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You fool! to seek companions in a crowd!
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Before thy bookshelves, humbly thank thy God
That thou hast friends like these!
THE ECONOMIC HISTORY OF IRELAND IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY
TO THE

REV. T. A. FINLAY, S.J., M.A.,

MY PROFESSOR OF POLITICAL ECONOMY
AT UNIVERSITY COLLEGE, DUBLIN.
NOTE.

I wish to express my gratitude to Messrs. P. S. King and Son for giving me permission to quote some of the tables of figures included in Miss A. E. Murray's *Commercial and Financial Relations between England and Ireland*. I have compared various figures taken at random from these tables with the original figures in the Irish Customs House Books in the National Library, Dublin, and have found them invariably accurate. I, therefore, feel justified in concluding that the other figures contained in the tables are equally accurate.

I wish also to express my gratitude to Mr. M. S. D. Westropp for some valuable information relating to the Irish coinage; to Mrs. Stopford Green for a helpful suggestion with regard to the introduction of the book; and to Mr. Arthur Cox for the loan of many books, and for the great assistance which he gave me in reading and correcting the proofs.

NOTE ON REFERENCES.

The following abbreviated references are employed throughout this book:

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<th>Title of Work referred to</th>
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<tr>
<td>Plowden</td>
<td>An Historical Review of the State of Ireland, by Francis Plowden. London, 1803.</td>
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References to Young's *Tour in Ireland* are to the edition published in 1892, and references to Hely Hutchinson's *Commercial Restraints of Ireland*, are to the edition published in 1888.
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THE ECONOMIC HISTORY OF IRELAND IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

INTRODUCTION.

THE history of Ireland has been the subject of so many volumes, old and new, that some doubt may be felt whether any useful purpose can be served by adding to their number. The eighteenth century, in particular, has been fully treated in recent years by two of the greatest historians of modern times, and it may well be questioned whether any justification can exist for a book which professes to deal with the same period as the works of Lecky and Froude. The only apology which the present writer can offer for this volume is that it deals with an aspect of that century which has been, though not overlooked, yet given a minor place by these writers. The eighteenth century in Ireland was conspicuous for so many political events of supreme importance, that it is inevitable that general histories should devote the greater amount of their space to the political history of the time. The struggle between the English and Irish Parliaments, the religious persecution and gradual emancipation of the Catholics, and the United Irishmen movement are matters of such compelling interest that it is inevitable that, in a narrative of the century in which they took place, the more prosaic and less picturesque details of the economic condition of the people should be relegated to a secondary position.
The economic history of the century is, nevertheless, a matter of great importance. Many of the political agitations of the times had their origins in economic causes; and it may be safely asserted that all the political reforms which were attempted or achieved had as their ultimate aim the economic amelioration of the nation. As we shall see, the principal object of the Penal Laws was the economic degradation of the Catholics, and the principal result of those laws was the economic degradation of the whole population, Catholic and Protestant alike. Again, the main object of the subordination of the Irish Parliament was that England might regulate Irish commerce favourably to English interests; and the most powerful motive which impelled the Irish Parliament to assert its independence was the desire to benefit Irish trade.

The history of Irish economic conditions up to the end of the sixteenth century has been told by Mrs. Stopford Green in a manner which admits of no addition or improvement, and the history of the commercial and financial condition of Ireland, so far as it affects the relations between England and Ireland, has been admirably treated by Miss Murray. No book dealing with the whole subject of the internal economic condition of Ireland during the eighteenth century has yet appeared, and it is the non-existence of such a book that has tempted the present writer to offer this volume to the public, although he is fully conscious of its inadequacy and many defects.

Some years ago an able and suggestive book was published by one who has since laid down his life for his country. This book is chiefly remarkable for the thesis, that Irish prosperity before the Union was in no way dependent on the existence of an independent Irish legislature, but, so far as it existed at all, was the result of non-political causes. If this theory were supported by facts, it would have very far-reaching effects, and would deprive the Irish nation of one great argument in favour of the restoration of its parliamentary liberty. It has

1 Connolly, Labour in Irish History.
consequently been examined in one of the later chapters of this book, where the conclusion is arrived at, and, it is hoped, established satisfactorily, that the period of the independent Irish Parliament was one of increasing prosperity, and that that prosperity was directly due to the legislation of the Parliament.

In one sense the eighteenth century is an easy period to treat historically, as the beginning and end of the century were marked by events which may be truly termed epochs. The seventeenth century did not merge gradually into the eighteenth, nor the eighteenth into the nineteenth. On the contrary, the former two were definitely separated by the Revolution, and the latter two by the Union. The events which marked the years between the Restoration and the beginning of the century were such as to destroy the old condition of things; Irish commerce was successfully attacked; the old popular land system was finally abolished; and the Irish people were reduced to a condition not far removed from slavery. The old economic state had disappeared, and a new one was about to begin.

The seventeenth century was the period of confiscation. During the reign of James I. the customs of tanistry and gavelkind were abolished, and feudal tenures generally introduced in the place of the old Irish tenures. The greater part of the land in the country was confiscated as a result of the rebellion of 1641, and was reappor tioned among the new proprietors by the Cromwellian and Restoration settlements. The precise amount of land forfeited, and the details of the manner in which it was settled, need not delay us here; it is sufficient to say that the greater number of the old Irish and Anglo-Irish families were dispossessed, and that the arbitrary dealing with vested interests created an unhealthy feeling of insecurity even among the new proprietors. During the reign of Charles II., however, the land system again tended to become stable, and customary rights between land and tenant securing fixity of tenure to the latter
came to be everywhere recognised. The great evils which later came to be looked on as characteristic of the Irish land system first took definite root in the years following the Revolution. Further confiscations of over a million acres were carried out, and, what was more important, a statute was passed to abolish the then generally recognised customary rights. Thus, when the eighteenth century dawned, the old Irish land-owners had lost their lands and had been reduced to the position of tenants without even the security of fixity of tenure of their diminished interests.

The Irish Catholics had first been oppressed by penal laws in the reign of Elizabeth, but the code then imposed had fallen into complete desuetude, and was not enforced to any extent in the time of Charles II. The years following the Revolution were marked by the first enactments of the infamous penal laws of the eighteenth century. No doubt, the new severity was caused by the reduction of the Catholics by means of confiscations to the position of a servile race, and by the fear which was felt by the new ascendancy class lest its newly-won spoils might be rendered insecure by the growth to prosperity and power of the Catholics. The Irish Parliament has been often blamed for the introduction of the penal laws. While it is certainly true that it passed the worst and most oppressive of those measures, it must not be forgotten that the foundation stone of the whole system was laid by the English statute which excluded Catholics from the Irish Parliament. Had Catholics continued to attend the Irish Parliament, it is doubtful whether that body would ever have been able to pass the penal laws of later years. As we have said, the first of these penal laws were passed in the decade 1690-1700, and consequently the eighteenth century opened at the moment that Ireland was being artificially divided into two distinct and hostile classes.

The half century preceding the year 1700 saw the ruin

1 7 W. III, s. i., c. 12.  2 3 W. and M., c. 2.
of the Irish trade with England, the Colonies, and foreign countries. The Irish export trade to England, which in earlier times had been so profitable, was largely suppressed by the Act of 1660, which imposed duties on all goods imported into England.\(^1\) Within a few years the import of Irish cattle, sheep, swine, and their products was prohibited.\(^2\) At the same time, Ireland’s trade with the Colonies was destroyed by means of the Navigation Acts, which also put an end to the prosperity of Irish shipping. These measures, though most harmful to Irish prosperity, were quite legitimate. It was unquestionably within the power of the English Parliament to impose any duties it wished on the importation of goods into England; it was also within its power to regulate the trade of the English colonies. So far, the Irish foreign trade had been left untouched, and, as we shall see, it was developing at a rapid rate. So long as the Irish Parliament retained a semblance of its independence, the Irish foreign trade could not be interfered with by English legislation, and indeed no such interference was attempted before the reign of William III. After the Revolution, however, the English Parliament immediately claimed and vigorously asserted its right to legislate for Ireland. As we have seen, an Act was passed excluding Catholics from the Irish Parliament, and in 1690 the Irish Acts of the “Patriot Parliament” were declared null and void.\(^3\) Emboldened by its success in legislating for Ireland without provoking remonstrance or resistance, the English Parliament in 1698 passed a statute forbidding the Irish to export their woollen manufactures to any part of the world. As we shall see, the woollen manufacture was at that time the staple industry of Ireland, and this prohibition had the effect of bringing about complete industrial ruin. Thus, on the very eve of the eighteenth century, Ireland’s foreign trade was severely wounded and well nigh done to death, her English and Colonial trade having been annihilated many years before.

\(^1\) 12 Car. II., c. 4. \(^2\) 18 Car. II., c. 23; 23 Car. II., c. 7; 22 Car. II., c. 2; 22 & 23 Car. II., c. 2. \(^3\) 1 W. and M., c. 9.
It may here be remarked that Ireland's worst enemy was not the English King but the English Parliament, and that the policy of oppressing Ireland commercially grew simultaneously with the rise of the power of the Parliament in England. It was in the King's interest that Ireland should be prosperous, as the Irish revenue was a very important source of royal income, and the assistance which he obtained in money and men from Ireland was frequently of great assistance in his struggles with the English Parliament. It was this very fact that partly accounted for the hostility of the English Parliament to Irish interests. The Parliaments following the Revolution, having fresh in their minds the struggle with James II. and his hated device of flooding England with Irish soldiers, were ever anxious to discourage the growth of sources of royal revenue beyond Parliamentary control.

Thus, Ireland at the dawn of the eighteenth century was economically in a very bad state. The land was in the hands of strangers, and the old proprietors were sunk in abject poverty; the mass of the people was beginning to feel the burden of an oppressive penal code; and Irish trade was tottering after repeated blows. There is one other factor in the situation which must be recalled before a picture of the state of the country can be said to be complete—namely, the great damage suffered by all classes of property during the Revolutionary war. Macaulay rightly emphasises this aspect of the war, and, although he probably exaggerates the loss sustained, there is no doubt that great quantities of valuable cattle and sheep were destroyed. "The destruction of property which took place within a few weeks would be incredible, if it were not attested by witnesses unconnected with each other, and attached to very different interests. All agreed in declaring that it would take many years to repair the waste that had been wrought in a few weeks. . . . . The French Ambassador reported to his master that in six weeks 50,000 horned cattle had been slain, and were rotting on

1 History of England, chap. xii.
the ground all over the country. The number of sheep that were butchered during the same time was popularly said to have been three or four hundred thousand. Any estimate which can now be framed of the value of the property destroyed during this fearful conflict of races must necessarily be very inexact. We are not, however, absolutely without materials for such an estimate. The Quakers were neither a very numerous nor a very opulent class. We can hardly suppose that they were more than a fiftieth part of the Protestant population of Ireland, or that they possessed more than a fiftieth part of the Protestant wealth of Ireland. They were undoubtedly better treated than any other Protestant sect. James had always been partial to them: they own that Tyrconnel did his best to protect them; and they seem to have found favour even in the sight of the Rapparees. Yet the Quakers computed their pecuniary losses at a hundred thousand pounds."

Enough has now been said by way of introduction. Ireland started the eighteenth century with as poor an economic outfit as can well be imagined. As we shall see, all the efforts which were made to improve her condition were fruitless, so long as the power of the English Parliament prevailed. The first eighty years of the century were marked by no great economic progress in any direction, and in many respects by economic retrogression. In the years 1779-82 a great revolution took place; the restraints which fettered trade were loosened; and the independence of the Irish Parliament was reasserted. The twenty years which followed were conspicuous for continued progress towards prosperity. Rents rose rapidly, population increased, industry revived, trade flourished, and the wealth of the country grew by leaps and bounds. There is no doubt that, had not Ireland's independence been extinguished, she would have developed into a rich and powerful nation. But such things were not to be; England, jealous of Ireland's new-found prosperity, determined once more to assume the control of Irish affairs.
The Act of Union may or may not have been, from the English standpoint, a wise measure politically; but it certainly was, from the Irish standpoint, a ruinous one economically.

In the following pages the subject is divided into five parts. The first part, entitled "The People," treats of the Irish people, their numbers and industrial qualities; the second part, entitled "The Land," deals with the land system, the different classes of tenants, the condition of agriculture, and other matters relating to the land, such as mining, timber, and fisheries. The third part, entitled "Industry and Trade," is concerned with the restraints on Irish trade and their ultimate relaxation, and with the condition of the principal industries of the country during the period of restriction and the period of freedom respectively. The fourth part, entitled "Public Wealth," deals with the questions of public finance, local taxation, poor laws, banking, coinage, towns, means of communication, and other kindred subjects. The fifth part, entitled "Political Influences," contains an examination of the causes which operated to impede Irish prosperity, a review of the economic policy and achievements of Grattan's Parliament, and an account of the Union, considered from the economic standpoint.
PART I.
THE PEOPLE.

CHAPTER I.
Population.

The population of Ireland in 1672 was calculated by Sir William Petty at 1,100,000, but there has been much discussion as to the correctness of this figure. We learn that a sort of census was taken in 1659 in which the population was taken at 1,500,091. If the latter of these figures be correct, Petty undoubtedly under-estimated the population both in the Political Anatomy, and when, at a later date, he increased his estimate to about 1,200,000, and still later to 1,300,000. The next estimate which we have, is for the year 1696, when a Captain South, calculating from a return of the poll tax in three counties and in the City of Dublin, estimated the population at 1,034,102. This figure is not inconsistent with Petty's, as it might at first sight appear, for we must remember that the country lost a great many men both by war and emigration between the dates of the two calculations. Mr. G. P. Bushe, in his very able paper on Population, which is published in the Transactions of the Royal Irish Academy, pointed out that the returns of the hearth money before 1686 were extremely defective, and that, consequently, Petty's figure was probably too small. Newenham, on the other hand, thought it too large. It is quite impossible to form any definite opinion on this subject, as the materials at our disposal are very incomplete and unsatisfactory, and the only deduction that can be drawn is that, at the beginning

of the eighteenth century, the population of Ireland was more than 1,000,000, and less than 2,000,000.

The following list of the different estimates of the population made at different times during the century is taken from Nicholl's *History of the Irish Poor Laws*, and is inserted here for what it is worth:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Estimate</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1695</td>
<td>Captain South</td>
<td>1,034,102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1712</td>
<td>Thos. Dobbs, founded on Hearth Money Returns</td>
<td>2,099,094</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1718</td>
<td>Do.</td>
<td>2,169,048</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1725</td>
<td>Do.</td>
<td>2,321,374</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1726</td>
<td>Do.</td>
<td>2,309,106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1731</td>
<td>Return by Magistrates and Clergy</td>
<td>2,010,221</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1754</td>
<td>Returns from Hearth Money</td>
<td>2,372,634</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1767</td>
<td>Do.</td>
<td>2,544,276</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1777</td>
<td>Do.</td>
<td>2,690,556</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1785</td>
<td>Do.</td>
<td>2,845,932</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1788</td>
<td>G. P. Bushe</td>
<td>4,040,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1791</td>
<td>Hearth Money Returns</td>
<td>4,306,612</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1792</td>
<td>Rev. Dr. Beaufort</td>
<td>4,088,266</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1799</td>
<td>Whitley Stokes</td>
<td>4,500,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1800</td>
<td>Gordon</td>
<td>nearer 5,000,000 than 4,600,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1805</td>
<td>Newenham</td>
<td>5,395,436</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1813</td>
<td>Imperfect Census</td>
<td>5,937,852</td>
</tr>
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By far the best and most reliable of these estimates is that for 1788, which was compiled by Mr. G. P. Bushe and presented to the Royal Irish Academy in 1793. In a paper accompanying his estimate he explains the method on which he proceeded. He selected the most intelligent hearth money officers, and requested them to subjoin to each house the number of persons inhabiting the same. Having those returns before him, he first found out the number of widows and paupers in the county; secondly, the number of new houses; thirdly, the number of houses with more than one hearth; and fourthly, the number of houses with single hearths which paid duty; and, when he had sufficient materials, he took a proportionate number of each sort to be estimated till he had the twentieth part of the houses in the county. Thus in the County of Wexford there were 2,111 paupers and widows: so he took
the first 106 houses inhabited by persons of this description, which appeared on the face of the hearth money books, with the number of occupants of each; then he found the number of new houses to be 766, so he took the number of occupants of the first 38 new houses: then he found the number of houses having two hearths and upwards to be 2,063, so he took the number of occupants of each of the first 103 houses of that description: and lastly he found the number of houses having but one hearth on which duty was paid to be 15,508, so he took the number of occupants of the first 755 houses of this class. He found the result of the account thus taken to stand as follows:—

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total No.</th>
<th>No. of Houses</th>
<th>No. of Persons therein</th>
<th>Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>2,111</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>549</td>
<td>About 5(\frac{1}{2})</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New</td>
<td>766</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>164</td>
<td>About 4(\frac{1}{2})</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Double Hearths</td>
<td>2,063</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>919</td>
<td>About 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single Hearths</td>
<td>15,508</td>
<td>775</td>
<td>5,008</td>
<td>About 6(\frac{1}{4})</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>20,448</td>
<td>1,022</td>
<td>6,640</td>
<td>About 6(\frac{1}{4})</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The next step was to calculate by how many houses the hearth money returns fell short of the truth. In thirteen counties, accordingly, he checked the number of houses omitted, and compared the hearth money returns with the Church surveys made by the supervisors of certain parishes. He found that the houses omitted in these thirteen counties amounted to 40,000, and he estimated that the houses omitted in the other nineteen counties amounted to at least 20,000. Moreover, many houses were returned as waste which were really inhabited, and no returns appeared for any barrack, hospital, school house, or public building. Making allowance for all these omissions, he calculated the population to amount to about 4,040,000.

If Bushe’s figures be at all correct, it is clear that the estimates in the above list for the years 1777 and 1785
must be incorrect, as it was impossible for the population to have increased almost fifty per cent. between the years 1785 and 1788. Of course, the estimate for 1792 is also faulty, but the other estimates in the list would seem to be quite consistent with Bushe’s calculation. It is obvious, from the inspection of the above table, that the population of Ireland tended to increase at a rapid rate, which is rather surprising, considering the small progress which the country made in other directions. There seem, however, to have been several causes strongly operating in this direction. In the first place there was no poor law in Ireland, and consequently no laws of settlement. "The laws of settlement in England," said Arthur Young, "which confine the poor people to what is called their legal settlements, arose from those maxims of barbarity and mischief, our poor rates; for when once the poor were made, what they ought never to be considered, a burden, it was incumbent on every parish to lessen as much as possible their numbers; these laws were, therefore, framed in the very spirit of depopulation, and most certainly have for two centuries proved a barrier to the Kingdom becoming as populous as it would otherwise have done. Fortunately for Ireland, it has hitherto kept free from these evils; and from thence results a great degree of her present population. Whole families in that country will move from one place to another with freedom, fixing according to the demand for their labour, and the encouragement they receive to settle. The liberty of doing this is certainly a premium on their industry and consequently to their increase."

The increase of population was further encouraged by the miserable habitations with which the people were content. In England it was the custom not to marry until the young couple could get a house or cottage to live in, but in Ireland, as Arthur Young said, "the cabin is not an object of a moment’s consideration: to possess a cow or a pig is the chief aim. The cabin

1 Young. Tour in Ireland, vol. ii., p. 119.
IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

begins with a hovel that is erected with two days' labour, and the young couple pass not their youth in celibacy for want of a nest to produce their young in."

Indeed, this tendency was furthered by the very low state of comfort which universally prevailed, and it may be said that the Penal Laws, which were framed with the object of stamping out the Catholic population, really had the result of increasing it. "Our Protestants do not marry young," said Madden, "but they wait for a tolerable portion and some settlement to live easy on, whereas the Papists are careless as to wealth or portion, and will have wives, let them be maintained how they will." "The poorer classes in Ireland," says Lewis in his essay on Irish Disturbances, "seem to have been in that precise state which is most favourable to the growth of population, namely, when the moral checks on increase scarcely operate at all, and the physical checks operate but feebly. Marrying early, dwelling in separate houses, and satisfied with the scantiest and poorest food, they had sufficient regard for their children to make every effort to rear them, but were indifferent about everything except their mere existence. For removed from the brutality of those half-civilized nations which have practised the exposure of new-born infants, they nevertheless performed only the animal and none of the moral duties of parents; nor did they feel any scruple in raising up children to whom they had nothing to bequeath but a sad legacy of poverty and wretchedness."

Early marriages were very common in Ireland amongst the poor, and were encouraged by the priests in the interests of morality: "Marrying is certainly more general in Ireland than in England: I scarce ever found an unmarried farmer or cottier: but it is seen more with other classes which with us do not marry at all such as servants: the generality of footmen and maids in gentlemen's

1 Young, vol. ii., p. 120.
2 Madden, Reflections and Resolutions, p. 194.
families are married, a circumstance we very little see in England."

Moreover, children, far from being a burden, were a form of wealth which was not to be despised. "The great body of the people appear to me to have generally arrived at that state of industry wherein a man becomes valuable and the price of his labour is on the increase; but not at that state of prosperity which would enable them to procure as comfortable habitations as may be seen in other countries. They are almost all married, and there are few instances of their not having children. They generally marry young, and, potatoes being their general food, they are under no apprehension of being unable to support their children. These children are their wealth; the father, therefore, is in no hurry to part with his son till he marries. Even after marriage the son or the daughter frequently lives with the parents."

Another fact which tended to cause the population to press hard on the means of subsistence was that the common food was potatoes, which could be produced in large quantities with comparatively little labour. Indeed, the whole explanation of the rapid increase of population amongst the Irish poor was their poverty. The only classes who have unlimited families are the very rich and the very poor: because no increase in their families can possibly diminish their own comforts. This certainly seems to have been so in Ireland, and indeed in every other community where the standard of existence was so low that no contingencies could lower it any more.

After 1785 the population increased more rapidly than formerly owing to the impetus given to tillage by Foster's Corn Law. As we shall see, one of the results of this Act was a great sub-division of farms, and a consequent great increase in the number of persons necessary to work them.

If the causes which we have enumerated had been

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3 Young, vol. ii., p. 120. 4 Mill, Political Economy, Bk. ii., c. xii., s. 4.
5 Infra, chap. xi.
allowed to operate unchecked, the population of Ireland would have grown even more rapidly than it did, but the tendency was effectually checked by emigration, and, to a smaller extent, by famine. No approximate estimate can be arrived at of the number that emigrated from Ireland in the eighteenth century, but it is quite clear that the number was very large. After the Treaty of Limerick, 14,000 men entered Continental armies and formed the nucleus of the great Irish Brigades of the eighteenth century. The Abbé MacGeoghegan\(^1\) estimated that 450,000 Irishmen fell in the service of France, and O'Callaghan\(^2\) placed the number even higher. Irish soldiers also served in the Spanish, Austrian and Neapolitan armies.\(^3\) The changes that followed the Revolution made the movement of emigration still more formidable. It would be difficult to conceive a national condition less favourable than that of Ireland to a man of energy and ambition. If he were a Catholic, he found himself excluded by his creed from every position of trust and power, and from almost every means of acquiring wealth, degraded by a social stigma, deprived of every vestige of political weight. If he were a Presbyterian, he was subject to the disabilities of the Test Act. If he were a member of the Established Church, he was even then compelled to see all the highest posts in Church and State monopolised by Englishmen. If he were a landlord, he found himself in a country where the law had produced such a social state that his position as a resident was nearly intolerable. If his ambition lay in the paths of manufacture or commerce, he was almost compelled to emigrate, for industrial and commercial enterprise had been deliberately crushed. The result was that a steady tide of emigration set in, carrying away all those classes who were most essential to the development of the nation. The landlords found the attractions of London and Bath irresistible. The manufacturers and the large class of energetic labourers who lived upon manufacturing industry were scattered far and wide. Some of them

\(^1\) *Histoire d'Irlande.* \(^2\) *History of the Irish Brigade.* \(^3\) Lecky, vol. i., p. 249.
passed to England and Scotland. Great numbers found a home in Virginia and Pennsylvania, and they were the founders of the linen manufacture in New England. Others, again, went to strengthen the enemies of England. Louis XIV. was in general bitterly intolerant to Protestants, but he warmly welcomed, encouraged, and protected in their worship, Protestant manufacturers from Ireland who brought their industry to Rouen and other cities of France. Many others took refuge in the Protestant States of Germany, while Catholic manufacturers settled in the northern provinces of Spain, and laid the foundation of an industry which was believed to be very detrimental to England."

One result of the destruction of the woollen industry was that a steady stream of Protestants emigrated for several years. "Many of those who were embarked in the wool trade were laid under the necessity of removing elsewhere, and, being piqued at the difficulties they were laid under, many of the Protestants removed into Germany. Several Papists, at the same time, removed into the north parts of Spain, where they laid the foundation of manufactures highly prejudicial to England. Many also of the Protestants, who were embarked with Papists in the wool manufacture, removed into France. Notwithstanding the fact that Louis XIV. had repealed the Edict of Nantes, these Protestants were kindly received by him, had great encouragement given to them, and were protected in their religion." Another cause which drove many Protestants abroad was the system of putting small farms up for auction. As we shall see, the Catholics, who were content to live on a lower scale of comfort than the Protestants, almost invariably outbid them in the rent they were prepared to pay, and consequently many Protestant families found themselves homeless, and had no alternative but to seek employment abroad. The conversion of large tracts of the country from pasture farms into grazing lands

2 Dobbs. Trade of Ireland, 1729.
drove many more abroad, and great numbers emigrated on account of the hardships occasioned by the tithes, which rendered life in Ireland not worth living. It is not surprising, when all these causes are considered, that it was estimated by Newenham that in the first fifty years of the eighteenth century 200,000 people emigrated to the British Plantations alone.

This tendency was intensified by the famines of 1729 and 1740: "What has of late occasioned a check to our increase of population was the scarcity of provisions we had for two or three years, by reason of bad seasons and want of granaries; this influenced a great many of our Protestant poor for want of employment to go to America, and many Papists went to France and Spain." It was said that for many years after the famine of 1740, the Protestants emigrating from Ulster amounted to 12,000 a year. In 1749 a great number of silk weavers emigrated on account of trade depression caused by over-production. A great impetus was given to emigration by the depression which occurred in the linen trade in 1770; Arthur Young found that about 4,000 emigrants left Belfast annually as late as 1776; and 30,000 linen weavers and their families were calculated to have been driven abroad as the result of this depression.

It is impossible to leave this subject without remarking that, at a time when England was zealous almost to tyranny in restraining the emigration of English workmen, no effort was made to stem this ever-flowing tide of Irish emigrants. The only conclusion that can be drawn from this strange difference of conduct in respect of the two countries is that the English Government was anxious that Ireland should become depopulated. Newenham was reluctantly forced to this conclusion: "That there prevailed a wish," he wrote in 1809, "rather to diminish than

1 Godkin, Land War in Ireland, p. 250; Sigerson, Last Independent Parliament of Ireland, p. 55.
3 Dobbs, Trade of Ireland, 1729.
5 Case of Silk and Worsted Weavers, Dublin, 1749.
6 Tour in Ireland, vol. i., p. 264.
7 A View of the State of Ireland in 1780; Newenham, on Population; Charlemont MSS., ii., 275.
to augment the population of Ireland seems extremely probable. The countenance given by the British Government to French officers employed in recruiting in Ireland for the Army of France is evidence of such a wish, and further proof of it may be drawn from the readiness with which transportations to America were resorted to—not merely for offences, but for that idleness which the mischievous and oppressive laws in question only occasioned. The number of convicts, felons and vagabonds ordered for transportation in the seven years ending 1743 was 1,920. They were sold in Maryland for £9 10s. a head."

There was one other channel through which many of the population of Ireland passed abroad, namely, the British Army and Navy. In a speech in 1793, Grattan said that in the recent war, of 80,000 seamen, 50,000 bore Irish names: in Chelsea, near one-third of the pensioners were Irish: in some of the men-of-war almost the whole complement of men were Irish: and that the Irish Catholics supplied the British armies and fleets so abundantly that the recruiting service could not have gone on without them.2 Wolfe Tone stated that between the years 1793 and 1705, 80,000 Irishmen joined the English Navy and 120,000 the Army,3 and this statement, though probably an exaggeration, still contains a large element of truth. In 1796 an official estimate of the number of men furnished by Ireland for the British Army and Navy during the previous three years was drawn up, which showed that within that period 11,457 men had joined the navy, 4,058 the marines, and about 23,000 the army.4 Much of the distress which was felt in Dublin in 1799 was stated to be owing to the fact that very large numbers of married men were then serving in the British Army abroad,5 and Ireland was frequently referred to as the "officina militum" of the British Empire.6 A great number of Irish also settled down in England: no doubt, many of the "spalpeens"

1 View of Ireland 2 Grattan's Speeches, vol. iii., p. 46. 3 Lecky, vol. iii., p. 515.
4 Lecky, vol. iii., p. 517. 5 Roeborough, State of Poor in Metropolis, Dublin, 1799.
never returned: and many beggars found that an opening existed for their activities in England.

The terrible effect of such a drain upon the life-blood of the country may be easily imagined. The consequences of the emigration caused by the famine of 1847 are too painfully near and apparent to make it necessary to labour this point. The only consoling reflection is that the country which allowed, if it did not encourage, this emigration, suffered many ill-effects as a result of it. It was the Irish wool workers, exiled in consequence of the suppression of the wool industry, who helped the French and Spaniards to manufacture their own woollens, and thus eventually to compete successfully with the English woollen manufacturers. It was the Irish emigrants who faced the English troops in battle after battle on the Continent, and it was the emigrants from Ulster who supplied many of the best soldiers and officers who fought with Washington in the War of Independence. "England, from unhappy experience, is convinced of the pernicious effects of her impolicy. The emigration of the Irish manufacturers in the reign of King William is not the only instance that has taught that nation the ruinous effects of restrictive laws. Our own remembrance has furnished a sad instance of the truth of this assertion—furnished it in the American war. America was lost by Irish emigrants; when the unhappy conflict took place, I am assured from the best authority that the major part of the American Army was composed of Irish, and that the Irish language was commonly spoken in the ranks. I am also informed it was their valour that determined the contest: so that England has not only lost her wool trade with Europe, but has lost America as well by force of Irish emigrants."

The gaps left by this excessive emigration were, to a small extent, filled by the immigration of some foreigners.

2 Speech of Mr. Gardiner in the Irish House of Commons, 2nd April, 1784, and see Emmet, Ireland under English Rule, vol. i., ch. 7: Sigerson, Last Independent Parliament of Ireland, p. xxiv.
into Ireland, of which a number were Protestant refugees from Germany and France. The German Palatines who were brought over in 1709 consisted of about four thousand persons, all of them of a humble class. They were mostly settled in Limerick and Kerry, and were given long leases at low rents. Arthur Young visited some of these German settlements in 1776, and remarked that, although the Palatines had improved their farms, they had done far less than the Irish peasants would have done if they had received half the encouragement. The French Huguenots, on the other hand, rendered invaluable services to Ireland. It was one of their number, Crommelin, who put the linen manufacture on a sound footing for the first time, and they also introduced the silk industry. Another Huguenot family, the La Touches, was associated with the one bank, which, prior to the founding of the Bank of Ireland, was a benefit and not a burden to the country. Several Dutch soldiers settled down in Ulster after the Williamite wars, and certain French prisoners, who were kept in Ireland during the wars about 1740, made their prison their home. In addition to these foreigners, a good many English came across from time to time in connection with the collieries and other industries. About 1780 another large infusion of foreign blood into Ireland seemed probable when it was arranged that a number of Genevese refugees should be settled. A place for their residence was fixed at Passage in County Waterford, and named "New Geneva." The Genevese, however, refused to come unless they were granted certain concessions which the Irish Parliament thought unreasonable, such as, that they should be governed by their own laws and not by the Irish law. The discussion of these concessions ended in disagreement, and the projected colony fell through. A certain number of Jews had come to Ireland in the seventeenth and early in the eighteenth century, but the immigration then ceased, and in the year 1775 there were not sufficient

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Jews in Dublin to support a synagogue. This circumstance was looked on by an English visitor at the time as a sign that the city must be in a low state, as he said that he considered the presence or absence of Jews "a barometer of poverty."

Although the number of immigrants was small, compared with the number of emigrants, it is only fair to remark that their economic value was very great in proportion to their number. As we have seen, the Huguenots did much to promote banking, and the linen and silk manufactures; the cotton industry was first started by some French prisoners who settled down in County Cork; and great improvements were effected in the bleaching of linen by a Dutch Williamite soldier.

The large unproductive class which was supported in Ireland did much to weaken the economic value of the population. The fact that the Established Church was not that of the great majority of the people rendered a double set of clergy inevitable all over Ireland, and there was also a lawyer class which "swarmed like locusts on the land devouring the labours of the people." An unnecessarily large number of revenue officers—coast officers, gaugers, hearth money collectors, tide-waiters, and surveyors—constituted a heavy burden to be supported by the workers of the country. Wakefield was much struck by this aspect of Irish life: "The northern parishes," he wrote, "are more than sufficiently served by a triple provision of clergy; the ministers of the Church of Rome and their coadjutors; the Presbyterian minister and his assistants; and the different classes of Methodists. Every other part of Ireland has a double set of clergy either resident or absent. When the multitude of persons set apart for religious instructors is considered, and the number of those who are educating for the same purpose, the gross amount will be found greater than is at first evident. To this may yet be added an unnumbered swarm of lawyers and their

1 Campbell, *Philosophical Survey of the South of Ireland*, 1775, p. 48.
2 Madden, *Reflections and Resolutions*, 1738.
3 Mulholland, *Ireland and her Staple Industry*, p. 52.
4 Madden, *Reflections and Resolutions*. Dublin, 1738.
dependents of every description; judges, for the same number of people as in double proportion to those in England, and whose attendants are more numerous; unnecessary domestics and the useless and lazy loiterers attached to every establishment. In consequence of the manner in which the revenue is collected, there is a host of officers who must be placed in the same class. The country towns in Ireland are filled with idle persons, the most conspicuous of whom are middlemen. I must not omit to state that professional beggars are very numerous."

The last feature of the Irish population to be noticed is that it was divided into rich and poor, without any intermediate class. One of the results of the system which, as will be seen, divided the Irish country dwellers into landlords, small farmers, and cottiers, was that during the greater part of the century there was no middle-class in Ireland. In England the body of yeoman farmers constituted the great strength of the nation, but in Ireland there was no corresponding class, much to the detriment of the country. The Tribune, a periodical which appeared in Dublin in 1720, calls attention to this:—"Though the English gave us their own laws and constitution, and have been greatly instrumental in bringing us the length we have got, yet they kept from us the secret of a well-ordered and regular yeomanry, such as they have in England, which is their chief strength and the grand nursery of their fleets and armies, their navigation and commerce. Instead of this, the people who should have been the yeomanry of Ireland, are a generation of half-starved, half-naked, half-dead animals, and a nursery for nothing else but the whipping post, the plantations, and the gallows." Dobbs noticed the same thing: "The want of a yeomanry is the true evil in Ireland from want of which most of our inconveniences flow: it is greatly the cause of our indolence and inactivity and a spur on our extravagance." "A True Patriot," in 1745, thought that the great want of the

1 Wakefield, vol. ii., p. 809, and see Arthur O'Connor, State of Ireland, 1798.
2 Tribune, p. 131
3 Dobb's Essay on Trade, 1729.
country was in having no class of people between the
gentry and the beggars.¹ "I believe there is in no king-
dom greater inequality than in Ireland: one class of great
property who live excessively sumptuous: the second and
more numerous class hurting their fortunes by the imita-
tion of the first—the third in extreme poverty."² "The
only division which a traveller can make would be into
persons of considerable fortune and mob; the intermediate
division of the scale, so numerous and respectable in Eng-
land, would hardly attract the least notice in Ireland."³
"In Ireland we see the two classes of men, a pampered
gentry and a starving commonalty."⁴ Crumpe regretted
that Irishmen were unacquainted with any such division
of citizens as the yeomanry. It will be remembered that in
"John Bull's Other Island," when Broadbent remarks
that the real heart of a nation is the yeomanry, Matt
Haffigan exclaims aghast, "The yeomanry!" and Larry
Doyle has to explain to his English friend that in England
the yeoman means a freehold farmer, but in Ireland it
meant a sort of Orange Bashi-Bazouk. Philologists assure
us that the best evidence of the non-existence of a thing
in a country is the absence of its name from the popular
vocabulary.

¹ View of Grievances of Ireland by a True Patriot. Dublin, 1745.
² Historical Anecdotes. Cork, 1762.
³ Young's Tour in Ireland, vol. ii, p. 146.
⁴ First Lines of Irish Interest. Dublin, 1780.
CHAPTER II.

ECONOMIC EFFECT OF PENAL LAWS.

Undoubtedly the most important chapter of Irish history in the eighteenth century, from whatever point of view we regard it, is the unhappy story of the Penal Laws, the evil effects of which are felt even to this day. It is not proposed here to give a full account of this terrible code—anyone anxious to read about it can do so in Lecky or Froude; it is impossible, however, strictly to divide up the Penal Laws into two water-tight compartments, one of which had economic effects and the other of which had not. It is certainly true to say that every one of the Penal Laws has had economic effects, and important economic effects; but, at the same time, there are some of the Penal Laws which deal more directly than others with the subjects which are usually comprised in an economic account of a period or a people, and these should be here given in detail. They may be roughly divided into those aimed against the acquisition of property by Catholics, and those which excluded Catholics from earning their living at various occupations.

The principal laws dealing with property were the following:—

7 William III., c. 5, s. 8.—No person of the Popish religion shall be capable to have or keep in his possession any horse, gelding or mare which shall be of the value of five pounds or over; and if any Protestant shall make discovery on oath of such horse or horses to be in the possession of such Papists.... to any two Justices of the Peace.... any such Protestant paying or making tender of the sum of £5 5s. 0d. to the owner or possessor of such horse.... from and after such payment or tender, the property
of such horse or horses shall be deemed to be vested in the person making such discovery.

2 Anne, c. 6, s. 3. (marginal note).—The eldest son being Protestant, from and after the enrolment of a bishop’s certificate of this in Chancery, his parent, if a Papist, shall be only tenant for life with reversion in fee to his son.

Same statute, s. 6.—Every Papist shall be incapable to buy and purchase either in his own name or in the name of any other person, any manors, lands, tenements, or hereditaments, or any rents or profits out of the same, or any leases or terms thereof other than any term of years not exceeding thirty-one years whereon a rent not less than two third parts of the improved yearly value at the time of making such lease of the tenements leased shall be reserved.

Same statute, s. 7.—No Papist who shall become entitled to enter or to take or have the profits by descent, or by virtue of any devise or gift, or of any remainder already limited, or at any time hereafter to be limited, or by virtue of any trust, of any lands . . . . whereof any Protestant now is or hereafter shall be seized in fee simple, absolute or fee tail . . . . shall take any benefit by reason of such descent, devise, gift, remainder, or trust, but from thenceforth during the life of such person, or until he do become a Protestant, the nearest Protestant relation to the person who would be entitled to such property, if such Papist and all intermediate Papists were already dead, shall have and enjoy the lands without being accountable for the profits thereof.

Same statute, s. 10. (marginal note).—Papist seized in fee or tail of lands, if not sold in his life for good consideration of money bona fide paid, it shall descend to all the sons, and not to the eldest son being a Papist.

8 Anne, c. 3, s. 1.—No Papist shall be capable to have, take or receive any annuity for life or a term of years determinable on any life or lives, or for any greater or lesser estate anyways chargeable on, or that may affect, any lands, tenements, or hereditaments.

The principal Penal Laws affecting trades and occupations were as follows:—

7 William III., c. 3, s. 8.—No person exercising or using the mystery or art of making any locks for barrels, muskets, pistols or firearms, or of making swords, bayonets, knives, or other weapons, shall take to apprentice, or use, receive or instruct as an apprentice, any Papist . . . .

10 William III., c. 8, s. 4.—No Papist or Papists shall be employed as fowlers for any Protestant or Protestants.

10 William III., c. 13.—No person or persons shall practice or act as solicitor in any Court of Law or Equity, or as agent or manager in any cause or suit or as seneschal or solicitor in all or any of the courts or affairs of this Kingdom, not having first taken the oath and subscribed the following Declaration:—

“I do believe that in the Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper there is not any transubstantiation of the elements of bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ . . . . and that the invocation and adoration of the Virgin Mary or any other Saint, and the sacrifice of the Mass as they are now used in the Church of Rome, are superstitious and idolatrous.’’
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2. Anne, c. 6, s. 16.—Every person who shall bear office, civil or military, or shall receive any pay, salary, fee or wages belonging to or by reason of any office or place of trust by reason of any patent or grant from Her Majesty or her predecessors . . . on the first day of Easter term, 1704, . . . shall receive the Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper according to the usage of the Church of Ireland before the first August, 1704.

Sec. 17. Any person who shall be admitted to such office after the first day of Easter term shall receive the Lord’s Supper, etc.

