process of the nineteenth century, a million and a half perished from starvation and its resulting pestilence, while another half million fled the stricken country. Subscriptions were raised all over the world to relieve a state of affairs directly attributable to the obliteration of one polity by another and the submergence of one nation by another. A few years thereafter England rocked with fierce denunciations of the monstrous inhumanity of the Sultan of Turkey; but she forgot that that potentate had sent a considerable sum to relieve the result of her conquest in Ireland, whereas she herself, in granting outdoor relief, disentitled all persons in possession of more than a rood of land from its receipt while she was content to grant moneys in aid of emigration.

37. Young Ireland, 1843-1848

While the Starvation was at its height, *The Times*, of London, had exclaimed: "The Celts are gone - gone with a vengeance. The Lord be praised." And again: "Now, for the first time these six hundred years, England has Ireland at her mercy, and can deal with her as she pleases." The triumph it expressed was premature. Astonishing though it may seem, these starvation years were years of great revival and awakening. Even while dying men and women wandered the roads, while corpses lay unburied in the mud cabins, while the holds of outgoing craft rotted with the death and pestilence of emigrants flying from their land, a literature was being created, though in a foreign tongue, and the literature and history of the past were being explored. A band of Intellectuals had been formed in Dublin who became known as the Young Irelanders.

Their weekly journal, *The Nation*, had a wide circulation through Ireland; and by their writings they gave the nation once again a public intellectual being. Their desire was, not only to re-create an intellectual being, but by means of it to give the dignity which would unite all citizens in the desire for freedom, and secure for the nation a character and stature before the world. At the same time, a body of scholars edited and published the works of the older historians and writers that had lain in the dust for years. Englishmen mocked at the older greatness that was now revealed. They sought to wither by laughter the beauty and wisdom that came to light, but the scholars patiently continued their work. They did so in no political spirit; but as the nation became more and more deeply stirred it struck its roots more deeply into the past; it regarded that past with clearer eyes, scholarship confirming its awakening intuitions; and it recovered and consolidated that past with every step forward into the future.

38. Risings the Heir to Risings, 1848-1867

The result was inevitable. The tragedy of the bondage in which the nation was held, and the intellectual recovery of its greatness and some-time sovereignty, met to awake another rising for freedom.

The Young Irelanders had formed the Irish Confederation, and now they prepared for an appeal to arms. The Government replied by arresting John Mitchell, and in doing so they struck down the only man who could have translated determination into a sufficiently resolute act. The others

had great abilities, but they had not the quality of will to make a forceful rising. Yet the people were willing to follow wherever they might be led. As their leaders were arrested, they flocked about them, desirous to release them; but the leaders were not willing that blood should be shed on their behalf, and thus the rising of 1848 proved abortive. The English Sovereign wrote regretfully: "There are ample means of crushing the rebellion in Ireland, and I think it now likely to go off without any contest, which people (and I think with right) rather regret. The Irish should receive a good lesson or they will begin again." Failure though it was, the attempt proved that the blood and the intellect of the nation must assuredly find itself in rebellion while the nation lay in captivity, and it passed the tradition onward. There were others to accept it. They proceeded, however, on other lines. They made long and careful preparation. Their conception was simple and intensive. They did not merely repudiate a foreign despotism; they conceived an Irish Republic as existent, and swore an oath of allegiance to that, and to that alone. On that basis a Brotherhood was created in a close organisation that included every parish.

Men were enrolled, not only in Ireland, but in England and America. The Government became aware of it, and introduced spies into it, with the result that some of its leaders were arrested, and others had to fly. But the Brotherhood was now indestructible, and continued its work. The emigrants in America provided it with money only too willingly, for from dawn to sundown they thought of England with implacable hatred. From America came the name of Fenians, drawn from old history. Farmers drew aside from the war for the land to join the Brotherhood. In the towns all classes joined. Then in 1867 the nation arose again. The Government had been well-informed by its army of spies, and was prepared. It crushed the rising, and filled its jails in England with Irishmen. Yet it did not break the Brotherhood. If it were felony to strive for the freedom of Ireland, the title of such felony ranked more highly in the estimation of the nation than the greatest eminence. The Brotherhood continued, and continues, and both within and without its ranks men took, and take, their oath of fidelity to the Sovereignty of Ireland, and avow no other sovereignty whatever.

39. The Land War and its Significance, 1848-1903

With the failure of the rising the nation turned with new fierceness to the war for the land.