Sec. 23.—No Papist or Papists shall take or purchase any house or tenement, or come to dwell or inhabit within the cities of Galway or Limerick, or the suburbs thereof, and the present Papist dwellers therein shall give security for fidelity or leave the City. . . Nothing herein shall be construed to hinder seamen, fishermen, or day labourers from holding a dwelling or house worth 40s. a year or under in Limerick or Galway.

8. Anne, c. 3, s. 16.—Whatsoever Papist shall publicly teach school or shall instruct youth in learning in any private house, or shall be entertained to instruct youth in learning as usher, undermaster, or assistant by any Protestant Schoolmaster, shall be liable to certain penalties.

Sec. 37.—No Papist who is or shall be permitted to follow any trade, craft or mystery in this kingdom shall hereafter take or keep more than two apprentices at a time (except in the hempen or flaxen manufacture).

2. Geo. I., c. 10.—For three years from the passing of this Act no Papist shall be capable of being appointed, presented or sworn as High Constable or as Petty Constable.

7. Geo. II., c. 5, s. 2.—From and after the last day of Michaelmas Term, 1734, no person shall be admitted an attorney or licensed to be a solicitor . . . who had not been a Protestant from the age of fourteen years, or for two years before his being admitted an apprentice.

Sec. 4.—Every Master in Chancery, six clerk of the High Court of Chancery, barrister-at-law and attorney, and officer of any of His Majesty’s Four Courts in Dublin . . . and every solicitor to be licensed by this Act shall take the following oath, viz.:—

“I do swear that I will not knowingly take as an apprentice or employ as clerk or solicitor any person of the Popish religion.”

Sec. 12.—If any person or persons now or hereafter to be admitted as a barrister, six clerk, attorney or solicitor, shall marry . . . any woman of the Popish religion . . . such person shall be thenceforth deemed a Papist and disabled from being a barrister, six clerk, attorney or solicitor.

It is obvious that laws of this kind must have had a most direct bearing on the economical condition of the country. By the first group of Acts, which we have detailed, Catholics were debarred from obtaining any permanent or even lengthy interest in land, and were consequently deprived of the stimulus which goes to make a great agricultural community. Moreover, they were even forbidden to lend money on the security of land, and we
shall see that this was one of the principal causes of the decline of agriculture during the eighteenth century. It seems to have been the policy of the code that, whereas no Catholic could acquire any further interest in land, even the interests they already possessed should gradually, in the course of time, come to be vested in Protestants. ¹ By the laws regulating occupation, on the other hand, all the better class employments were closed to Catholics, and even some of the poorer ones. Lecky refers to a petition in the House of Commons complaining that Catholics in Dublin had the audacity to attempt to earn money as coal porters. ² These two species of discouragement must have acted on each other in a vicious circle. No Catholic could pursue any occupation at which much money might be made, except a small retail trade; and, even if he made money, he had no opportunity of investing it, because he could not buy land, nor could he bring his children up to professions which might give them a scope for ambition. ³

It must not, however, be supposed that the Penal Laws, which did not deal directly with economic conditions, had not an important economic effect. The voluminous code directed against the education of Catholics must by its nature have kept the Irish people ignorant; the laws which prohibited them from exercising the civic functions as voters and jurymen must, to some extent, have atrophied those functions; the laws which prohibited them from being soldiers or sailors must have sapped some of their martial spirit; and the laws which made the exercise of their religion a crime, and which rendered priest-hunting a profitable occupation, must have tended to make the people secretive, suspicious, and, possibly, servile. If this be so, it is idle to deny that all these laws had important economic effects. One of the greatest sources of the richness of a country is the character of its people, and the Irish character must have suffered severely from this iniquitous oppression.

² Lecky, vol. i, p. 147.
Nor was the result confined to the oppressed—the oppressors also suffered. A system which divides a country into two classes must, in course of time, produce something resembling castes, and the members of the dominant caste are as unlikely to be possessed of industrial virtues as the members of the servile caste. So it certainly was in eighteenth century Ireland. The Protestants possessed the whole land for themselves; they were in a position to monopolise any benefits which the country afforded; and it is no wonder that, when such promising fields of unearned income as landlordism, jobbery and the Church presented themselves, they did not see the necessity of indulging in industrial or mercantile pursuits.

"Before I conclude this section," wrote Arthur Young, "I must observe one circumstance, which, though not important enough to stop the progress of commercial improvement in Ireland, yet must very much retard it; and that is the contempt in which trade is held by those who call themselves gentlemen. I heard a language common in Ireland, which, if it was to become universal, would effectually prevent her ever attaining greatness. I have remarked the houses of country gentlemen being full of brothers, cousins, etc., idlers, whose best employment is to follow a hare or a fox; why are they not brought up to trade or manufacture? Trade! (the answer has been). They are gentlemen; to be poor till doomsday: a tradesman has not a right to the point of honour—you may refuse his challenge. Trinity College at Dublin swarms with lads who ought to be educated to the loom and the counting-house. Many ill-effects flow from these wretched prejudices; one consequence, manifest over the whole kingdom, is commercial people quitting trade or manufactures, when they have made from five to ten thousand pounds, to become gentlemen; where trade is dishonourable it will not flourish; this is taking people from industry at the very moment they are the best able to command success. Many Quakers who are (take them for all in all)
the most sensible class of people in that kingdom, are exceptions to this folly; and mark the consequence, they are the only wealthy traders in the island. The Irish are ready enough to imitate the vices and follies of England; let them imitate her virtues, her respect for commercial industry, which has carried her splendour and her power to the remotest corners of the earth."

The fact is that in Ireland, at that period, the Protestants looked down on trade, and, as a whole, took no part in it; whereas the Catholics, if ever so willing, were not in a position to take any part in it.

The two features which distinguished the religious oppression of the eighteenth century in Ireland were, first, that it was an oppression of a majority by a minority, and, second, that it was an oppression directed, not against belief, but against prosperity. The English Catholics of that period were persecuted just as severely as the Irish, but the persecution did not produce the same evil effect on the whole country, because the number of the oppressed was comparatively so small as to render any resulting weakness of character unimportant from a national point of view; but in Ireland, it was the whole nation that was oppressed—not a section. The fact that the oppression was directed against prosperity, and not against belief, is quite clear from the Penal Laws. "The Penal code," says Lecky, "was intended to make the Catholics poor, and to keep them poor; to crush in them every spark of enterprise; to degrade them into a servile caste, who could never hope to rise to the level of their oppressors"; and Young wrote: "The scope, purpose and aim of the laws are not against the Catholic religion, but against the industry and property of whoever professes that religion." Young was also of opinion that "the oppression of the Catholics, by loading the industry of two millions of subjects, has done more to retard the progress of this kingdom than all other causes put together." An eminent

1 Young's Tour in Ireland, vol. ii., p. 247.  
2 Lecky, vol. i., p. 152  
3 Young's Tour in Ireland, vol. ii., p. 141.  
4 Ib., p. 271, and see Volkaersbeke, La Lutte d'Irlande, p. 148.
French writer of the last century remarked that what distinguished this persecution of Irish Catholics from every other religious persecution in the world was that it was continued from motives of interest, after the disappearance of every political justification.¹

CHAPTER III.

The Lazy Irish.

THERE is no doubt that the Penal Laws had, in fact, a very bad effect upon the Irish character, considered industrially. "The Penal Laws, both in their enactment and in their subsequent relaxation, have affected materially the position of occupiers and proprietors of land. They interfered with almost every mode of dealing with landed property by those who professed the Roman Catholic religion, and so by creating a feeling of insecurity directly checked their industry." There is no need to quote contemporary authorities about the idleness, which seemed to be a characteristic of the Irish poor of the time, because this defect is universally recognised by writers on the subject. Crumpe, in 1793, says: "The moment an overseer quits them they invariably drop their work, take snuff, and fall into chat as to the news of the day. The most trivial occurrence, especially in the sporting line, will hurry them, unless restrained, from their occupation. Even the sedentary manufacturer will on such occasions quit his employment. Nothing is more common than to see a weaver in the North start from his loom on hearing a pack of hounds, and pursue them through a long and fatiguing chase. A low cunning and lying is very observable among them; and, as their accompaniment, may be mentioned a fawning flattery. The blunt honesty, the bold independence of the English yeoman are wanting."

1 Finding of Devon Commission, 1845.
The idleness of the Irish women was especially noticed by contemporary observers: "No women are apter to spin well than the Irish, who, labouring little in any kind with their hands, have their fingers more supple and soft than other women of the poorer condition among us." "As for the women and children, they are wholly useless everywhere except in the North." "In many parts of Ireland, more especially near the City of Dublin, the women and wives of the poor small farmers and labourers are generally of little or no service to the maintenance of their families, not applying themselves to any useful work." "The women and children are idle throughout the whole year, except for a few days on which they assist the men at the potatoes, and pilfer their landlord's corn in the harvest field." Arthur Young, speaking of the German Colonists, says: "The industry of the women is a perfect contrast to the Irish ladies in the cabins, who cannot be persuaded on any consideration even to make hay." Twiss heard when he was in Ireland, in 1775, that the evil was also felt among the middle class, and that no tradesman's wife would help him in his shop. "In Ireland the price of hosiers' work is much higher than in England on account of the idleness of the women and children—in England a workman's family lowers his necessity for wages, in Ireland it raises it." In the North, however, the women were largely employed in the linen trade. Strangely enough, on this point, Wakefield is at variance with all his contemporaries. "In regard to the women of Ireland," he said, "they work more like slaves than labourers."

One more symptom of the prevailing laziness was the large number of holidays which were customary in the country. As early as 1672, Petty complained that

1 Sir William Temple, Essay on Trade in Ireland, 1672.
3 Considerations for the Promotion of Agriculture, by R.L.V.M., Dublin, 1723.
4 Benefits of Inland Navigation, Dublin, 1761.
5 Young's Tour in Ireland, vol. i., p. 452.
6 Wallace, Manufactures of Ireland, 1793.
7 Twiss, Tour in Ireland, Vol. i., p. 518.
appointed by the law, do, one place with another, observe about 24 days more in the year in which they do no corporal labour, so as they have but about 266 working days." Dobbs says: "There are 26 Popish holidays kept in England, more than 32 kept by our law, but by our Irish calendar I apprehend there are many more; for in an almanack I saw some time ago in which the Papist holidays were distinguished, I observed it had 49 more than our law allowed; considering also that the common Irish Papists kept St. Patrick's Day, his wife's and his wife's mother's." It was ingeniously remarked that for about a hundred days in each year the labourers were the worst class of absentees. The same feature is noticeable in the cottiers' budgets, which will be found in Chapter IX. of this book, where it will be noticed that, right up to the end of the century, the number of working days remained rather small, and as late as 1814 Wakefield was of opinion that the labourers lost at least one-third of their time in this way. It would be wrong to conclude that the evil was confined to Catholics. "The mischief of many holidays, not only of the Popish ones, but even of many of our Church holydays, is really greater than most people are sensible of." Parliament made an effort to deal with this evil by an Act limiting the number of holidays in the year, and inflicting punishments on any labourer who refused to work on any other day. Beaumont remarks that this Act was suggestive of a condition of slavery—"elle fait ainsi une double violence, premièrent à l'homme qui a toujours le droit de donner ou de refuser son travail, secondement au catholique à qui sa conscience défend de travailler." Some admirers of the Irish people have denied this universal prevalence of idleness, but it seems to the present writer better to admit it, and to inquire into the causes that produced it. There is no doubt that any bad traits which the

1 The Political Anatomy of Ireland, 1672.
2 Inquiry into Causes of Ill-situation of Affairs in Ireland, Dublin, 1731. See The Tribune, Dublin, 1729, p. 104.
3 Wakefield, ii., 810; see Fitzpatrick, Life of Doyle, ii., 177.
4 Considerations for Promoting Agriculture, Dublin, 1723.
5 Will, iii., c. 19.
6 L'Irlande Sociale, p. 99.
people exhibited were the direct results of oppression and bad government; and it certainly seems fair to conclude that the blame attaching to these important defects of industrial character should not be attributed to those who suffered from them, but rather to those who caused them.

English writers, who studied Irish affairs, were frequently shocked at the state of demoralisation to which the people had sunk, and were at pains to suggest reasons to account for it, which might help to shift the blame from their own country. For instance, it was at one time suggested that the Irish were idle because they lived on potatoes, potatoes being such an easy crop to grow, that the great amount of leisure time they had left free rendered them idle. This idea seems to have been started by Sir William Temple: "In Ireland," he says, "by the largeness and plenty of food, all things necessary to life are so cheap that an industrious man, by two days' labour, may gain enough to feed him the rest of the week; which I take to be a very plain ground for the laziness attributed to the people." Crumpe says that this argument was frequently used by English writers, and frequently refuted. Young answered it as follows:—"Is it, or is it not, a matter of consequence for the great body of the people of a country to subsist on that species of food which is produced in greatest quantity by the smallest space of land? One only need state in order to answer the question: it certainly is an object of the highest consequence"; and, surely, it must be quite apparent that the people lived on potatoes because they were poor and miserable, and were idle because they had no opportunity of exercising their industry at anything else.

Macaulay, and other writers of his school, thought the Irish were idle because they were Catholics, and used the condition of Ireland in the eighteenth century as a terrible instance of the state to which Catholicism could reduce a country. It is true, in one sense, that the evils of Ireland were due to the people being Catholics—but not in the

1Observations on the United Provinces. 2 Tour in Ireland, ii., 45.
sense that Macaulay meant; they were idle because the whole spirit of the Penal Laws was to keep Catholics idle and poor; not because there is anything in Catholicism itself which makes people idle. Other writers, still more fertile in imagination, attributed the idleness of the Irish to the "Scythian blood in their veins."

It should surely be quite plain that the causes of this general idleness and industrial demoralisation were commercial oppression and the Penal Laws; and this was recognised by a great variety of contemporary writers some of whom were not at all inclined to palliate or excuse the bad points of the Irish. As early as 1605 Sir John Davies said: "Extortion and oppression hath been the true cause of the idleness of the Irish." Swift frequently refers to this: "In the matter of the industry of the people our misfortune is not altogether owing to our own fault, but to a million of discouragements." "We are apt to charge the Irish with laziness because we seldom find them employed; but then we don't consider that they have nothing to do . . . . the want of trade with us is rather owing to the cruel restraints we lie under than to any disqualification whatsoever in our inhabitants."

"That the natives are naturally industrious appears by the readiness and even zeal with which they came into the linen manufactory. That, if they could procure subsistence, they would multiply greatly, appears by their fruitfulness when no impediment restrains it. The country, therefore, would be fully peopled if proper methods were taken to subsist its inhabitants; or rather if they were suffered to exert their own efforts to subsist themselves."

An anonymous pamphleteer thus addresses the Irish nation in the year 1780: "You are not the blundering stupid wretches they say you are; you show more wisdom in the effort to clothe yourselves with your own wool and work than your philosophical and commercial sister did

1 Inquiry into Causes of Want of Tillage, Dublin, 1755.
2 Short View of the State of Ireland, 1727.
3 The Present Miserable State of Ireland, 1726
4 Caldwell, Trade of Ireland, 1779, p. 29.
in driving you to that measure. You are not by nature more lazy and indolent than she, but you have not been able to acquire habits of industry; they first manacle you and then blame you for not using your hands.”

“Great eulogiums,” says Hely Hutchinson, “on the virtues of our people, have been pronounced by some of the most respected English authors. Yet, indolence is objected to them by those who discourage their industry; they do not reflect that each of these proceeds from habit, and that the noble observation made on virtue in general is equally applicable to industry; the day that it loses its liberty half its vigour is gone.”

“Those who rendered our people idle are the first to ridicule them for that idleness. Whenever this country has been encouraged it showed great industry—witness our linens, our broad stuffs, our tabinets, our poplins—how groundless, therefore, is the charge of idleness.”

The whole solution of the problem is summed up in a sentence by Lord Sheffield:

“That men who have little to do should do little is not strange.”

“The truth is,” says a writer who describes himself as “A True Patriot,” “there is scarce any man living would be idle if we made it worth his while to be otherwise; but if men are to be beggars, they will most certainly choose to be idle beggars and not working ones.”

The connection between the Penal Laws and the idleness of the Irish people is strikingly illustrated by the marked improvement, which occurred after the partial relaxations of the later part of the century. “I think that no peasantry can be more industrious,” said G. P. Bushe in 1788, “and the continued frugality of those who have grown rich is perfectly astonishing. I am happy to observe that in my own memory the peasantry have grown more intelligent, more sturdy, and have more confidence in the law than they used to have.”

1 First Lines of Irish Interest, 1780. 2 Commercial Restraints, p. 127.
3 Mr. Gardiner’s Speech in the Irish House of Commons, 4th April, 1781.
4 View of Grievances of Ireland, by a True Patriot, Dublin, 1745.
writing in 1793, said: "The lower classes are becoming more industrious, more wealthy, more independent." Even Lord Clare, speaking in the Irish House of Lords on the 19th February, 1798, of the Southern and the Midland parts of Ireland, said: "During all the disturbances which prevailed in the North, we were in a state of profound tranquility and contentment there; the farmers had already tasted the sweets of sober industry; agriculture was increasing most rapidly, and the country wore the face of wealth and comfort and happiness." Newenham says that "after the relaxation of the penal code many wealthy Catholics hastened to transfer a considerable portion of their capital to land, to the great improvement of the agriculture of the country." "Our agriculture and tillage began to improve," says a pamphleteer writing in 1799, "from the moment that an intermission in the phrenzy of our religious prejudice allowed us to follow our own interests by taking off those restraints which clogged the industry and damped the spirit of the nation."
CHAPTER IV.

DRUNKENNESS IN IRELAND.

The Irish in the eighteenth century were addicted to a vice which was productive of grave economic consequences. This is not the place to discuss drunkenness from its moral aspect, but it is necessary to refer to it in view of the very deleterious effects which it had on the character of the people considered industrially. Amongst the gentry, especially amongst the lesser gentry, or middlemen, the consumption of French wine was remarked by all English visitors. Bishop Berkeley noticed that every little Irish gentleman kept a good stock of wine in his house, and Lord Chesterfield was also struck by the prevalence of claret drinking in Ireland. Towards the end of the century, however, the habit of drinking amongst the gentry declined. Arthur Young says “Drinking and duelling are the two charges which have long been alleged against the gentlemen of Ireland; but the change of manners that has taken place in that country is not generally known in England. Drunkenness ought no longer to be a reproach. . . . Nor have I ever been asked to drink a single glass more than I had an inclination for. I may go further and assert that hard drinking is very rare amongst people of fortune.” The decline in drinking amongst the gentry was also noticed by other travellers.

Much more disastrous to the prosperity of the country, than the excessive drinking of the upper class, was the

1 Chesterfield, Misc. Works, vol. iv., p. 349. 2 Young, Tour in Ireland, vol. ii., p. 339. 3 Campbell, Philosophical Survey of the South of Ireland, p. 39; Luckombe, Tour Through Ireland 1780; Twiss, Tour in Ireland in 1775; see Sir Jonah Barrington’s Personal Sketches.
habit of drinking spirits in excess which seems to have prevailed throughout the century amongst the lower classes. "It would be but a waste of words at this time to undertake to prove that the growing abuse of spirituous liquors has already nearly extirpated out of the minds of our common people all sense of religion, virtue and modesty; has often heated them to a degree of madness to commit riots, thefts, robberies, and murders; draws on our manufacturer to habits of idleness and incapacity for labour; and, to sum up all, destroys the lives of several thousands in this kingdom every year."

Drinking amongst the lower classes does not seem to have gone down towards the end of the century, but rather to have increased, and to have been at its worst about 1790. A terrible picture of this evil is to be found in a series of letters written by "Agricola" in 1791: "The present excessive use of whiskey in Ireland is the most dangerous plague which ever infected a nation; a malady that extends to every corner of the land, that sweeps away thousands in the prime of their days, and generates almost all the vices by which the poor are debilitated and deluded. Every seventh house in the City of Dublin and its suburbs is occupied in the sale of spirituous liquors; an equal number, at least, will be found in the other great towns of the kingdom, and a much greater number in the villages. Can it be supposed, on the mention of this fact, that universal drunkenness does not prevail among the lower orders of the people? They alone are the consumers, and it would be impossible that such numbers could live by the vile traffic was not the consumption immense." The following lines are from a leaflet which was circulated about the same time:—

"Look through the land from North to South,
And look from East to West,
And see what is to Irishmen
Of life the deadliest pest.

"It is not want, though that is bad,
Nor war, though that is worse,
But Ireland's sons endure, alas!
A self-inflicted curse.

"Go where you will throughout the realm,
You'll find that every vice
In cities, villages, and towns
From whisky takes its rise."

Crumpe, writing in 1793, says: "Drunkenness is an evil of considerable magnitude in the catalogue of national vices. It is one to which the lower Irish are peculiarly addicted, and that from which the most serious obstructions arise to their industry and employment." Some idea of the quantity of spirits consumed in the country may be gathered from the tables showing the imports of and the excise paid on home distilled spirits which will be found in Chapters XIX. and XXII. below; these figures are by no means exclusive, for, probably, a still greater part of the spirits used was the product of illicit stills, or was imported by smugglers.

The evil of drunkenness seems to have been worse in Dublin than in the country parts, and must have inflicted a very grave injury on the industry of the city. Rutty, in his Natural History of Dublin, writing in 1772, says: "With us in Dublin the use of spirituous liquors began to prevail from the year 1724, and thence to the present time has increased to an enormous degree." Frequent petitions were presented to Parliament by the employers and inhabitants of Dublin, complaining of the extent to which their businesses were injured by the prevailing drunkenness, and stating that in some trades the journeymen were idle half their time owing to intoxication.

"Who are the persons that drink spirits to excess?" writes a pamphleteer in 1771, "not the husbandmen, neither is it the linen manufacturers; the persons who make an
improper use of spirits are the city manufacturers." \\
"One-third of the shops of Dublin are vendors of spirits. The brawny and laborious porter and the robust and healthy artisan of England carry in their aspect a certain vindication of the salubrious air and healthy course of life; contrast them with the emaciated artificer of Dublin with long and hollow visage whose trembling hands can scarcely receive the alms which his miserable appearance extorts." In the debate, which took place in Parliament on the drink question in 1791, it was alleged that, whereas drunkenness had not increased in the country parts, it had grown in Dublin to a terrifying degree.

Although drinking was worse in the city than in the country, it was by no means confined to the former, and some of the country towns seem to have competed in this respect with the Metropolis. "In the outskirts of our market towns the worst of people, such generally as by their drunkenness have reduced themselves to beggary and are incapable or unwilling to work, open their cabins for the sale of spirituous liquors—not one in twenty of these retailers takes out any licence at all." After the passing of the Act in 1758, which, for a certain time, prohibited distillation, the evil of drunkenness in the country greatly increased owing to the number of illicit stills which everywhere sprang up. "A fiery spirit was distilled in all quarters, whereof the population drank so eagerly that scarce a week passed in which some did not die suddenly. Seven killed themselves at Londonderry by it, and at Castlederg, at a funeral, multitudes sat down to drink in the field at the chapel gate, to such excess that heaps lay wallowing in their drunkenness. Fourteen persons were given over for dead, and with difficulty saved. Two men died on the spot in most frightful convulsions." A petition was presented to Parliament from the Quakers

1 Serious Thoughts on a Subject Truly Interesting to the Welfare of Ireland, Dublin, 1771.
2 View of the State of Ireland, 1781.
3 I.P.D., vol. xi., p. 68.
5 A Dram for Drunkards, Dublin, 1759.
in 1780 complaining of the universal prevalence of drunkenness amongst people all over the country.

This evil was caused probably by the low price of spirits, the excise on which was only tenpence a gallon. "The exceeding cheapness of spirits is the principal cause of the poverty, and especially the increase of drunkenness amongst the common people; it is the parent of that wretchedness, poverty, and misery, which we see continually in our streets, where we find our manufacturers and tradesmen remaining idle from Saturday to Tuesday, and frequently to Wednesday, in every week in a state of intoxication, and, when their own indolence prevents their being able to earn sufficient to support their families, we find them running to whiskey houses and entering into combinations to force an increase of wages." In addition to the lowness of the price, the facility with which spirits could be obtained also contributed to the evil. Everybody could take out spirit licences, and they were usually obtained by a totally irresponsible class. It was stated by Grattan in 1791, that every seventh house in Dublin was licensed for the sale of spirits, and a far greater number in the country towns. Moreover, the licensing laws were not strictly enforced, and spirits were sold by a great many people who took out no licences at all. The whole country teemed with illicit stills, from which the most poisonous of spirits could be obtained at a low price; indeed, it was said that in certain districts every farmer was both his own distiller and retailer of spirits as well.

Parliament was not blind to this evil, and certain attempts were made to remedy it, but any effort in this direction was usually frustrated by the combination of the landowners, who thought the encouragement of distilling kept up the price of corn, and the Government, who were jealous of the revenues which they obtained from the...
excise on spirits. In 1771, heads of a bill were passed to suspend whiskey distilling, but this bill was prevented from passing into law by the English Government. The great difficulty of doing any good by legislation was illustrated in 1758, when an Act was passed forbidding distillation for a limited time, the immediate result of which, as we have seen, was greatly to increase the number of illicit stills to such an extent that many died throughout the country as a result of drinking the poisonous spirits distilled therein. Moreover, any prohibition of distilling, unless accompanied by a prohibition on the imports of spirits, would have been ineffectual. In 1791, an attempt was made to divert the taste of the people from spirits to beer by raising the excise on the former and lowering it on the latter, and by various other regulations. Apparently this measure met with some success, for Newenham, in 1809, was told that the people of Munster had very generally taken to beer in place of spirits. But distillation, nevertheless, still increased by leaps and bounds.

The prevalence of drunkenness in Ireland, although an unpleasant feature of Irish life, should not be taken to cast any slur upon the people. Nothing even approaching the horrors which gin-drinking attained in England, until put down by law, was ever known in Ireland. It was the extreme facility of getting spirits, together with the low price for which they could be bought, which brought about the state of affairs we have described. The temptation to drink was very great, and it would be unreasonable to expect that any people would have resisted it under the circumstances. Indeed, English workmen who came over towards the end of the century succumbed to the temptation even more completely than the Irish themselves, as they seem to have drunk themselves into a condition of such complete incapacity for work that they had to return to England owing to lack of employment.

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1 Froude, *English in Ireland*, vol. i., p. 663.  
2 Newenham, *View of Ireland*.  
3 See Chap. xxii., sec. (f) infra.  
4 *Observations on the Pernicious Consequences of Excessive Use of Spirituous Liquors*, Dublin, 1788.
Another cause which aggravated the evil was the enforced idleness of a great number of the workers; it is notorious that at the present day nothing produces such an increase of drunkenness as a period of unemployment. It is probable also that a small quantity of drink was sufficient to cause the most deleterious effects upon people who were ill-fed and under-nourished.
CHAPTER V.

COMBINATIONS OF LABOURERS.

The subject of combinations among labourers has been introduced in this place because the efficiency and economic value of the working classes depend to a large extent upon their industrial organisation. Of course, the legislation which was directed against combinations to raise wages was in no sense peculiar to Ireland, but was common to all countries during the eighteenth century. The Irish workers seem, however, to have made use of combinations to a somewhat unusual extent, and to have sought their own interests with a complete disregard of the peculiar difficulties under which Irish manufacture was carried on.

The labourers in the different trades were not organised on any definite system, but each locality had its own apprenticeship system. Generally speaking, outside corporate towns there were no rules governing the taking of apprentices at any trade; any artificer was at liberty to take an apprentice for as long as he pleased; and any man was entitled to set up in any branch of business without having served as an apprentice or worked as a journeyman at it.¹ In the towns, on the other hand, most of the trades were highly organised, but it must be remembered that such organisations were strictly confined to Protestants, and that the Catholic tradesmen had no rights under any of the Guild Laws which prevailed.² The journeymen

¹ Thoughts on the General Improvement of Ireland, Dublin, 1758.
² Scully, History of Penal Laws.
in most trades seem to have combined in a very successful manner to enforce their privileges, and, indeed, the rights of the workmen were frequently insisted on to an extent which seriously injured the prosperity of the business in which they were engaged.

These combinations amongst journeymen seem to have at times amounted to a public danger; the Irish Commons Journals contain numerous petitions presented to Parliament complaining of the extent to which industry was hampered thereby: and several Acts were passed with the object of restraining them. The necessity for these Acts is a proof of the existence of the combinations which existed from time to time; for instance, we may infer that there was some trouble with the colliers and miners in 1756, as an Act was passed in that year prohibiting combinations of workmen in the coal and other mines. Seven years later, combinations in the linen and other manufactures were rendered punishable by six months' imprisonment and whipping. In 1771, combinations by the journeymen tailors and shipwrights in Dublin were prohibited, while in 1779 all combinations amongst master manufacturers or journeymen were declared a public nuisance. This Act is interesting in view of the preamble, which sets out the many different species of damage which the combinations were accustomed to cause, such as the forcible prevention of the erection of new machinery, and the destruction of materials and stock-in-trade. The existence of striking and picketing may also be inferred from the provisions of the Act.

The evil of combinations was more acute in Dublin than elsewhere, as the apprenticeship system prevailed in that city, and was regarded with scrupulous jealousy on the part of those engaged in the trades. Much of the trouble was caused by the drunken habits of the workmen, who were accustomed to waste two or three days a week

1-79 Geo. II. c 17.
11 and 12 Geo. III. c 33.
19 and 20 Geo. III., c. 19.
23 Geo. III., c. 34.
through intoxication, and then to combine to raise the wages paid to them on the three or four days on which they worked. In the wool manufacture, particularly, if prices rose in the least, the workmen became idle, discontented, and greedy for higher wages, and would only work two or three days instead of five or six. Indeed, it looked at one time as if the woollen trade could not be carried on in Dublin at all, and provision was made by Parliament, by means of bounties and grants, for its removal to country districts. An English traveller, in 1791, noticed that "the trade of this City is greatly impeded by combinations, at a time when commercial enterprise is commencing to diffuse"; and in 1795 Judge Downes, addressing the City Grand Jury, referred to "combinations among the journeymen of the large trades in the City to raise their wages. These combinations, notwithstanding the repeated endeavours of Parliament to suppress them, have increased in a most alarming manner, and, at this moment, some important branches of trade are almost destroyed by them."

To some extent, no doubt, the evils of these combinations were increased by the fact that they were illegal, and that the members had to meet in secret, but, whatever the cause, they certainly were attended with considerable ill-feeling on both sides, and did considerable injury to the industrial progress of the City. An employer who gave evidence before the select committee on the combination laws in 1825 thus described the system of combinations which existed in Dublin about the time of the Union: "The men of each trade form themselves into an association, which they call a 'Body,' and in which they bind themselves either by oath or solemn engagement not to work for any employer under the prices then agreed on. Few men, except those who have served an apprenticeship of seven years, are admissible to the Body. Those who

1 I. C. J., vol. vii., p. 308.  2 View of the Present State of Ireland, London, 1780.  325 Geo. III., c. 48; 27 Geo. III., c. 13, etc.  4 Bowden, Tour Through Ireland.  5 Charge of Mr. Justice Downes to Grand Jury of City of Dublin, 1794.  6 Chart, Ireland from the Union to Catholic Emancipation.
refuse to join, or who may not have served the regular apprenticeship, or who recede from the Body, are all more or less marked men, and are in hourly dread of the vengeance of the men.\textsuperscript{11} The effect of this system was injurious in the extreme, as we shall see when we come to deal with the different industries; the cotton manufacture was paralysed in Dublin on account of the attitude taken up by the journeymen employed; the revival of the silk industry after the depression of 1798 was rendered impossible by means of combinations;\textsuperscript{3} and the shipbuilding industry was driven out of Dublin on account of the unreasonable demands by the journeymen and apprentices.\textsuperscript{3} In order that they might get on with their businesses, employers were frequently driven to importing men from England and Scotland.\textsuperscript{3}

It must not be imagined that the evil was altogether confined to Dublin, although it was certainly worse there than elsewhere. In 1762 great trouble arose in the linen districts of the North, owing to the weavers' objection to the new method of inspecting and sealing webs, and serious riots took place.\textsuperscript{4} Owing to some unexplained jealousy, the men of Munster and Leinster combined not to work with each other,\textsuperscript{3} and the Whiteboy troubles were to some extent aggravated by disputes over the price of labour.\textsuperscript{4} It was said that Mr. Brooke, who introduced the cotton industry into County Kildare, was several times in danger of losing his life, because he refused to give a higher wage than was customary in Manchester.\textsuperscript{7}

Of course, these combinations had the result, for the time being at least, of improving the condition of the workers. As we shall see in a later chapter, wages in Irish industries were, on the whole, higher than in English. The good results gained by the workmen, however, were deceptive, as the industries could not be carried on when

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{1}Murray, Commercial Relations, p. 351. \textsuperscript{2}Webb, Industrial Dublin since 1698, p. 81. \textsuperscript{3}Committee on Artificers and Machinery, 1824, vol. v. \textsuperscript{4}Smith, Ireland and Her Staple Industry, p. 78. \textsuperscript{5}I.C.T., vol. iv., app. p. 182 \textsuperscript{6}Foster's Speech on the Union, p. 73.}
such high wages were demanded; and the individual benefit derived from the combinations was more than outweighed by the damage which they inflicted on the industry of the country as a whole.
PART II.
THE LAND.

CHAPTER VI.
The Land System.

There is no doubt that the feature of Irish life in the eighteenth century, which produced the most important economic consequences, and which had the most far-reaching effects on the progress of the country, was the system of land tenure which prevailed. Much has been written about the Irish land question, and it is a subject on which it is impossible to say anything which has not been repeatedly said before. The chief value of an account of the state of affairs in the eighteenth century is that it presents a view of this system at its worst. The whole Irish land question may be regarded as a disease—a disease which was produced by a multiplicity of causes in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and which was, to a large extent, cured by a series of remedies in the nineteenth and twentieth. The eighteenth century was the period during which the sufferer was stricken down; all the causes producing the malady had had time to show their results, while no application of a remedy had as yet been attempted. It is, therefore, the period most suitable for a study of the symptoms. The following chapters are, indeed, nothing more than a study of the symptoms of the diseased Irish land system during the time when those symptoms were most acute. No attempt is made to deal with the broader subject of the general history of land tenure in Ireland, or with the remedies which, at a later date, were attempted: the former subject has been fully dealt with by Dr. Sigerson and others,
while the latter belongs to the history of the nineteenth century in Ireland.

The two great factors which helped to bring about the injurious land system which we are about to describe were the substitution of English for Irish law, and the confiscations. It is not necessary to examine the ancient Irish tenure of land in this book, beyond saying that, in general, separate absolute rights of property were unknown. The Brehon laws indicate, indeed, that numerous exceptions were beginning to appear to this general rule, and it is highly probable that, had the land system been allowed to develop naturally, ownership in severalty would have been ultimately evolved. The many attacks which were made upon the ancient system, however, prevented its normal evolution, and tended to stereotype its code. It is certain, at any rate, that, at the date when Sir John Davies described the Irish tenure, separate property formed no part of the system. It was just at this time that the whole system was swept away, and English tenures substituted by two decisions of the Irish law courts. "By these two decisions the law of a nation, which, whatever its faults, was ingrained in their national life, and regarded by them with that unreasoning devotion which is one of the curious contradictions of the Celtic nature, was swept away."1

In consequence of the substitution of feudal for native tenures, it became necessary for the Government to redistribute the lands in fee amongst the former occupiers—"a land problem in which each free member of a tribe who received land would think that he got no more than his due, while those who were neglected, or whose portions not being to their taste must have longed for the old system of redistribution, would imagine themselves forcibly robbed."2 Sir John Davies carefully describes the system upon which this redistribution proceeded:—"We made every inquiry what portion of land or services

1 Montgomery, History of Irish Land Tenures, p. 35.
2 Montgomery, p. 69.
3 Montgomery, p. 70.
every man held in every ballibetagh (an ancient Irish land measure); and after naming such as had the greatest quantity of land and so descending into such as possess only two taths; there we stayed, for lower we could not go." A commission was then held to inquire into "the quantity and limits of the lands whereof the Irish lord is the reputed owner. Next, how much he himself doth hold in demesne, and how much is possessed by his tenants and followers. And thirdly, what Customs' duties and services he doth yearly receive out of those lands. This inquisition being made and returned, the lands which are found to be the lord's proper possessions in demesne are drawn into a Particular; and his Irish duties as coshererings, cessings, rents of butter and oatmeal, and the like are reasonably valued and reduced into certain sums of money to be paid yearly in lieu thereof. This being done, a grant is passed, not of the whole country, as in former times, but of those lands only which are found in the lord's possession, and of those certain sums of money as rent issuing out of the rest. But the lands which are found to be possessed by the tenants are left unto them, respectively charged with these certain rents only in lieu of all uncertain Irish exactions."

Although this re-adjustment was doubtless carried through as fairly as possible, and was a distinct improvement on the system which had prevailed in Elizabeth's reign of regranting the whole tribal territory to the chief, without paying any regard to the rights of the other tribesmen; still, it was inevitable that it should be unpopular with the majority of the old occupiers. "It is necessary to bear in mind the position of the next generation of mere Irish to those to whom the grants were made. Thus A, a free member of the sept, receives a grant of lands in fee—he has issue four sons, B. C. D. E. Under the old system, each on his birth would have become a member of the sept; he would have looked on all the lands of the sept as in a sense his

1Davies' Discoverie.
property, since from them in due course his allotment would have been received. Under the new system, B, the eldest, is alone entitled to lands, and these only on his father's death. Assuredly, C, D, and E (and probably B also) would think that the hated English had robbed them of their birthright."

From this point of view, therefore, the abolition of Irish law and the substitution of English law must have worked a great deal of injustice, but it is probable that, if the new system thus introduced had been allowed to progress uninterruptedly, the land system would ultimately have become fairly stable. After all, the lands were given to the original proprietors, although the proportion in which they were held was altered; by the system of confiscations, on the other hand, the ancient Irish landholders were completely dispossessed. The confiscations have been dealt with in a recently-published book devoted exclusively to that subject, and there is no necessity to go over the same ground again. It is enough to say that, whereas, before the Rebellion of 1641, two-thirds of the land of Ireland was in the hands of the old Irish or Anglo-Irish proprietors, after the Act of Settlement, not more than one-third was so owned. The full evil of the confiscations, however, was not felt until the beginning of the reign of William III., for, during the years between the Act or Settlement and the Revolution, the tenants on the confiscated lands were in a relatively good position owing to the customs which were growing up, and which were becoming generally recognised. After the Revolution, however, the whole system was changed for the worse; in addition to a further series of confiscation of Catholics' lands, which had the effect of reducing the amount of land held by the old proprietors to a small fraction of the total land of the country, an Act of Parliament was passed in 1605 which aimed to destroy these customary rights. By this statute it was

1 Montgomery, p. 70.  
2 Butler, Confiscations in Irish History.  
3 Sigerson, History of Irish Land Tenures, p. 103.
provided that "All leases, estates, interests, freeholds or terms of years or any uncertain interest of, into, or out of any messuage, manors, lands, tenements or hereditaments made and created by livery of seisin only or by parole, and not put in writing and signed by the parties so making and creating the same . . . . shall have the force and effect of leases and estates at will only." This statute undoubtedly had the effect of reducing a great number of the tenants throughout Ireland to the position of mere tenants at will, as parole lettings, or lettings effected by livery of seisin had been very common throughout the years preceding the Act. That this statute was not framed from any desire to regularise the law in respect of parole or written leases, but was simply passed in the interests of landlords who wished to rack their tenants as much as possible, is evidenced by a section which excepts from its operation "all leases not exceeding a term of three years whereupon the rent reserved shall amount to two-thirds at least of the thing demised."

The result of the joint operation of these two causes, the change of law and the confiscations, was that, at the beginning of the eighteenth century, the greater part of the Irish land was owned by a class of alien landlords, and that numbers of the tenants were degraded to the position of mere tenants at will. The land, instead of being a property, the ownership of which entailed duties as well as rights, was looked upon simply as a source of revenue. "The altered circumstances of society threw estates into the markets or made them the prey of political intrigue; and the successful speculator, when his prize was secured, carried the profits to enjoy them where he pleased. Enormous estates had fallen to English companies and capitalists in a country where they never meant to set their foot. Irish noblemen and gentlemen, as from increasing intercourse they became conscious of the contrast between the two countries, grew impatient of the wretchedness in their Irish homes and established

1 Sigerson, p. 104. 27 Will. III., sess. 1., chap. 12.
themselves in London or Bath. Ireland was robbed of the men whom she could least afford to lose and whose estates were managed on the terms which would yield the largest profit to the owner with the smallest outlay of attention.

The writers of the two most complete histories of Irish land tenures have both arrived at the conclusion that the condition of affairs at the beginning of the eighteenth century was almost the same as it had been in England in the time of William the Conqueror. "To possess an accurate idea of Ireland's condition," says Dr. Sigerson, "it must be remembered that William III. was a William the Conqueror amongst whose followers a large portion of the country was shared." "The Saxon and the Norman, like the Irish and the English, present the spectacle of a conquered race settled on the land of their birth, but ruled by the stranger conqueror. In the former case not less than in the latter, sentiments of national hatred would tend to make the conqueror an oppressor, and the Norman yoke was exceedingly heavy; yet slowly but surely the villein established his rights in the soil, while the Irish peasant remained a precarious holder. The villein cultivator of the lord's demesne was but little in status above the mere beast of the field. Unable to leave the land without the lord's permission, if he ran away or was purloined he could be recovered by action; holding his land at first at the unfettered will of the lord, by the meanest services, uncertain both in time and quantity; prohibited from acquiring property, and liable if he even allowed the marriage of his daughter without the lord's permission to an action for damages for purloining property; could a more debased condition be possible? Yet he reached security of tenure. The express or implied manumission by the lord, the growth of the customary rights in the holding, and the recognition of his title by the manorial courts, built him by slow degrees a fortress against unjust exactions and summary ejectments. There

1 Froude, vol. i., p. 308. 2 p. 139.
is no trace of a similar growth of proprietary rights in the case of the Irish tenant at will."

The last sentence in the passage just quoted suggests an interesting question—why was it that the Irish land tenures did not become ameliorated in the course of time, just as the English land tenures had done? The answer undoubtedly is that progress in this direction was hindered by the absence of personal relationship between the landlords and the tenants. "The curse of absentee owners is responsible in a great measure for that total want amongst the lowest tenants of continuity in their holdings, which prevented the growth of customary rights. That such rights would have arisen in the natural course of events, had even the semblance of that consideration which always springs from personal relationships been present, is clear. In Ulster, customary rights arose, so universal as to lead eventually to their formal recognition by the Legislature. The greatest wrongs inflicted over most of Ireland by the landlords upon the tenants were the deeds which prevented such a continuity of possession as would have fostered customary traits." The landlords were either Englishmen who resided in England and managed their estates by agents, or, if they were Irish, they were Protestants, and were thus to a large extent interested in the repression of their Catholic tenants. "In these two ways all friendly connection between the landlord and the tenant of the soil was broken; either the landlord was at a distance, and was represented by an oppressive, grasping middleman, or, if on the spot, he was a member of a dominant and privileged caste, who was as much bound by his official duties as he was prompted by the opinion of his order, by the love of power, and by the feeling of irresponsibility, to oppress, degrade, and trample on his Catholic tenants. Hence it was impossible that the different classes of society should be shaded into one another: that the rich should pass into the poor by that insensible gradation which is found in

1 Montgomery, p. 91.
2 Montgomery, p. 92. and see Butt, Irish People and Irish Land, p. 64.
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England; or that the amicable relations should even be formed between landlord and tenant which have subsisted for some centuries in the latter country. . . . Any person who had attentively studied the state of society in England and Ireland at the opening of the eighteenth century might, without any remarkable gift of political prophecy, have foretold the respective destinies of the agricultural population in either country." Two further causes which operated to prevent the growth of customary rights were, first, the growth of pasture, whereby large numbers of small tenants were displaced so that the land might be given over to cattle; and secondly, the anxiety on the part of the landlords to have Protestant tenants on their estates in order to secure the return to Parliament of their nominees, which frequently led to the summary ejectment of bodies of Catholic holders.

The causes which we have mentioned would have been, in themselves, sufficient to produce most of the land troubles which characterised the eighteenth century, but the evil was aggravated by two other causes—the Penal Laws and the commercial restrictions. "Designed as it was to reduce to the lowest grade the scanty remnant of those Catholics who retained recognisable proprietary rights in the soil, the result of the Penal Code was to increase the class of those dependent upon the land for their sustenance. A cursory glance at some of these provisions, which constitute such a blot on the Statute Book, will illustrate this proposition. Catholics were prohibited from taking a mortgage of freehold lands, and, if they succeeded to such, were obliged to conform within six months or forfeit to the next Protestant heir. Their lands were gavelled and descended to the children equally, but subject to the proviso that if the eldest son conformed, the father merely had an estate for life, the reversion in fee resting with the son. A Protestant heiress who married a Catholic forfeited her lands to her next of kin, and a Protestant man marrying a Papist became himself liable

1 Lewis, Irish Disturbances, p. 49.  
2 Montgomery, p. 94.
to all the disabilities of a Catholic. The whole weight of the law tended to reduce the Catholic interest in the land to mere tenancies at will."

The commercial restrictions, which had the effect of suppressing most of the manufactures of the country, tended in the same direction by driving the population on to the soil for support; this is so obvious that it need not be emphasised.

The main evils then which characterised the Irish land system were an alien proprietorship and a degraded tenantry. Most of the large proprietors were either English, or of English descent, and many of them resided altogether in England, thus becoming absentees; this led to the management of their estates by agents, or to the custom of making long leases at comparatively low rents to Irish residents who let the lands to the actual cultivators at a profit—these were the middlemen. The tenantry, on the other hand, being mostly Catholics, and consequently prohibited by the Penal Laws from acquiring a permanent interest, became tenants for terms so short as to offer them no inducement to improve their holdings; while on a still lower plane came the cottiers who were the labouring class, and the remuneration for whose labour consisted of a miserable wage supplemented by a tiny plot of land, by the culture of which, in their spare time, they had to grow sufficient potatoes to support themselves and their families. As we shall see, from time to time, the cottiers were evicted in large numbers from their miserable holdings; these evictions created a large class of "landless" people, the "spalpeens," or migrant labourers, and the beggars. The condition of these different classes of possessors and dispossessed forms the subject of the following three chapters.

CHAPTER VII.

Absenteeism.

The practice of the great Irish landlords living in England had been complained of as a grievance at a very early date. In the reign of Richard II. an ordinance was passed enacting that Irish landlords who were absent from Ireland should forfeit two-thirds of their rents to the King until such time as they should go to reside on their lands or provide sufficient men to defend them against invasion. Absentee office-holders were also declared to forfeit their offices. A statute of 1635 provided that "all persons dwelling in England or elsewhere who shall obtain titles of honour among the nobility of Ireland shall, though resident in England or elsewhere, contribute to all public charges levied by Parliament, rateably and in such manner as others of their rank resident in this Kingdom are, or shall be, liable unto." These laws, though never repealed, were allowed to fall into complete desuetude. In 1682 the amount of rent remitted to absentees was calculated at £78,752 per annum, and ten years later it had grown to £91,652.

During the eighteenth century the evil of absenteeism grew to an altogether unprecedented extent. "The causes of the evil," says Lecky, "are not difficult to discover. A very large part of the confiscated land was given to Englishmen who had property and duties in England, and habitually lived there. Much of it also came into the

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1 Sir John Davies, Historical Relations.
2 10 Car. I., c. 21.
3 Prior, List of Absentees, 1729.
4 Interest of Ireland, by Richard Lawrence, London, 1682.
5 Remarks on Affairs and Trade of England and Ireland, London, 1691.
market, and, as there was very little capital in Ireland, and as Catholics were forbidden to purchase land, this also passed largely into the hands of English speculators. Besides, the level of civilisation was much higher in England than in Ireland. The position of a Protestant landlord, living in the midst of a degraded population, differing from him in religion and race, had but little attraction; the political situation of the country closed to Irish gentlemen nearly every avenue of honourable ambition, and, owing to a long series of very evident causes, the sentiment of public duty was deplorably low. The economic evil was not checked by any considerable movement in the opposite direction, for after the suppression of the Irish manufactures, but few Englishmen, except those who obtained Irish offices, came to Ireland."

Swift frequently called attention to the growth of absenteeism in his time: "The rents of land in Ireland, since they have been of late so enormously raised, and screwed up, may be computed at about two millions; whereof one-third part, at least, is directly transmitted to those who are perpetual absentees in England. . . . Upon this subject of perpetual absentees, I have spent some time in very insignificant reflections; and considering the usual motives of human actions, which are pleasure, profit, and ambition, I cannot yet comprehend how those persons find their account in any of the three. I speak not of those English peers or gentlemen, who, besides their estates at home, have possessions here; for, in that case, the matter is desperate; but I mean those lords, and wealthy knights, or squires, whose birth, and partly their education, and all their fortune (except some trifle, and that in very few instances) are in this kingdom. I knew many of them well enough, during several years, when I resided in England; and truly I could not discover that the figure they made was, by any means, a subject for envy; at least it gave me two very different passions; for, excepting the advantage of going now and then to

1 Lecky, vol. i., p. 213.
an opera, or sometimes appearing behind a crowd at
court, or adding to the ring of coaches in Hyde Park, or
losing their money at the Chocolate House, or getting
news, votes, and minutes, about five days before us in
Dublin, I say, besides these, and a few other privileges
of less importance, their temptations to live in London
were beyond my knowledge or conception. And I used
to wonder how a man of birth and spirit could endure
to be wholly insignificant and obscure in a foreign
country, when he might live with lustre in his own; and
even at less than half that expense, which he strains him-
self to make, without obtaining any one end; except that
which happened to the frog when he would needs con-
tend for size with the ox. I have been told by scholars
that Cæsar said he would rather be the first man in I
know not what village, than the second in Rome. This,
perhaps, was a thought only fit for Cæsar: but to be
preceded by thousands, and neglected by millions; to
be wholly without power, figure, influence, honour, credit,
or distinction, is not, in my poor opinion, a very amiable
situation of life, to a person of title, or wealth, who can
so cheaply and easily shine in his native country."

In 1729 a list of the absentees was drawn up by Prior, who
divided them into four classes. The first class comprised
those who had more than £400 a year, and who lived con-
stantly abroad and were seldom or never seen in Ireland;
the second class, those who lived generally abroad visiting
Ireland for a month or two in the year; the third class
those who lived generally in Ireland, but who were absent
at the time that the list was made; and the fourth class
included all absentees with incomes under £400 a year.
The rents paid to the absentees of the first class amounted
to £204,000, to those of the second class £91,800, to those
of the third class £54,000, and to those of the fourth class
£40,000. These figures did not include the large sums
which were annually remitted to pensioners and office
holders living abroad. Another edition of this list was

1 Seventh Drapier's Letter.
published in 1769, when the respective amounts were put as follows:—First class, £371,900; second class, £108,300; third class, £92,000, and fourth class, £60,000. In 1779, Arthur Young estimated the rents of absentees at £73,122,000. "It is not," he says, "the simple amount of the rental being remitted into another country, but the damp on all sorts of improvements and the total want of countenance and encouragement which the lower class of tenantry labour under. The landlord at such a great distance is out of the way of all complaints: miseries of which he can see nothing and probably hear as little can make no impression. All that is required of the agent is to be punctual in his remittances: and as to the people who pay him, they are too often welcome to go to the devil provided their rents could be paid from his territories." Hely Hutchinson calculated that the sum remitted to Great Britain for rents, interest on money, taxes, salaries, and profits of offices amounted from 1768 to 1773 to £1,100,000 yearly. In 1783 the amount of the absentee rents was put at £1,227,480, while in 1797 it had grown to £1,500,000. The rate of increase would undoubtedly have been much greater had it not been for the establishment of Grattan’s Parliament, which brought back to Dublin a great number of those who had previously gone to live in England, thus checking to some extent the flow in the contrary direction. The number of absentees increased after the Rebellion, and, of course, the evil became worse after the Union than it had ever been before. As early as 1804, Newenham calculated that over two million a year was remitted to England in rents. It was suggested that the extent of this evil was largely exaggerated, but the general opinion seems to have been that the absentee rents amounted to a very large sum.

The suggestion that absentees should be taxed was

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4 Essay on Population, and see O’Driscoll’s Views of Ireland, 1823.
5 Speech of Lord Sheffield in English House of Commons, 22nd April, 1799.
frequently made throughout the century, but the opposition of the landed gentry in Parliament, who numbered amongst themselves some of the worst offenders, was always strong enough to prevent the imposition of such a tax. In 1729 a tax of four shillings in the pound was placed on all salaries, profits of employment, and fees payable to persons who were absent from Ireland more than six months in the year, but this did not touch rents of land remitted. The popular party was at all times in favour of a tax, especially in view of the fact that there was no land tax in Ireland. Thus an Irish land-owner resident in England avoided payment of the English land tax by reason of his property being situated in Ireland, and of the Irish taxes on consumption, as he was not resident in the country. The justice of an absentee tax was insisted on by no less an authority than Adam Smith: "Those who live in another country contribute nothing, by their consumption, towards the support of the government of that country in which is situated the source of their revenue. If in this latter country there should be no land tax, nor any considerable duty upon the transference either of movable or of immovable property, as is the case in Ireland, such absentees may derive a great benefit from the protection of a government to the support of which they do not contribute a single shilling. This inequality is likely to be greatest in a country of which the government is in some respects subordinate and dependent upon that of some other. The people who possess the most extensive property in the dependent, will in this case generally choose to live in the governing country. Ireland is precisely in this situation, and we cannot, therefore, wonder that the proposal of a tax upon absentees should be so very popular in that country. It might, perhaps, be a little difficult to ascertain either what sort or what degree of absence would subject a man to be taxed as an absentee, or at what precise time the tax should either begin or end. If you except, however, this very peculiar situation, any inequality in the contribution
of individuals which can arise from such taxes is much more than compensated by the very circumstance which occasions that inequality, the circumstance that every man’s contribution is altogether voluntary, it being altogether in his power either to consume or not to consume the commodity taxed.”

In 1773 financial distress called for a great increase in revenue, and Lord Harcourt, who was Viceroy at the time, proposed a tax of two shillings in the pound on the rents of absent proprietors. The Tory party in England, although they did not like the proposed tax, were prepared to agree to it if it were passed in the Irish Parliament; but the Whigs, who included in their numbers many of the greatest of the Irish absentee proprietors, opposed the tax with great vigour. A remonstrance signed by Lords Devonshire, Rockingham, Bessborough, Miltown and Upper Ossory, which Lecky describes as one of the most perfect State papers of the time, and which was probably composed by Edmund Burke, was presented to Lord North. All the arguments against the tax were stated with great ability, the principal one being that a proprietor of land was entitled to choose his own residence in any part of the King’s dominions that he pleased. It was pointed out that many of the proprietors of land in the North of England lived in London, and it was suggested that a restriction on this species of absenteeism would be the logical conclusion of the proposed measure. This argument, of course, rested on a fallacy. Although Ireland and England were under the same crown, in money matters they were two distinct countries, as they had separate exchequers, different taxes, and distinct, indeed hostile, commercial systems. This remonstrance was seconded by the great English companies, which were large proprietors of Irish lands.

Lord Harcourt, being apprised of the strong English opposition, took care that the measure, which he himself had suggested, should not be passed in the Irish House.

of Commons. "In consequence of this determination," he wrote, "we have used our industry to divert the progress of the tax for the present, and we mean to allow it to be moved in the House by a certain wild, inconsistent gentleman, who has signified such to be his intention, which will be sufficient to damn the measure were no other means employed against it." Who this member was we are unable to say: some say it was Flood, others Fortescue. However, the ruse was a success, for the measure was rejected in the House by a majority of fourteen.¹

A tax on absentees was again brought forward by Molyneux in 1783, but was lost by an overwhelming majority.² In 1797 it was brought forward by Vandeleur, who, in proposing the tax, referred to the extra taxation occasioned by the war, and pointed out that it fell altogether on the heads of the poor. He went on to show the great evils which had been caused in the country by the absentees, and stated that all the disturbances of the last few years had commenced on the lands of absentee landlords. His proposal of a tax of two shillings in the pound, however, was defeated by 122 votes to 49.³ The same gentleman brought the matter forward again in the early part of 1798, but his proposal was defeated by a large majority, and no further attempt was made during the century to impose a tax of this kind.

¹ Lecky, vol. ii., p. 132; Charlemont MSS., I., 36.
² Plowden, vol. ii., p. 64.
CHAPTER VIII.

LANDLORDS, MIDDLEMEN, AND FARMERS.

ONE of the worst results of absenteeism was the system of middlemen which it produced. The landlords, who lived at a distance from their estates, preferred a moderate and secure income, coming from a few large tenants, to a larger income from a number of small ones, with the additional trouble of managing their estates themselves. They consequently were in the habit of leasing their land in large tracts to substantial holders for terms of nine hundred and ninety-nine years, or for ever, by means of fee farm grants. Once having parted with their land, they were unable to insist upon the tenant occupying the holding himself, and, as the value of land tended to rise, the occupiers found that they could sublet the lands at a profit. In this way, the middleman became a sort of agent, "necessary by the indolence of the landlord, who will not be at the trouble of judging for himself of the character and responsibility of his tenants, nor of keeping small accounts—a most expensive agent, as his profit generally amounts to seven shillings in the pound." The habit of leasing to middlemen was, no doubt, prevalent on the estates of some of the large resident gentry, but, on the whole, middlemen were much more common on, indeed scarcely ever absent from, the estates of absenteees. The evil was not confined to one middleman: there were often three or four between the owner of the

1 Project for Re-Establishing Internal Peace in Ireland, by Whitley Stokes, 1799.
2 Foster's Speech on the Union.
land and the actual occupier: needless to say, the rent became higher at each transaction, until the ultimate occupier was burdened with a rent far higher than he would have been asked to pay if he held immediately from the owner of the soil.

The middleman had not the interest in the land which a resident landlord would have had, his only desire being to extract for himself as large a profit as possible during the continuance of his holding, and the system of letting land which prevailed in Ireland enabled a middleman, if so disposed, to make a very large profit. In England, when a landlord took a tenant, the former invariably let the farm in an improved condition, having laid out considerable capital on it: at the end of the lease, moreover, a good tenant was almost certain of getting a renewal of his holding, on the same terms, or at a very slightly increased rent. In Ireland, on the other hand, the land was let in its unimproved state: the tenant was expected to stock the farm, and to put it into a state fit for cultivation, without any assistance from the landlord, whose sole part in the transaction was to extort the rent when it became due. The system of renewals which prevailed in England was quite unknown in Ireland: at the end of the tenancy it was the custom to put up the lands for auction without any regard to the claims of the occupying tenant. This custom of auctioning farms over the head of the outgoing tenant was a characteristic feature of the Irish land system and was known as "canting."

As soon as the lease of a farm fell in, the landlord, who was in nine cases out of ten himself a tenant, in short, a middleman, put the land up for public auction. Sometimes, proposals were invited from prospective tenants. These were usually under seal, so that no proposer knew what his neighbour offered, the result being that, in their anxiety to get a piece of land, the unfortunate tenants often offered rents which they were quite unable to pay, without subjecting themselves to extreme hardship. There is ample evidence of the universal prevalence of this
custom. Swift describes the landlords canting their own lands upon short leases and sacrificing their oldest tenants for a penny an acre advance. In 1729, Dobbs stated that "agents, particularly of those small noblemen and gentlemen who resided in England, or at a distance from their estates, who have been empowered to treat with tenants and give leases, to encourage themselves with their employers, have in some places taken proposals sealed up under a promise to divulge none of the names but that of the person who offered the most, and whose proposal was consequently accepted." "When a lease has expired," says Crumpe, writing in 1793, "the lands are advertised to be let to the highest bidder: the proposals of each are kept secret, and by this unfair species of auction a promise of an exorbitant rent is obtained, very frequently to the exclusion of the former occupier, who is considered as having no stronger claim to them than the most perfect stranger, unless he exceed him in the amount of the proposed rent." "It is now the almost universal mode of letting land in Ireland for the landlord to advertise his land at the expiration of a lease to be let to the best and highest bidder, and to let them accordingly."

The result of this system of canting was injurious in the extreme. In the first place, the land, instead of being let at a proper value, was usually let at a rent higher than it could reasonably bear. The tenant, having undertaken to pay this high rent, was devoid of any spare money wherewith to stock the land. The result, as we shall see, was a wretchedly low state of cultivation throughout the country. But even tenants who had capital to spare had no motive for investing much in the improvement of land, which would cease to be theirs in a short time. In England, the tenant farmer was encouraged to improve his land, knowing that, at the expiration of his lease, he would be granted a renewal at

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1 Proposal for Universal Use of Irish Manufactures, 1720.
2 Dobbs, Trade of Ireland.
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a reasonable rent; but in Ireland the tenant knew that the only consequence of improving his land would be that in a few years some poor wretch without capital or resource would be tempted to bid some utterly exorbitant sum for a lease of it. Indeed, it was common towards the end of a letting deliberately to waste the land so that it might fetch a lower price when it came to be auctioned: "The tenant, when he finds he cannot renew upon his own terms, towards the latter end of his lease does all he can to destroy his farm by turning up all the greensward, by taking false crops, neglecting to manure it, not giving it due seasons, and suffering the houses and fences to run to decay." "It is, indeed, the shameful practice," wrote Swift, "of too many Irish farmers to wear out their ground with a plough; while, either through poverty, laziness, or ignorance, they neither take care to manure it as they ought, nor give time to any part of the land to recover of this: and when their leases are near expired, being assured that their landlords will not renew, they plough even the meadows and make such a havoc that many landlords are considerable sufferers by it."2

The result of this system of letting land was, therefore, disastrous in the extreme. The landlord did not improve his land, and the tenant had no inducement to do so, knowing that any improvements effected would simply have the result of raising the price of the land at the public "cant," which would take place at the end of a few years. It is possible that this discouragement might have been got over if the tenant was sure of enjoying the land himself for a long term, but the almost universal custom was to grant nothing but leases so short as to give the tenant no opportunity to reap the reward of his own improvements during the duration of his term. It must be remembered that the vast majority of the tenant class were Catholics, and, as we have seen, prior to 1778 no Catholic could obtain a lease for more than

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1 Considerations for Promoting Agriculture, by Lord Molesworth, Dublin, 1723.
2 Answer to a Paper called a Memorial, 1728.
thirty-one years, and could only obtain a lease for a shorter period on the condition that, if at any time the holding were improved so that the rent became less than two-thirds of the improved annual value, the landlord was entitled to re-enter. It is true that there was nothing to prevent a Protestant being granted a much longer lease, but, as a matter of fact, the general custom was only to grant Protestants leases for the same term that could legally be granted to Catholics, and, in any event, the only result of giving a long lease under the existing system would have been to create a new middleman. In 1778, Catholics were enabled to take long leases, but the habit of granting short leases had become so fixed that for some years the change of the law did not make very much difference to the tenantry.

The Octennial Act of 1768, which provided that Parliament should be dissolved every eight years, acted as an inducement to landowners, who wished to have voters on their estates, to grant leases for lives—which, being freehold tenure, qualified the holder to vote. But a lease for lives was a very uncertain tenure, and not one calculated to tempt tenants to lay out sums of money on their lands, which might be taken away from them by the unexpected death of one of the "lives."

The tenants, therefore, had no inducement to improve their lands, and indeed, even if they had the inducement, they had not the means wherewith to do so. The result of the canting system was that an inflated value was given to the land, and tenants, in their anxiety to acquire a holding, offered a rent so high that its payment exhausted their whole available means, and left them no capital wherewith to stock or improve their holdings. Incidentally, the worst tenants usually procured the lands in preference to the best, as the former would improvidently offer to pay a rent higher than the land could really bear, and which, therefore, would not be offered by a prudent farmer. The tenants were, indeed, afraid to improve their lands or to show any outward signs of prosperity, as they
knew that the only result of this prosperity would be to increase the rent immediately. A writer in 1724 described the tenant as "a poor animal tucked up in a voluminous lease, large enough to be his winding sheet, afraid to ride a likely garron, to put a good coat on his back, to eat a flesh dinner once a week, or to keep a cup of small ale in his house for fear of having his land taken from him." "The landlords," wrote Swift, "either by their ignorance or greediness to make large rent rolls, usually acted so ill, as we see by experience, that there is not one tenant in five hundred who hath made any improvement worth mentioning, for which I appeal to any man who rides through the Kingdom whether anything is to be found among the tenants but beggary and desolation; the cabins of the Scotch themselves in Ulster being as dirty and miserable as those of the wildest Irish. Whereas good firm penal clauses for improvement with a tolerably easy rent and reasonable period of time would, in twenty years, increase the lands of Ireland at least one-third part in intrinsic value."1 "Farms are screwed up to rack-rent, leases granted but for a small term of years, tenants tied down to hard conditions, and discouraged from cultivating the land they occupy to the best advantage, by the certainty they have of the rent being raised on the expiration of the lease proportionately to the improvements they shall make. Thus is honest industry restrained; the farmer is a slave to his landlord; it is well if he can cover his family with coarse homespun frieze."2

The following is Dobbs' Account of this evil system: "The discouragement to improve arising from our present method of letting our lands by short leases of twenty-one years is obvious to all. Places where the number of Papists is great, it is plain, will never be improved; on the contrary, they will either endeavour to waste and impoverish their land, though bound up by the strictest ties. This is occasioned by

1 Considerations upon Considerations, Dublin, 1724.
2 Swift, Answer to Several Letters, 1729.
3 Swift, The Present Miserable State of Ireland, 1726.
the shortness of their leases. We find very little improvement made upon leases of thirty-one or forty-one years. Let us cast our eyes upon churchlands throughout the Kingdom, and we will not find one place in a hundred where there has been any improvement made upon them. Have not tenants daily instances before them of landlords squandering away their time and money, and living above their fortune, upon the prospect they have of retrieving their affairs at the expiration of such leases, by raising extraordinary fines or setting their lands to those who offer most for them. Upon renewal, the improving tenant must pay for the landlord's extravagance a sum of money equivalent to the improvement he has made, and the utmost value of the land, in case he has been so provident as to have acquired any money, which seldom happens, upon such terms: or he must give a nominal great rent for the future, if he renews his lease, otherwise the next person who offers a trifle more gets his land, and he is turned adrift to seize in like manner the land whose lease is expired. How then can a tenant improve his land, when he is convinced that, after all his care and toil, his improvements will be over-rated, and he obliged to shift for himself?"

The state of the country, in this respect, did not improve in the least with the progress of time; the farmer was as badly off at the end of the century as in the beginning. Indeed, with the increased price of land, which was caused after 1785 by the pressure of tillage, his condition became worse, as the competition for his holding became proportionately greater. "The cultivator, under the pressure of a double rent, a barbarian under the whole incumbency of social life, with tenure so precarious, tenant rights so disregarded as on the expiration of the lease instantly to give way to the highest bidder; without one sunny spot in his whole existence, his prospects ending with the darkness of the day, and

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all hope of bettering his situation wasting and dying in his heart” — such was the description of the Irish tenant given by Dr. Drennan in 1799. The connection between the short leases and the neglect to improve was well illustrated by the fact that the lands which were best improved were those leased to the Palatines in County Limerick. Arthur Young was of opinion that these improvements were solely due to the fact that the Palatines were assured of secure tenure of their holdings.

The evil effects of this system did not end with the impoverishment of the land: they also appeared in the demoralisation of the landowners. Writers on the eighteenth century are almost unanimous in their denunciations of the middlemen. Lecky refers to them as follows: — "A hybrid and ambiguous class, without any of the solid qualities of the English yeomen, they combined the education and manners of farmers with the pretensions of gentlemen, and they endeavoured to support these pretensions by idleness, extravagance, and ostentatious arrogance. Men who, in England, would have been modest and laborious farmers, in Ireland sublet their land at rack-rents, kept miserable packs of half-starved hounds, wandered about from fair to fair and from race to race in laced coats, gambling, fighting, drinking, swearing, ravishing, and sporting, parading everywhere their contempt for honest labour, giving a tone of recklessness to every society in which they moved. An industrial middle class, which is the most essential of all the elements of English life, was almost wholly wanting; and the class of middlemen and squireens, who most nearly corresponded to it, were utterly destitute of industrial virtues, and concentrated in themselves most of the distinctive vices of the Irish character. They were the chief agents in agrarian tyranny, and their pernicious influence on manners, in a country where the prohibition of manufactures had expatriated the most industrious classes and artificially checked the formation of industrial habits, can

1 Letter to Mr. Pitt. Dublin. 1799. 2 Tour. vol. i., p. 178.
hardly be over-rated. They probably did more than any other class to sustain that race of extravagance which ran through all ranks above the level of the cottier, and that illiberal and semi-barbarous contempt for industrial pursuits, which was one of the greatest obstacles to national progress. False ideals, false standards of excellence, grew up among the people, and they came to look upon idleness and extravagance as noble things, upon parsimony, order, and industry as degrading to a gentleman."

The following description of the middlemen is taken from an Irish periodical which appeared in 1729:—

"This motley generation of half-landlords, half-tenants, fills the country with a sort of half-gentry, half-commonalty, who abound at all races, cock-fights, and country fairs, and are the very pest and bane of this nation. . . . Many of them, when they come short in their payments, are able to carry on a sort of war with their landlords, and keep them out of possession by vexatious suits-at-law. Most, if not all, of them are oppressors of the poor labourers under them; not even allowing them the common necessaries of food and raiment. This tyranny is the more intolerable as it is exercised by persons who neither have any real property in the land, nor are of any manner of use to society, but rather a burden and nuisance to it." Arthur Young's account of the middlemen was as follows:—"I was particularly attentive to every class of tenants throughout the kingdom, and shall, therefore, describe these middlemen, from whence their merit may be the more easily decided. Sometimes they are resident on a part of the land, but very often they are not. Dublin, Bath, London, and the country towns of Ireland contain great numbers of them; the merit of this class is surely ascertained in a moment; there cannot be a shadow of a pretence for the intervention of a man, whose single concern with an estate is to deduct a portion from the rent of it. They are, however, sometimes resident on a part of the land they hire, where it is natural to suppose they

1 Lecky, vol. i., p. 293. 2 The Tribune, p. 140.
would work some improvements; it is, however, very rarely the case. I have in different parts of the kingdom seen farms just fallen in after leases of three lives, of the duration of fifty, sixty, and even seventy years, in which the residence of the principal tenant was not to be distinguished from the cottared fields surrounding it. I was at first much surprised at this; but after repeated observation I found these men very generally were the masters of packs of wretched hounds, with which they wasted their time and money, and it is a notorious fact that they are the hardest drinkers in Ireland. Indeed, the class of the small country gentlemen, chiefly consisting of these profit renters, seems at present to monopolise that drinking spirit, which was, not many years ago, the disgrace of the kingdom at large: this I conjecture to be the reason why those who might improve are so very far from doing it; but there are still greater objections to them.” The middleman was also an object of particular denunciation by Crumpe, whose opinions about Irish agricultural matters are of such value:—“Men of small estates who generally lived beyond their income—those landowners known by the name of middlemen who take large districts of the country from those possessed of extensive estates, and either cover them with black cattle or sheep or rent them at extravagant rents to wretched and indigent cottagers. The general characteristics of this class are dissipation, idleness and vanity. Every man with a few acres of land and a moderate revenue is dignified, as a matter of course, with the title Esquire; and be his family ever so numerous, the incumbrances on his little parsimony ever so considerable, he must support a pack of hounds, entertain with claret or whiskey, keep a chair and livery servants, and ape, in short, his superiors in every respect. . . . The influence of such example extends to the most inferior rank. The labouring hind quits his spade to pursue his landlord’s pack of beagles on foot, and at night he intoxicates himself with whiskey, while

1 Young. vol. ii., p. 25.
his master enjoys a similar pleasure with liquids more refined. To the same source we trace those nuisances to society known as bucks and buckeens. Such, in general, are either the eldest sons of those gentlemen of small property we have described, or the younger children of those possessed of larger. To stand behind a counter, superintend in a farm, or calculate in a counting-house would be beneath the dignity of these exalted beings.”

Even Lord Clare, who came from this class himself, denounced the middlemen as “A set of gentry who have no inheritance, no education, or other means of life than by getting between the inheritor and the cultivator of the soil and grinding the poor people to powder.”

The actual occupiers suffered severely from the existence of the middlemen. Instead of paying, as the English tenants did, a fair rent for their holding, they paid a rent quite out of proportion to the value of the land which they leased, and consequently had not the means to farm the lands properly, or to live themselves as they should have lived. After the payment of the half year’s rent, there was no surplus left for the satisfaction of any but the barest needs of subsistence, with the result that the farmers, not having the inducement to create new tastes for themselves, remained in a much lower condition than the English farmers of the same time. Indeed, it was very difficult for any family to continue to belong to the distinctively farming class for any length of time. Some few of them rose to the position of small middlemen themselves—a class of middleman known by the name of the iron-bound gentlemen, who were described as follows:—“An iron-bound gentleman is an upstart farmer who, after serving some man of fortune, or having fought for him, sworn with him, got drunk with him, was tolerated to mix in his company. He goes to county meetings and races, and, having seized the unguarded

3 Ferguson and Vance, Improvement of Land in Ireland, 1851, p. 84.
moment of some Squire Gawky, he gets a bargain of a farm, the tenants of which he racks to death to maintain his extravagance." It was much more common, however, for the farmer to sink to the rank of a cottier or labourer.

The farmers, moreover, became infected with many of the bad qualities of the middlemen, and imitating, as they thought, their better, developed habits of gambling and drinking which did much to interfere with their own prosperity, and with the proper cultivation of the soil. As a result of all these causes, the condition of the Irish farmers during the eighteenth century remained very low—indeed, little better than that of the labourers; while towards the end of the century, their condition was rendered even worse by the destruction of the many home industries which had been common in Ireland: "In England the meanest cottager is better fed, better dressed, and better lodged than the most opulent farmer here." The following account of the farmers was written in 1786:

"This being the state of your neglected peasantry, how fares it with those of a higher class? Your farmers who hold from fifty to two hundred acres of land, you will suppose their state at least eligible: a man who holds a farm of that magnitude should be a man of substance. Let us see: This man’s habitation is not much better than the hovel of the cottager: the furniture of a piece with the rest, a few wooden vessels, trenchers seldom or never soiled with meat, two or three pots, and a couple of stools, compose the whole: the children squat half naked and barefooted around the fire: a car, or plough, or barrow, stuffed into gaps supply the place of gates: lean horses with drooping looks, milk kine with bones starting through the skin, speak but too plainly their miserable and scanty pasture." "The farmer," says Whitley Stokes, "has generally more land than he has capital adequate to employ, and becomes little better than a herd

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1 Congratulatory Address to His Majesty from Peasantry of Ireland, Dublin, 1786.
2 A Tour Through Ireland, 1780.
3 A Farmer’s Letter, Dublin, 1785.
for his landlord's cattle, and I have known farmers pay two hundred a year who seemed little better off than cottiers." The statistical surveys of Ireland taken from 1800 to 1810 show that the farming class then lived in great poverty and want. For instance, in County Kilkenny it was said that the houses of the farmers were very bad and the offices wretched. The barn was generally a shed to thresh in, with no floor but the natural soil, the stable a hovel, frequently no cow-house or out-offices, and a shed to protect the implements of tillage was never thought of; and in County Meath the farmers "were worse lodged than any part of the community, their houses being extremely wretched." An English traveller in Ireland at this time was much struck by the way the farmers lived: "If we ascend one step higher, we shall find a dozen renting a small farm from eight to ten guineas a year, which enables them to get a small dairy: but perhaps this class of man might be employed with more advantage to themselves and to the public if they worked for a more extensive farmer. Of these the stranger would suppose that there were none, if he judged only by the appearance of their farms and offices; the house of a farmer paying three or four hundred a year is not at all better than many of the cottages of the labouring poor."

But the farmer had to suffer more than mere poverty; he was in many ways a slave, and was burdened with much petty oppression and tyranny on the part of his landlord. "Living upon the spot, surrounded by their little under-tenants, the middlemen prove the most oppressive species of tyrant that ever lent assistance to the destruction of a country. They relet the land, at short tenures, to the occupiers of small farms, and often give no leases at all. Not satisfied with screwing up the rent to the uttermost farthing, they are rapacious

1 Project for Restoring Internal Peace, 1799.
2 Tughe, Survey of Kilkenny, 1802, p. 412.
3 Thompson, Statistical Survey of County Meath, 1802.
4 Hoare, Tour in Ireland, 1806.
and relentless in the collection of it. . . . But farther, the dependance of the occupier on the resident middleman goes to other circumstances; personal services of themselves, their cars and horses, is exacted for leading turf, hay, corn, gravel, etc., insomuch that the poor under-tenants often lose their own crops and turf, from being obliged to obey these calls of their superiors. Nay, I have even heard these jobbers gravely assert that, without under-tenants to furnish cars and teams at half or two-thirds the common price of the country, they could carry on no improvements at all; yet taking a merit to themselves for works wrought out of the sweat and ruin of a pack of wretches, assigned to their plunder by the inhumanity of the landholders." In 1786 we read of the "system of slavery" by which "duty fowl, duty turf, duty horses, and duty work were extracted from the farmer." Such emoluments were "demanded without right and yielded under the impression of fear." Paley said that the lowest class of the Irish were poor and indigent of situation, in a state of slavery,¹ and Wakefield was greatly struck by the resemblance of the Irish tenant to the Russian serf. After quoting an account of the position of the latter, he goes on to say:—"In all things he seems exactly on a level with the Irish slave, who is bound by the system of his laws to cultivate in like manner the lands of his master. The expressions I have used may offend some delicate ears: but to call the former tenant would be a perversion of terms, and to name the latter landlord would be a prostitution of language." Leases frequently contained a clause binding the tenant to work for his landlord at a rate of wages less than that which could be obtained by a free labourer.²

Dr. Sigerson, in his extremely able history of Irish land tenures, draws attention to this aspect of the Irish land question, and concludes that there existed in Ireland a superstratum of land feudalism inconformably over-

lying a stratum of native rights, such as may have existed in England for a time subsequent to the Norman invasion when the name of Englishman was as much a term of reproach as that of Irishman had been, and Irish Papist was till lately." He is of opinion that the exactions which the Irish tenant had to pay were in the nature of the feudal aids and dues which existed in England before the land system was properly evolved. "The mulcts paid by the tenants were feudal, and there was more system in their exaction than appeared to those who chronicled them, whilst apparently ignorant of their origin and character. Thus a tenant was forced to pay a fine on obtaining possession. Cases are given where a year's rent was required as 'lease-money,' and on one estate ten thousand pounds was thus taken at a swoop by the agent. This was identical with what of old had been usually termed a 'relief'; and which, payable by the heir on coming into his ancestors' property was fixed at one year's rent. Pecuniary 'aids' which the tenant had anciently been expected and required to yield his lord, to help him to provide a portion for his daughter, and like incidental family calls, were well represented, though now insidiously termed 'bribes' by Wakefield. Families and connections of landlord or agent (sometimes of both), 'wives, daughters, kept mistresses, all receive money,' he states. Threats were sometimes necessary to make the lease-possessing tenant render these 'aids.' Besides the rent, aids, and relief, the tenant had to pay certain 'dues' in kind, and perform certain 'duties.' Contributions of poultry, eggs, etc., were required as 'duty fowl,' 'duty eggs,' and so forth. The 'duty work' to be performed consisted in labour given to plant, reap, and gather the landlords' crops, to thresh his corn, draw home his turf or like agricultural services. A rate of payment was occasionally fixed, but this payment was always less than the market value of the labour. The tenants had to neglect their own occupation in order to perform this

1 Sigerson, History of Irish Land Tenures, p. 144.
labour. A receipt was passed for its performance as well as for the rent payment, and for non-performance a penal sum was reserved in the lease, to be recoverable in the same manner as rent." In fact, the whole land system was identical with what had existed in England of old, with one exception—"the old freeholder was required to follow his lord to war against the Scots; the campaign for which the Irish tenants were needed had, therefore, merely changed character with the times. They were pledged to stand by him in his election contests."

This is not the place to recount the many upheavals and disturbances which convulsed Ireland during the eighteenth century, except in so far as they had economic causes or economic results. Anybody familiar with the career of the Whiteboys and the Steelboys cannot deny that the economic results of risings of that kind were severe in the extreme, owing to the manner in which the orderly cultivation of the country must have been interrupted by such universal unrest; to the great damage which the discontented peasantry inflicted upon the cattle and other property of their oppressors, real or supposed; and to the hostility created between different classes, which was one of the principal obstacles to the amelioration of the land system. But these disturbances, it is well to note, also had economic causes, connected with the system of land tenure which prevailed.