England, by striking down the prosperity of Ireland in its own interest, had struck away the resident Ascendancy it had placed in Ireland. The population of Ireland was now almost wholly that of the ancient Irish nation. This made the war significant. The people lived as tenants where they had been freemen and possessors. They were rackrented, harassed and compelled to live in squalor where they had been builders of a polity and a State. And those who by force of arms had effected the change, and brought them to this pass, now had returned whence they came, to spend there the gains so gotten. Therefore, if the tenants could break their power, and win back the land to their possession, a state of affairs would be created approximately the same as had existed before the disruption of the National Polity. The polity itself would be lacking, but the foundation on which that polity had been built would be secured. Nor was this only a strange historical symbol in the renewal of a nation. It was actually the prompting cause of the Land War. It was, indeed, almost as if the nation had become a person, and had consciously willed the result. For when the people arose and demanded their land, they demanded it as a right, like men who, though they might have lost the fact of possession, had never lost the thought and voice of possession. They did not, as others might have, seek amelioration of their intolerable state; they demanded back their own, and as they did so they acted in some remarkable reminiscences of their old law. When they withheld rents, they withheld them as a declaration of war, as they might withhold vexatious tributes imposed by a conqueror. When they shot bailiffs and agents, they shot them as they would transgressors. Then suddenly in the height of the war they enforced the legal penalty of their old law.

"The body of law," reads an old text, "which all Ireland enacted none dared to transgress; and he that perchance did so was outlawed from the men of Ireland." The old law, abolished with their social order, lived now in intuition; and with the present stirring of emotion intuition awoke and enforced the law. The people outlawed the landlord and all his underlings. They withheld all dealings from him. In the words of their new leader, they shunned him in the marketplace and on the road. They made his life impossible in the social order, because he made their social order impossible. It was a remarkable act; it was a remarkable enforcement of law; and it was all the more remarkable because it was the emergence of the old polity in the fight for that on which the old polity was based. And as though to make the contrast all the more remarkable, the foreign Government was compelled to withdraw its own law, and re-enforce Coercion.

40. War in the Enemy's Camp, 1877-1903

The scene, however, now shifted to the Parliament in London. The nation had never given great heed to the proceedings in that Parliament, but they now did so because of a striking personality that had arisen in it. That personality was Charles Stewart Parnell. Englishmen were bewildered at this personality, so full of passion, and yet with that passion controlled by so implacable a will and so proud a reserve; but Irishmen understood it perfectly. They understood its purpose, and rejoiced in it. Parnell was determined if the English Parliament would not concede the demand of the Irish nation that it would at least accomplish no other work. He was resolved, if necessary, to make a bear-garden of its proceedings. And he accomplished his purpose some success, while his nation applauded. He became the most hated man in England and the best beloved in Ireland. Yet whenever he spoke he shewed that he had as shrewd a perception of English political situations as he had a statesmanlike grasp of Irish problems. Therefore, he never permitted the effort on Irish soil to relax, though he sought to bring that effort to bear on the field where he himself fought.

When England gave power for Coercion in Ireland he pointed out the perfect logic and inevitability of the action. Joseph Chamberlain stated in 1885 that the English "system in Ireland is founded on the bayonets of 30,000 soldiers, encamped permanently as in a hostile country"; and since the beginning of the century there had scarcely been a year when Coercion or Insurrection Acts had not been in force. "This," said Parnell, "was a public admission that the Irish nation was a nation in captivity." The English nation, whom it pleased to consider Ireland as part of a free English people, desiring to impose that fiction on Europe, was as enraged at his cold logic as it was at his ruthless will. ... [see note.] First, it was permitted a revision of rents; then it won security of tenure; and finally it was permitted to purchase back the land that had four hundred years before been taken from it. It required menace, with both the threat and execution of arms, at each stage; but the result was that the nation, now fully awake and resurgent, won the second stage on the road before it.

41. The Awakening of the Nation, 1891-1913

Parnell had focussed the attention of the nation on to the Parliament in London. It required his masterly personality to do this. He received from his predecessor, Isaac Butt, a demand for what was known as Home Rule. It was a vague term; it covered a vague thought; its possibility was remote enough, but Parnell made it, not merely practical politics, but the one insistent thought and demand of his day. Nobody in England or Ireland was permitted to think of anything else. Yet in demanding that Ireland should be given political freedom, he made it clear that he expressed no finality in his immediate goal. "No man," he publicly declared, "has the right to fix the boundary of a nation. No man has the right to say to his country: 'Thus far shalt thou go, and no further.' We have never attempted to fix the ne plus ultra to the progress of Ireland's nationhood, and we never shall." On this ground he was supported by Republicans at home.

When, however, he was broken by English ministers, and "Home Rule" was banished with him, the nation turned its thoughts again to affairs within itself.