The original cause of the Whiteboy outbreak, which lasted so many years and assumed such large proportions, was the enclosing by the landlords of the little commons, which existed here and there throughout Ireland, and which the tenants had been accustomed to use for the grazing of their smaller cattle. There was, of course, no common field system in Ireland, as there was in England, the whole country being enclosed; but there were small commons throughout the country of which the tenants had had the use from time immemorial, and to which they

1 Sigerson, pp. 150-3.
2 Lewis, Irish Disturbances, p. 232.
3 Lewis, p. 303.
4 Lewis, p. 298; see Charlemont MSS., II., 275.
were certainly entitled by every principle of law.¹ About 1760 the landlords, no doubt in imitation of the English landlords, who were at that time enclosing commons on a large scale, determined to deprive the tenantry of these valued rights, a proceeding which was deeply resented, and which was to give rise to an agitation which outlasted the century itself. About 1765 the rise of the price of provisions led to a great increase of pasture at the expense of tillage, and many of the poor emigrated to the crowded cities. "Those who remained in the country took small spots of land consisting of about an acre each, at an exorbitant price, where they laboured to procure, if possible, the means of support for themselves. To lessen some of the burdens by which they were oppressed, some landlords granted them a liberty of commonage. The relief was but temporary, for, some time after, by a breach of justice and positive compact, they were deprived of this privilege."⁴ A traveller, in 1764, noticed that there were many little commons adjacent to the roads upon which the inhabitants of the cabins had from time immemorial the right to rear a pig or a goose, but they were at that time in process of being enclosed. "There is another grievance under which the peasantry labour, which has distressed them exceedingly—the taking in and enclosing all the commonages of the province of Munster; within these twenty years it became fashionable for gentlemen of property to take possession of every common contiguous to their estates, and drive the poor peasants' pigs and geese off, and annex them to their own lands. I remember, myself, large tracts of land in commonage even in my own time in the County of Tipperary, and which had been the chief support of many poor families, walled in by gentlemen of fortune."⁵ By the end of the century the little commons were all enclosed, and, in Wakefield's

¹ The origin of these commons is discussed in Montgomery, History of Land Tenures in Ireland, p. 34.
³ Bush, Hibernia Curiosa.
⁴ Observations on the Bishop of Cloyne's Pamphlet, by A. Griffith. Dublin, 1787; and see Charlemont MSS., l., 21."
time, the nearest thing to commonage which existed was the custom of letting a mountain on a partnership lease to the inhabitants of a mountainous district, on which each had a fixed number of "collops," usually cows, goats or geese.¹

The Steelboy agitation, which raged in the North at the same time as that of the Whiteboys was at its height in the South, also had an agrarian origin. On several estates in Ulster rents had been increased to such an extent that the tenants were quite unable to pay them. When leases fell in, it was the custom of the landlords to offer to renew them only on payment of large fines, which the small tenants were quite unable to pay, but which were within the means of the larger middlemen, who thereupon obtained at one letting what had formerly sufficed to support several families, but which was now to be converted into pasture to the ruin of the country. This system culminated in 1763, when many leases belonging to the Marquis of Donegal fell in, and fines amounting to the sum of a hundred thousand pounds were demanded for renewals. As the tenants were utterly unable to pay these, two or three rich merchants of Belfast obtained the lands, turned them into pasture, and thus drove the population of a vast district from their homes.² The Oakboy agitation had its origin in the hardships suffered by the poor in being bound to contribute their labour to the upkeep of the roads.³ Indeed, of all the conspiracies which convulsed Ireland during the latter half of the eighteenth century, the only ones which did not arise from the pressure of economic grievances were the Peep o’ Day Boys and the Defenders.⁴

Towards the end of the century the middlemen seem to have disappeared to some extent, although they never quite died out. Young mentions that "the system of letting farms to be re-let to lower tenants is very much going out; it is principally done upon the estates of absenteees,

¹ Wakefield, vol. i., p. 308; see Sijerson, p. 128, and authorities there referred to.
² Lecky, vol. ii., p. 50; Lewis, Irish Disturbances, p. 35.
³ Lewis, p. 36.
⁴ Lewis, p. 36.
whose agents think of the most rent from the most solvent tenants." One of the results of Foster's Corn Law was to squeeze out a good many of the middlemen. The head landlords, seeing the great increase of rents which was caused by the growth of tillage, became jealous of the middlemen, who were reaping all the benefits of this increase, whereas their own rent had not increased; they, therefore, did all they could to break the leases of the middlemen, and took advantage of every technical point to put an end to their long tenancies. Their interests were then auctioned, sometimes to other large holders, who, in their turn, became middlemen, and replaced those who had been ejected, but more frequently the landlord let the land by auction direct to the tenants, thus procuring a higher rent. This did not in any way relieve the condition of the tenants, who were still in the same position as before, with the one exception that, instead of being ground down by middlemen, they were ground down by the landlords or their agents. An English traveller, in 1806, noticed that the middlemen were disappearing in various parts of the country, and the same feature is noticed in several counties in the statistical surveys which were made about that time for the Dublin Society. In 1822 the middlemen were said to have nearly disappeared; indeed, the elimination of the middlemen would seem to be a feature common to every improving country; "in Ireland recently, as formerly in England, Scotland and France, the system of middlemen, or allowing the tenant to re-let at a profit, has gone out in proportion as the countries became more improved." It is possible that too much weight may have been laid on the evils caused by the middlemen. After all, the cause of the evils of the Irish land system was the system itself, and not the individuals who took advantage of it. This was admirably put by Isaac Butt: "It is an

1 Young, vol. i., pp. 114 and 237.
2 Wakefield, vol. i., p. 244.
3 Smerson, p. 150.
4 Leachrymate Hiberniae.
5 Ferguson and Vance, Improvement of Land in Ireland, 1851, p. 185.
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absurdity to say that the existence of the middlemen was the cause of the miseries of the people. At the very worst they were the administrators of a vicious system of land tenures—not its creators. They may have preyed upon the miseries of the people, but they did not make them. It is plain that whatever the middleman did the chief landlord might do, and if the power of extortion and oppression did not exist in that chief landlord it was not possible for him to delegate it to another. The middleman was obnoxious, because, wherever he did exist, he was the instrument of oppression who came in contact with the people; and it was the natural tendency both of the people and the aristocracy to throw all the blame of every oppression on him. . . . It would be the greatest of all mistakes to imagine that oppression and extortion were confined to estates that were let to middlemen. On the contrary, the agent of the absentee proprietor was generally, if not always, a more grievous oppressor than even the worst of the middlemen, and the resident landlord, having just the same opportunity for oppression, used it just as often." "There are very few competent thinkers," says Professor Cairnes, "who will not be of opinion that the utmost damage inflicted by absenteeism on Ireland—and I am, for my part, far from thinking that this was not very considerable even from an economic point of view—was absolutely inappreciable in comparison with the misfortunes entailed upon the country through the proprietary who remained at home. The absentee landlords neglected their duties, and drew their rents; the resident proprietary drew much more exorbitant rents, and were, at the same time, the active agents of a tyranny as demoralising and ruinous as any which the history of modern times has exhibited.""
CHAPTER IX.  
COTTIERS, SPALPEENS, AND BEGGLARS.

The Irish agricultural labouring class was made up of three different grades of workmen—"first, cottiers who hold at will a small take of land, seldom more than an acre, and grass for a couple of cows, at an exorbitant rent, which they work out at the small wages of four pence or five pence a day without diet; second, persons who have short leases or leases of uncertain tenure at high rents; and third, the inhabitants of cottages in the neighbourhood of towns and small villages, who hold no land, and are supported by daily labour." The last class must have formed an insignificant proportion of the whole, and the general rule was that the agricultural labourer derived his subsistence partly from the small money-wages which he received from his employer, the farmer, and partly from the produce, chiefly potatoes, of the little patch of ground which he tilled. Labourers employed on these terms were known as "cottiers," or "cottars," and the system of employment under which they worked "the cottier system," or "cottierism"—"a specific and almost unique product of Irish industrial life." The great majority of the Irish population during the eighteenth century were "cottiers," and, therefore, an examination of their condition must take a foremost place in any account of the economic condition of the time.

The best contemporary account of the cottiers' condition is to be found in Young. "It is necessary here," he says,

1 Sir James Caldwell, Proposal for Employing Children. Dublin, 1771.
2 Professor Cairnes.
"to explain the common cottar system of labour in Ireland, which much resembles that of Scotland until very lately; and which was probably the same all over Europe before arts and commerce changed the face of it. If there are cabins on a farm, they are the residence of the cottars; if there are none, the farmer marks out the potato gardens, and the labourers, who apply to him on his hiring the land, raise their own cabins on such spots; in some places the farmer builds; in others he only assists them with the roof, etc.; a verbal compact is then made, that the new cottar shall have his potato garden at such a rent, and one or two cows kept by him at the price of the neighbourhood, he finding the cows. He then works with the farmer at the rate of the place, usually sixpence half-penny a day, a tally being kept (half by each party), and a notch cut for every day's labour; at the end of six months, or a year, they reckon, and the balance is paid. The cottar works for himself as his potatoes require."

Young points out that, in the cottar system, the recompense for labour was the means of living; that in England these were dispensed in money, but in Ireland in land or commodities; and concludes that such a system, be it good or bad, was consistent with the situation of Ireland, and that it would necessarily continue until a great increase of national wealth had induced a more general circulation of money.

The position of the cottier is nowhere better analysed than in an essay by the late Professor Cairnes, which is so admirable that it must be quoted at length:—"One of the most curious and unfortunate blunders which have been made about the Irish cottier is that which confounds him with the peasant proprietor under the general description of a representative of the petite culture. In fact, the two forms of tenure are, in that which constitutes their most important attribute—the nature of the cultivator's interest in the soil which he tills—diametrically opposed; and the practical results stand as strongly in contrast as

the conditions. It would be difficult, perhaps, to conceive two modes of existence more utterly opposed than the thriftless, squalid, and half-starved life of the peasant of Munster and Connaught, and that of the frugal, thriving, and energetic races that have, over a great portion of Continental Europe—in Norway, in Belgium, in Switzerland, in Lombardy—and, under the most various external conditions, turned swamp and deserts into gardens. And it is scarcely a less gross error to apply to the same status, after the fashion so common with political reasoners in this country, conclusions deduced from the relations of landlord and tenant in England and Scotland. True, the cottier and the cultivator of Great Britain are alike tenant-farmers; they both pay rent, which is, moreover, in each case determined by the competition of the market. But under what circumstances does competition take place in the two countries? In Great Britain the competitors are independent capitalists, bidding for land as one among the many modes of profitable investment which the complex industrial civilisation of the country supplies: in Ireland they are men—we speak, it will be remembered, of the cottier class—for the most part on the verge of absolute pauperism, who see in a few acres of land their sole escape—we cannot now say from starvation, but at best from emigration and the workhouse. Is it strange that the result should be different in the two cases? and that ‘rent,’ which in England and Scotland represent exceptional profit (the appropriation of which by the landlord merely equalises agriculture with other occupations), should, in Ireland, be the utmost penny that can be wrung from the poverty-stricken cultivator? How, again, does the analogy of the tenant-farmer of Continental countries meet the present case? Between the ‘metayer’ and the cottier there is the broad distinction, that, while the rent of the former is a fixed proportion of the produce, determined by custom, that of the cottier is whatever competition may make it—the competition, we repeat, of impoverished men, bidding under the pressure of pros-
IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

pective exile or beggary. Lastly, we must insist on keeping the cottier distinct from another class also, with whom he has been more pardonably confounded, and with whom, indeed, he has many real affinities—the serf of Eastern Europe and of mediæval times. Judging from their ordinary existence, there is, perhaps, little to distinguish the cottier from the serf. Nevertheless, they are not the same. The serf is *adscriptus glebae*: the Irish cottier, as he knows by painful experience, is bound to the soil by no tie save those imposed by his own necessities. He has unbounded freedom to relinquish, when he pleases, his farm and home, and to transfer himself to the other side of the Atlantic, and he pays for the privilege (of which, no doubt, he has largely availed himself) in the liability, to which the serf is a stranger, of being expelled from his farm and home when it suits the views of his landlord.

"Such is the Irish cottier, the essential incidents of whose position are well summed up in the definition of Mr. Mill—'a labourer, who makes his contract for the land without the intervention of a capitalist farmer,' and 'the conditions of whose contract, especially the rents, are determined not by custom, but by competition.'

"I have hitherto dwelt chiefly upon one incident—the fundamental one, as it seems to me—in the condition of the Irish cottier—the determination of his rent by competition, he himself having no other resource than the land. But we may look at him also from another point of view, as, to borrow the definition of Judge Longfield, 'the cultivator who produces almost wholly for his own consumption, and pays his rent chiefly in labour.'

"The Irish peasant undertook to pay for his patch of land that sum of money which the competition of his fellows forced him to pay, and this sum he was allowed to work out in labour, at a rate of wages also determined by competition. Cottierism (omitting the condition of personal freedom, and regarding it simply in its economic
aspect) was thus, in fact, serfdom reduced to a money standard, and modified by competition."

It has been pointed out above that a strong analogy existed between the Irish land system at the beginning of the eighteenth century and the English system after the Norman Conquest. The position of the "villein" in the latter was now taken in Ireland by the cottier. Lewis, in his Essay on Irish Disturbances, demonstrates that the Irish cottier was subject to all the disabilities of the ancient English "villein." "The transition from the state of a villein to that of a free labourer cannot be considered as fully effected until the peasant is able to live on wages, without cultivating his own land, and until his wages are regularly paid to him in money. The essential mark of a villein is that he gains nothing by his work; although he may live in a separate house, contract a legal marriage, rear a family, have the use of land, and even though he may be only bound to perform certain specified services, yet he never receives any remuneration from his lord. Now, a cottier who rents a cabin and a small piece of ground, and who works for his landlord on an agreement that the wages are to be set off against the rent, is virtually in the same condition as a villein, if his annual wages never exceed his annual rent, and if, in fact, he never receives nor can hope to receive anything. His person may be free, but he can no more hope to raise himself to pecuniary independence than the villein who was bound to work for his lord without claiming any recompense. It is only when a man receives his wages at certain short intervals, and relies on the payments made to him in money for his means of support, that the transition from villeinage can be said to be fully effected."

The average rent paid by the cottier for his little bit of land was estimated by Young at £1 13s. 10d., and, in addition, £1 11s. 3d. for grass for his cow; while the average price which he got for his labour was 6½d. a day.

IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

all the year round. The average size of his plot was about an acre. This was barely enough to sustain life, and, all through the century, the poor cottiers were very near the verge of starvation. In 1728, Sheridan wrote in the Intelligencer:—"When I travel through any part of this unhappy kingdom, it raises two passions in my breast of a different kind: an anger against those vile betrayers and insulters of it, who insinuate themselves into favour by saying it is a rich nation; and a sincere passion for the natives, who are sunk to the lowest degree of misery and poverty, whose houses are dunghills, whose victuals are the blood of their cattle or the herbs in the field, and whose clothing, to the dishonour of God and man, is nakedness." In the same year, Swift drew an equally depressing picture: "My heart is too heavy to continue this journey longer, for it is manifest that whatever stranger took such a journey would be apt to think himself travelling in Lapland or Iceland rather than in a country so favoured by nature as ours. The miserable dress and diet and dwelling of the people, the families of farmers who pay great rents living in filth and nastiness upon buttermilk and potatoes, not a shoe or stocking to their feet, or a house so convenient as an English hog-sty to receive them." In a letter written in 1726, Swift had previously referred to the subject: "All they have left is, at the expiration of a lease, to rack their tenants, which they have done to such a degree that there is not one farmer in a hundred through the kingdom who can afford shoes or stockings to his children, or to eat flesh, or drink anything better than sour milk or water, twice in a year: so that the whole country, except the Scottish plantation in the North, is a scene of misery and desolation hardly to be matched on this side of Lapland." In 1719, Archbishop King wrote that "The peasants in France and Turkey live much better than the tenants in Ireland." The state of the cottiers in 1764 is described in Bush's Hibernia Curiosa as follows:—"The landlord

1 Short View of the State of Ireland, 1727-8. 2 And see The Tribune, Dublin, 1729.
does nothing for them. They build their own mud hovels, plant their hedges, dig their ditches. They are half naked, half starved, utterly destitute of all providence and of all education; the poor wretches have hardly a skin of a potato left to live on—they live in cabins of such shocking material and construction that from hundreds of them you may see the smoke ascending from every inch of the roof, for scarce one of them have any chimney, and the rain drips from every inch of the roof on the half-naked, half-starving inhabitants within . . . . the case of the lower class of farmers, indeed, is little better than a state of slavery." Their condition towards the end of the century is described by Whitley Stokes:—"Generally the cottier has but an acre . . . . they could afford themselves but one meal a day, and that consisted of potatoes and buttermilk, for which they paid a penny a quart, and they could never afford to procure themselves enough. In many places the poor were exposed to a variety of diseases, especially of putrid diseases, from the poorness of their diet. In Kerry they lived so low that I am assured by a medical man that the addition of a very small quantity of butter to their potatoes is used as a cordial with very evident advantage."

Young, in his *Tour*, gives a full and sympathetic account of the cottiers in 1776: "Their food consisted of milk and potatoes, and practically nothing else"—a diet, by the way, which Young considered better than that of the average English labourer—"but of this food there is one circumstance which must ever recommend it, they have a bellyful; and that, let me add, is more than the superfluities of an Englishman leave to his family; let any person examine minutely into the receipt and expenditure of an English cottage, and he will find that tea, sugar, and strong liquors can come only from pinched bellies. I will not assert that potatoes are a better food than bread and cheese; but I have no doubt of a bellyful of the one being much better than a half a bellyful of the other; still less

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have I that the milk of the Irishman is incomparably better than the small beer, gin, or tea of the Englishman; and this even for the father; how much better it must be for the poor infants? Milk to them is nourishment, is health, is life. If anyone doubts the comparative plenty which attends the board of the poor natives of England and Ireland, let him attend to their meals; the sparingness with which our labourer eats his bread and cheese is well known; mark the Irishman's potato-bowl placed on the floor, the whole family upon their hams around it, devouring a quantity almost incredible, the beggar seating himself to it with a hearty welcome, the pig taking his share as readily as the wife, the cocks, hens, turkeys, geese, the cur, the cat, and, perhaps, the cow—and all partaking of the same dish. No man can often have been a witness of it without being convinced of the plenty, and, I will add, the cheerfulness, that attends it."

Young pointed out that the average cottier labourer usually had some little live stock, such as a pig or poultry, and thus eked out his subsistence. With respect to their clothing and habitation, he says: "The common Irish are, in general, clothed so very indifferently, that it impresses every stranger with a strong idea of universal poverty. Shoes and stockings are scarcely ever found on the feet of children of either sex; and great numbers of men and women are without them: a change, however, in this respect, as in most others, is coming in; for there are many more of them with those articles of clothing now than ten years ago. An Irishman and his wife are much more solicitous to feed than to clothe their children; whereas in England it is surprising to see the expense they put themselves to, to deck out children, whose principal subsistence is tea. Very many of them in Ireland are so ragged that their nakedness is scarcely covered; yet are they in health and active. As to the want of shoes and stockings, I consider it no evil, but a much more cleanly custom than the beastiality of stockings and feet that are washed no oftener

1 Tour. vol. ii., p. 45; and see A Tour in Ireland in 1775, Anon., London, 1776.
than those of our own poor. Women are oftener without shoes than men; and by washing clothes nowhere but in rivers and streams, the cold, especially as they roast their legs in their cabins till they are fire-spotted, must swell them to a wonderful size, and horrid black and blue colour, always met with both in young and old. They stand in rivers and beat the linen against the great stones found there with a beetle.

"I remarked, generally, that they were not ill-dressed of Sundays and holidays, and that black or dark blue was almost the universal hue.

"The cottages of the Irish, which are all called cabbins, are the most miserable looking hovels that can well be conceived; they generally consist of only one room: mud kneaded with straw is the common material of the walls; these are rarely above seven feet high, and not always above five or six; they are about two feet thick, and have only a door, which lets in light instead of a window, and should let the smoak out instead of a chimney, but they had rather keep in it; these two conveniences they hold so cheap, that I have seen them both stopped up in stone cottages, built by improving landlords; the smoak warms them, but certainly is as injurious to their eyes as it is to the complexions of the women, which, in general in the cabbins of Ireland, has a near resemblance to that of a smoaked ham. The number of the blind poor I think greater there than in England, which is probably owing to this cause.

"The furniture of the cabbins is as bad as the architecture; in very many consisting only of a pot for boiling their potatoes, a bit of a table, and one or two broken stools; beds are not found universally, the family lying on straw, equally partook of by cows, calves, and pigs; though the luxury of sties is coming in in Ireland, which excludes the poor pigs from the warmth of the bodies of their master and mistress; I remarked little hovels of earth thrown up near the cabbins; and in some places they build their turf stacks hollow, in order to afford shelter
to the hogs. This is a general description, but the exceptions are very numerous."

Some interesting annual budgets of labourers’ families are given in the first volume of Young’s *Tour*, of which the following is one:—

**Expenses and Receipts of a Cottar Family.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expenses</th>
<th>£ s. d.</th>
<th>Receipts</th>
<th>£ s. d.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cabbin and one acre, rent</td>
<td>1 0 0</td>
<td>Two pigs</td>
<td>2 0 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two cows</td>
<td>2 0 0</td>
<td>On average of years the two cows will yield three calves in two years</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One stone of broken wool</td>
<td>0 14 0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weaving it</td>
<td>0 3 0</td>
<td>Poultry</td>
<td>0 15 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weaving their linen</td>
<td>0 3 0</td>
<td>Hire 365 days</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hearth money</td>
<td>0 2 0</td>
<td>52 Sundays</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tools</td>
<td>0 5 0</td>
<td>15 holidays</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tithe of one acre</td>
<td>0 5 0</td>
<td>20 bad weather</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hire of half an acre potatoes</td>
<td>3 8 0</td>
<td>48 sickness and their own work, i.e., 230 days at 5d.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

£9 11 0

Expenses... 8 0 0

Remains for unspecifed articles... £1 11 0

The following two budgets are taken from pamphlets written some years later than Young’s book. The first is from *Thoughts on State of Cottiers (Dublin)*, 1794, and the second from *An Account of the Parish of Aghaboe, by Ledwich (Dublin)*, 1796:—

I. **Expenses.** | £ s. d. | **Receipts.** | £ s. d. |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>House and garden (half acre)</td>
<td>1 10 0</td>
<td>Wages at 6d. a day for one half year and 5d.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grazing one cow</td>
<td>1 10 0</td>
<td>the other ...</td>
<td>7 3 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 cwt. of meal at 15s. the cwt.</td>
<td>5 5 0</td>
<td>Potatoes, computed at</td>
<td>3 0 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Milk of his cow</td>
<td>2 0 0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

£12 3 6

Leaving a balance of £3 18s. 6d. for all other expenses.

1 Young’s *Tour in Ireland*, vol. ii., p. 47.
"To such a state," says an English contemporary writer, "has England reduced Ireland, that out of two and a half million inhabitants she contains, not above one million are said to be so employed as to get more than the merest subsistence; they go half naked, and the few clothes they wear are of coarse manufacture made at home, and worse than the dress of Indians. They are as ill-lodged as the hogs in England; and as to furniture, it consists of a few rushes or heath for a bed, a horn spoon, and an iron pot." "The Irishman feeds the cattle whose flesh he is debarred from taking. As to clothes, he has scarcely any; as for habitation, he has, perhaps, some miserable hovel where an Englishman would not turn his beast." "Behold," says Crumpe, "the Irish husbandman sally forth to his work; barefoot and covered with rags; behold his ruinous hovel, covered with weeds, and pervious to every shower that falls and every pinching gale that blows. Behold him seated after a hard day's labour, involved in smoke, surrounded by a naked offspring, and sharing with them his dry and scanty meal."

On the whole, the cottiers seem to have been in a wretched state, living on the margin of subsistence. They seem to have been much poorer than they were in the previous century, when Petty described their condition as follows: "The housing is, as hath been often said, very wretched, but their clothing far better than that of

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1 Propriety of Extending Trade to Ireland, by A.S., London, 1780.
2 Mr. Gardiner's Speech in the Irish House of Commons, 4th April, 1784.
3 Crumpe, Essay on Providing Employment, 1793, p. 225; and see Thoughts on Tillage of Ireland, London, 1737; Four Letters Relating to the Kingdom of Ireland, Dublin, 1739; and Bell's Description of the Irish Peasantry, London, 1804.
the French peasants or the poor of other countries: which advantage they have from their wool. Madder, alum, and indigo are imported, but the other dyeing stuffs they find nearer home, a certain mud taken out of bogs serving them for copperas, a rind of several trees and saw-dust for galls: as for wild green weeds, they find enough. The diet of these people is milk sweet and sour, thick and thin, which also is their drink in summer time, in winter small beer or water. But tobacco taken in short pipes, seldom burnt, seems the pleasure of their lives, together with sneezing. Their food is bread in cakes, potatoes from August to May, mussels, cockles, and oysters near the sea, eggs and butter made very rancid by keeping in bogs; as for flesh, they seldom eat it."

The lot of the cottier was worse in the South than in the North, as the cottiers in the North were almost all engaged in the linen manufacture, and were thus enabled to supplement their incomes.

This downward tendency was aggravated by the ever-increasing extension of pasture at the expense of tillage. According as more land was wanted for grazing, the number of people who could be employed in a district became less and less, and the little cottier homesteads, such as they were, were broken up and the cottier driven to a still lower rank of life. "Their houses and cabins," says Dobbs, "being generally made of earth or dry stone, there is little difference in the expense or time employed in the erecting or demolishing of them; and this is done just as gentlemen incline to heap up their lands and improve them by tillage, or as they lay them down under grass and enlarge their sheep walks and grazing farms; and by this means the poor, who remove with little trouble, are turned adrift, and must remove to some other place where they can get employment." The wretched people would seem actually to have been employed to render the land fit for sheep, and then turned away. "In many parts of the Kingdom I have seen a number of poor

1 Petty, Political Anatomy of Ireland, p. 193. 2 Dobbs, Essay on Trade.
souls fixed on the side of a barren mountain, two or three acres being parcelled out to each of them for a garden, where, by grubbing, stoning, manuring, and dint of hard labour, they bring it to a kind mold. But no sooner does the greedy landlord cast his eye on the produce of their labour, but he at once demolishes their little cabins, hedges and ditches, and so removes the poor animals to the other side of the mountain there to do the like; so, by the sweat of their brows, he, by degrees, improves his land so as to bear grass and herbage, instead of heath and stones, and makes it fit for a sheepwalk or other pasture." No doubt, the greater number of those who were thus unmercifully displaced emigrated to America; of those who remained at home, some settled down in poorer and more remote parts of the country, some became spalpeens or migrant labourers; and the rest drifted into the ranks of the already overcrowded profession of begging.

The practice of Irish labourers crossing to England to look for labour in the busy season, which has lasted to the present day, took its origin early in the eighteenth century. References to the custom are to be found in Madden’s Reflections and Resolutions, published in 1738, and in a pamphlet dated 1755. Bell, in his Description of the Irish Peasantry, in 1804, gives the following account of the "spalpeens," as they were called:—"There was a third description of Irish peasants who emigrated annually to some part of Ireland or England, where wages comparatively large were given for labour. These emigrations always took place at the beginning of autumn, at which time the roads leading to the Metropolis of each kingdom might be seen covered with wretches half naked and barefooted, with barely the means of defraying the expenses of their journey; and sometimes without any other resource than the scanty stock of oaten bread which they brought from their homes. Those that did not leave Ireland generally found employment for about three weeks

1 Remarks on Some Maxims, etc., Dublin, 1730.
2 Inquiry into Causes of Want of Tillage in Ireland, Dublin, 1755.
within 30 or 40 miles of Dublin. . . . The holds of the vessels sailing from Dublin to Parkgate and to Liverpool might, at this season, be seen crowded with poor wretches, who, after paying half-a-crown for their passage, had scarce enough money left to defray the expenses of their journey to the metropolis. Having at length, after a most fatiguing march of two hundred miles, arrived at the lands where their services were wanted, fresh difficulties and discouragements started up before them. It is a well known fact that in many parts of Hertfordshire and other places there have been, and still are, a species of contractors or spalpeen brokers whose purpose it is to furnish the farmers with Irish labourers. They would then engage the miserable labourer at the lowest possible rate, and pocket themselves the difference between it and the wages paid by the farmers to them on the labourers' behalf. To swell their profits to the utmost pitch, these contractors, like West India negro drivers, would call out the labourers at break of day and make them work ten times harder than their sable brethren of the torrid zone." It was alleged that the wandering labourers went yearly as far as Newfoundland in search of employment.  

The existence of enormous numbers of beggars was a feature of Irish life which was noticed by all contemporary observers. In 1724, Swift expresses the view that half the souls in Ireland supported themselves by begging or thieving; and in a later pamphlet says: "The prodigious number of beggars throughout this kingdom in proportion to so small a number of people is owing to many reasons—the laziness of the natives, the want of work to employ them, the enormous rents paid by cottagers, very early marriages without the least prospect of establishment, the ruin of agriculture whereby vast numbers are hindered from providing their own bread and have no money to purchase it, the mortal damp upon all kinds of trade, and many other circumstances too tedious to mention. And to the same causes we owe the congregation of foreign

1 Arthur O'Connor, State of Ireland, p. 3.  2 Maxims Controlling Ireland.
beggars to this town (i.e., Dublin), the country landlords
giving all assistance except money and victuals to drive
from their estates those miserable creatures they have
undone." As early as 1726 the number of beggars in
Cork was noticed as a nuisance, and in 1762 a reference
is found to "the foreign beggars and strollers who come
from the country and infest the city." Dublin also was
greatly harassed by the swarms of beggars that flocked in
from the country. Dobbs draws a dreadful picture of
the beggars in 1729:—"Another evil very necessary to
be remedied is the idleness of our poor. The hurt this
kingdom suffers from the number of idle and sturdy
vagrants is greater than is commonly imagined. They
appear in various forms, mostly affected or brought upon
them by particular stratagems, as blind, lame, dumb, dis-
torted, with running sores, pretended fits and other
disorders. They exercise the greatest barbarities upon
children, either their own or those they pick up, by
blinding them or breaking or disjointing their limbs when
they are young to make them objects of charity and com-
passion. Not to mention the robberies and thefts they
commit, and the lewdness, debauchery, and drunkenness
that is to be found amongst them at their merry-meetings.
We may compute the number of strolling beggars in the
Kingdom at 34,000. . . . Since the trade of begging has
become so general, it has been known that servants have
quit their service and have gone a-strolling with them,
and day labourers have quit their labour and refused to
be employed, giving it as a reason that they get more by
begging than by working." Irish publications of the
eighteenth century are full of allusions to the beggars,
who seem to have formed an important section of society. It
was remarkable, however, that Arthur Young, who was

1 Considerations About Maintaining the Poor.
2 Council Book of Cork Corporation, 9 Nov., 1726, and 8 Jan., 1762.
3 Rockborou, Observations on State of Poor in Metropolitan, Dublin, 1801.
4 Dobbs, Trade of Ireland, and see Berkeley, "The Querist."
5 See "Mendico-Hymen" Dublin, 1733: The Surprising Memoirs of the Meeting,
Courtship, and Sundry Other Humerous Adventures of the Most Renowned of Cripple
Beggars, Monopodius and Strumpathanymph, Dublin, 1734; Necessity of Tillage,
Dublin, 1741: Berkeley's "Querist."
gifted with a particularly keen sense of observation, makes no reference to the existence of beggars in his *Tour*.

A series of statutes beginning in the reign of Henry VI. had prohibited begging, and visited convicted beggars with many heavy penalties, such as whipping, imprisonment, and the stocks; idle vagrants were, moreover, condemned to transportation.¹ These statutes were, however, not enforced, and begging was allowed to flourish without any interference on the part of the law.²

¹25 Henry VI., c. 7; 33 Henry VIII., c. 9; 3 & 4 P. and M., c. 5; 6 Anne, c. 11; 11 & 12 Geo. III., c. 30.
²Commission on State of Poor in Ireland, 1830.
CHAPTER X.
Famines.

The existence of such a large population on the verge of starvation meant that if any failure of the crops, especially the potato crop, occurred, the country was immediately menaced with famine: "We scarce have a bad season that is not followed by a famine among the common people, which never fails to drive a multitude of our best hands out of the kingdom to seek their bread in foreign climes." To give particular dates as the occasions of famine years is, to some extent, to create a wrong impression of the Irish situation, the truth being that the country lived in a chronic state approaching famine, and that the particular years which are mentioned by historians as famine years were simply the years in which the chronic symptoms became acute. The author of the Groans of Ireland (Dublin, 1741), thought that the prime cause of this state of affairs was the want of granaries in the country; a particularly bad year increased the quantity of tillage in the following year; the result was a surplus in that year, a fall in prices, and a consequent neglect to till in the year after; there were, therefore, alternating years of too much and too little food, and it was said that the erection of granaries for storing the surplus grain of the good years would have solved the difficulty. However, in spite of the many requests for granaries, none were ever erected, and the country suffered severely in consequence.

1 Thoughts on Tillage of Ireland, London, 1737: see Mitchell, History of Ireland, ch. ix.
In 1727 began the first acute famine, of which contemporary writers give the most harrowing accounts. The early stages of the distress were described by Primate Boulter in March as follows:—"Last year the dearness of corn was such that thousands of families quitted their habitations to seek bread elsewhere, and many hundreds perished; this year the poor had consumed their potatoes, which is their winter subsistence, near two months sooner than ordinary, and are already, through the dearness of corn, in that want, that in some places they begin already to quit their habitations." It was this famine which impelled Swift to write his "modest proposal" that the children of poor people should be eaten. In that pamphlet he gives a terrible description of the condition of the country. "Some persons," he says, "of a desponding spirit are in great concern about that vast number of poor people, who are aged, diseased, or maimed, and I have been desired to employ my thoughts what course may be taken, to ease the nation of so grievous an encumbrance. But I am not in the least pain upon that matter, because it is very well known that they are every day dying, and rotting, by cold, and famine, and filth, and vermin, as fast as can be reasonably expected. And as to the younger labourers, they are now in almost as hopeful a condition. They cannot get work, and consequently pine away for want of nourishment, to a degree, that if at any time they are accidentally hired to common labour, they have not strength to perform it; and thus the country and themselves are happily delivered from the evils to come." "The calamities of the year 1728," says another writer, "are still fresh in our memory: when many of the poorer sort in the Northern parts who were not able to fly from the famine perished in it, and died in their native country through want of food." An attempt was made to relieve some of the distress in the North by a body of charitable people in Dublin, who set on foot a subscription to buy

corn in Munster when it was cheap, and to send it to the North, but the inhabitants of Munster took alarm at so much food going away, and assembled to prevent its removal at Limerick, Cork, Waterford and Clonmel.¹

Matters cannot be said ever to have really mended after this famine: for the next ten or fifteen years the country suffered from a severe and almost continuous shortage. There was a greater shortage than usual in 1733, but the years were tided over without acute loss of life until the period following the great frost at the end of 1739. Lecky says that although this famine has scarcely left a trace in history, and hardly excited any attention in England at the time, it was one of the most fearful upon record.² Bishop Berkeley wrote, in May, 1741: “The distresses of the sick and poor are endless: the havoc of mankind in the counties of Cork, Limerick, and adjacent places has been incredible. The nation will not recover this loss in a century. The other day I heard from the County of Limerick, that whole villages were entirely dispeopled.”³ Skelton, a Protestant clergyman, tells us that as many people died of want, or of diseases occasioned by want, during the two years 1740-1, as died by the sword in the massacre and rebellion of 1641: “Whole parishes were almost desolate, the dead were eaten in the fields by dogs: one thousand had perished in a single barony.”⁴ In County Kerry the number of families paying hearth money in 1733 was over 14,000: in 1744 it had sunk to a little over 9,000.⁵ Contemporary writers give terrible accounts of the distress: “Families are without a spoonful of meal between them for some weeks, and that not such as are reckoned the very poor.”⁶ “On my return to this country last summer, I found it the most miserable scene of universal distress that I have ever read of in history; want and misery in every face; the rich unable almost, if they were willing, to relieve the poor: the roads spread with dead and dying bodies. Mankind of the colour of the

¹ Howlet's Letters, i., 235.
² Lecky, vol. i., p. 186.
³ Fraser, Life of Berkeley, p. 255.
⁵ Distressed State of Ireland, Dublin, 1741.
⁶ Lecky, vol. i., p. 188.
docks and nettles which they feed on: two or three, sometimes more, on a car going to the grave for want of bearers to carry them. . . . The loss must be upwards of two hundred thousand souls.'" 

"By a modest computation there are near one-third part of the cottiers of Munster have perished by fevers, fluxes and downright want." "'Tis well known that multitudes of poor families have been under great difficulty to subsist, and many of their lives but barely preserved, and that very much by the corn which they gathered for food through the summer in the fields: and what rendered their case more pinching was the scarcity of milk.'"

Of course, there were to be found people who attributed the famine to the anger of God. There is an interesting pamphlet in the Royal Irish Academy, entitled, On the Judgment of God upon Ireland, or Sickness and Famine God's Visitation for the Sins of the Nation, dated 1741, in which the writer argues that the famine was a punishment for the toleration, such as it was, of Popery. Thus, even in moments of distress and misery, there are ever people to be found whose bigotry gets the better of their charity.

Although no famine at all approaching in severity that of 1741 occurred throughout the remainder of the century, there were periodical shortages of food and great consequent distress. In 1757 the potato crop again failed, and the suffering amongst the poor was very great. The situation was rendered worse by a shortage of corn at the same time. The potato crop and the spring corn failed once more in 1765, and the country was threatened with another famine, but the distress was prevented from becoming acute by the action of Parliament prohibiting the exportation of corn and stopping the distilleries.

The year 1770 was also one of scarcity, but it is useless to detail the recurring symptoms of a chronic

1 The Groans of Ireland, Dublin, 1741.  
2 Letter to the Lord Primate, Dublin, 1741.  
3 Disturbed State of Ireland, Dublin, 1740.  
5 Wakefield, ii., 10.  
6 Ibid.
disease; the whole matter may be summed up in the words of Hely Hutchinson: "The bulk of our people have always continued poor, and in a great many seasons have wanted food." The century was closed by a year of famine. The harvest of 1800 turned out very unfavourably: the potato crop was a failure, and the yield of wheat and oats was not half the ordinary average; and the country passed through another period of great distress.¹

¹Mulholland, Ireland and her Stable Industry, p. 203.
CHAPTER XI.

THE STRUGGLE BETWEEN PASTURE AND TILLAGE.

The two great divisions of agricultural activity are pasture and tillage. The whole agricultural state of a country depends on which of these is predominant; where tillage prevails, the population of the countryside tends to increase and the industry of the people is encouraged; on the other hand, where pasture predominates, large tracts are converted into grazing, and the human inhabitants are driven to extreme poverty or emigration. The climate and quality of the soil have always favoured pasture in Ireland, and in the first eighty years of the eighteenth century this natural tendency was accentuated by many outside causes. The two things most requisite for a people anxious to advance in agriculture are skill and capital, and the Irish had little of either. The long unsettled state of the country, and the insecurity of land tenure had done away with any skill that they might otherwise have possessed, and the same causes tended to keep down the quantity of capital in the country. Besides, there was no great inducement held out to those who wished to accumulate new capital, or to replace that which was lost. The insecurity of tenure, from which the Catholic tenantry suffered, and to which we have before referred, discouraged the greater part of the population from adding to the capital value of their farms, and the saving of money was still further discouraged by the Penal Act, not repealed until late in the century, which provided that no Catholic might lend money on the
security of a mortgage on land. With such conditions as these prevailing, it is not surprising that the majority of the Irish tenantry were not tempted to increase the value of their holdings by careful and laborious tillage, and by the incidental improvements that such tillage implies; and that those tenants, who were anxious to embark on undertakings of this kind, found it difficult to raise the money to do so, as the great majority of the lenders of the country were unable to lend money on the one security that the farmer was in a position to offer.

There were positive inducements, moreover, held out to those who wished to use their land as pasture. In spite of the legislation of 1698, vast quantities of wool continued to be exported, or rather smuggled, to France, and cattle were still freely exported to every country in the world except Great Britain. In spite of these inducements, however, to throw the land into pasture, the Irish farmers did not immediately give up tillage; and it was not till after 1730 that the first signs of the great growth of pasture began to appear. "From the beginning of the last century until about the year 1732 the industry of the Irish appears to have been voluntarily directed to tillage, with a view to export, much more than it was subsequently to that year and anterior to the year of 1786, probably owing in a great degree to the then condition of its trade and manufactures, which was by no means such as to afford sufficient employment. The woollen manufacture was rapidly declining under the repeated attacks of Great Britain; the linen manufacture was in its infancy; the manufacture of iron was lost by the waste of timber; the importation of cattle and provisions into England had been proclaimed a nuisance; in short, the Irish seemed necessitated to betake themselves to tillage."

After the Peace of 1715, the Continental demand for cattle greatly increased, and the demand was still further increased by reason of a murrain which broke out on the Continent. In 1758 even the British market was opened to

1 Newenham, *View of Ireland*, p. 123.
Irish cattle. As against these advantages enjoyed by pasture we must set the disadvantages with which tillage had to contend. England was at that time a wheat-exporting country, and, whereas English wheat exported to Ireland was helped by bounties, Irish wheat exported to England was burdened by duties. The Penal Laws, moreover, rendered pasture a more suitable occupation than tillage for the Catholic tenantry. "The Roman Catholics, having only a temporary property in land at improved and high rents, must naturally fall into the lazy industry of grazing: in which they are quick-sighted enough to find that sort of interest which bears a proper analogy with the nature of their tenures—a sagacity which must teach them to avoid as far as possible the culture of land." In a pamphlet published in 1765, Lord Taaffe emphasises this aspect of the question: "No sooner," he writes, "were the Catholics excluded from durable and profitable tenures than they commenced grazing, and laid aside agriculture; they ceased from bounding or enclosing their farms, and from building good houses as occupations unsuited to the new post assigned them in our national economy. They fell to waste the lands they were virtually forbidden to cultivate; the business of pasturage being compatible with such conduct and requiring little industry and still less labour in the management. This business also brings quick returns in money, and, though these profits be smaller than those arising from agriculture, yet they are more immediate, and are much better fitted to the condition of men who are confined to a fugitive property which can so readily be transferred from one country to another. This pastoral occupation also deludes the vigilance of our present race of informers, as the difficulty of ascertaining the grazier's usual profits is considerable, and as the proofs of his enjoying more than one-third of the profit cannot so easily be made clear in our courts of law. To keep the lands waste also prevents in a great degree leases in reversion, which Protestants only are qualified to take, and which

1 Case of the Roman Catholics, Dublin, 1755.
give the present occupant the best title to future renewal. This sort of self-defence in keeping the lands uncultivated had the further consequence of expelling that most useful body of the people, the Yeomanry in England and the Scouogs in Ireland—communities of industrious housekeepers who, in my own time, herded together in large villages and cultivated the land everywhere, till as leases expired some rich grazier negotiating privately with a sum of ready money, took their lands over their heads."

Another minor cause operating in the same direction was the preference of the lower classes for potatoes rather than bread as their staple food. As if the natural tendencies weighing against tillage were not sufficiently strong, the Irish House of Commons determined to aid them, and in 1735 passed a resolution exempting pasture land from tithes. This resolution was of no legislative force, as it was the act of one House only, but was nevertheless strictly observed by tithe-gatherers during the remainder of the century.

It is not surprising that all these causes acting together should have had a marked effect in the country. From about the year 1730 the amount of land tilled steadily and speedily declined, with many bad results, not the least of which was that the smaller tenants were driven off the land and usually ended either by retiring to the mountains and becoming cottiers, or by emigrating.

Parliament, fully cognizant of the evil results of this state of affairs, made several attempts to remedy it, but at first with little success. Newenham was of opinion that these efforts were not bona fide: "The Acts," he writes, "of the Irish Parliament, which professed to aim at the encouragement of tillage, furnish indisputable evidence of the truth of the assertion that, notwithstanding an apparent wish, the real welfare of Ireland was far from being the governing principle of the Irish Parliament." It is more probable, however, that the reason the Acts passed by Parliament

1 Taaffe, Observations on Affairs of Ireland. 1766, p. 12.
2 Carew, Fragments on Ireland, Political Essays, p. 129.
3 Newenham, op. cit., p. 123.
were not really efficacious is that no effective measure would have been sanctioned by the English Privy Council. The first Act passed in Ireland for the encouragement of tillage was 6 Anne, c. 18, whereby bounties were given of 1/6 a quarter on the export of wheat, ground or unground, when the price was under 14/-; 1/- on barley, bere, or malt, when it was under 10/-, and 1/- on rye, ground or unground, when it was under 9/-. Newenham thought this Act must have been merely illusory, as the average price of wheat in England for the twenty years ending 1707 was 23/4 quarter, and, as it was highly unlikely that the average Irish price was so much as 20/- less, it was improbable that the bounty could ever operate. He points out that during the 24 years which succeeded the passing of this Act, the quantity of barley and malt exported from Ireland was only 707,371 quarters, and of wheat only 223,210 quarters. The former of these, if exported at or under 10/- a quarter, would have been productive of a premium amounting to £35,368; the latter at or under 14/-, a premium of £16,748, making in all £52,116. But the premium paid on all sorts of corn exported during those 24 years amounted, according to the Parliamentary Return, only to £18,035.

In 1716 the House of Commons passed resolutions, which never developed into Acts, condemning the clauses against tillage which had become so common in Irish leases, and resolutions were also passed in favour of establishing public granaries. The Act of 1 George II., c. 10, made it compulsory for every tenant to till one-twentieth of his land. Newenham concludes from the provisions of this Act that less than five per cent. of the land in the country was tilled at the time. This Act, however, was never enforced. The next Act for promoting tillage was 29 George II., c. 9, whereby bounties of 2/- a quarter were given on wheat exported when the price was not more than 24/-: 1/6 on rye not exceeding 14/-: the same on bere, barley, and malt not exceeding 12/-: and 1/- on oats not exceeding 6/-. Newenham was of opinion that the
benefits proposed by this Act were also illusory. The
bounty on wheat was little more than a quarter
of that which had been granted in England seventy
years earlier; and the price at which the bounty
could be obtained was about one third of the cor-
responding price in England, and was only about
one-half of the average price on wheat in Ireland at the time
of the passing of the Act; and the same objections applied
to the bounties on rye and barley. Besides, the quarter
was defined in the Act as being 40 stone, whereas pre-
viously it had only been taken to be about 32 stone, so
that, in fact, the actual bounties were not proportionately
greater than those given by the Act of 1707, and in any
event—most vital defect of all—were still unaccompa-
panied by corresponding duties on importation. In 1765,
premiums were offered to the landlords and farmers having
the greatest quantity of corn on stands four feet high with
flag stones on top, but no premium seems to have been
paid under this Act. The explanation of this fact appears
when we realise that it was necessary that the applicant
for a premium should have twenty-five acres under tillage,
and, according to Newenham,¹ in 1765, twenty-five acres of
tillage were rarely found in the occupation of one indivi-
dual except a resident gentleman of considerable fortune.

In 1759 was passed what Young describes as "one of
the most singular measures that have anywhere been
adopted: that is, giving a bounty on the inland
carriage of corn from all parts of the country to the
Capital." At first it was provided that the corn should
come from more than ten miles from Dublin, but five
miles was the distance fixed by an amending Act of 1767.²
The rate of the bounty was as follows:—

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Commodity</th>
<th>Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5 cwt. of flour</td>
<td>3d. per mile</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 cwt. of malt</td>
<td>2½d.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 cwt. of wheat</td>
<td>1½d.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 cwt. of oats</td>
<td>1d.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 cwt. of bere</td>
<td>1½d.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 cwt. of barley</td>
<td>1½d.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹ p. 139. ² 7 Geo. III., ch. 12.
Excess of Imports over Exports
Thousands of Barrels.

Excess of Exports over Imports
Thousands of Barrels.
Diagram showing the Annual average excess of Corn, Meal, and Flour, exported from, and imported into Ireland, 1700–1800.
As early as 1759 the good effect of this Act was felt in Dublin. "You know how we all suffered from want of bread: how small the loaves were, and how many of our poor labourers died of want. This bill was passed in 1757. . . . What has been the effect? The farmers, tempted by this premium, have turned themselves to tillage. Look at the large loaf we have. Look at the children about us, who, instead of dying with hunger, hold in their fists large pieces of good bread." As a result of this Act, moreover, tillage was greatly extended, or rather the tendency in the other direction was very effectively checked, but, although the area under tillage greatly increased, and the sums spent on the bounty rapidly grew from a few pounds to the solid sum of £61,786 in 1777, the importation of corn did not diminish in anything like the same proportion. The following figures illustrate this:—

The average bounty paid in 7 years ending 1770—£12,148
" " " " " " 1777—£47,059
Average value of corn imported in 7 years ending 1770 ... ... ... £101,607
Average value of corn imported in 7 years ending 1777 ... ... ... 84,697
Average value of corn exported in 7 years ending 1770 ... ... ... 36,299
Average value of corn exported in 7 years ending 1777 ... ... ... 64,871

In view of these figures we must feel some surprise at Young's emphatic condemnation of the wisdom of these bounties. According to him, they produced three bad effects—first, as the bounty was only paid on corn carried by land, corn that would otherwise have been more cheaply carried by sea was carried by road, and consequently a large unproductive class of carters and wagon-builders grew up; secondly, on account of all the corn being attracted to Dublin, the more convenient ports of the

1 The Clothiers' Letter to the Inhabitants of the Liberties, Dublin, 1759.
2 Young. Tour, vol. ii., ch. 18.
country were sacrificed, and Dublin developed a flourishing export trade at the expense of the taxpayer; and thirdly, the land which was tilled was not the poor uncultivated land, but the rich sheep pastures of the Leinster counties. "The effect of the Act," he complains, "was to substitute good pasture by bad tillage."

Young was wrong about the coastwise traffic. By 7 George III., c. 4, a bounty of 4d. per cwt. was granted on flour, wheat, etc., brought coastwise to Dublin from any place between Wicklow and the Tuscar Rock, or between Drogheda and Carrickfergus; and 5d. from any place south of the Tuscar Rock or north of Carrickfergus; and a bounty of 4d. per cwt. on corn, etc., brought to Newry, Belfast, or Derry from any place south of Cooly Point near Carlingford. By 17 and 18 Geo. III., c. 34, 4d. per cwt. was granted on corn, and 12d. on flour brought to Dublin coastwise from between Wicklow and the Tuscar, and Drogheda and Carrickfergus; and 5d. per cwt. on corn and 1/2 per cwt. on flour brought from south of the Tuscar or north of Carrickfergus. By 19 and 20 Geo. III., c. 34, 10d. per cwt. was granted on grain, and 1/6 per cwt. on malt or wheat brought coastwise to Dublin from any point between Dunfanaghy Head, Co. Donegal, and Cape Clear, Co. Cork.

A real evil occasioned by the bounty, not mentioned by Young, was that a great deal of the corn consumed in other parts of Ireland was first brought to Dublin for the purpose of getting the bounty, and the price was consequently increased for the consumer. Another evil caused by the Act was that, as the bounty was equal on all qualities of corn, the quality tended to be lowered: "Instead of improving the quality of the grain, the bounty has debased it, especially in the County of Kilkenny, where this bounty most operates. There are in that county a multitude of little mills which are carried on by persons of small capital who grind for the profit of the bounty alone, and, as they receive the same premium for all classes of flour, they make little or no distinction as to the quality
of what is ground. The best of our farmers are but slovenly, but the County of Kilkenny farmers exceed all description: whereas before the bounty they were reckoned the best in the country." This defect was to some extent remedied by the Act 19 and 20 George III., c. 17, by which no bounty was to be paid on flour unless good and merchantable, and bonâ fide sold at 6/- per cwt.; by the same Act the bounty on land carriage was lowered so as to encourage transmission by the Grand Canal, the grain and flour brought by which were entitled, by 17 and 18 Geo. III., chap. 29, to two-thirds of the Land Carriage Bounty, and the oatmeal to the full amount thereof.

One good effect of the inland bounty was that it encouraged the milling of corn in Ireland. As early as 1768 it was noticed that mills were springing up all over the country. Newenham says: "The inland bounty occasioned the erection of many of the finest mills, perhaps, in the world. Mr. Jebb's, of Slane; Capt. Mercer's, near Leighlin Bridge, and Mr. Moore's, near Clonmel, are three extensive structures. In the first, 14,000 barrels of wheat were annually ground soon after it was built; in the second, 15,000, and in the third at least as much. From the commencement of the period to the year 1790 there were erected no fewer than 248 mills at distances from 11 to 130 miles from Dublin: and a large majority of these cost much greater sums of money than individuals, generally speaking, had before been tempted to spend in speculation. The number of mills from which flour was brought to Dublin was as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Mills</th>
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<th>Mills</th>
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<th>Mills</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Mills</th>
<th>Year</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1768</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>1774</td>
<td>125</td>
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<td>1782</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>1788</td>
<td>179</td>
<td>1794</td>
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<tr>
<td>1771</td>
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<td>1778</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>1784</td>
<td>158</td>
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<td>219</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1773</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>1779</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>1785</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>1791</td>
<td>221</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 Dissertation on the Bounty Laws. Dublin, 1780.
3 The best account of the good effects of the Inland Bounty is to be found in the speech of Sir Hercules Langrishe in the Irish House of Commons on the 7th April, 1791.
About the year 1770 the tide turned to some extent, and causes began to operate in favour of tillage. The Octennial Act of 1768 had made elections for Parliament more frequent, and landlords being anxious to increase the number of voters on their land, discouraged the growth of vast tracts of pasture land without human inhabitants. Then again, by the legislation of 1778, Catholics were enabled to take long leases; England was rapidly developing into a manufacturing country to the prejudice of her agriculture, and this fact, coupled with the outbreak of the French war, tended to increase her demand for Irish corn.

Further bounties had meanwhile been granted by Parliament. The Act 5 Geo. III., c. 19, granted bounties on the export of corn as follows:—

8d. per cwt. on oatmeal not exceeding 6/- in price; 5d. per cwt. on barley not exceeding 3/9 in price; 5d. per cwt. on oats not exceeding 3/- in price;

but again this Act imposed no duties on importation. The Act 13 and 14 Geo. III., c. 11, gave the following further bounties on exports:—

3 4 per quarter on 32 stones of wheat and the same on meal and flour, when price of wheat less than 32 1/2. 1 2 per quarter on 22 stone of oats when price of oats less than 9 1/2.

Newenham says this Act was useless, as the prices fixed were well below the average current prices. A step in the right direction was taken by 15 and 16 Geo. III., c. 3, by which an import duty of 1 - was imposed on every cwt. of bread, flour and biscuits, and 2/- on every barrel of wheat, provided that the price did not exceed 3/- per barrel. But this Act excepted all imports from Great Britain, and the import duties were, therefore, largely inoperative.

All these causes tended to produce a marked effect.
IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

Young, in 1776, had noted an increase of agriculture in all parts of the country, and, strange to say, with disapproval. In his eyes the farmers were simply substituting bad tillage for good pasture; but he seemed to overlook the fact that an improvement in skill would necessarily be gradual owing to the very low state to which agriculture had previously been reduced.

Further bounties were given by 19 and 20 Geo. III., c. 17, as follows:

(a) Bounties on exportation of wheat under 44/-, 5/- a quarter; barley, bere and malt under 22/-, 2/6; oats under 14/-, 2/6.

(b) Duties on imported wheat, except British, 16/11 when not above 53 4 a quarter; barley the same when not above 32/-; oats, 5/10 when not above 16/11.

The tendency in the direction of tillage received its final impetus in 1784, when Foster's Corn Law was passed. This great measure was passed into law less than two years after the liberation of the Irish Parliament, and is a notable argument in favour of the necessity of a free Parliament. As long as the iniquitous provisions of Poyning's Act were in operation, the Irish Parliament had to confer its benefits on the country in small doles, almost by stealth, for fear of offending the English Privy Council, which had the power to wreck all Irish legislation. As a general rule, any measure which was designed to confer a substantial benefit on Irish trade was rejected by the English Privy Council, if there was any reason to fear that the results would in any way injure English commerce. Now, at last, the Irish Parliament was freed from that restraint, and the width and completeness of this Corn Law, one of the first of its enactments, leads one to regret that so patriotic and independent an assembly was cut short in its labours by the Act of Union.

The following is a summary of the principal provisions of Foster's Act.

1 23 & 24 Geo. III., c. 19.
Bounties on Exportation.

When price of wheat not more than 27/- a barrel—
3 4 per barrel of wheat; 1/4 per cwt. of wheatmeal, or malt made of wheat; 1/11 per cwt. of flour of wheat, or wheaten bread or biscuit.

When price of barley not more than 13/6 a barrel—
1 7 per barrel of barley, bere, or big; 2/2 per barrel of malt made thereof; 1/- per cwt. of flour or meal made thereof.

When price of rye not more than 23/- a barrel—
2 2 per barrel of rye; 10d. per cwt. of rye meal or flour.

When price of oats not more than 10/- a barrel—
1/5 per barrel of oats; 1/5 per cwt. of oatmeal.

When price of white pease not more than 27/- a barrel—
2/- per barrel.

Prohibitions on Exportation.

No wheat, wheatmeal, malt or flour, to be exported when price more than 30/- the barrel.

No rye or rye-meal when price more than 25/- the barrel.

No barley, bere, big, or malt, or meal thereof, when price more than 14/6 the barrel.

No oats or oatmeal when price more than 11/-.

No white pease when price more than 30/-.

No grey pease when price more than 18/3.

Duties on Importation.

On wheat, or malt made of wheat, when price under 30/- per barrel... ... 10/- per barrel

On rye, when price under 26/- per barrel... ... 10/-,

On barley... ... 14 6... ... 10/-,

On oats... ... 11/-... ... 5/-,

On white pease... ... 30/-... ... 10/-,

On grey pease... ... 18/3... ... 10/-,

When prices are more than those mentioned above, a duty of 2d. per barrel on corn or grain, and 2d. per cwt. on malt.

Preferential Treatment of Great Britain.

Corn, grain, and malt might be imported from Great Britain at a duty of 2d. per barrel on corn and grain, and 2d. per cwt. on malt when prices were between following figures: —

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Article</th>
<th>Price Range</th>
<th>Duty in pence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wheat</td>
<td>less than 30/-, and not less than 27/-</td>
<td>2 3/4 per barrel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rye</td>
<td>26/-</td>
<td>23/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barley</td>
<td>14 6</td>
<td>13 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oats</td>
<td>11/-</td>
<td>10/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White pease</td>
<td>30/-</td>
<td>27/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grey pease</td>
<td>18 3</td>
<td>16 3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This preference only to be continued so long as the like Irish articles should be allowed to be imported into Great Britain at the same or lower duties.
Special Provision for Ulster.

“Whereas the manufacturers and poor in the province of Ulster have been frequently distressed by the high price of oats there,” the export of oats from Ulster might be prohibited by proclamation, and so long as that prohibition should remain in force, all oats imported into an Ulster port from Leinster or Connaught (except Dublin) should receive a bounty of 6d. per cwt., and all oats imported from Munster a bounty of 10d. per cwt.

The result of this Act was to change Ireland from a pastoral to an agricultural country. “As a result of Mr. Foster’s Act,” says Crumpe, “the agricultural tenantry have in several counties increased in numbers and in wealth, and some little improvement in the mode of tillage is observable”; and Newenham estimated that a million and a half acres extra were tilled within twenty years of the passing of the Act. The great increase in tillage will be sufficiently evident from the figures contained in the tables of imports and exports at the end of this chapter. But it must be remembered that the increase cannot be judged by the imports and exports alone, as the population of Ireland itself grew very rapidly during these years.

Young complains that in Ireland bad tillage had taken the place of good pasture, but it is satisfactory to note that, according to other contemporary observers, the great increase of tillage caused by Foster’s Act was not at the expense of the old pasture, but was largely effected by the reclamation of waste ground. The cattle trade still continued to flourish as it had always done, in spite of the determined efforts of England to suppress it. “Agriculture,” says Lord Sheffield, “is concerned with raising and feeding cattle. A thousand acres, of which a few parts is tilled, will maintain, with good management, by the artificial use of turnips, etc., more cattle than an equal quantity of pastureland.” “But though the tillage of Ireland appears to have been wonderfully extended by the operations of this Act, its pasture land has not experienced the least diminution; on the contrary, its quantity has been

3Sheffield, Trade of Ireland, 1785.
evidently augmented. Had the effects of the Act merely operated in transmuting the pasturage into tillage, it would demonstrably have been a singular national benefit. But while it secured the vast and various advantages arising from the extension of the latter, it does not appear in the least to have trenched on the former." Nor did the sheep-breeding industry suffer by reason of Foster's Law. "The increase of tillage," writes Newenham, "does by no means imply a proportionate decrease of sheep. Sheep are necessary to, and are kept by, every little tillage farmer and cottier tenant. Their milk contributes to the support of his family; their wool to the clothing of his family; and their muck to the revival of his worn-out fields. Besides, as land is annually meliorated by the depasturing of sheep, the mountains of Ireland actually support vast multitudes of these animals more than formerly."

An incidental effect of Foster's Act was the abolition of the Inland Bounty. At the time of the original Act of 1757 granting the Inland Bounty, the export bounties were not sufficient to be effective, and the object of the Inland Bounty was to encourage the farmers to grow enough corn to ensure that Dublin could never be short. For several years the Act operated to produce this result, and great quantities of corn came to Dublin. Foster's Act provided that no bounty should be paid on any corn exported from Dublin, as it was considered at the time that the Dublin corn merchants were sufficiently encouraged by the previous Act. After 1784 the Dublin market ceased to attract as it had formerly done; corn for export was sent to other ports rather than Dublin owing to the bounties, and the result was that Dublin only obtained each year barely sufficient corn to supply its own inhabitants. A small excess caused a glut in the Dublin market which discouraged the farmers from sending corn to Dublin the following year, and there was then a scarcity.

1 Newenham, p. 218; and see "An Essay on the Subserviency of Improved Agriculture to the Proper Feeding of Stock, and the Mutual Support they may derive from each other," by John Hamilton, Dublin, 1801.
In the Eighteenth Century.

There was, apparently, a great shortage of corn in the City during the years 1784 to 1797, and this may account for the fact that the complaints of distress which prevailed during those years was confined to the city, and did not spread over the rest of the country. It was to remedy this state of affairs that Parliament, in 1797, repealed the Act giving the Inland Bounty, and provided that like bounties should be paid on the export from Dublin as from other ports.

Ultimately the process of sub-division which was caused by Foster's Act went too far, and the land came to be split up into what would now-a-days be called "uneconomic" holdings. The tendency in this direction was accentuated by the Catholic franchise granted in 1793, and the rapid growth of population. The process of sub-division continued until about 1820, when, owing to the fall of the price of corn following the declaration of peace, much distress was felt, and farms began to be consolidated. The great distress which followed belongs to the history of the nineteenth century.

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Table, compiled by Newenham, showing quantities of Barley and Malt, Oats, Wheat, Oatmeal, Wheatmeal and Flour exported from Ireland, 1700—1800, in periods of four years.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Four Years ending</th>
<th>Barley and Malt</th>
<th>Oats</th>
<th>Wheat</th>
<th>Oatmeal</th>
<th>Wheatmeal</th>
<th>Flour</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dec. 25, 1704</td>
<td>16,317 Quarters</td>
<td>6,937 Quarters</td>
<td>7,106 Quarters</td>
<td>37,707 Barrels</td>
<td>674 Barrels</td>
<td>Cwts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1712</td>
<td>101,420 Quarters</td>
<td>4,878 Quarters</td>
<td>66,705 Quarters</td>
<td>50,427 Barrels</td>
<td>10,493 Barrels</td>
<td>Cwts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1720</td>
<td>91,719 Quarters</td>
<td>39,277 Quarters</td>
<td>7,656 Quarters</td>
<td>53,788 Barrels</td>
<td>1,504 Barrels</td>
<td>Cwts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1724</td>
<td>101,500 Quarters</td>
<td>35,103 Quarters</td>
<td>2,351 Quarters</td>
<td>66,142 Barrels</td>
<td>1,140 Barrels</td>
<td>Cwts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1728</td>
<td>81,723 Quarters</td>
<td>20,416 Quarters</td>
<td>6,225 Quarters</td>
<td>43,122 Barrels</td>
<td>945 Barrels</td>
<td>Cwts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1732</td>
<td>158,668 Quarters</td>
<td>32,636 Quarters</td>
<td>1,833 Quarters</td>
<td>15,452 Barrels</td>
<td>142 Barrels</td>
<td>Cwts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1736</td>
<td>165,380 Quarters</td>
<td>4,440 Quarters</td>
<td>234 Quarters</td>
<td>3,632 Barrels</td>
<td>146 Barrels</td>
<td>Cwts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1740</td>
<td>233,366 Quarters</td>
<td>7,778 Quarters</td>
<td>1,971 Quarters</td>
<td>3,075 Barrels</td>
<td>160 Barrels</td>
<td>Cwts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1744</td>
<td>80,213 Quarters</td>
<td>6,288 Quarters</td>
<td>5,249 Quarters</td>
<td>18,128 Barrels</td>
<td>1,787 Barrels</td>
<td>Cwts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1748</td>
<td>35,282 Quarters</td>
<td>3,057 Quarters</td>
<td>6,955 Quarters</td>
<td>12,306 Barrels</td>
<td>1,008 Barrels</td>
<td>Cwts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1752</td>
<td>54,466 Quarters</td>
<td>5,869 Quarters</td>
<td>4,706 Quarters</td>
<td>9,637 Barrels</td>
<td>290 Barrels</td>
<td>Cwts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1756</td>
<td>9,902 Quarters</td>
<td>19,343 Quarters</td>
<td>7 Quarters</td>
<td>52,503 Barrels</td>
<td>50 Barrels</td>
<td>Cwts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1764</td>
<td>17,533 Quarters</td>
<td>17,788 Quarters</td>
<td>117 Quarters</td>
<td>37,762 Barrels</td>
<td>285 Barrels</td>
<td>Cwts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1768</td>
<td>29,584 Quarters</td>
<td>40,377 Quarters</td>
<td>2,258 Quarters</td>
<td>69,603 Barrels</td>
<td>68 Barrels</td>
<td>Cwts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1772</td>
<td>24,337 Quarters</td>
<td>74,532 Quarters</td>
<td>8,145 Quarters</td>
<td>103,811 Barrels</td>
<td>5 Barrels</td>
<td>Cwts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1776</td>
<td>58,642 Quarters</td>
<td>181,106 Quarters</td>
<td>17,220 Quarters</td>
<td>151,159 Barrels</td>
<td>100 Barrels</td>
<td>Cwts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1780</td>
<td>30,483 Quarters</td>
<td>278,512 Quarters</td>
<td>41,232 Quarters</td>
<td>34,228 Barrels</td>
<td>1,178 Barrels</td>
<td>Cwts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1784</td>
<td>34,527 Quarters</td>
<td>174,881 Quarters</td>
<td>83,993 Quarters</td>
<td>40,011 Barrels</td>
<td>200 Cwts.</td>
<td>Cwts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1788</td>
<td>158,489 Quarters</td>
<td>618,346 Quarters</td>
<td>89,888 Quarters</td>
<td>256,366 Barrels</td>
<td>32 Cwts.</td>
<td>71,703 Cwts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1800</td>
<td>97,333 Barrels</td>
<td>1,959,120 Barrels</td>
<td>114,211 Barrels</td>
<td>312,213 Cwts.</td>
<td>26,476 Cwts.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Acts Regulating Weights and Measures.

6 Anne, c. 18—Quarter to contain 8 bushels.
7 Geo. II., c. 15.—Quarter to weigh 40 stone.
25 Geo. II., c. 15.—Quartcr of wheat 40 stone; barley, 24; Oats, 22.
13 & 14 Geo. III., c. 11.—Quarter of wheat 32 stone.
19 & 20 Geo. III., c. 17.—English Exportation Measures.
23 & 24 Geo. III., c. 19.—Barrel of wheat 20 stone; of barley, 16; of oats, 14.
Table, compiled by Newenham, showing quantities of Barley and Malt, Oats, Wheat, Oatmeal, Wheatmeal and Flour imported into Ireland, 1700—1800, in periods of four years.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Four Years ending</th>
<th>Malt</th>
<th>Corn</th>
<th>Oatmeal</th>
<th>Wheatmeal</th>
<th>Flour</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Quarters</td>
<td>Quarters</td>
<td>Barrels</td>
<td>Barrels</td>
<td>Cwts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec. 25, 1704</td>
<td>1,009</td>
<td>5,027</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>71</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mar. 25, 1708</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>2,391</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>13</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1712</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>3,556</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>53</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1716</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>3,532</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>375</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1720</td>
<td>567</td>
<td>27,309</td>
<td>1,164</td>
<td>294</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Barley and Malt</th>
<th>Quarters</th>
<th>Oats</th>
<th>Wheat</th>
<th>Cwts.</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1724</td>
<td>47,274</td>
<td>5,416</td>
<td>98,044</td>
<td>8,157</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1728</td>
<td>14,065</td>
<td>1,006</td>
<td>43,176</td>
<td>12,741</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1732</td>
<td>19,751</td>
<td>650</td>
<td>104,226</td>
<td>24,344</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1736</td>
<td>68,915</td>
<td>1,863</td>
<td>115,540</td>
<td>63,178</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1740</td>
<td>29,763</td>
<td>2,437</td>
<td>60,777</td>
<td>45,263</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1744</td>
<td>53,175</td>
<td>3,341</td>
<td>52,061</td>
<td>46,240</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1748</td>
<td>264,569</td>
<td>23,797</td>
<td>164,904</td>
<td>5,300</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1752</td>
<td>201,398</td>
<td>3,670</td>
<td>75,786</td>
<td>161</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1756</td>
<td>348,912</td>
<td>1,648</td>
<td>136,938</td>
<td>71,432</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1760</td>
<td>138,225</td>
<td>6,115</td>
<td>118,242</td>
<td>179,694</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1764</td>
<td>143,559</td>
<td>203</td>
<td>67,974</td>
<td>247,319</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1768</td>
<td>125,574</td>
<td>4,547</td>
<td>70,149</td>
<td>229,558</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1772</td>
<td>118,263</td>
<td>4,660</td>
<td>111,341</td>
<td>275,144</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1776</td>
<td>15,672</td>
<td>415</td>
<td>17,718</td>
<td>88,962</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1780</td>
<td>133,200</td>
<td>2,296</td>
<td>17,998</td>
<td>85,723</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1784</td>
<td>166,820</td>
<td>7,684</td>
<td>51,150</td>
<td>142,519</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1788</td>
<td>44,546</td>
<td>782</td>
<td>39,426</td>
<td>110,947</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Barrels</th>
<th>Barrels</th>
<th>Barrels</th>
<th>Cwts.</th>
<th>Cwts.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1792</td>
<td>2,347</td>
<td>717</td>
<td>1,933</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1796</td>
<td>24,622</td>
<td>784</td>
<td>103,563</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1800</td>
<td>55,243</td>
<td>1,617</td>
<td>19,439</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Acts Regulating Weights and Measures.
(See Table opposite).
**Account of the Amount of the Bounties paid on Grain and Flour brought by Land Carriage, Canal and Coastways to Dublin.**

(Compiled by Nevenham).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Land Carriage</th>
<th>Canal</th>
<th>Coastways</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bounty</td>
<td>Act</td>
<td>Bounty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1762</td>
<td>£7,240</td>
<td>31 Geo. III., c. 3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1763</td>
<td>5,096</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1764</td>
<td>5,583</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1765</td>
<td>6,660</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1766</td>
<td>9,212</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1767</td>
<td>6,074</td>
<td>7 Geo. III., c. 12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1768</td>
<td>13,675</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1769</td>
<td>25,225</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1770</td>
<td>18,706</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1771</td>
<td>19,290</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1772</td>
<td>39,580</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1773</td>
<td>44,465</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1774</td>
<td>49,674</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1775</td>
<td>53,889</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1776</td>
<td>60,745</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1777</td>
<td>61,786</td>
<td>17 &amp; 18 Geo. III., c. 29</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1778</td>
<td>71,521</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1779</td>
<td>67,848</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1780</td>
<td>77,856</td>
<td>19 &amp; 20 Geo. III., c. 17</td>
<td>5,868</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1781</td>
<td>68,272</td>
<td></td>
<td>7,738</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1782</td>
<td>57,762</td>
<td>£2.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1783</td>
<td>30,141</td>
<td>216</td>
<td>17,185</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1784</td>
<td>30,962</td>
<td>446</td>
<td>11,228</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1785</td>
<td>28,905</td>
<td>783</td>
<td>10,516</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1786</td>
<td>40,223</td>
<td>640</td>
<td>12,869</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1787</td>
<td>43,133</td>
<td>3,857</td>
<td>11,779</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1788</td>
<td>39,155</td>
<td>12,854</td>
<td>18,362</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1789</td>
<td>30,220</td>
<td>27,833</td>
<td>20,455</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1790</td>
<td>32,152</td>
<td>27,334</td>
<td>19,648</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1791</td>
<td>24,116</td>
<td>27,395</td>
<td>19,918</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1792</td>
<td>27,848</td>
<td>33,216</td>
<td>24,197</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1793</td>
<td>28,027</td>
<td>31,992</td>
<td>29,685</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1794</td>
<td>35,716</td>
<td>24,303</td>
<td>28,074</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1795</td>
<td>23,505</td>
<td>22,539</td>
<td>29,963</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1796</td>
<td>28,283</td>
<td>24,725</td>
<td>33,929</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1797</td>
<td>28,074</td>
<td>28,958</td>
<td>28,763</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1798</td>
<td>13,545</td>
<td>10,927</td>
<td>36,616</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER XII.

THE STATE OF AGRICULTURE.

UNDER a land system such as we have described, it is not surprising that the state of agriculture in Ireland remained low. The great landlords lived either in Dublin or in England, and consequently did not pay any attention to the cultivation of the soil; the middle-men, on the whole, were an idle, worthless class who did not cultivate their land, and, as we have seen, by their system of canting discouraged their tenants from cultivating it. This iniquitous system of canting the land by auction resulted in the tenant paying such rents as to leave him no margin for stocking or otherwise improving the land, and, as we have seen, the system resulted in the worst tenants being preferred to the best. The shortness of the leases was another cause operating in the same direction. Moreover, while in the case of a Protestant the high rate of interest on money made it more profitable to purchase than to improve land,¹ in the case of a Catholic, the provision that if he improved his land so that the rent became less than two-thirds of the annual improved value he was liable to have his interest terminated, acted as a discouragement. The conversion of land into pasture indicated that the larger tenants did not devote their attention to cultivation; and the smallness of the corn bounties deprived the farmer of the large market which would have operated as an inducement to him to cultivate on a larger and more improved scale. Another

¹ Reasons offered for Erecting a Bank in Ireland, by Henry Maxwell, Dublin, 1721.
cause which probably helped to keep back the progress of agriculture was the dearness of all agricultural implements, which had to be imported, owing to the lack of iron manufactures in Ireland.\(^1\)

Many of the Irish farmers, moreover, were not only farmers, but manufacturers as well, and divided their energy between their two occupations. This was a very common ground of complaint all through the eighteenth century. In 1723 Lord Molesworth complained that "to set a farm to a manufacturer, tradesman, or shopkeeper, both spoils the tradesman and ruins the farm."\(^2\) "Our tradesmen do not associate in towns or villages, but are generally found dispersed over the country, where each of them is fond of getting a bit of land, and will needs be dabbling in a farm: the consequence of which is that they become neither skilful farmers nor expert workmen, but are bunglers in both."\(^3\) Young complained greatly of this system:—"In the North, where the linen manufacture has spread, the farms are so small that ten acres in the occupation of one person is a large one, five or six will be found a good farm, and all the agriculture of the country is so entirely subservient to the manufacture that they no more deserve the name of farmers than the occupier of a mere cabbage garden. . . . Change the scene, and view the North of Ireland; you there behold a whole province peopled by weavers; it is they who cultivate, or rather beggar the soil, as well as work the looms; agriculture is there in ruins; it is cut up by the root, extirpated, annihilated; the whole region is the disgrace of the kingdom; all the crops you see are contemptible, are nothing but filth and weeds. No other part of Ireland can exhibit the soil in such a state of poverty and desolation. A farming traveller, who goes through that country with attention, will be shocked at seeing wretchedness in the shape of a few beggarly oats on a variety of most fertile soils, which, were they in Norfolk,
would soon rival the best lands in that county. But the cause of all these evils, which are absolute exceptions to everything else on the face of the globe, is easily found. A most prosperous manufacture, so contrived as to be the destruction of agriculture, is certainly a spectacle for which we must go to Ireland. It is owing to the fabrick spreading over all the country, instead of being confined to towns. This, in a certain degree, is found in some manufactures in England, but never to the exclusion of farmers; there, literally speaking, is not a farmer in a hundred miles of the linen country in Ireland. The lands are infinitely subdivided; no weaver thinks of supporting himself by his loom; he has always a piece of potatoes, a piece of oats, a patch of flax, and grass or weeds for a cow; thus his time is divided between his farm and his loom. Ten acres are an uncommon quantity to be in one man's occupation; four, five, or six, the common extent. They sow their land with successive crops of oats until it does not produce the seed again; and they leave it to become grass as it may, in which state it is under weeds and rubbish for four or five years. Such a wretched management is constant destruction to the land; none of it becomes improved unless from a state of nature; all the rest is destroyed, and does not produce a tenth of what it would if cultivated by farmers, who had nothing to do but mind their business.'" This system was so general that in 1763 a statute was passed which provided that the apprentices of linen weavers must not be employed unreasonably on other work, save for twenty-four days in the harvest season. 2

Of course, in describing the state of agriculture no reference is intended to the operations of the cottiers, which were on such a small scale as to render anything in the nature of improvement quite impossible; as John Stuart Mill says, "The state of agriculture under a cottier system must always remain miserable." All the

1 Young, Tour of Ireland, vol. ii., p. 29.  2 3 Geo. III., c. 34.
8 Mill, Political Economy, Bk. ii., ch. ix., s. 2.
accounts which follow have reference to farming as pursued by the larger tenants. In 1723 Lord Molesworth complained of the low state of agriculture at that time:—"I have often wondered how it comes to pass that we should be so long a time, and so unusually ignorant of the English manner of managing our tillage and lands as we now are, so that English tenants who pay double the rent to their landlords for their acres are able, notwithstanding, to supply us with corn at a moderate price, whilst we are often starving: and I have at last determined with myself that this must needs be through the difference in our industry and skill."

A very full account of the methods of the Irish farmers will be found in Madden's Recollections and Resolutions of the Gentry of Ireland, published in Dublin in 1738:—"The great obstacle to our tillage is our downright negligence or ignorance in many material articles belonging to it, and our retaining several old customs which are very prejudicial to it. I shall give a few short hints of some of them; and the first I shall touch upon is that great instrument of tillage, the plough, which, in many places, we make in so odd a fashion here, that if it were carried to England they would hardly know what it was, and would be utterly at a loss how to use it, or till their land with it, at least, to make it produce a tolerable crop. Instead of having different kinds of ploughs, as the strong Hertfordshire plough for the first, and the smaller light Suffolk plough for the second fallowing, and the little foot-plough for shutting up the furrow—instead of having several sorts (to say nothing of the new invented patent plough, and the double or four-coultered plough) for over-wet, stiff, clay grounds, or light, dry, sandy, loamy soils, we shift off all our business with one, and that is ill-contrived and ordered, and the Dutch would not wish us a worse, what is as bad as all the rest, 'tis often drawn, not by oxen, but by horses or garrons, as we call them, of different sizes, which many of the poorest Irish

1 Considerations for Promoting Agriculture, 1723; and see "The Present State of Tillage in Ireland Considered," by S. P., Dublin, 1725.
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draw by the tail. But we work our ploughs as ill as we make them, when we turn up our fields with them, for we generally leave much of our soil entirely unturned, and the furrows bare, broad, and unfruitful; even our richest lands are by no means wrought to a sufficient fineness. Thus, after a great deal of injudicious and superfluous labour, we rather drown or bury our grain than sow it. Though we plough too little through the Kingdom, each particular farmer often ploughs too much, that is, he grasps more than he can well manage, and what, by sowing too late, what for want of due care, sufficient manure, and proper culture, well applied, he has frequently a smaller crop on forty acres than he might have on twenty well wrought with skilful management. Our neglect as to proper manures is intolerably great in our poorer lands. Numbers of them we know nothing of, and many of those we do know we do not employ to the best use and in a skilful manner, by which means it happens that our crops are so ordinary that our neighbours in England under double rent, severe taxes, and treble wages for labour, with the help of a small premium, can bear the loss and charges of exporting their grain to us, and yet undersell us in our own towns. Numbers of the harrows of our poor farmers have their harrow-pins made of wood, and the tackle for them (and the plough also) of twisted gads and wretched tags cut out of the hides of horses; but even our best iron-pinned harrows are ill-contrived both for the draught of the cattle and the breaking of clods. They are generally too light, and their pins too short, thin, and weak, and not right placed to answer each other, and, therefore, can never sufficiently raise and beat the mold. Thus we just scratch the ground only, as the Indians do: and, when we have done, we neither manure our land sufficiently, nor steep the sod in proper liquor to enrich it, nor use rollers to smooth and flatten the mold, nay, we do not even mow the crop with scythes when it is ripened, but rich and poor cut it down entirely with hooks, what grain soever it be: and some of the less improved Irish,
instead of threshing, do often burn the straw as the quickest and easiest way to get out the grain. This, indeed, is a terrible account of our husbandry, and, I must own, in many particulars, is only applicable to the poorest and less civilised part of the Irish natives: but I have set it down here just as the Lacedæmonians made their slaves, the Helots, drunk, and then exposed them to their youth to make them ashamed of such odious folly.”

Bush, an Englishman, who travelled through Ireland in 1764, was much struck by the unimproved condition of the country: “The land almost universally wears the face of poverty for want of good cultivation, which the miserable occupiers really are not able to give it, and few of them, indeed, know how if they were; and this, indeed, must be the case when the lands are canted in small parcels of £20 or £30 a year at third, fourth, and fifth hand from the first proprietor . . . . the produce of this kingdom either of corn or of cattle is not above two-thirds at most of what, by good cultivation, it might yield. The province of Leinster, and the middle parts of the Kingdom in general, are the best cultivated and the most generally enclosed—especially Kilkenny.”