Two new movements arose. The first was the Gaelic League. It set itself to the revival of the national language, and to the study of the nation's history. The language had been interdicted and broken. The history had been obscured by the conqueror's gloss with a view to belittling the nation's greatness and breaking the force of its inspiration. Each upheaval of the nation through the century had been followed by a revival of the nation's distinct and separate intellectual being; and specially by a revival of the national language, both as a subject of study and as a vehicle of public expression. These things were now organised by the Gaelic League. Definitely the nation reclaimed, with its language, its historic past. It set itself to undo all the meaning of the Statutes of Kilkenny. The intuitions that the nation had carried through bitter centuries now became confirmed as a matter of intellectual perception and knowledge - became once again, as they had been before, the subject of thought and study. The other movement became known by its title of Sinn Féin (Ourselves). It affirmed that to send Irish representatives to an English Parliament was, firstly, an abnegation of the nation's integral right and historic claim, and, secondly, a weakening of the self-reliance essential to the assertion of that right and claim. It called the nation to itself, and completed in economics and politics what the Gaelic League achieved in expression and culture. These were the two new influences in Ireland, both intensive, both neglecting the fact of foreign possession. Beside them grew up another for an economic organisation of the land.

Irishmen were now coming into the possession of their land. They had won, that is to say, that on which the National Polity had been built without the power to re-create the State. Their holdings were small, and in the new world-wide competition they were unable to compete against farming syndicates all over the world. So the Organisation Society grouped them into co-operative societies with a view to giving them a corporate responsibility and power. And a remarkable thing happened. The new societies became in many ways the modern counterparts of the old Stateships. They are, though only in matters of business, legislative and economic units; they have their central townships, where they meet, and about which reside the artisans of those units; they enact their own limited governance of themselves. With Ireland a Sovereign State it would take very little to make of them what the Old Stateships had been, and to rebuild from them the wise and distinctive National Polity that was once so ruthlessly destroyed. So inevitable has proved the nation's instinct of itself, and so inevitable is its historic assertion.

42. Declaration of Independence, 1914-1916

In the meantime the attention had been for a while thrown back into the Parliament in London.

The party that Parnell had formed still carried the glamour with which he had endowed it, though it had come into hands far different from his; and when it seemed that the new English Government, by political necessity, would be compelled to grant the old demand of Home Rule, the nation turned to attend. As it turned its attention outward, its intensive life failed. The power of Sinn Féin fell in abeyance; the activity of the Gaelic League weakened. These things, it was felt, would revive when Ireland had won an assembly in which the larger national ambition could renew its effort. The fortune of a political party in the foreign parliament was put to what was admitted to be a critical and final test. It proved unworthy of that test.

Where Parnell had held aloof from English parties, and won his way to strength by a continual national challenge, his successors became the allies of English sections, and were treated with contempt by English sections. With a cynicism hardly to be paralleled, English politicians sought to undo the political demand by the deepest wrong any nation has inflicted on any other nation: the Plantation of Ulster. It is as though a murderer excused his murder by the death of his victim. In a few counties of the province there remained a proportion of the Jailer Ascendancy. In the whole province they were in a minority. In the nation itself they formed so small a minority as to

appear negligible. There is no nation or State in the world that can reckon so small a minority to its national will; and if nations could have their right to nationhood and sovereignty cancelled by the existence of a minority even twice as large, there is no State that could continue without general anarchy.

England itself would be glad if its own turbulent minority possessed proportions as convenient. Yet, even so, the men in Ulster and the nation of Ireland had lived at peace. Religious distinctions were as little conceived in Ireland as in any nation in the world. But behind Ulster lurked the cynical political purpose of England. To achieve that political purpose and hold Ireland in continued captivity and thralldom English politicians, acting in accordance with historical precedent, invaded Ulster, and deliberately incited the worst religious rancour. They appealed to every vice in human nature. As those who claimed moral law among nations it was conceivably proper that they should do so. And then they stumbled on an error that undid their case. They appealed to arms. They, English politicians, appealed to arms to threaten their own Parliament. The Irish nation looked on with bewilderment. It had long been forbidden the right to possess arms, much less to create a military force. It was this that, in great measure, had turned its attention to the foreign parliament. But with so good an authority the road was now clear before it.

The nation gladly sprang to arms. It had no intention to use them against its own countrymen; it hoped rather to join with those countrymen in a renewal of war against England. With that act the nation's attention turned again within itself. Those who formed the new Volunteers came from the ranks of Sinn Fein and the Gaelic League, for once again, as ever before, the intellect and worth of the nation were ready for the war of Independence. They were strengthened by veterans who had arisen in 1867. They could now drill and manoeuvre openly and without fear, for they had the security, in this last wonderful event in Time, of English law officers and the whole English Peerage and Ascendancy. By that security, and under that sanction, the war of nation against nation could be renewed. Thus Fate had ordained that the cynicism and debauchery of foreign conquest should be turned against itself. As though to continue the lesson and to point the moral, it befell that England should find herself embroiled in the vast cataclysm of European war, and embroiled on the public profession that she was committed to procure, assert and defend the right of small nationalities to determine their own governments and destiny. So notable a profession could not be improved by the Irish Volunteers, who determined that they, too, would profess the same cause on behalf of their own sovereign nation of Ireland. Therefore,

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