Of course, the best known and most valuable account of the state of agriculture in the eighteenth century is to be found in Arthur Young’s Tour in Ireland. The author, an acute observer, and a keen and successful farmer himself, travelled Ireland from end to end in order to acquire all the information he could on this very subject. The whole of the first volume of the Tour, which consists of a diary recording what he saw as he travelled from place to place, presents a complete picture of the methods of farming then practised. Young’s general conclusion was that the Irish farmers were, in their knowledge and skill, at least five centuries behind the English. Such barbarous practices as ploughing by the tail and burning corn in the straw were still to be found

1 Bush, Hibernia Curiosa: and see A Short Plan for More Effectually Propagating Husbandry, Dublin, 1764.
2 Tour, vol. ii., p. 104.
in some places. The manuring of the land with lime was generally well understood, but the use of dung as manure was to a large extent unknown. The average crop per acre was smaller than in England, in spite of the greater fertility of the soil, as the following table shows:

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<th>Average Crop Per English Acre</th>
<th>AVERAGE CROP PER ENGLISH ACRE.</th>
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<tr>
<td>Wheat</td>
<td>3 0 0</td>
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<td>Barley</td>
<td>4 0 0</td>
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<td>Oats</td>
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The quality of the crops was also inferior to that of the English, owing to the imperfect understanding of the system of rotation. The wasteful methods in vogue were strikingly illustrated by the fact that, in spite of the fact that Irish land paid no land tax, no poor rate, and was worked by men at sixpence a day, Irish corn was uniformly dearer than English. Land in Suffolk paid three shillings in the pound land tax, three shillings more poor rates, and was worked by labourers at sixteen pence a day; yet the corn from that county, under the expenses of land carriage, freight, lading, unlading, insurance, commission, and port charges, was able to undersell Irish corn in the Irish market.

The rearing of cattle and sheep was better understood than tillage. The breeds of Irish cattle had been much improved by the introduction of some good English stock, and the culture of turnips was beginning to receive attention. But the care of the pastures was shamefully neglected, no attention being given to draining or fencing them properly.

It must not be supposed that no inducements were offered to farmers to improve their methods. From the year 1764 great efforts were made in this direction by John Wynne Baker, an expert who was employed by the Dublin Society. An agricultural school was founded

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by this gentleman at Celbridge, where boys from the foundling hospital were apprenticed, and many encouragements were given to improved methods by means of premiums.\(^1\) About the same time, farming societies were founded in some counties, which afterwards became general.\(^2\) Parliament also tried to encourage the reclamation of barren lands by exempting such lands when reclaimed from the tithes for flax, hemp, and rape for seven years—an exemption which was extended to all tithes in 1793.\(^3\) In 1771 an Act was passed enabling "Papists" to take a sixty-one year lease of fifty acres of bog, and half an acre of arable land adjoining, and providing that the lease should be void if half the bog were not reclaimed within twenty-one years.\(^4\)

The system of agriculture did not improve, as one might expect, towards the end of the century, in spite of these encouragements. This is not surprising when we remember that the real obstacle to improved methods of cultivation was the system of land laws which prevailed and which was not revolutionised until late in the nineteenth century. It is true that the Inland Bounty Law of 1757 and Foster’s Corn Law of 1784 greatly increased the market for Irish corn, and that the repeal of the more severe Penal Laws in 1778 took away many of the discouragements under which Catholic tenants had laboured before that time; but these were matters of minor importance compared with the system of short leases at rents so high as to leave the tenant no capital wherewith to cultivate his holding. "An extension of tillage has, no doubt, taken place," said Wakefield, "but there is a wide difference between extension and improvement."

In England the latter half of the eighteenth century was marked by a great agrarian revolution, which accompanied the industrial revolution, but in Ireland the agrarian as well as the industrial revolution came some years after the corresponding events in England.

\(^3\) Geo. III., c. 9. \(^4\) 33 Geo. III., c. 25. \(^5\) 11 & 12 Geo. III., c. 21.
Toynbee says that the causes of the agrarian revolution in England were, first, the discontinuance of the common field system of cultivation; second, the enclosure on a large scale of common and waste lands; and third, the consolidation of small farms into large. None of these causes operated in Ireland; the common field system of cultivation had never existed; there were no large commons or waste lands to be enclosed; and the consolidation of small farms into large did not begin to take place until about the year 1820. Indeed, the tendency in Ireland was in quite the opposite direction; sub-divisions of large farms into small was the order of the day. Moreover, the slowness of the industrial revolution in other directions still left the farmers under the disadvantage of being artificers as well. About this time, modern machinery was gradually concentrating industrial pursuits in towns in England, but the change had not begun to operate so markedly in Ireland.

In 1788, Grattan described the state of agriculture as "miserable and experimental," and a very unflattering description of Irish farm methods was drawn by Crumpe in 1793: "The low and wretched state of agriculture in Ireland requires little proof; even those perfectly unacquainted with its practice who have seen the rich and regularly cultivated fields of Flanders and England must be convinced from a glance of its great inferiority. The mouldering fences, scanty crops, weeds universally prevalent, and a thousand other similar symptoms bring it home but too forcibly." The following good summary of the state of agriculture at the end of the century is from Chart's History of Ireland from the Union to Catholic Emancipation:—"The state of agriculture was, in many respects, disappointing. Something was undoubtedly got out of the land, but not nearly so much as might have been. The consensus of expert opinion is that farming of every kind was carried on in a slovenly

1 Industrial Revolution, p. 68.
2 See Chapter xxiv., infra.
3 Grattan's Speeches, vol. ii., p. 41.
4 Essay on Providing Employment.
and impractical way, and with most rudimentary appliances. For instance, bullocks were used for ploughing, although it had been shown by this time that they consumed proportionately more food and gave less work in return than horses. Corn was threshed on clay floors, and consequently became so dirty that its value deteriorated. Thatching was done with straw not properly dried and prepared, with the result that seeds germinated in the roof covering, and it soon presented the appearance of a meadow or a corn field.

A very full account of the state of affairs in 1814 is to be found in Wakefield, who says:—"The arable land in Ireland is cultivated on a system very different from that pursued in England. If any of my readers expect to hear of enlarged plans of farming or improved methods of cultivation worthy of the present enlightened state of science and the arts he will be disappointed. In consequence of the...partnership system which prevails chiefly in the Western districts of the country; the petty manufacturing farmers in the east parts of Ulster, the equally small sub-division throughout the greater parts of the Southern coast; the large tracts of mountain or large grazing pastures in many of the counties; and in places where these are not found, the land occupied by dairies, very little room is left for tillage purposes." On the smaller farms the spade did the work of the plough, harrow and roller; the ground was insufficiently manured and weeded, and the corn was threshed very wastefully. On the principal farms, English methods had been to some extent introduced, but they were worked in a very slovenly way. Oxen and horses were even yoked together in a "plough that would disgrace the most unskilful workman that ever undertook to construct an implement of that kind." The Scotch plough had been introduced in some places, but the many varieties of English ploughs were all unknown, and the other implements used were all indescribably inferior to those used in England. The practices of

1Wakefield, vol. i., p. 413.
ploughing by the tail, however, and of burning the straw, seem to have gone out of use, and a more extensive system of hoeing to have been introduced.

The last authority I shall quote on this subject is an English traveller who visited Ireland in 1818:—"The superior freshness and fertility of the soil enable the husbandmen in Ireland to obtain crops, with, perhaps, one-third of the manure that is required in Great Britain; were this not so, the country must long ago have been excessively deteriorated. The richness of the surface resists all the efforts of man to sterilise it; for, however just may be the censure of want of exertion on other occasions, I must give the Irish credit for being very persevering in their endeavour for this purpose."

The great success which the Irish attained in the provision trade might lead one to suppose that the care of cattle had been brought to a very high pitch. The breeds of Irish cattle were greatly improved in the eighteenth century by the introduction of some good English stock, but the bulk of Irish cattle seem to have remained rather poor, and the care of the pastures to have been to a large extent neglected. Wherever cattle and sheep were kept together, the sheep were well attended to by those who had charge of the cattle, but such a thing as a shepherd to look after sheep specially was unknown in Ireland.¹

¹Curwen's Letters; and see Ferguson and Vance. Improvement of Land in Ireland, 1851, p. 160; and Trimmer, A Brief Inquiry into Present State of Agriculture in the South of Ireland, London, 1808.
²Wakefield, vol. i., p. 342.
CHAPTER XIII.

EARLY IRISH CO-OPERATION.

THERE was one feature of Irish agricultural life which is interesting, in view of the fact that it seems to contain the germ of the co-operative system which, in recent years, has been revived so successfully in Ireland. It is possible, indeed, that the rapid progress which co-operative methods have attained during the last twenty years may be to some extent explained by the fact that joint effort in farming had been practised in the past by the Irish. As we have seen, the old Irish tenure of gavel-kind was abolished in the reign of James I., but remnants of this old custom persevered among the peasantry, especially in the West, until the nineteenth century. When the tenant of a farm died, it was the usual practice for his children to remain on, holding the land in common; the shares of daughters were usually paid off in money, but sometimes a son-in-law was admitted to share equally with sons. Any differences which might arise between these joint owners were not settled in the law courts, but were submitted for arbitration to the elders of the village. In this way a true system of gavelkind was kept up, in spite of the legal abolition. A step further was taken in the direction of re-constituting the old Irish tenure, when several members of different families combined to take a holding, either in all their names, or in the name of one of them. A combination of this kind was known as a "knot"; when any member of the knot died, his share—or "rundale," as it was called
—passed to his children in gavelkind; and disputes, whether between the children of a deceased holder, or between the holders themselves, were settled by the arbitration of local courts composed of village elders.

Wakefield gives a full account of how this system was worked in Connaught:—"It is common in County Galway to grant leases for three lives or thirty-one years to an indefinite number of persons, very often twenty—in other places to fewer—who, by law, are joint tenants, and entitled to the benefit of survivorship. This has been an old-established practice handed down from father to son for many generations. These people divide the land and give portions to their children, which consist of a fourth or a fifth of what is called a 'man's share,' that is, of the land which originally belonged to one name in the lease. . . . A certain portion of the whole farm, or 'take,' as it is called, is appropriated for tillage, and this portion is then divided into lots. These lots are subdivided into fields, which are subdivided into smaller lots, each partner obtaining one or two or more 'ridges.' These ridges do not continue in the hands of the same occupier longer than the time they are in tillage. The pasture is held in common, and the elders of the village are the legislators, who establish such regulations as may be judged proper for their community, and settle all disputes that arise among them."

There can be no doubt that this system, which was a survival of the old custom of common ploughing recognized by the Brehon Law, contained the idea of co-operative working. This is brought out by Young's notice of the custom as he found it in County Kilkenny:—"They have here a practice which much deserves attention: three, four, five, or seven little farmers will take a large farm in partnership; they must be equal in horses, cows, and sheep, and tolerably so in other circumstances; they divide every field amongst themselves equally, and do

1 Wakefield, vol. i., p. 260. An interesting account of the survival of old customs in the Highlands is to be found in Skene's *Celtic Scotland*, vol. iii., ch. x.
2 Montgomery, *History of Irish Land Tenure*, p. 34.
all the labour of it upon their separate accounts, assisting each other mutually; they never throw the whole into one stock and divide the profits, through suspicion, I suppose, they have of one another." The same system was practised in County Sligo: "Farms in culture are excessively small; a number of the people divide and take them in partnership, four or five to a ploughland of ten acres, but in general they sub-divide down to five or six acres." Young approved of the system, as it enabled small farmers to cultivate their land on a large scale, and made it possible for them to obtain the use of agricultural implements which they would otherwise have been unable to afford: "Where it is the custom to take in partnership, the difficulties are easier got over; for one man brings a few sheep, another a cow, a third a horse, a fourth a car and some seed potatoes, a fifth a few barrels of corn, and so on until the farm amongst them is tolerably well stocked, and hands upon it in plenty for the labour." Crumpe, in 1793, found the custom still common: "Agriculture requires to be carried to any degree of perfection a fund or capital, which is at first expended in a variety of preliminary operations without any immediate advantage, but which ultimately returns with accumulated profit. In England no man thinks of taking a farm without a certain proportion of capital and a stock of farming utensils. In Ireland the wretched peasant will undertake the management of many acres without sixpence in his pocket, and no means of breaking and improving the stubborn glebe but the spade he carries on his shoulder. To remedy, as much as possible, these inconveniences, he associates with others in a similar situation, thus endeavouring to supply the place of capital, and the various necessary apparatus of agriculture, by a union of the powers of rude labour, which, if divided, must be still more inadequate to the task it attempts to effect. Hence rises the destructive system of taking large

1 Tour, vol. i., p. 79.  2 Tour, vol. i., p. 234.  3 Tour, vol. ii., p. 32.
farms in partnership—a practice in a great degree necessary where the husbandman is abjectly poor and unprovided, but which always disappears in proportion as he acquires capital. At present the possession of the most necessary of implements, the plough, is, in several parts of the Kingdom, by no means considered as essential to constitute a farmer; nay, frequently even when a farm is taken by a number of wretched cottagers in partnership, there frequently is not one in a whole colony. In general, they scratch the surface of their corn land with the spade, and when the fields are too extensive for this management, perhaps there are half a dozen ploughs in a parish, the owners of which earn their livelihood by hiring them out by the day at a very high rate."

Dr. Sigerson, who was the first modern writer to throw any light upon this system, expresses the opinion in his book that it was of the utmost value to the agricultural progress of the country: "This system of co-operative agriculture may have dated from the entry of colonisers amongst the woods and wilds of ancient Erin. If it was of old found well adapted for the reclamation of a new country, it was now considered not ill-suited to the incumbrances of a poor tenantry, whose chief riches consisted in their labour. Two or more families, each bringing a little, were thus enabled by joining their forces to accomplish what they were individually unable to. The continued existence of this system through turbulent times proves the presence of elements of organisation and order which merits respect." Another industry in which co-operative methods were resorted to was the fisheries, where it was the almost universal custom for the boats to be owned by the fishermen in common, and for the profits to be divided amongst the crews.

The idea of mutual assistance amongst farmers seems to have been common in Ireland. Wakefield found in various parts of Ulster that the hiring of labour was

2 Sigerson, History of Irish Land Tenures, p. 162.
3 Townsend, Survey of Cork, 1810, p. 251.
unknown, and the neighbours helped each other to work their land in turn—a custom known as "swapping." No doubt, the system of tenure referred to by Arthur Young as "changedale," which consisted of the changing of every man's land every year, was a variant of the common holding which we have described. Confusion has sometimes been caused by the use of the word "rundale" to describe this system, whereas the real meaning of rundale was the share of one man in a system of gavelkind.

The co-operative system of agriculture remained common in Ireland until the end of the eighteenth century, and references to it occur in many of the statistical surveys prepared for the Dublin Society between 1800 and 1810. With the introduction of modern methods of agriculture, however, the difficulties in the way of successfully conducting partnership tenure increased, and the greater number of the "knots" were voluntarily dissolved. Remnants of the old custom are stated by Doctor Sigerson to have survived in the West as late as 1870.
CHAPTER XIV.

Tithes.

The Irish tenants were subjected to another burden which was a great hardship, and which became so oppressive as to keep whole districts of the country in a state of perpetual unrest. The principle on which tithes were based was condemned by Adam Smith as being a tax not only on industry, but on the industry to which the country looks for its food supply: "The tithe, as it is frequently a very unequal tax upon the rent, so it is always a great discouragement both to the improvements of the landlord and to the cultivation of the farmer. The one cannot venture to make the most important, which are generally the most expensive improvements, nor the other to raise the most valuable, which are generally, too, the most expensive crops, when the church, which lays out no part of the expense, is to share so very largely in the profit."

If Adam Smith objected so strongly to the tithe system in England, he would, no doubt, have objected much more strongly to the system in Ireland, where the tithes were levied with more severity even than the rent, and where it was said that "the clergy's little finger was thicker than the landlord's loin." It is true that many articles were charged with tithes in England which were not charged in Ireland, and that the average rate in England was slightly higher, but these small advantages were counterbalanced a thousandfold by the many

2 Distressed State of Ireland. Dublin, 1740.
3 Impartial Discussions on the Subject of Tithes, Dublin, 1786; Young's Tour in Ireland, vol. ii., p. 110.
disadvantages of the Irish system. In the first place, the clergy in receipt of tithes in Ireland belonged to a church which ministered to only a minority of the population. Tithes are supposed to be in the nature of a payment in return for the ministrations of the clergy, and are only justified in a country where all or nearly all of the people belong to the church to which the tithes are paid. In Ireland, as we know, the clergy who received tithes only ministered to about one-sixth of the population, while the other five-sixths had not only to pay the tithe, but were also at the expense of supporting their own clergy as well. The evil was aggravated by the fact that a great number of the State clergy were absentees, so that the money which they received was not even spent in the district where it was raised. In County Clare, for instance, in 1763, in sixty-two out of seventy-six parishes in the county no Protestant Church existed, and the rectors of most parishes were non-resident: "The established churches are shamefully neglected by their clergy, who consider nothing but how to make the most money out of their benefices, and, instead of applying any part of their tithe to acts of charity and hospitality, do not so much as lay it out amongst those from whom it is collected."'

The grievance of the tithe system was not so much the tithe itself as the manner in which it was collected: "In parishes where the Rectors took the tithes into their own hands it is acknowledged that the clergyman received much more than he ever did through the mediation of agents," and there were very few complaints of oppression by the clergy themselves. It was very difficult, however, for clergymen, coming to a strange part of the country, and unaccustomed to the management of agricultural affairs, to collect their tithes without running the risk of being cheated by the farmers, and consequently various methods of collection through

1 Lecky, vol. i., p. 239. 2 Lecky, vol. ii., p. 19.
3 Caldwell, On the Proposal to enable Papists to take Real Securities, Dublin, 1764; and see Thoughts and Suggestions for Improving the Condition of the Irish Peasantry, by R. Bellew, London, 1808.
4 O'Leary's Defence.
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agents were resorted to. The clergy were in the habit of appointing proctors to collect the tithes on their behalf; another method was to rent the tithes to a tithe-farmer, or tithe-jobber, who stood in much the same relation to the clergymen as the middleman did to the landlord; and the third method was by "canting" the tithes of one farmer to another by public auction.

These three methods were all obnoxious, but that of the proctors was, perhaps, the most objectionable. The contemporary literature of the time teems with abuse of these harpies; Froude described the tithe proctors as "perhaps, of all the carrion birds who were preying on the carcase of the Irish peasant, the vilest and most accursed"; and Arthur Young frequently refers to the hardship which was inflicted on the poor by the proctors. "By getting into such hands the poor cottager gets into the talons of a vulture; at the time of payment he finds the sum too exorbitant and his creditors inexorable; the payment is enforced, perhaps, through the medium of a petty court, and the costs and expenses too frequently strip him to the skin and turn him out to nakedness and want. Has the poor wretch a cow, a horse or a few sheep? They are sold for his tithe, and years of toil and honest industry cannot replace them." The proctors, in addition to the tithe, frequently obtained a commission or fee from the cottiers, very often amounting to two shillings in the pound, and in many cases they accepted payment by bonds, which they let run on from year to year, and thus were in a position to crush their debtor out of existence at any time they chose to do so. "The greatest abuse that I heard of were the notes and bonds taken by the proctors for the payment of tithes, which bear interest, and which are sometimes continued for several years, principal and interest being consolidated until the sum becomes too great for the poor man to pay it."

1 Present State of the Church of Ireland, by Woodward, Dublin, 1787.
3 Young, Tour in Ireland, vol. i., 82, 84, 213, etc.
4 Project for Better Regulations in Collecting the Income of the Clergy, Dublin, 1786.
5 Grattan's Speeches, vol. ii., p. 29. 6 Young, Tour in Ireland, vol. ii., p. 110.
The tithe-farmer is sometimes spoken of as if he were the same as the proctor, but they were quite distinct, and no proctor could legally act as a tithe farmer. The tithe-farmer was the middleman of the clergy, and was usually notorious for his merciless greed and cruelty towards the poor. The use of the tithe-farmer is to get from the parishioners what the parson would be ashamed to demand, and to enable the clergyman to absent himself from his duty; the powers of the tithe-farmer are summary laws and ecclesiastical courts; his livelihood is extortion; his rank in society is generally the lowest; and his occupation is to pounce on the poor, in the name of the Lord. He is a species of wolf left by the shepherd to take care of the flock in his absence. He fleeces both, and begins with the parson; to such an abuse is this abominable practice carried, that in some of the southern parts of Ireland the peasantry are made tributary to the tithe-farmer; draw home his corn, his hay, and his turf—for nothing; give him their labour, their cars, and their horses, at certain times of the year—for nothing. These oppressions not only exist, but have acquired a formal and distinct appellation—tributes; tributes to extortioners; tributes paid by the poor, in the name of the Lord. The tithe-farmer frequently made great profits out of his iniquitous dealing, and in some cases received £600 or £700 from the peasantry, of which he only paid about half to the parson. He was frequently a Catholic: "The common practice now is to put such an exorbitant price on a poor farmer's tithe that he is not able to pay what is demanded, then some tithe jobber, a litigious, worthless, wrangling fellow, a papist and a stranger, is encouraged to bid very high on purpose to raise the market, and the tithe jobber puts all the hardship imaginable upon the farmer." The tithes were frequently farmed through as many degrees as the lands themselves passed through middlemen, and, of course, each successive farmer, raised

17 Geo. III., ch. 21. 2Grattan's Speeches, vol. ii., p. 44. 3O'Leary's Defence.
4Considerations for Promoting Agriculture, by Lord Molesworth, 1723.
the tithe on the actual payers so as to provide remuneration for himself.

The third method by which the clergy obtained from the poor what they were themselves ashamed or unable to demand was by means of canting the tithes, that is to say, by holding an auction at which the tithes payable on each farm were sold to the highest bidder. A description of this system is given in a pamphlet written in 1786:—“A notice is given in each parish that on a certain day the minister or his proctor will hold a general sitting (in fact, an auction) of the tithes of the Parish; every poor man whose entire savings are probably but barely sufficient for the yearly maintenance of him and his family must attend at the trouble, perhaps, of a walk of some miles, and at the loss of a day’s labour in the busiest season of the year. I say he must attend, for otherwise the tenth part of the very scanty support of himself and his family may be sold off to another. The consequences that follow must be, either that the poor occupier must pay to their canter (as he is called) an exorbitant premium to recover the labour of his own hands, or he will substract and overbold his tithes from this worthy substitute of the parson; if he submits, he must cast about for means to feed himself and his family for a tenth part of the ensuing year, the provision for which has thus been legally wrested from him; by substracting his tithes he is so much worn in proportion as the expense to which the suing for them will subject him.”

The hardship of the tithe system was aggravated by the fact that all disputes which arose between the clergyman and the farmer were decided in the Ecclesiastical Courts, which were notoriously partial. “Turn to the Ecclesiastical Court; the judge is a clergyman, or appointed by a clergyman, and, of course, is a party judge; and though, in some cases, his personal rectitude may correct his situation, and prevent him from being a

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1 Project for Better Regulation of Income of Clergy. Dublin. 1786; see Thoughts and Suggestions for Improving the Condition of the Irish Peasantry. by R. Bellew. London, 1808.
partial, yet, from the constitution of his court, he is a party judge. The Ecclesiastical Courts in England maintain gravel and stone to be titheable, as some of ours have maintained turf to be titheable. Lord Holt said they made everything titheable; 'but,' says he, 'I do not regard that; the Pope, from whom our clergy derived their claim, though they depart from its alleged application, subjected to tithe the gains of the merchant, and the pay of the army; the canons went further, and held the tithe of fornication and adultery to be the undoubted property of the Church.' We are now too enlightened to listen to claims carried to so very great an extent, and Ecclesiastical Courts are less extravagant now; but still, the principle continues, the bias continues; still they are party courts; the evidence, like the judge, is a party; he is worse; he is frequently the servant of the party, and the nature of his evidence is the best calculated to give every latitude to partiality and corruption; he generally views the crop when the crop is ripe, or when the ground is red; in the first case, he cannot, with any great accuracy, ascertain the quantum of produce, and in the last case he cannot with any accuracy at all; and yet, without survey, without measure, and, in some cases, without inspection of the crop, hear him swearing before a party judge, to the quantum of ground and produce!"'

Possibly the greatest injustice which disgraced the system in Ireland was the exemption of pasture land from tithes. The pasture land of the country was usually the property of rich land-owners or large graziers, whereas, until the revival of tillage at the end of the century, the tillage farms were usually in the possession of very poor farmers. There was no doubt that pasture land was legally liable to tithe; the liability had been established in the Law Courts in 1707 and 1722, but the gentry were very aggrieved at these decisions, and in 1735 petitioned Parliament complaining of this tithe of agistment, as it was called. In that year the House of Commons resolved

1 Grattan's Speeches, vol. ii., p. 34.
that the demand of tithe agistment for dry and barren cattle is new and grievous and burdensome to the landlords and tenants of this kingdom, and that all legal ways and means ought to be made use of to oppose all demands that shall hereafter be framed to carry the demand of tithe agistment into execution until a proper remedy can be provided by the legislature." The effect of this vote, according to Grattan, was to send the parson from the demesne of the gentleman into the garden of the cottager. Needless to say, the resolution of one House of Parliament was not sufficient to alter the law, but most of the gentry of County Dublin combined into associations to uphold this resolution. Proposals for similar associations were sent down to the country to be prepared for signing at the ensuing Assizes, and were signed in many counties, and in each county a common purse was formed for legal resistance to such actions of the clergy and the latter threatened with opposition to the maintenance of their other rights if they ventured to sue for agistment. The attitude of the Government towards this combination is instructive in view of the attitude which was subsequently adopted when the poor people combined against the payment of tithes later on in the century. In the one case the combination was perfectly successful and unmolested by the Government; in the other case those who combined were treated as felons, and the arrears of tithe which they had succeeded in stopping were made recoverable by special processes. One of the last Acts of the Irish Parliament before its dissolution was to legalise the exemption of pasture land from tithes, as it was feared that the Executive of a United Kingdom might not be inclined to pay attention to the resolutions which had been passed by a single house of the Irish Parliament.

The amount demanded for tithe in respect of the various articles assessed was in most cases exorbitant. Arthur Young found the following to

1 Grattan's Speeches, vol. ii., p. 64.
2 Mant, History of Church of Ireland.
3 40 Geo. III., ch. 23.
be the average rate in 1776:—Wheat, per acre, 6.9; barley, 5.4; oats, 3.8; bere, 5.11; potatoes, 7.2; hay, 3.3. The average amount of tithe paid by several thousand small cottiers of the South and West of Ireland in 1786 was as follows:—Potatoes, 3.3; corn, 1.7; turf, 1 7/1; hay, 3.3; poultry, 8d.; small dues, 5/5.¹

The burden was much heavier in the South than in the North. On the one hand, potatoes were tithed in the South and not in the North, and, on the other hand, flax, which in the North never bore more than a fixed modus of 6d. an acre, was heavily taxed in the South, and every other article was correspondingly higher.² A full account of the rates for tithes will be found in the speeches of Grattan, who alleged that 10/- an acre was frequently paid for wheat, and 10/- for potatoes of the worst kind; that a charge was made of 20/- for 1 1/2 acres of barley; and, in fact, that the tithes on every object were grossly exorbitant.³

The tithe which pressed heaviest on the poor was that of potatoes. It was not charged anywhere except in Munster, where it sometimes amounted to 7/- or 8/- an acre;⁴ O'Leary alleged that some acres of potatoes actually paid 32/- for tithe:—"As to potatoes, the clergyman ought not to proceed with reference to the produce, but the price of labour; in the parts of which I have been speaking, the price of labour is not more than 5d. a day the year round; that is, £6 4s. 0d. the year, supposing the labourer to work every day but Sunday; making an allowance for sickness, broken weather, and holidays, you should strike off more than a sixth; he has not, in fact, then more than £5 a year by his labour; his family average about five persons, nearer six, of whom the wife may make something by spinning (in these parts of the country there are considerable manufactories). Five pounds a year, with the wife's small earnings, is the

¹ Congratulatory Address to His Majesty from the Peasantry of Ireland. Dublin, 1786.
⁴ Address to Nobility and Clergy, Dublin, 1786.
capital to support such a family, and pay rent and hearth-money, and, in some cases of illegal exaction, smoke-money to the parson. When a gentleman of the Church of Ireland comes to a peasant so circumstanced, and demands 12/- or 16/- an acre for tithe of potatoes, he demands a child's provision; he exacts contribution from a pauper, he gleans from wretchedness, he leases from penury; he fattens on hunger, raggedness, and destitution."

Flax in the North was subject to 6d. an acre, but in the South to an indefinite amount, and this excessive tax on the growing of flax was possibly one of the reasons why the linen industry did not spread in the South of Ireland. In 1785 the tithe of hemp was fixed at 5/- an acre,\(^1\) and provision was also made that any barren ground reclaimed and improved for the growth of flax, hemp, or rape should be exempt from tithe for seven years.\(^2\)

The clergy, not content with what the law gave them, made frequent illegal demands for tithes on turf, which had been distinctly held to be not tithable; "I will prove that, in many instances, tithe has been demanded, and paid for turf; that tithe of turf has been assessed at one or two shillings a house like hearth-money; and, in addition to hearth-money, with this difference, that, in case of hearth-money, there is an exemption for the poor of a certain description; but here, it is the poor of the poorest order, that is, the most resistless people, who pay. I will prove to you that men have been excommunicated by a most illegal sentence for refusing to pay tithe of turf."\(^3\)

A further claim was also made for tithe of furze.

The tithe system bore many resemblances to the land system. In the one, as in the other, the ultimate receiver was often an absentee who entrusted the collection of his rent or tithe to middlemen and tithe jobbers, greatly to the detriment of the poor: "As the absentee landlord had his middleman, the absentee incumbent had his

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\(^1\) Grattan's Speeches, vol. ii., p. 33.  
\(^2\) 25 Geo. III., ch. 29.  
\(^3\) 5 Geo. II., ch. 9.  
\(^4\) Grattan's Speeches, vol. ii., p. 27.
tithe farmer and tithe proctor, . . . . there were gradations in them as with the middlemen, one with the other. A tithe farmer in active practice of his profession held of another who held of a proctor who held of a clergyman who did not reside." In the one case, as in the other, the ultimate burden was laid on the poor, who were the least able to bear it.

The evil results of this system were incalculable. Pasture was encouraged at the expense of tillage owing to the unjust and illegal exemption of the former from tithes; and the poor were frequently reduced below the level of subsistence by the tithe, which, when added to the rent and county cess, left them insufficient with which to purchase the necessaries of life. Tenants were frequently cited in the Ecclesiastical Courts, and the costs, when added to the original demand, sometimes amounted to such a formidable sum that, rather than endeavour to pay it, the unfortunate defendants ran away and left the country. Much emigration was thus caused. It is by no means certain, moreover, that the linen industry would not have taken firmer root in the South had not the production of the raw material been rendered unremunerative by an oppressive tithe.

But by far the worst result which the system produced was the continued state of unrest into which the country was thrown during the whole of the latter half of the eighteenth century. Although the Whiteboys originally commenced their agitation as a protest against the enclosure of commons, their principal grievance soon came to be the tithe system, and, as a result of the neglect of the Government to improve this system, the country was kept in a state of constant disorder which frequently manifested itself in outrages against life and property.

When the Whiteboys directed their attention to the injustices of the tithe system, the landlords, if they did not actively encourage, silently acquiesced in the agitation, in the hope that they would ultimately be able to

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increase their rents by the amount which the tenants might succeed in withholding from the parsons.¹ This fact throws some light on the character of Irish landlordism.

It has frequently been represented that the Whiteboys were a religious movement who directed their agitation against the Established Church. This idea has been so thoroughly refuted by Lecky that it would be redundant to attempt to refute it again. The motive force of Whiteboyism was economic, not religious, as is conclusively shown by the following circumstances. The Whiteboys were composed of Protestants and Catholics, both in great numbers; if the Catholics outnumbered the Protestants, it was because they were more numerous in the country. In the second place, the agitation was directed, not against the clergy, but against the proctors and tithe-jobbers, who were, themselves, frequently Catholics. In the third place, the agitation was almost altogether confined to the South, where, as we have seen, the tithe system was found to be most oppressive. Lastly, it is interesting to note that the Whiteboys undertook to regulate payments to the Catholic clergy as well as to resist payment to the Protestant. This last fact is interesting, and, though sometimes lost sight of, is undoubtedly true. The famous letter addressed by the Whiteboys to the Munster peasantry fixed the rate which should be paid for tithes, and then proceeded to fix the rates which should be paid to the Catholic priest for his ministrations, as follows:—For a marriage, 5/-; a baptism, 1/6; confession, 2/-; a funeral mass, 1/-; any other mass, 1/-, and extreme unction, 1/6.² O'Leary did the same thing in his address to the Whiteboys; he first fixed the rate of tithes which he considered fair for the parson, and then fixed the rate of payment which he thought enough for the priest, namely, 5/- for a marriage,

¹ Lewis, Irish Disturbances, p. 23.
² Address to the Nobility and Gentry of the Church of Ireland, Dublin, 1786.
1/6 for a baptism, 1/- for visiting the sick, 1/- for a mass, and 6d. for a confirmation.¹

A strenuous effort was made in Grattan’s Parliament to ameliorate the tithe system, but without success. In 1787 Grattan proposed that the House of Commons "should take into consideration the subject of tithes, and endeavour to form some plan for the honourable support of the clergy and the ease of the people."² He did not carry his motion, but he raised the subject again in the following year with a proposal either to charge on the baronies the maintenance of the clergy, or to give them a modus in lieu of their tithes. He proposed, moreover, that flax and potatoes should be exempted, and that an absentee tax on the clergy should be imposed, but his proposals were again rejected.³ He raised the subject for the last time in 1789, when he suggested that commissioners should be appointed to inquire into the tithe system of the country.⁴

¹ O’Leary’s Defence, 1787, p. 149; and see Congratulatory Address to His Majesty by the Peasantry of Ireland, Dublin, 1786. ² Grattan’s Speeches, vol. ii., p. 25. ³ Grattan’s Speeches, vol. ii., p. 82. ⁴ Grattan’s Speeches, vol. ii., p. 163.
CHAPTER XV.

Afforestation.

In early times Ireland was celebrated for the magnitude and beauty of its forests. Giraldus Cambrensis and Spenser both remarked this, but in the years of war and devastation the forests and woods of Ireland suffered very considerably. Their destruction was looked on as a military measure, as they harboured the native Irish. The destruction of the woods was hurried on after the confiscation that followed the Revolution. The lack of association of the new proprietors with the country and their feeling of the insecurity of their tenure tempted them to cut down and sell the woods. No subject fills a larger part of the economic history of the latter half of the seventeenth century than the increasing destruction of the woods, but nothing effectual was done to check it until the year 1698. In that year was passed the first of a series of statutes which were meant to remedy the evil.

The Act of that year provided that all persons having freehold estates of ten pounds and upwards, and tenants for years having eleven years unexpired should plant a certain number of trees in proportion to their holding. The Statute, 8 George I., c. 8, repealed the last Act, and provided that when a tenant planted trees he should be entitled to the property in one-third of them at the termination of his lease; 9 Geo. II., c. 7, increased this to one-half; and 5 Geo. III., c. 17, gave all the property in the trees to the

1 10 William III., ch. 12.
person who planted them. Moreover, the Act 2 Anne, c. 2, laid a duty of £2 10s. a ton on timber, 5/- for 1,000 groups of laths, and £3 on every 1,000 staves exported from Ireland, except to England.

At first the Act of 1722 seems to have operated as a spur to planting, ¹ but ultimately this legislation does not seem to have proved an effective remedy. Swift criticises it:—"In this climate, by the continual blowing of the South-west wind, hardly any tree of any value will come to perfection that is not planted in groves, except very rarely, and where there is much land shelter, and planting in groves is not enjoined as part of the covenant by these Acts." "What tenants are planting at all?" asks a writer a few years later, "or what encouragement is there given towards it?" "It is by no means clear," says Young, "whether this Act has any great tendency to increase the quantity of wood. It has, unfortunately, raised an undecided question of law whether the Act gives the trees which were originally furnished from the landlord's nursery, or planted in consequence of clauses in the lease. To this cause it is principally owing that the plantations made in consequence of that Act are perfectly insignificant."²

It is quite certain that, in spite of these Acts, the destruction of woods still went on: "The precarious state in which Ireland had long been, and the refuge which its forests afforded for criminals and outlaws, rendered the landlords careless with regard to the preservation of their lands and woods, and, rather, it would seem, adverse to their existence, for in many old leases clauses are to be found requiring tenants to use no other article for fuel but timber."³ Another cause which played havoc with the timber was the indiscriminate use of wood in the ironworks in the early part of the century. Ironworks were common all over Ireland, but they gradually ceased to

¹ Considerations on Considerations, etc., Dublin, 1721.
² Answer to Several Letters, 1729.
³ Distressed State of Ireland, Dublin, 1740.
work owing to the timber of the country having been used up for fuel. Kinahan¹ says that the woods finally gave out in 1765.² This evil was aggravated by an English Act of Parliament of 1695, which took off the duties on bar iron unwrought, and iron slit and hammered into rods when imported from Ireland. The Irish Parliament tried to improve matters by imposing duties on all iron goods exported to any place except Great Britain, but, as the greatest amount of Irish bar iron went to Great Britain, this relief was not of much use.³

The country must have been completely denuded of timber. Young, in his *Tour*, gives the following description:—"Through every part of Ireland, in which I have been, one hundred contiguous acres are not to be found without evident signs that they were once wood, or at least very well wooded. Trees, and the roots of trees of the largest size, are dug up in all the bogs; and, in the cultivated counties, the stumps of trees destroyed show that the destruction has not been of any antient date. . . . The kingdom exhibits a naked, bleak, dreary view for want of wood, which has been destroyed for a century past, with the most thoughtless prodigality, and still continues to be cut and wasted, as if it was not worth the preservation. The Baltic fir supplies all the uses of the kingdom, even those for which nothing is proper but oak; and the distance of all the ports of Ireland from that sea, makes the supply much dearer than it is in England. In conversation with gentlemen, I found they very generally laid the destruction of timber to the common people who, they say, have an aversion to a tree; at the earliest age they steal it for a walking stick; afterwards for a spade handle; later for a car shaft; and later still for a cabin rafter. That the poor do steal it is certain, but I am clear the gentlemen of the country may thank themselves. Is it the consumption of sticks and handles that has destroyed millions of acres? Absurdity! The

profligate, prodigal, worthless landowner cuts down his acres, and leaves them unfenced against cattle, and then he has the impudence to charge the scarcity of trees to the walking sticks of the poor."

It was said towards the end of the century that although the country appeared completely denuded of trees on a cursory view, a closer survey would disclose the existence of many trees of great size and beauty. The bounties granted by the Dublin Society for the fencing of areas for coppice wood seem to have been productive of good results. The number of trees planted annually by persons claiming the bounty for not less than ten acres so planted amounted on an average, for the years 1788-93, to 500,000. Wakefield, on the other hand, was of opinion that the Dublin Society had done "little or nothing" to improve planting.

The consequences of this destruction of timber were very disastrous. In the first place, it deprived the country of its natural shelter from the prevailing Atlantic winds, and is supposed to have rendered it less fertile than it would otherwise have been. It also had a serious effect on the brewing industry; hops could not be grown in Ireland owing to the complete lack of timber; this will be more fully referred to in the chapter on Irish breweries. The destruction of the oaks left Ireland without any bark for its tanning industry, one of the consequences of which was that the English Parliament was in a position to ruin this industry at any moment by withholding the English supplies of bark; the knowledge of this power often in later years hindered the Irish Parliament from acting on its own best judgment for the good of the country. The iron works which had proved so profitable could no more be worked; the trade of smoking herrings could not be carried on; and the shortage of home supplies of iron, coupled with the shortage of timber itself, proved very detrimental to the progress of Irish shipbuilding.

1 Young's *Tour in Ireland*, vol. i., p. 85.
2 *Practical Treatise on Planting*, Dublin, 1794.
3 *Th.*
CHAPTER XVI.
MINES AND MINERALS.

IRELAND is by no means naturally deficient in mineral wealth; it is known that large supplies of coal, iron, copper and lead are to be found in the country, and it is suspected that there are deposits of silver and gold in various districts. It is quite obvious to anyone who has looked at the specimens of ancient Irish metal work in the National Museum that the old inhabitants of the country were skilled workers. "The English writers on Ireland, such as Spenser, Raleigh, Ledwich, Boate and others, insinuate or positively state that the Irish, before the English came to the country, were perfectly incapable of finding or working minerals. This, however, the researches of the antiquarians have proved to be perfectly incorrect, as the early Irish were eminent workers in gold, silver, brass, and, I believe, iron. Their trade degenerated, and perhaps altogether ceased during the internal wars before and after the advent of the English."

At the beginning of the eighteenth century, practically no mining work was carried on in the country. This was the result of several causes—the many internal wars which had destroyed the peace of Ireland during the previous century; the lack of capital; and the great insecurity of property which was felt at the time. Possibly the last cause was the one most fatal to the development of the mineral wealth of the country; the landlord, looking back on the many confiscations and re-settlements of the

1 Kinahan, Economic Geology of Ireland, 1889.
previous century, was loth to lay out money on a large scale on land, which might be taken from him in the event of some new upheaval; whereas the tenants, who, as we have seen, were all holders for short terms, had no encouragement to improve and develop the land.¹ The Irish Parliament, aware of these discouragements, early in the century passed an Act authorising persons with limited interests in land to lease copper, tin, iron, or lead mines for thirty-one years in possession,² and this power was extended to coal mines in 1742.³ English mining companies were said to make use of these powers to take leases of Irish mines, so as to prevent them from being worked, and thus retain their own monopoly.⁴

In the early years of the eighteenth century, the coal mines, with the possible exception of those in Tyrone, were not worked at all. In a Natural History of Ireland, published in 1726, a reference is made to the Carlow coal-field as then being worked, and the price of coal was given at ninepence per Irish car. Arthur Dobbs, writing three years later, complains that all the coal in Ireland was then imported from Great Britain, but that coal mines had recently been discovered in Cork and Leitrim, and in Kilkenny, within two miles of Leighlin Bridge.⁵

The Irish Parliament was always sedulous in encouraging the coal mines. In 1717 a premium of £1,000 was offered for the first five hundred tons of Irish coal landed in Dublin, but it is not certain whether this encouragement met with any response.⁶ Again, in 1729, £4,000 was voted for the encouragement of Irish coal, but we are told both the money and the coals were embezzled.⁷ In 1742, limited owners of coal mines were given power to lease them for thirty-one years,⁸ and the period was extended to forty-one years in 1750.⁹ In 1758, a premium on Irish coal imported into Dublin of two shillings per

¹ Dobb's Trade of Ireland, 1729. ² 10 Geo. I., c. 5. ³ 15 Geo. II., c. 10. ⁴ Madden, Reflections and Resolutions for the Gentlemen of Ireland. Dublin, 1738. ⁵ Coal Supply Commission, 1871, vol. iii., p. 27. ⁶ Rallycastle Collieries Set in Their Proper Light. Dublin, 1733. ⁷ The Case of Many Thousand Poor Inhabitants of Dublin. Dublin, 1729. ⁸ 15 Geo. II., c. 10. ⁹ 23 Geo. II., c. 9.
ton was given, and in 1791 a duty of a shilling per ton was placed on all foreign coal brought into Dublin, with the exception of coal intended for the glass, sugar and salt manufactures.

The Ballycastle collieries had been worked from a very early date. In 1770 some miners working there unexpectedly discovered a passage cut through the rock which turned out to be part of a complete gallery, which had been driven forward many hundred yards into the bed of coal. It branched out into thirty-six chambers, which were dressed quite square and in a workmanlike manner. It was evident from tools found that the work was one of great antiquity. A lease of the Ballycastle collieries was taken in 1720, and they were extensively worked till 1724, in which year they were taken over by an English company, which carried them on for many years. This company was succeeded by a private gentleman, who continued to work the collieries with great success, and who procured several grants of money from the Irish Parliament, amounting altogether to £23,000, for the purpose of forming a harbour and building a quay, but, unfortunately, the pier gave way and the harbour became useless.

In 1760, English witnesses of great experience in coal-mining thought that a hundred tons a day might be raised from the works then open if they were properly worked, but the proper extension of the mines was hindered by lack of communications; and, in that year, seven or eight thousand tons of coal were left lying on the banks of the colliery for want of conveyances to take them away. The mines were worked in only one shift, and were, therefore, idle for sixteen hours a day.

In 1762, 160 colliers were constantly kept occupied in these mines.

The Tyrone coal-field was first discovered about 1690, and was worked soon after that time. In 1729 there were four collieries working in the county—Drumglass,

1 31 Geo. II., c. 14.  2 21 and 22 Geo. III., c. 17.
3 Griffith, Survey of Coal Districts of Tyrone and Antrim, 1829.  4 Ib.
Gortnaskeaghi, Brackavide, and Crenagh. In 1752, large quantities of coal were being raised in these mines, and a few years later several English colliers were imported to work in them. In 1760 there were several pits open at Stewartstown, of which three were then being worked, twenty tons being extracted daily from each. Drumglass mine was also working, and one or two other smaller collieries, but they all suffered from difficulties of transport. In 1770 the annual output of these mines was estimated at 3,680 tons, which sold at the rate of six shillings a ton.* Wakefield estimated the output of these collieries in 1810 at about 60,000 tons annually.*

The Kilkenny coal-field was opened about 1729, when the coal there mined was sold at sixteen pence the stand of 5 cwt. 1 qr. A traveller, in 1778, writes:—"I saw the coal mines, which are well worth seeing; the pits are principally at Castlecomer on the estate of Lord Wandesford, who is said to clear £10,000 a year by them." In 1783, 10,000 tons of Kilkenny coal were sold annually in Dublin at £2 10s. a ton, but they could not be expected to compete at this price with the English coal, which was sold at 18s. This difference in price was caused by the cost of conveying the coal by land to Dublin, and it was to lessen this cost that the Irish Parliament, in 1791, granted £4,370 to the Grand Canal Company to enable them to extend their navigation towards the Kilkenny coal-fields. In 1800, sixteen pits were worked at Castlecomer; the wages paid to the miners were very high; the colliers received 20d., the hurriers 18d., the pullers 13d., and the thrusters 18d. a day. The miners, however, were a degraded class, spending all their money on spirits, living in ruinous houses, letting their children run naked, and living on a lower scale than the agricultural labourers.

1 Remarks on Scheme for Supplying Dublin with Coal, by Francis Seymour, Dublin, 1729.
2 Narrative of Facts Concerning the Irish Collieries, Dub., 1771.
4 Featherston, Tyrone Collieries, Dub., 1771.
5 1., 614.
6 The Case of Many Thousand Poor Inhabitants of Dublin, Dub., 1722.
7 Campbell, Philosophical Survey of the South of Ireland, 1778.
around them, who only received about a quarter their wage.\footnote{Tighe. \textit{Statistical Observations Relating to the Co. Kilkenny.} Dublin, 1802.} In 1814, the Castlecomer Colliery produced 40,000 tons per year, and gave employment to 600 men.\footnote{Wakefield. \textit{I. Com. Jls.}, vol. xiii., p. 142.}

Small pits had been worked in Co. Leitrim for a considerable time, but no large pit was sunk until about 1790, when it was discovered that iron could be smelted by means of pit coal. In order to help the iron smelting at Arigna, the adjacent collieries were then extensively worked.\footnote{\textit{Thoughts and Facts Relating to the Increase of Agriculture}, by R. Griffith, Dub., 1795.} In 1795 the Arigna coal sold at the pit mouth at 8/8 per ton of 30 cwt. This included a royalty of 2/2 per ton, which was much larger than any royalty received by English landowners.\footnote{Wakefield, \textit{I. Com. Jls.}, vol. iv., p. 332.} In 1809 the Arigna mine gave employment to 614 men.\footnote{\textit{I. C. Jls.}, vol. v., p. 17.}

In addition to the mines which we have mentioned, and which were the principal ones, there were other small mines worked from time to time in various parts of the country. We hear of one on the borders of Cork and Limerick\footnote{\textit{I. C. Jls.}, vol. xi., p. 330. \textit{See Fortescue MSS.}, 1., 230.} in 1740, and of another in the same year at Rathmeadon, Co. Meath.\footnote{\textit{I. C. Jls.}, vol. xi., p. 350.} In 1765 a mine was worked at Munterkenny, Co. Leitrim;\footnote{\textit{I. C. Jls.}, vol. xi., p. 350.} another in 1771 at Ballycuddy, Co. Galway,\footnote{\textit{I. C. Jls.}, vol. xi., p. 330. \textit{See Fortescue MSS.}, 1., 230.} and one in 1785 in County Roscommon.\footnote{\textit{I. C. Jls.}, vol. xi., p. 330. \textit{See Fortescue MSS.}, 1., 230.}

The consequences of the neglect to work the coal mines were very detrimental to the general prosperity of the country. One result was that when iron came to be smelted by means of pit coal, the Irish had to continue to import the bulk of their iron from abroad, instead of producing it at home. It also meant that the coal required for the glass, salt, and provision trades had to be imported from England, and this gave the English Parliament the power of completely checking these manufactures at any time by stopping the Irish coal supply. "By our neglect in working the coal mines all our capacities in the iron trade are narrowed, nor does it end here: it extends to the glass manufacture, and, moreover, renders our people
dependent upon another nation for a prime necessity of life. Want of capital is charged with this keeping our coal mines unwrought. But part of the blame should be attached to the spirit of jobbing by which for so many years the redundancy of the Irish treasury was lavished in futile and abortive projects until the public mind became so disgusted with work carried on by public grants that at length no aid could be obtained for the most laudable or necessary undertaking. . . . The scarcity of fuel meant that the Irish salt could not be well boiled, and this meant that imported salt had to be used in the herring and provision industries. . . . Of the provision trade, one of the most essential materials is salt; and it, therefore, lies under the same disadvantage as those manufactures of which the raw material is foreign, and of which we must always have a certain supply. It would be easy to recollect how often the legislative deliberations of Ireland have been held in suspense, while the Parliamentary wisdom was occupied in weighing the probability whether a certain measure would, if adopted, endanger our supply of these important articles of salt and coal."

Later on, this objection applied to all manufactures. In the earlier years of the nineteenth century, when steam came to be universally used as the motive power in factories, Ireland was placed at a disadvantage compared with England in not having a home supply of coal, and this was largely the cause of the failure of Irish industry to progress. In addition to these many bad results, a great deal of money was exported every year to buy English coal; the colliers from Whitehaven would take payment in nothing but bullion, and this was one of the causes of the shortage of coin which so much distressed the country throughout the century. Moreover, the Dublin coal supply was at the mercy of strangers, and some idea of the extent of this evil may be gathered by a glance at the innumerable attempts made by the Irish Parliament to regulate the many abuses which disgraced the coal trade in Dublin.

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1 Wallace, Manufactures of Ireland, 1798.
Next in importance to the coal mines came the copper. The Irish Parliament gave a good deal of encouragement to this industry. In 1783, premiums were given on Irish manufactures of iron or copper, and bounties were granted in the following year. In 1783 the mines at Cronebane, Co. Wicklow, were encouraged by a grant of £500, and in 1792 the Hibernian Mining Company was incorporated to work these mines.

The most important copper mine in Ireland was that at Ballymurtagh, Co. Wicklow, which was opened in 1755 by Mr. Whaley, and worked very profitably. The copper ore in this mine was reduced to copper at Arklow, where works for the purpose existed on a large scale, but, unfortunately, the enterprise came to an end about 1805. Other mines were worked at Muckross, Co. Kerry, and at Skerries, Lackamore, and Dunally, Co. Tipperary. The good effect of the encouragement accorded to this industry may be gathered from the following figures:

Exports of copper ore, 1783 ... 151 tons

" " " " 1793 ... 2,344 "

" " " " 1808 ... 6,869 "

The lead mines also received encouragement from Parliament. By 36 George III., c. 2, it was provided that no duty should be payable on lead ore exported to Great Britain. The lead mines, however, never obtained any great prosperity. In 1778 one was worked at Ballysodare, but proved a failure. Another was opened near Enniscorthy, and another at Glenmalure. Newenham says that in 1808 lead mines were working at Lackamore and Dunally, Co. Tipperary, and in County Donegal; and Wakefield mentions mines at Keady, Co. Armagh, Dundrum and Clonlegg, County Down, Ardmore,

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1 Description of the Ballymurtagh Mine, by Edward Barnes, 1864.
2 Statistical Survey of County Wicklow, by Robert Frazer 1807.
3 Newenham, View of Ireland.
4 Twiss, Tour in Ireland, 1776.
5 Newenham, History of Sligo.
6 Frazer, Statistical Survey of County Wicklow, Dublin, 1807.
7 Newenham, Statistical Survey of County Wexford, Dublin, 1807.
8 Newenham, Statistical Survey of County Wicklow, Dublin, 1807.
The exports of lead ore were as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Tons</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1783</td>
<td>...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1793</td>
<td>...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1808</td>
<td>...</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The only silver mines which we know of were found on Mr. Glover's estate at Williamstown in County Kildare, which were opened about 1760, and another at Silvermines, County Tipperary, which, however, must have ceased to work early in the century.

Although a great deal of iron ore existed in Ireland, it ceased to be worked about the middle of the century. This was owing to the reckless manner in which the timber all over the country was cut down for smelting purposes. In the reign of Charles I. there were iron works in Munster, Roscommon, Leitrim, Queen's Co., Clare, Fermanagh, and Kilkenny. Many of these mines were working in the early part of the century, but they mostly were closed about 1750 to 1760, as the timber gave out in those years. Many attempts were made to employ peat for smelting purposes, but apparently without success. In 1752, £300 was granted by Parliament to Robert Laney for his discovery in making malleable iron from pig metal with turf coal, and two years later £300 more was granted to him for his discovery of melting ore into pig metal with turf coal.

The following account of the iron manufactory in 1785 was written by Arthur Young:—"The state of the iron-founderies in Ireland is as follows:—The principal smelting-furnace is at Enniscorthy; its produce annually, when at work, may be about 300 tons, chiefly of castings, from 40 to 60 tons, of which 300 tons are pigs for the forge. There is another of the same sort at Mountrath, in the Queen's County; but, from the great scarcity of charcoal, it does not work above three or four months..."
IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

every third or fourth year; when this furnace is at work, that at Enniscorthy is idle. There are other founderies in Ireland, but not of the smelting kind; they work by recasting pig-iron; of these, there is one at Belfast, and another near to the town; one in Newry, and five in Dublin; it is believed that there are no others in Ireland. The ore is English, and is raised in Lancashire.

"The only iron ore, which, it is understood, has been raised in Ireland, is in the neighbourhood of Ballyporeen, but it cannot be worked to advantage without a large portion of iron ore from England; this work has been idle for many years past. The founderies in Ireland which work upon pig-iron are supplied with it chiefly from Bristol and Chepstow, with some from Workington, some from Carron by Glasgow, and last year were supplied with about 150 from the south coast of Wales. The price is from £6 to £6 10s. per ton. The duty is 10s. 6d. per ton.

"With respect to the fuel used at the Irish founderies, smelting ones use charred wood. Some of the Dublin founderies, charred English pit-coal (only one of them, it is believed, continues to use Kilkenny coal); the fuel which is used in the founderies in the North cannot be spoke to with certainty. The general price of coal is from 16s. 6d. to 17s. 6d. per ton; and the best coal for this purpose, to be had in Dublin, is brought from Harrington, in the neighbourhood of Workington.

"The average price of Kilkenny coal at the pit is 5d. per hundred. The price in Dublin varies with the season. In winter it has sold for 3s. 6d. per hundred; in summer from 1s. 8d. to 2s. 6d.

"Kilkenny coal has been tried in the smelting of iron ore, but it will not answer, no raw fuel of any sort, in its natural state, can possibly be used with success in obtaining metal from its ore; its quality, whether it be pit coal or wood, must be changed by fire or heat before it will smelt with success."

The iron industry received an impetus in 1788, when iron began to be generally smelted by means of pit coal. In 1789, large iron works of the latest design were opened at Arigna and were worked successfully, about 1,000 tons of pig iron being produced yearly. Apparently, these were the only works in Ireland at the time of the Union, although rough articles, such as nails and rods were always extensively made.

Gold was first found in the stream flowing from Cronebane, and dividing the Counties of Wicklow and Wexford, in 1765, but no serious attempt was made to extract gold in this district until about 1795, when a large nugget was discovered. The gold deposits were then claimed by the Government, and commissioners were appointed to report on the prospects of finding more gold in the locality. A thousand pounds was also advanced towards the project. During the following ten years about ten thousand pounds’ worth of gold was extracted from this mine, but it had ceased to be worked in Wakefield’s time.

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1 *J. C. Jls.*, vol. xiii., p. 142; and see Report on the Arigna Iron Works, Dublin, 1801.
3 Lords Committee on Trade, 1785.
CHAPTER XVII.

FISHERIES.

ONE would imagine that a country situated as Ireland is would have derived great advantage from its fisheries, but, as a matter of fact, they were neglected throughout the eighteenth century, in spite of much encouragement given to them by Parliament. Sir William Temple, writing in 1672, said that the fishing of Ireland might prove a mine under water as much as any mine under ground if it were properly worked, but that at that time it was hopelessly neglected; and Petty said that the export of fish from Ireland was small.¹ The exertions of the Irish fishermen were hampered by English jealousy; in 1698, petitions were presented to the English Parliament from Folkestone and Aldborough complaining of the injury done to the fishermen of those towns "by the Irish catching herrings at Waterford and Wexford, and sending them to the Straits, and thereby forestalling and ruining the petitioners' markets";² and there was a party in England who desired to prohibit all fisheries on the Irish coast except by boats built and manned by English fishermen.³ A direct blow was aimed at the Irish fisheries by an English Statute of the reign of Queen Anne, whereby the importation of rock salt into Ireland was restricted by the imposition of an additional duty of nine shillings per ton on rock salt exported from England to Ireland.⁴

Some small encouragements were given to the fisheries

¹ Political Anatomy. ² Hely Hutchinson, Commercial Restraints. ³ Lecky, vol. i., p. 179. ⁴ 2 Anne, c. 14 (Eng.)
by the Irish Parliament during the reign of George II., but nothing substantial was done in this direction until 1763, when an Act was passed granting generous bounties on all fish exported, and on English or Irish-built vessels of more than twenty tons employed in the Irish Fisheries. In spite of this encouragement, however, the fisheries continued to decline; in 1729 Dobbs complained that fish was actually imported into Ireland, in spite of the magnificent home fisheries which were allowed to lie undeveloped, a condition of things which he attributed to the unskilfulness and want of enterprise of the fishermen who waited for the fish to "jump into their nets." In a pamphlet published in 1739 we read:—"It maketh for our disgrace with God and Nature, that with so great a treasure, we have, notwithstanding, neglected the benefit thereof; in so much for want of industry and care in this particular, a great many fishing towns are reduced to great poverty." In 1755 there was no organised Company, as in England, to promote the fishing industry, nor was there a single large fishing vessel in the whole of Ireland; and in 1772 the fishermen were said to be half their time idle, and greatly prone to drunkenness. Lecky says that the decline of the Irish Fisheries was due to the introduction of trailing nets about 1738, and the destruction they caused among the seaweed and the spawn, and that about the same time the shoals seemed to desert the Irish waters. In consequence of the injury which the fisheries suffered, the fishing towns, such as Bantry and Dun- garvan, sank rapidly into decay.

Although the Irish do not seem to have succeeded in creating a flourishing fishery at home, they were instrumental in helping to create the Scotch Fisheries. About 1754 some Irish fishermen were brought to Uist to teach the natives how to manufacture seaweed into kelp, thus

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1 7 Geo. II., c. 11: 11 Geo. II., c. 14. 2 3 Geo. III., c. 21.
3 Dobbs, Trade of Ireland: and see Prior Observations on Trade of Ireland, 1729; and Letter to a Member of Parliament recommending the Improvement of the Irish Fisheries, Dublin, 1729.
4 A Letter to every Well-wisher of Trade, Dublin, 1739.
5 Letters from an American in Ireland to his friend in Trebizond, London, 1757.
laying the foundation of a flourishing industry; and a few years later Irish fishermen were very active in the Shetlands, and, by their example, greatly improved the methods there employed. Amongst other things which they taught the Highlanders was the correct method of curing fish.¹

Arthur Young gives a good account of the state of the fisheries in 1776: he found that most of the fishing boats were worked on the co-operative principle, the men dividing the profits of the fishery,² the average share of each man being worth from ten to sixteen shillings a week. The principal fisheries were situated on the north-west coast; in Killybegs Bay there were three hundred and twenty-seven boats employed; in Lough Swilly, five hundred boats; at Killala, a hundred and fifty boats; while the principal centre for fishing on the east coast was Strangford Lough, where about four hundred boats were employed. Young thought that the bounty of 1763 was not a success, as the amount of herrings imported into Ireland since that date had steadily increased.³

One of the first matters to which the independent Irish Parliament turned its attention was the state of the fisheries, and in 1785 a Statute was passed giving substantial bounties on the exports of fish and increasing the bounty on boats employed on the coast fisheries;⁴ elaborate provisions were also made for the inspection of the fish exported, and for ensuring that the Irish commodity should always be up to a high standard. Assistance was given to the fisheries in another direction by the low duty which was imposed on rock salt.⁵ It was said at the Commission which sat to examine into the state of the English Fisheries that the system of bounties and encouragements created by this Act was superior to that in England, chiefly owing to the absence of unreasonable restraints imposed on the fishermen.⁶

² Tour, vol. i., pp. 309 and 347.
³ Tour, vol. ii., p. 242. For an account of the fisheries in 1783 see Fortescue, M.S.S., 1., 189.
There is no doubt that, as a result of the inspection, the Irish fish acquired a very high reputation abroad, and that, in consequence, they were able to rival the Scotch, whose frauds in packing their fish nearly destroyed the market for British fish altogether; the Irish fish was sold at a much higher price than Scotch fish of corresponding quality.

In spite of the high reputation, however, which the Irish Fisheries acquired, the industry did not progress as it should have done. A recently published article on this subject has hailed the Irish Parliament's encouragement of the fisheries as a model of legislative wisdom, but, whatever the intentions of Parliament may have been, the measures which it passed were not sufficient to develop the Irish fishing industry. This is conclusively shown by the fact that whereas the exports from Ireland gradually but steadily decreased during the periods 1785 to 1800, the imports increased rapidly during the same period, as the following figures demonstrate:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year ending 25th March</th>
<th>Imports of Herrings</th>
<th>Exports of Herrings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1785</td>
<td>22,512</td>
<td>35,514</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1786</td>
<td>2,385</td>
<td>17,188</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1787</td>
<td>6,235</td>
<td>17,366</td>
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<td>1788</td>
<td>17,474</td>
<td>16,855</td>
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<tr>
<td>1789</td>
<td>12,088</td>
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<tr>
<td>1790</td>
<td>4,402</td>
<td>7,980</td>
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<tr>
<td>1791</td>
<td>52,121</td>
<td>1,321</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1792</td>
<td>52,028</td>
<td>4,072</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1793</td>
<td>50,628</td>
<td>364</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1794</td>
<td>53,671</td>
<td>1,390</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1795</td>
<td>51,793</td>
<td>2,170</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1796</td>
<td>93,085</td>
<td>1,261</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1797</td>
<td>93,989</td>
<td>3,793</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1798</td>
<td>96,431</td>
<td>5,555</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1799</td>
<td>106,172</td>
<td>4,215</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1800</td>
<td>122,430</td>
<td>5,587</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In Wakefield's time the fisheries had thoroughly degenerated—a fact which he attributed partly to the disappearance of the shoals from Irish waters; partly to the lack of enterprise amongst the fishermen who did not take the trouble to build boats large enough to be entitled to the Parliamentary bounty, but continued to fish in their old-fashioned small boats; and partly to the growth of tillage following Foster's Act, and the consequent subdivision of land which enabled every poor man to be a landholder even on an infinitesimal scale. The northwest coast fisheries which Arthur Young had found so progressive totally disappeared, for some unexplained reason, towards the end of the century.

The fishing activities of the Irish, such as they were, were not confined to home waters. An Act of Charles II. had confined the Greenland and Newfoundland fisheries to the inhabitants of England, and a later Act had vested all the right of these fisheries in an exclusive company, but in 1704 these fisheries were thrown open to the Irish. Great numbers of Irish Catholics driven from home by one or other of the many causes which were then causing men to emigrate, settled in Newfoundland and developed the fisheries there to a considerable extent. In 1793 it was said that the residents of that island were principally Irish natives; and the annual number of immigrants into Newfoundland always consisted of more Irish than English. One of the measures which accompanied the Free Trade Legislation was the extension of the bounties granted to vessels engaged in the Newfoundland Fisheries to Irish vessels, and, no doubt, this greatly increased the already growing tendency for the Irish to engage in this industry.

Great numbers of whales were to be found off the Irish coast, and the Irish Parliament was always anxious to develop the whale fisheries. As early as 1738 bounties on

1 Wakefield, vol. ii., pp. 93 to 143.
2 25 Chas. II., c. 8; 4 & 5 Wm. and Mary, c. 17; 1 Anne, c. 16 (Eng.)
4 Plowden, vol. i., p. 431.
fins and whale oil were granted, and from that date forward much encouragement was given to this fishery by means of bounties. In spite of this encouragement the whale fishery never made much progress, and in 1785 it was practically extinct.

The inland fisheries were the subject of constant regulation by Parliament, and proved very valuable properties to those who were the owners of them, but they never developed on such a scale as to be worth notice as a national industry. Before leaving the subject of fisheries, attention should be drawn to the fact that fish was a common article of diet amongst the poorer classes all round the coast throughout the century, and, no doubt, from this point of view the fisheries were of the greatest value to the people; herrings were also used as manure in the vicinity of the coast.

11 Geo. II., c. 14.
15 Geo. II., c. 1; 5 Geo. III., c. 1; 15 & 16 Geo. III., c. 19; 17 & 18 Geo. III., c. 18; 27 Geo. III., c. 50.
Caldwell, Parliamentary Debates, p. 142; Young, Tour, vol. i, p. 183; Sheffield, Trade of Ireland, 1785.
PART III.
TRADE AND INDUSTRY.

CHAPTER XVIII.

The Restraints on Irish Trade.

PRIOR to the Restoration, the English Parliament was not in any sense hostile to, but rather encouraged, Irish trade. By 17 Edw. III., ch. 1, all sorts of merchandise was permitted to be exported from Ireland except to the King's enemies. By 27 Edw. III., ch. 18, merchants of Ireland and Wales were encouraged to bring their merchandise to the staple of England; by 34 Edw. III., ch. 17, all kinds of merchandise were allowed to be exported from and imported into Ireland as well by aliens as denizens; and by 50 Edw. III., ch. 8, no alnage was to be paid on frieze made in Ireland. The Statute 3 Edw. IV., ch. 4, while providing that no person should import any woollen cloths or other manufactures into England or Wales, enacted that all wares made and wrought in Ireland might be brought in and sold in England, as they were before the passing of the Act, and a similar Act was passed in the following year. In the treaties concluded in the fifteenth century, England and Ireland are always treated equally. This treatment continued uninterruptedly for many years; and in 1627 King Charles I. made a strong declaration in favour of the trade and manufactures of Ireland.¹

A similar spirit prevailed in the enactments relating to shipping and navigation. The great Navigation Act of 1660 provided that no goods or commodities of the growth, production or manufacture of Asia, Africa, or America

¹ Hely Hutchinson, Commercial Restraints, pp. 110-3.
should be imported into England, Ireland, or Wales but in ships belonging to the people of England or Ireland, etc.\(^1\) It must also be remembered that prior to the reign of Henry VII. Ireland was free to regulate her own affairs without any veto from the English Privy Council, and that, even after that reign, the Irish Parliament was not, in fact, interfered with whenever it sought to benefit Irish interests by its legislation.

In the year 1663 the distinction between the Colonial trade of England and Ireland appeared for the first time, and the restraints upon that of the latter commenced. By an Act of that year,\(^2\) it was provided that no commodities of the growth, produce or manufacture of Europe were to be exported to the British Plantations unless they were laden or shipped in England, Wales, or Berwick-on-Tweed. However, horses, servants and victuals from England and Ireland were excepted from the Act, and allowed to be exported direct to the Plantations; nor was the direct importation of Plantation produce to Ireland forbidden. This Act did not, in fact, injure the Irish trade with the Plantations to any degree, as the principal export of that time consisted of provisions. The first really injurious Act passed was 22 and 23 Chas. II., ch. 26, which prohibited the exportation to Ireland from the English Plantations of the following articles, unless they were first unloaded in England or Wales:—Sugar, tobacco, cotton, wool, indigo, steel or Jamaica wood, fustick or other dyeing wood. This prohibition was extended to all goods by 7 and 8 William III., ch. 22. By subsequent British Acts it was made lawful to import from the Plantations to Ireland all goods except the following:—The articles before mentioned, and, in addition, rice, molasses, beaver skins, and other furs, copper ore, pitch, tar, turpentine, masts, yards, and bowsprits, pimento, cocoa-nuts, whale-fins, raw silk hides and skins, ginger, pot, and pearl ashes, iron, lumber and gum seneca.\(^3\) These enumerated commodities included

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\(^1\) 12 Chas. II., ch. 18.  
\(^2\) 15 Chas. II., ch. 7.  
\(^3\) 4 Geo II., ch. 15: 6 Geo. II., ch. 15.
practically everything exported from the Plantations, and Ireland, therefore, was practically forbidden to import anything direct from the Plantations. This, of course, had the indirect effect of crippling the Irish export trade in provisions. It was of no avail to be permitted to export goods to the Plantations, when the ships which carried them had to return empty. "Denying the import from those countries to Ireland has, in effect, prevented the export from Ireland to those countries. Money cannot be expected for our goods there; we must take theirs in exchange, and this can never answer on the terms of our being obliged in our return to pass by Ireland, to land those goods in England, to ship them a second time, and then to sail back again to Ireland. No trade will bear such unnecessary delay and expense. The quickness and the security of the returns are the great inducements to every trade. One is lost and the other hazarded by such embargoes; those who are not subject to them carry on the trade with such advantages over those who are so entangled as totally to exclude them from it. This is no longer a subject of speculation, it has been proved by the experience of above seventy years."

These Acts remained in full force, with unimportant exceptions, until the concession of free trade in 1780, and had the effect of completely ruining the Irish Plantation trade throughout the greater part of the century. The only relaxations which were introduced into the code were in respect of the exportation of linen. By 3 and 4 Anne, ch. 8, certain kinds of Irish linen were permitted to be exported direct to the Plantations; by 3 Geo. I., ch. 21, all Irish linens imported to Great Britain were to be exported to the Plantations without the payment of further duties; and by 29 Geo. II., ch. 15, the English Parliament granted the same bounty on Irish linens made in Ireland exported from Great Britain as it allowed on British linens. Of course, this relaxation was of no value when an import trade in return was not allowed.

1 Hely Hutchinson, Commercial Restraints, p. 121.
The effect of this treatment was that, whereas England treated Ireland like a Plantation in respect to Irish trade with England, in respect to Irish trade with the American Colonies Ireland was treated no better than any foreign country. This is illustrated by the Act of 25 Chas. II., ch. 5, which allowed Plantation produce to be shipped from one Plantation to another, but this Act never extended to Ireland. (This is treated more fully in the chapter *infra* on the Causes of Irish Misery). It was most unreasonable to extend the Colonial system of trade to Ireland: "The climate, growth and production of the Colonies were different from those of the parent country. England had no sugar canes, coffee, dyeing stuff, etc.; she took all of those from her Colonies only, and it was thought reasonable that they should take from her only the manufactures which she made. But in Ireland the climate, soil, growth and products are the same as in England, who can give no such equivalent to Ireland as she gave to America." The effect of the restrictions was particularly felt in the matter of shipbuilding, as Ireland was forbidden to import from the Colonies most of the commodities which would be necessary to promote this industry. They also ruined the Irish carrying trade. During the reign of Charles II. the amount of Irish shipping had gradually increased, but after the Revolution a marked decrease was noted; in 1698, Dublin had not one ship; Belfast and Cork had only a few small ones, and there was not one large ship in the whole Kingdom. Between 1723 and 1772 Irish tonnage decreased by one-fourth; in the former year, Great Britain possessed about two-thirds of the Irish carrying trade, while in 1772 she monopolised seven-eighths of it. In 1783 the English tonnage engaged in the Irish trade was 360,000, and the Irish 74,000.

Of course, the restraints which we have mentioned in no wise affected the Irish trade with foreign countries, and

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1. Hely Hutchinson, p. 103.  
3. *Ib*.  
the immediate effect of the Navigation Acts was greatly to increase the intercourse between Ireland and foreign states and their colonies. As we shall see when we come to deal with the provision trade, a large commerce grew up between Ireland and France, Spain, and the Netherlands. The principal Irish export consisted of woollen cloths, and there is no doubt that, by means of the undoubted progress that this industry was making, Ireland would have more than made up what she lost by being deprived of the Colonial trade. During the latter part of the seventeenth century, however, English merchants became increasingly apprehensive of the growth of the Irish woollen trade. Several minor restraints were placed upon it, without, however, injuring it materially, but in 1698 the final blow was dealt to the Irish woollen industry by the English Statute 10 and 11 William III., ch. 10, which prohibited the export of Irish wool to any country whatsoever. We shall deal with the effects of this Act more in detail when we come to speak of the woollen industry; it is sufficient here to mention the statute.

It is, of course, quite obvious that, after the prohibition of the export of the commodity, which formed by far the most important subject of the Irish foreign trade, this promising and increasing intercourse with foreign countries should have been almost annihilated. Whatever little Irish foreign trade was left after 1698 was stamped out by statute after statute of the English Parliament; for instance, when the Irish showed signs of establishing a flourishing brewery by reason of their being able to obtain cheap foreign hops, an English Act of Parliament forbade the importation of hops into Ireland from any part of the world except Great Britain, and further enacted that hops of British growth exported should not be given the benefit of the drawback which they received when being exported to foreign countries.¹ The export of Irish glass was also absolutely prohibited;² and tobacco, grown or

¹ 9 Anne, ch. 12: 5 Geo. II., ch. 9: 7 Geo. II., ch. 19: 6 Geo. I., ch. 11.
² 19 Geo. II., ch. 12.
manufactured in Ireland, was forbidden to be exported to any part of the world except Great Britain.¹

The exclusion of Ireland from the British Plantation trade had caused the growth of trade with foreign Plantations, but this also was nipped in the bud by 6 Geo. II., ch. 13, which enacted that sugar, syrups, or molasses of the growth, product, or manufacture of any colonies in America, and rum and spirits of America (except of the growth or manufacture of the British Sugar Colonies there) should not be imported into Ireland unless shipped in Great Britain. By 12 Geo. II., ch. 55, rum or spirits of the British Colonies or Plantations were not to be imported into Ireland in any ship under seventy tons burden; whereas foreign brandy and other spirits from any other place whatsoever were not to be imported in ships under a hundred tons burden. By 12 Geo. III., ch. 60, no part of the old subsidy was to be drawn back for any sugars of the growth or production of any foreign colony or plantation which should be exported from Great Britain to Ireland. Thus the English Parliament succeeded in ruining the Irish trade, not only with the British Plantations, but with foreign countries and Plantations as well.

The only market left for us to consider is the English. This market was closed as effectively as either the foreign or Colonial. The Act 12 Chas. II., ch. 4, imposed duties on all goods imported into England, without any exception in favour of Ireland, and the policy initiated by this Act was not relaxed at any time during the succeeding century. The duties on woollen cloths, stuffs, tallow, candles, and soap, imported into England, were so high as to amount to a prohibition. Any loopholes which might have been left in previous Acts were speedily filled up as they became apparent. By 2 Anne, ch. 14, Irish salt was prohibited from importation into Great Britain, except as necessary provision for a ship, or for curing fish.

The one industry which was to some extent encouraged was the linen industry. By 7 and 8 William III., ch. 39,

¹14 Geo. III., ch. 25.
hemp and flax and any manufacture made thereof in Ireland was to be imported into Great Britain free of all duties. This, as we shall see, undoubtedly gave a great impetus to the Irish linen trade, but even the linen industry later came to be hampered by grave restrictions. The Act 23 Geo. II., ch. 22, imposed additional duties on all sail cloth and canvas imported into Great Britain from any part of the world, including Ireland, thereby fatally injuring one of the most important branches of the Irish trade. A few years later, cambrics and lawn were prohibited from being imported to Great Britain until the Irish Parliament prohibited the importation of French cambrics and lawn into Ireland. The only relaxations, apart from those in favour of the linen industry, which the Irish manufacturers experienced at the hands of the English Parliament were the following:—

By 12 Geo. II., ch. 21, the importation of woollen bay yarn into Great Britain duty free from Ireland was allowed; and by 9 Geo. III., ch. 39, and 14 Geo. III., ch. 16, raw hides of steers, cows, or any other cattle (except horses, mares, or geldings), and calf skins or goat skins, raw or undressed, might be imported into Great Britain from Ireland duty free.

Thus, the English effectively succeeded in robbing the Irish manufacturer of his Colonial, Foreign and English market. The Eastern market, moreover, was in the hands of an English monopoly—the East India Company. We might expect that the Irish manufacturer would at least be allowed to supply the Irish market, but even this privilege was denied him. Whereas the English Parliament, as we have seen, imposed heavy duties on all Irish goods entering England, the Irish Parliament was not allowed to retaliate by imposing duties at anything like the same rates on English goods imported into Ireland. This, of course, was a result of the lack of legislative independence. If the Irish Parliament proposed to impose duties on English goods entering Ireland, the

1 7 Geo. III., ch. 43.
English Privy Council invariably refused to sanction any such suggestion. The result was that the Irish market was flooded with English goods of all sorts, which were admitted to Ireland at ridiculously low duties. Working under this disadvantage, the Irish manufacturer was quite unable successfully to compete with his English rival; the growth, moreover, of industry on a large scale, even to supply home consumption, was rendered impossible by the prohibitions on export, which rendered large scale production out of the question. The result, therefore, of the English trade restrictions was not only to deprive Ireland of the English Foreign and Colonial trade, but to prevent her from supplying even the Irish consumer.

These restrictions on Irish trade were continued without substantial relaxation until the year 1780, when they were repealed as the result of Irish agitation. The history of Irish industries in the eighteenth century falls naturally, therefore, into two periods; first, the years 1700-80, during which the restraints on Irish trade were in full operation, and which may be called "the period of restriction," and second, the years 1780-1800, during which Irish trade was unfettered by any serious restraints, and which may be called "the period of freedom." The treatment of this subject in the following pages has been consequently divided into two parts, dealing with Irish industries during the period of restriction and the period of freedom, respectively.
CHAPTER XIX.

Irish Industries During the Period of Restriction.

(a) The Woollen Industry.

The woollen industry had flourished in Ireland from very early times. Several statutes were passed to encourage it, e.g., 13 Henry VIII., ch. 2; 28 Henry VIII., ch. 17; 11 Elizabeth, ch. 10, which provided that no unmanufactured wool or flock should be exported; 14 and 15 Charles II., ch. 8, which allowed raw wool to be imported duty free; and 17 and 18 Charles II., ch. 15, which made provision for the length and breadth of all cloth to be exported. A great extension of the industry was caused by the Act 15 Chas. II., ch. 8 (Eng.), which forbade the import of Irish cattle into England, after which sheep were substituted to a great extent for cattle all over Ireland. In 1672 Sir William Petty estimated that there were thirty thousand makers of wool and their wives in Ireland, and about four million sheep. The industry reached its zenith in 1687, when the value of the exports amounted to £70,521. The industry, in common with every other industry in the country, suffered a set back by the Revolutionary War, and the immense destruction of sheep which took place, but subsequently showed every sign of recovery. In 1697 the exports amounted to £23,614, and it appears from a pamphlet entitled, "A Discourse Concerning Ireland," that there were in 1697-8 in Dublin, twelve thousand, and in the whole of the Kingdom, fifteen thousand English families bred to the wool trade.
The success of the Irish woollen manufacture at this time raised the jealousy of the English manufacturers to such a degree that they presented so many petitions to Parliament as to induce that body to enter fully into their jealous and illiberal views. In response to an address on the subject presented to the King by a Committee of the House of Lords and Commons, William III. replied:—"Gentlemen, I shall do all that in me lies to discourage the woollen manufacture in Ireland, and to encourage the linen manufacture there, and to promote the trade of England." In 1698, Parliament gave effect to the wishes of the English merchants by passing the Act 10 and 11 William III., ch. 10, restraining Ireland from exporting all woollen manufactures, including frieze, to any part of the world except England and Wales.

In order fully to appreciate the effect of this Act, it is necessary to understand the previous legislation. In 1660, by the English Act 12 Chas. II., ch. 4, heavy protective duties were imposed on all Irish woollen cloth imported into England. This had the effect of closing the English market to all Irish woollen goods, except the raw material of the industry; but it still left open the colonial and foreign markets. In 1663, however, the Colonial market was closed by the Navigation Act, 15 Chas. II., ch. 7 (subsequently continued by 11 Geo. I., chap. 7), which provided that from and after . . . 1664 no commodity of the growth, produce, or manufacture of Europe should be imported to any land, island, plantation, colony, territory, or place to his Majesty belonging but what should be bona fide, and without fraud, laden and shipped in England, Wales, or Berwick-upon-Tweed, and in English built and English manned ships, with certain unimportant exceptions. The only market now left was the foreign market, and, as we have seen, this was taken away at one blow in 1698. It is true that by the Irish Act, 10 William III., ch. 5, an Act passed under English influence, export duties were imposed on Irish broadcloth and new drapery (frieze excepted), but, as this was only a temporary Act,
it is true to say that the English Act of 1698 struck the fatal blow. All that was left was the English market for the raw material, and this was fettered by the regulations of William and Mary, ch. 32 (Eng.), which provided that wool from Ireland should only be landed in England at certain enumerated ports, and 7 and 8 William III., ch. 28 (Eng.), which re-enacted the former Act, and which, curiously enough, was entitled, "an Act to encourage the trade of Ireland."

Meanwhile, English woollens were freely imported into Ireland, for, whereas English legislation had put up a prohibitive tariff against the admission of Irish woollens into England, and had deprived Ireland of her foreign markets with the object of securing a wider foreign demand for English woollens—unsuccessfully as we shall see—the English Privy Council had prevented the subordinate Irish Parliament from putting on any tax on the import of English wool into Ireland—except a very small duty, which always remained much lower than the corresponding duty in England. In addition, the English Parliament prohibited the export of raw wool from England, and thus the state of affairs was that England had the benefit of the Irish raw material as well as her own, and also had the benefit of the Irish market as well as her own for the finished product.1

The evil effects of this legislation may be easily imagined. We have seen in treating of population that the ruin of the woollen industry was one of the main causes of the great emigration early in the century. Swift1 writes, in 1726:—"Three parts in four of the inhabitants of that distressed town where I dwelt were English manufacturers, whom either misfortunes in trade, little petty debts, or the pressure of a numerous family had driven into our cheap country. These were employed in working up our coarse wool, while the finer was sent into England. Several of these had taken the children of the native Irish


2 The Present Miserable State of Ireland.
apprentices to them. Upon the passing of this bill we were obliged to dismiss thousands of these people from our service." Hely Hutchinson and other competent authorities were of opinion that up to thirty thousand woollen workers emigrated as a result of this Act.

Those who remained were left in great distress. Many petitions were presented to Parliament from the clothiers and weavers throughout the Kingdom praying for relief. The following lines are from a poem published in Dublin in 1723:

"His woolly flocks no more the shepherd tends,
A beggar now, with piteous cries he rends
The ears of passengers and begs relief,
The smallest bounty to assuage his grief;
A cold, damp, dirty hut is all his seat,
Whose house was erst so comfortably neat."

"I need not travel far," wrote Sir R. Cox, "to enquire into the condition of the wool spinners: miserable wretches, neither fed, nor clad, nor lodged like human creatures."

This Act proved subsequently, from England's point of view, to have been worse than a crime, a blunder. Irish wool workers who went abroad worked up the industry of the countries where they settled, so as to enable those countries to rival England in foreign markets, and in a few years deprive Great Britain of millions instead of the thousands that Ireland might have made. "It is a fact, the consequences of which have been too severely felt not to be universally acknowledged, that the Act of 1698 was so far from serving the woollen manufacturers of Britain that we may date the rise and competition of those of France from that unhappy year—the effect of the Act on Ireland was soon felt—the manufacturers began to emigrate in considerable numbers, insomuch that it was

1 See Argument upon Woollen Manufactures of Great Britain. London, 1735.
5 Dobbs, Essay on Trade of Ireland.
computed that no less than twenty thousand artists quitted this kingdom within twelve months after the Act passed into law—while the French, taking advantage of the folly of Great Britain, gave every encouragement to our woollen manufacturers to settle amongst them, and soon found means to open an illicit commerce with this country, which is still carried on to a great extent, by which they procured a considerable quantity of our unwrought wool; the total ruin of the woollen manufacture made it necessary for the farmer to find out some means of disposing of his fleece, and by the contraband trade of France there was an immediate and advantageous sale. The French cannot manufacture their own fleece at least in such a manner as to come into any competition with the fabrics of Great Britain without procuring English or Irish wool—and it is equally certain that with one pack of the fleece of those islands they can manufacture from them from three to four packs of their own raw material—the simple and easy deduction from these premises is that, for every stone of Irish wool imported into France, the manufactures of that country are increased in quadruple proportions. Consequently, Great Britain, instead of sharing with Ireland a very considerable part of the woollen manufacture, has, by her short-sighted policy, bestowed above half of it on her most inveterate foe; the effects of this conduct are but too visible in the total loss of the Levant trade, which the English formerly possessed without competition, but which has been entirely taken out of their hands by the French."

An Englishman, writing in 1735, said that the destruction of the woollen industry had the following five consequences:—(1) The emigration of 20,000 manufacturers at once from Ireland; (2) their retreat into foreign countries; (3) the establishment thereupon of the woollen manufacture in almost all parts of Europe; (4) the exportation of Irish and English wool; and (5) the gradual and notorious decay of the English trade from that hour.³

¹ Griffith, Thoughts on Protecting Duties. Dublin, 1784.
² Argument upon Woollen Manufactures of Great Britain, London, 1735.
One result of the wool legislation was an enormous development of smuggling both of raw and of spun wool. The Irish sheep farmer and wool merchant were supposed by law to send their wool nowhere except to England; thus, legally speaking, the English were monopolist buyers and could fix the price as low as it suited them. Besides, Irish wool entering England was subject to import duties, and, in consequence, the price which the Irish seller obtained was very low. The French, on the other hand, were very anxious to purchase as much Irish wool as they could obtain. It was impossible to make cloth from French wool unless it was mixed with some English or Irish wool, and English wool they could not obtain, as it was all wanted for the home manufacture. They were consequently forced to offer a very high price for Irish wool, if it could be smuggled over to them. "The price of fleece wool in Ireland in 1730 was five pence a pound; of combed wool, twelve pence a pound. In France, Irish fleece wool was sold for two shillings and sixpence a pound; combed wool, from four shillings and sixpence to six shillings. The profits of the contraband trade were thus so considerable that the temptations to embark in it were irresistible."

The country was eminently suited for smuggling. The deep bays and intricate creeks which indent the coast, especially in the south-west, rendered detection well-nigh impossible. Besides, the whole country was in a conspiracy to defeat the revenue officers. "The entire nation, high and low, was enlisted in an organised confederacy against the law. Distinctions of creed were obliterated and resistance to the law became a bond of union between Catholic and Protestant—Irish Celt and English Colonist—from the great landlord whose sheep roamed in thousands over the Cork mountains to the gauger, who, with conveniently blinded eyes, passed the wool-packs through the Custom-house as butter barrels; from the

1 Remarks on English Woollen Manufactory, Dublin, 1730.
2 Proude, English in Ireland, vol. i., 497.
magistrate, whose cellars were filled with claret on the return voyage of the smuggling craft, to the judge on the bench, who dismissed as frivolous and vexatious the various cases which came before the court to be tried. The very industry of the country was organised upon a basis which made it a school of anarchy."

As a contemporary writer remarked:—"When a whole people pique themselves upon exporting a commodity in which they think themselves unjustly restrained, no law will stop them."

At first the smugglers brought back the price of their goods in specie, but it is significant of the extent of the traffic that the French found after a few years that they were exporting an altogether abnormal amount of bullion; and the French Government forbade the export of so much gold and silver.  From that time on, the quid pro quo for the wool took the form of claret, brandy and silks. One incidental effect of this change was greatly to restrict the supply of gold currency in the country."

"Thus, by a curious combination, the system worked the extremity of mischief, commercially, socially, and politically. It fostered and absolutely bred and necessitated habits of lawlessness. It promoted a close and pernicious connection between Ireland and France. It inundated Ireland with wine and brandy, cheap and excellent, and produced the hard drinking which gave social life there so ill a fame." Wool was also smuggled in large quantities to Holland, and to Lisbon, where it undersold both the French and English wool.

In 1740, the Act 13 Geo. II., ch. 3 (Brit.), took off the duties on woollen and bay yarn exported from certain Irish ports to certain English ports, and this operated in some degree to check smuggling, but the check cannot have been either complete or permanent, for as long as forty years later Hely Hutchinson wrote: "Our very existence

1 Froude, op. cit., p. 500.  2 Groans of Ireland, Dublin, 1741.
3 Proposals to Prevent the Exhoriation of Wool to France, by Mr. Knox, Dublin, 1730.
4 Groans of Ireland, Dublin, 1741.  5 Froude, op. cit., p. 502.
8 Murray, Commercial Relations, p. 72; Hely Hutchinson, Com. Restraints, p. 79.
is dependent on our illicit commerce." It is impossible in view of this statement, to believe that Young was correct in his surmise, that smuggling had completely ceased at the time of his tour. When Twiss was at Cork, in 1775, he was told that a great deal of smuggling went on on the Cork coast. At a much later date smuggling must have been countenanced by popular opinion in Ireland. Lockhart relates the following anecdote in his account of Scott's visit to Ireland in 1825:—"At one county gentleman's table where we dined, though two grand full-length daubs of William and Mary adorned the walls of the room, there was a mixed company—about as many Catholics as Protestants, all apparently on cordial terms, and pledging each other lustily in bumpers of capital claret. About an hour after dinner, however, punch was called for; tumblers and jugs of hot water appeared, and with them two magnums of whisky—the one bearing on its label KING'S, the other QUEEN'S. We did not at first understand these inscriptions; but it was explained, sotto voce, that the King's had paid the duty, the Queen's was of contraband origin; and, in the choice of liquors, we detected a new shibboleth of party. The jolly Protestants to a man stuck to the King's bottle—the equally radiant Papists paid their duty to the Queen's."

The only legal market left for Irish woollens was the home market. All during the century there were efforts made to increase the home consumption of Irish woollen stuffs. Wool and cloth were usually the principal items mentioned in the non-importation agreements; the Dublin Society encouraged the manufacture; and the industry revived in some extent. "In 1759 a great many woollen goods, very well finished, and some to the utmost nicety, were manufactured in Dublin"; and in 1773 the Dublin Society opened a woollen warehouse in Dublin. Arthur Young mentioned several woollen manufactories as

1 Letter quoted by Froude at vol. i., p. 499.  
2 Twiss, Tour in Ireland.  
3 Lockhart's Life of Scott, ch. 13.  
4 Murray, Commercial Relations, p. 106.  
5 Essay on Ancient and Modern State of Ireland, Dublin 1759.
flourishing on a small scale at the time of his visit. Miss Murray says that during the whole of the century Ireland managed to supply the greater part of her own needs in woollen goods. The better classes imported woollens from abroad, the result being that the Irish manufacturers concentrated their efforts on the production of the coarser stuffs for the poor people, and the quality of the finer stuffs was, in consequence, very poor compared with that of the English article. This had a bad effect when the foreign market was again opened to Irish manufacturers. It was suggested that the reason that the finer stuffs were of an inferior quality compared with those from England was that they were manufactured in Dublin, where wages and rent were high, whereas the coarser stuffs were mostly manufactured in the country parts—the satteens in Tipperary and Kilkenny; the flannels in Wexford and Wicklow; and the serges in Limerick. Apparently, the Irish consumer was to some extent to blame for the decline of the trade; he was said to exercise a decided preference for the imported article.

(b) The Linen Industry.

The linen industry was of old standing in Ireland. As early as 1430 linen cloth was imported into England from Ireland, and a century later Guicciardini mentions coarse linens as amongst the products imported from Ireland to Antwerp. In the sixteenth century Spenser mentions that in his time all Irishmen wore shirts made of linen, while the women wore linen turbans. Moreover, in various Acts of the Irish Parliament, the linen industry is referred to as then existing.

When Strafford was in Ireland he conceived the idea of extending the Irish linen industry. England at that time did not manufacture linen at home, and the only result of the export of Irish linen would be that the

1 Address to Representatives of the People, Dublin, 1771: Caldwell, Trade of Ireland, p. 23.
3 Campbell, Philosophical Survey of the South of Ireland, 1778.
5 33 Henry VIII., c. 16: 13 Elizabeth, c. 10.
English money which was spent on linen, instead of being paid to foreign countries, would be paid to Ireland. He entered into the project with characteristic energy, and is said to have spent over £50,000 of his own money on it. He also brought over some Dutchmen to instruct the Irish farmers as to the culture of flax. In 1636 he wrote to the King relating that he had already established six or seven looms, and that, in his opinion, Ireland could undersell Holland and France by twenty per cent. The increased product of yarn was not all worked up, and was consequently much sought by English buyers; we find in an account of the trade of Manchester written about this time: "Manchester buys linen yarns off the Irish in great quantity, and, weaving it into cloth, returns the same again in linen into Ireland to sell." The further increase of this industry was prevented by the Civil War of 1641, which disorganised the country from end to end.

After the Restoration, the Duke of Ormonde was anxious to carry on Strafford's original plan, and did much to aid the linen industry. He sent to the low countries to learn about the manufacture and arranged to have brought to Ireland five hundred Brabant families, and many other workmen from La Rochelle, the Island of Rhé and Jersey. The Duke was aided in his efforts by the Irish Parliament; by the Statute 17 and 18 Charles II., c. 9, the sum of twenty pounds was directed to be levied by the Grand Jury of every County except Dublin and Kerry at the Lent Assizes for twenty years, and distributed in premiums of ten pounds for the best, six pounds for the second best, and four pounds for the third best piece of linen furnished for inspection; six thousand pounds was directed to be levied on the kingdom at large for the purpose of establishing in each province a bleaching yard; and by another section a penalty of forty shillings was imposed on every landlord who let a cottage

1 Irish Linen Trade Handbook, Belfast, 1876, p. 29.
2 Murray, Commercial Relations, p. 114.
or cabin to any person holding one acre of land, and not covenanting to sow one-eighth of his holding with hemp or flax. The Irish Parliament also placed duties on English linen imported into Ireland. In 1669 there was a flourishing industry at Chapelizod, and another at Carrick-on-Suir. Sir William Temple thought that the industry was particularly suitable to the Irish climate and character. "No women," he wrote, "are apter to spin so well as the Irish, who, labouring little in any kind with their hands, have their fingers more supple than other women of the poor condition among us." Sir William Petty said that, in 1685, there were exported 1,851 pieces of linen cloth, and 3,582 cwt. of linen yarn. But the progress of the trade was again arrested by the political state of Ireland, this time by the War of 1689, which again disorganised the country completely.

When the Irish woollen trade was suppressed in 1698, it was clearly understood that England would encourage the linen trade in its stead. In reply to an address of the House of Commons, the King replied:—"I shall do all that in me lies to discourage the woollen manufacture in Ireland and to encourage the linen manufacture there." "The memoirs of the times," says Young, "as well as the expression in the above transaction, evidently prove that it was understood by both kingdoms to be a sort of compact; that if Ireland gave up her woollen manufacture, that of linen should be left to her under every encouragement." Of course, this bargain, even if it had been subsequently observed, was all in favour of England. In return for the suppression of the woollen trade, which was then her chief manufacture, Ireland was given a trade which she already had. We have seen that the linen trade had attained a certain prominence in the country for several centuries, and just before the end of the seventeenth century the coming of the French Huguenots had given it new life. As we shall see, it was by their efforts that the trade subsequently grew and

1 Treatise on Ireland. 2 Murray, Commercial Relations, p. 114.
prospered. But it is very doubtful whether it would not have prospered in any event under their guidance. There is no reason to suppose that, if things had been allowed to go on as before, Ireland could not have developed a linen trade, in addition to the woollen trade, as England subsequently did.

The linen trade of that date, however, was in no sense an adequate recompense for the loss of the woollen trade. The latter was Ireland's staple industry, and had attained to great proportions as the result of much labour and expenditure. The success of the linen trade, on the other hand, though probable, was by no means certain, and might have been prevented by various unforeseen happenings in the future; as Hely Hutchinson said, the exchange was one of a certainty for an experiment.

The woollen trade, moreover, was eminently suitable to Ireland. The excellence of the pasture land for sheep, combined with the skill of the people, had rendered it the natural industry to which everyone turned. The linen industry, on the other hand, was to some extent a foreign growth; its success in the past had to a large extent been dependent on Government encouragement and foreign immigrants—Dutchmen in Strafford's time, Frenchmen in Ormonde's time, and again Frenchmen in more recent years. From another point of view also the exchange was a bad one: "the linen could not have been a compensation for the woollen manufacture, which employs by far a greater number of hands, and yields much greater profit to the different workers, as well as to the manufacturers. Of this manufacture there are not many countries which have the primum in equal perfection with England and Ireland, and no other country taking part in the various kinds of these extensive manufactues so fit for carrying them on. There cannot be many rivals in this trade; in the linen trade they are most numerous. Other parts of the world are more fit for it than Ireland, and many equally so."  

1 Hely Hutchinson, Commercial Restraints, p. 91.
way, had the greatest contempt for the linen trade: "To reward my love, constancy, and generosity," says the injured lady, "he hath bestowed upon me the office of being sempstress to his grooms and footmen, which I am forced to accept or starve."

The bargain, however, was made, and, good or bad, should have been carried out. The principal provision of the contract was that England should give encouragement to the Irish linen trade. As a matter of fact, in examining England's conduct in the matter, we shall see that, whereas a certain amount of encouragement was given as promised, it was more than counterbalanced by discouragements and restraints.

Just before the passing of the acts suppressing the woollen industry, an English Act had allowed Ireland to export direct to England all sorts of hemp, flax and thread yarn, and all kinds of linen, duty free. The Colonial market was, of course, still closed to Irish linens, and was not opened until 1705, seven years after the promise of encouragement, when an English statute permitted Ireland to export direct to the Colonies coarse white and brown linens. The next encouragement given to the Irish linen industry by England was in 1708, when a bounty of a penny per yard on the exportation of sail-cloth from Ireland of the value of tenpence and under fourteenpence yer yard was given. A certain amount of encouragement was given by the English Bounty Acts; by an Act of 1743 a bounty of a penny for every yard of British or Irish linen exported from Great Britain worth from sixpence to twelvepence per yard was granted; in 1746 a further bounty of a half-penny per yard on linen exported of the value of five-pence and not exceeding twelvepence per yard, and of a penny halfpenny a yard on linen of the value of twelvepence and not exceeding eighteenpence per yard was given, and a further bounty was given in 1770.

1 Story of the Injured Lady. 2 7 & 8 William III., c. 39. 3 3 & 4 Anne, c. 8. 6 15 & 16 Geo. II., c. 29. 6 16 Geo II., c. 25. 6 Geo. III., c. 38.
It must be carefully noted that these bounties only extended to coarse white and brown linens, and did not include striped, checkered, painted or printed linens, and that they were only paid to persons residing in Great Britain. Moreover, the encouragement given to British and Irish linens by these bounties was not equal; the latter had to pay freight from Ireland to England, and this practically reduced the nominal bounty of 12 per cent. to less than 7 per cent. in fact. This completes the catalogue of the English encouragements to the Irish linen industry.

Let us now see in what ways these encouragements were rendered of little or no avail. At the time that the bargain between England and Ireland was entered into, there was no linen manufacture of any extent carried on in Great Britain. Shortly afterwards, however, the Scotch manufacture began to flourish and increase, whereupon the British Parliament, acting on its old principle, immediately began to inquire in what way it could most effectively hinder the Irish manufacturer from competing with the Scotch. In 1702 and 1703 Acts were passed laying import duties of thirty per cent. on checkered, striped, printed, painted, stained and dyed linens made in foreign parts, and by a forced construction this duty was held to be payable by Irish linens. The permission to export Irish linen to the Plantations was, in fact, of very little use when not accompanied with corresponding permission to import Plantation goods to Ireland, as it practically meant that any ships engaged in the linen trade to the Plantations would have to return empty. No such permission to carry on an import trade was ever granted. As we shall see, when Crommelin applied for an extension of his patent, he met with opposition from the English Government, who greatly feared that he intended to extend the

1 Foster's Speech on the Union. 2 Ibid. 3 10 Anne. c. 19; 11 & 12 Anne. c. 9; 6 Geo. 1., c. 4. 4 Hely Hutchinson, Commercial Restraints, p. 95.
manufacture into the South of Ireland on a large scale, and thereby create other rivals to the Scotch. In 1717 the permission which had been given to Ireland to export her linens to the Plantations was only renewed on the condition that British linens should be allowed into Ireland free of duty; and, at the same time, Irish coloured linens imported into Great Britain were subjected to a duty equal to a prohibition.

In 1746 the Irish Parliament made an effort to develop the sail-cloth manufacture by granting bounties on the export of all sail-cloth from Ireland, and, as a result of this measure, the quantity of the export greatly increased. In 1750 the British Parliament, frightened by this prosperity, imposed duties equivalent to the Irish bounties on all Irish sail-cloth and canvas imported into Great Britain. "The nation that encouraged us to the undertaking has now become our rival in it. That this is not too strong an expression will appear by considering the British statute which allowed a duty on the importation of Irish sail-cloth into Great Britain." This restraint must have had a specially injurious effect in Munster and Connaught, as large quantities of hemp were cultivated there. As in the case of most of the restrictions of this kind, England did not gain anything herself. The quantity of sail-cloth imported into Great Britain in 1774 was greater than that imported in the year 1750, the year the restrictive law was made; the only result of the law being to take the trade from Ireland and give it to foreigners. By the same Act which imposed duties on the importation of sail-cloth, the British Parliament granted bounties on all kinds of British hempen manufacture exported to the Plantations, to Ireland, or to foreign countries, thereby completely suppressing the Irish trade. Moreover, in 1770, a bounty was granted on British linens, checked and stained, exported to Africa, America, Spain,

Portugal, Gibraltar, Minorca, or the East Indies. This bounty did not include Irish goods, and, therefore, enabled Great Britain to monopolise the trade in checked and stained linens as she had previously done in sail-cloth.

It is pretty clear, from the recital of these measures, that any encouragement given to the Irish linen manufacture was more than counterbalanced by discouragements, and that England committed a gross breach of the promise to support the Irish industry. "What moonshine would such encouragement prove if England, departing from the letter and spirit of that compact, had encouraged her own linen manufacture to rival the Irish, after the Irish had destroyed their woollen fabricks to encourage those of England? Yet, we did this in direct breach of the whole transaction, for the 23rd of Geo. II. laid a tax on sail-cloth made of Irish hemp. Bounties also have been given in England, without extending fully to Irish linens. Checked, striped, printed, painted, stained, or dyed linens of Irish manufacture are not allowed to be imported into Britain. In which, and in other articles, we have done everything possible to extend and increase our own linen manufacture, to rival that of Ireland." "A perpetual prohibition to export every denomination of woollen drapery was exchanged for a promise on the part of England to give every possible encouragement to the linen and hempen manufactures in Ireland—a promise which England has kept by discouraging the importation of our sail-cloth, in which manufacture she is become our rival, and grants a bounty of twopence per ell on the importation of her own fabric into Ireland, though no bounty whatever is allowed on the importation of our sail-cloth into Great Britain—by laying prohibitory duties on the importation of all sorts and denominations of printed, dyed, chequed, or coloured linens from this country, and by affording every possible encouragement to the extension and improvement of the linen manufacture in Great Britain."  

1 Young's *Tour in Ireland*, vol. ii., p. 198. 
The truth is that any encouragement which the Irish linen industry received was received, not from the English, but from the Irish Parliament, and, incidentally, was paid for by the Irish tax-payer. By 7 William III., c. 16 (Ir.), additional duties were laid on Scotch and foreign linens imported, and the Act 2 Anne, c. 4 (Ir.) laid an additional duty of sixpence per yard on all linen imported; but, of course, these duties came to an end as against Great Britain in 1717, when, as we have seen, their discontinuance was made the condition of the permission to continue the export of Irish linen to the Plantations. In 1708 spinning schools were set up in every county, and in 1710 a Board of Trustees was appointed for the management of the industry, the trustees to consist of an equal number of persons in each of the four provinces, with power to dispose of all duties granted by Parliament for the support of the manufacture, and to settle and adjust all disputes arising therein. This Board, though on the whole a great help to the industry, was sometimes found to be rather a hindrance. Like all public bodies, it was very conservative, and on various occasions it delayed the introduction of improvements into the manufacture for some years—notably the use of lime for bleaching, which, though proved to be successful in 1760, was not countenanced by the Linen Board until ten years later. In 1719, lappers were appointed to stamp linen goods with their official seal, and by various Acts, which were all repealed and consolidated in 1746,¹ the whole trade was regulated and put under control. This latter Act granted bounties on sail-cloth exported, but, as we have seen, these were rendered ineffectual by the action of the English Parliament.

Very large sums of money were granted by Parliament from time to time for the encouragement of this industry. From the year 1724 two thousand pounds was granted yearly for the improvement of the growing of flax, and a similar sum was granted annually for the

¹19 Geo. II., c. 6.
encouragement of the linen industry in Leinster, Munster and Connaught. In addition to these regular sums, large grants were made from time to time. The following table, which is taken from Young,\(^1\) contains an account of the sums of money for which the Vice-Treasurers claimed credit, as being paid by them for the use of the Hempen and Linen Manufacturers from 1700 to 1777:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>In the Year</th>
<th>£</th>
<th>In the Year</th>
<th>£</th>
<th>In the Year</th>
<th>£</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1700</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>1728</td>
<td>5,154</td>
<td>Forward, 75,983</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1701</td>
<td>372</td>
<td>1729</td>
<td>11,340</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1702</td>
<td>213</td>
<td>1730</td>
<td>10,824</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1703</td>
<td>430</td>
<td>1731</td>
<td>13,711</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1705</td>
<td>3,384</td>
<td>1732</td>
<td>5,149</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1706</td>
<td>1,783</td>
<td>1733</td>
<td>7,422</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1707</td>
<td>1,498</td>
<td>1734</td>
<td>5,670</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1708</td>
<td>1,475</td>
<td>1735</td>
<td>13,103</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1709</td>
<td>1,180</td>
<td>1736</td>
<td>14,785</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1710</td>
<td>1,180</td>
<td>1737</td>
<td>12,927</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1711</td>
<td>1,770</td>
<td>1738</td>
<td>14,931</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1712</td>
<td>2,023</td>
<td>1739</td>
<td>13,085</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1713</td>
<td>1,596</td>
<td>1740</td>
<td>16,973</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1714</td>
<td>789</td>
<td>1741</td>
<td>15,484</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1715</td>
<td>1,597</td>
<td>1742</td>
<td>22,085</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1716</td>
<td>1,641</td>
<td>1743</td>
<td>17,917</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1717</td>
<td>3,981</td>
<td>1744</td>
<td>23,587</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1718</td>
<td>3,337</td>
<td>1745</td>
<td>18,948</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1719</td>
<td>4,784</td>
<td>1746</td>
<td>9,154</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1720</td>
<td>3,369</td>
<td>1747</td>
<td>11,216</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1721</td>
<td>4,421</td>
<td>1748</td>
<td>15,371</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1722</td>
<td>5,173</td>
<td>1749</td>
<td>20,979</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1723</td>
<td>3,439</td>
<td>1750</td>
<td>31,109</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1724</td>
<td>5,678</td>
<td>1751</td>
<td>16,680</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1725</td>
<td>6,290</td>
<td>1752</td>
<td>22,556</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1726</td>
<td>7,779</td>
<td>1753</td>
<td>16,886</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1727</td>
<td>6,701</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Total ...  £852,471</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

But even these large figures are not exhaustive, for, in addition, money was granted for bounties on the import of flax-seed, and on the export of canvas and sail-cloth.

\(^{1}\text{Tour, vol. ii., p. 209.}\)
Young¹ says that the total sums applied for the purpose of the industry in the period 1700 to 1775 were as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Paid by the Vice-Treasurer</th>
<th>£847,504</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parliamentary bounty</td>
<td>192,540</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bounty on flax import</td>
<td>226,834</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bounty on export of canvas</td>
<td>28,682</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>£1,295,560</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Irish linen industry, as we know it to-day, may be said to have been founded by Crommelin and the Huguenots who emigrated from France after the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685, and settled in the North of Ireland. The state of the linen industry at the time of Crommelin’s arrival is fully described in an essay which he wrote in 1705:—“The people are entirely ignorant of the mysteries relating to the manufacture. . . . The flax being managed by women altogether ignorant as to their choice of the seed or soil, for which reason their flax is too short, and unfit for making good yarn; they do not know when or how to pull their flax, whereby their seed degenerates, and their flax wants strength and substance. . . . Their manner of reeling yarn is one of the greatest grievances, as many honest, industrious men are undone by the deceitful methods now used by the crafty and unfair people in this particular; as, for instance, there is no standard for the measure of reels, and everybody uses such reels as they think fit; for which reason a stranger to the market is imposed upon to his ruin. . . . The looms generally employed in this kingdom for the making of all sorts of linen cloth (excepting diaper and damask) are looms properly disposed, and invented for the making of woollen cloth (save only that they change the gear, and work promiscuously linen and woollen therein); therefore, it is impossible to use one and the same loom to both material with good success. . . . The reeds are uneven and too thick, . . . and

¹ Tour. vol. ii., p. 212.
they make a stuff, of water and meal, without judgment, wherewith they stiffen their warps; and the cloth is made too thin and sleazy, and woven where the weather affects it. . . . The manner of mixing their ashes and yarns together in the kneeve, purely through ignorance, or laziness, makes their yarn fret and cotton for ever.""

Crommelin received much encouragement from William the Third, who granted him an annuity of £200 for life and £120 a year for each of his assistants. He was also given £800 a year for ten years as interest on £10,000, which he advanced for starting the industry at Lisburn. Crommelin imported a thousand looms and spinning wheels from Holland, and gave a premium of five pounds for every loom at work. In a short time Lisburn became the most prosperous town in Ireland, and the manufacture spread and flourished over the whole of the adjoining country. "Lurgan has at present (1708) the greatest mart of linen manufactures in the North, being almost entirely peopled with linen weavers."" Crommelin, moreover, agreed to establish himself at Kilkenny, provided he obtained an extension of his patent, and made a demand of £2,500. As soon as this was mooted in England, great opposition arose, as it was felt that too much prosperity in the Irish industry might injure the Scotch, and ultimately a patent was only obtained on the condition that none but the coarsest linen should be manufactured. "

The manufacture spread very rapidly in Ulster. In 1735 the Belfast Linen Hall was opened, and in 1737 there were 339 looms at work in the North. Irish linen had already acquired a high reputation abroad, for we read that in 1741 German and Scottish merchants were counterfeiting Irish marks to increase the price of their commodity. Although the linen industry undoubtedly progressed in the early years of the eighteenth century, it

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1 Essay Towards Improving Hempen and Flaxen Manufacture of Ireland. Dublin, 1705.
2 Smiles, Huguenot Settlements in England and Ireland.
3 Molyneux. Journey to the North, 1708.
4 Lecky, vol. i, p. 132.
5 Benn. History of Belfast. 6 The Groans of Ireland Dublin, 1740.
IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

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did not show any signs of the enormous volume it was ultimately destined to attain until after 1750. This was said to be owing to three causes—first, the want of capital in the country; secondly, the ignorance of the people; and thirdly, the neglect of the Grand Juries to make use of the powers conferred upon them.¹ Lord Molesworth said that the law which required the Grand Juries in each county to give premiums to the women who made the three best pieces of linen cloth broke down because the jurymen insisted on always giving them to the three prettiest girls.² In spite of this comparatively slow growth, in 1727 the exports of linen were one-third of the total exports from Ireland.

After 1750 the trade increased very rapidly. In 1725 machinery driven by water-power had been introduced for beetling, which had previously been done by women;³ in 1764 great improvements were made in the old spinning wheel, by a Lurgan carpenter named Turner, so that a child could now produce twice the quantity which a grown person previously did with the old machine;⁴ and lime was used for bleaching in 1770.⁵ In 1764 provision was made for the stamping of brown linen in the same manner as the white had been stamped since 1719, a regulation which provoked great opposition from the weavers, which culminated in serious disturbances. The one branch of the manufacture which did not progress was the hempen, which had been finally ruined by the British Act of 1750, imposing duties on sail-cloth. With this exception, however, the industry grew at an amazing rate. The best estimate of its growth may be gathered from the following table, compiled from figures in the Irish Commons Journal and the Customs' House Books, National Library, Dublin, and reprinted here by the kind permission of Messrs. P. S. King and Son, publishers of Murray's Commercial and Financial Relations Between England and Ireland:—

¹ Enquiry into the State and Progress of the Linen Manufacture in Ireland, 1757.
² Considerations on the Promotion of Agriculture, by R.L.V.M., Dublin, 1723.
³ Mulholland, Ireland and Her Staple Industry, p. 50.
⁴ The Irish Linen Trade Handbook, p. 45.
⁵ ib.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year ended March 25th</th>
<th>Linen Cloth</th>
<th>Linen Yarn</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yards</td>
<td>Value £</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1710</td>
<td>1,688,574</td>
<td>105,537</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1711</td>
<td>1,254,815</td>
<td>78,425</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1712</td>
<td>1,376,122</td>
<td>86,007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1713</td>
<td>1,819,816</td>
<td>113,738</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1714</td>
<td>2,186,392</td>
<td>155,602</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1715</td>
<td>2,153,120</td>
<td>107,656</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1716</td>
<td>2,188,105</td>
<td>109,405</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1717</td>
<td>2,437,265</td>
<td>132,018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1718</td>
<td>2,247,375</td>
<td>121,732</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1719</td>
<td>2,359,352</td>
<td>127,708</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1720</td>
<td>2,437,984</td>
<td>121,899</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1721</td>
<td>2,520,701</td>
<td>126,035</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1722</td>
<td>3,419,994</td>
<td>170,995</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1723</td>
<td>4,378,545</td>
<td>218,927</td>
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<tr>
<td>1724</td>
<td>3,879,170</td>
<td>193,958</td>
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<tr>
<td>1725</td>
<td>3,864,987</td>
<td>193,249</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1726</td>
<td>4,368,395</td>
<td>218,419</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1727</td>
<td>4,768,889</td>
<td>238,444</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1728</td>
<td>4,692,764</td>
<td>234,638</td>
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<td>1729</td>
<td>3,927,918</td>
<td>196,395</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1730</td>
<td>4,136,203</td>
<td>206,810</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1731</td>
<td>3,775,830</td>
<td>220,250</td>
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<tr>
<td>1732</td>
<td>3,792,551</td>
<td>237,034</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1733</td>
<td>4,777,076</td>
<td>298,567</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1734</td>
<td>5,451,758</td>
<td>310,734</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1735</td>
<td>6,821,439</td>
<td>426,339</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1736</td>
<td>6,506,151</td>
<td>468,759</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1737</td>
<td>6,138,785</td>
<td>409,252</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1738</td>
<td>5,175,744</td>
<td>345,049</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1739</td>
<td>5,962,316</td>
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<td>1740</td>
<td>6,627,771</td>
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<td>1741</td>
<td>7,207,741</td>
<td>480,516</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1742</td>
<td>7,074,168</td>
<td>471,6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1743</td>
<td>6,058,041</td>
<td>403,869</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1744</td>
<td>6,124,892</td>
<td>459,366</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1745</td>
<td>7,171,963</td>
<td>537,807</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1746</td>
<td>6,836,667</td>
<td>512,750</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1747</td>
<td>9,633,884</td>
<td>722,541</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1748</td>
<td>8,692,671</td>
<td>543,291</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1749</td>
<td>9,504,339</td>
<td>594,021</td>
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<td>1750</td>
<td>11,200,460</td>
<td>653,360</td>
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<tr>
<td>1751</td>
<td>12,891,318</td>
<td>751,993</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1752</td>
<td>10,656,003</td>
<td>621,600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1753</td>
<td>10,411,787</td>
<td>694,119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1754</td>
<td>12,090,903</td>
<td>806,060</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1755</td>
<td>13,379,733</td>
<td>891,982</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1756</td>
<td>11,944,328</td>
<td>796,288</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1757</td>
<td>15,508,769</td>
<td>1,033,913</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Exports of Linen Cloth and Yarn from Ireland, 1710-79—contd.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year ended March 25th</th>
<th>Linen Cloth</th>
<th>Linen Yarn</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yards</td>
<td>Value £</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1758</td>
<td>14,982,557</td>
<td>998,837</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1759</td>
<td>14,093,431</td>
<td>939,562</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1760</td>
<td>13,375,456</td>
<td>891,697</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1761</td>
<td>12,048,881</td>
<td>803,258</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1762</td>
<td>15,559,676</td>
<td>1,037,311</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1763</td>
<td>6,013,105</td>
<td>1,067,540</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1764</td>
<td>15,101,081</td>
<td>1,006,738</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1765</td>
<td>14,355,205</td>
<td>957,013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1766</td>
<td>17,892,102</td>
<td>1,192,806</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1767</td>
<td>20,148,170</td>
<td>1,344,211</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1768</td>
<td>18,490,019</td>
<td>1,232,667</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1769</td>
<td>17,790,705</td>
<td>1,186,047</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1770</td>
<td>20,560,754</td>
<td>1,370,716</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1771</td>
<td>25,376,808</td>
<td>1,691,787</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1772</td>
<td>2,599,178</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1773</td>
<td>18,450,700</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1774</td>
<td>16,916,674</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1775</td>
<td>20,205,087</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1776</td>
<td>20,502,587</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1777</td>
<td>19,714,638</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1778</td>
<td>21,945,729</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1779</td>
<td>18,836,042</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The industry, of course, was most prosperous in the North. Various causes have been assigned for this, but it would seem a sufficient cause that it was in the North Crommelin and most of his followers settled down. It must not be supposed, however, that the industry was altogether confined to the North; on the contrary, it was very widely spread throughout the South and West, and seems to have been practiced in every county. In the latter half of the century it was said that the value of the linen goods annually disposed of in the different markets was two million pounds—one and a half million the produce of Ulster and half a million the produce of the other provinces.\(^1\) Another reason why the industry flourished best in Ulster was the existence of the Ulster custom whereby tenants had acquired a certain security of tenure

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\(^1\) Mulholland, Ireland and Her Staple Industry, p. 92.
which encouraged them to improve their land and thus possibly put by some savings, which they employed in setting up as linen weavers on a small scale. Moreover, flax in the North was only subject to a small tithe of sixpence an acre, whereas in the South it was charged with an exorbitant tithe.

In 1717, Crommelin extended operations to Waterford, and in 1747 a manufacturer from Belfast, Mr. Patrick Smith, removed to Waterford, and was granted by Parliament £500 and an annual salary of £300. In the next ten years the sale of yarns and linen cloths in that city increased twentyfold, and in 1758 there were fifteen hundred hands engaged in the linen manufacture in Waterford. A successful manufacture of linen was carried on in Kilkenny during the first half of the century, and in 1759 it was stated that the industry was in a very flourishing condition in Cork. "The plain linens made in the neighbourhood and town of Drogheda were generally of a coarse description—in some districts of Louth large quantities of goods were made of a finer quality. The King's County was celebrated for Dowlas, and Cork for its heavy quilts and stripes. Clare produced coarse fabrics, and in Tipperary there was a good deal of business done. . . . The linen weavers of Mayo, Sligo, and Galway were principally engaged in working a very stout article." A full account of the state of the industry in every county will be found in the reports and observations of R. Stevenson, made to the Trustees of the Linen Manufacture in 1764.

The fact is that as long as the linen manufacture remained a rural industry, it continued to flourish all over Ireland, though nowhere to such an extent as in Ulster, and it was not until the time of the industrial revolution that it became definitely localised in the North. It is important to remember that until the era of the great mechanical improvements which marked the progress of

1 Butt, Irish Land and Irish People, p. 29. 2 Grattan's Speeches, vol. ii., p. 86. 3 Mulholland, p. 41. 4 Titch, Statistical Survey of the County of Kilkenny, 1892. 5 Mulholland. 6 Halliday Pamphlets, R.I.A., vol. 319.
the industrial revolution, the linen manufacture was carried on, not in factories as we understand them now, but in the homes of the people. Every weaver was also, to some extent, an agriculturist, and could supplement his earnings by the produce of a little piece of land. This is strikingly illustrated by the Irish Statute of 3 Geo. III., c. 34, which provides that no apprentice in the linen trade is to be employed on his master's land for more than twenty-four days in the year. The industry did not come to be located in towns as at present until the improved processes of manufacture had extended the division of labour to such an extent as to make it necessary for several operatives to come together in one place to carry on the process from start to finish. Above all, the introduction of steam as the motive power of the looms rendered the factory system indispensable, to the displacement of the old system.

The fact is that, until the end of the eighteenth century, the linen manufacturer sold his linen just as a farmer sold his oats—by taking it to the nearest market town on the fair days. A very striking account of the manner in which the sales were carried on in 1775 is to be found in the pages of Arthur Young:—

"When the weaver has made his piece of cloth he goes into the market of Armagh on a Tuesday, and sells it to the draper, as he would any other commodity. . . . The draper generally has a bleach green, and the expense to him of bleaching is £4 10s. to £5 a pack of 30 pieces, or 3s. to 3s. 2d. a piece. After bleaching, he either sends it to factors in London or Dublin, or sells it at the Linen-hall in Dublin. Some go over to Chester for themselves and dispose of it there. In London he gives seven months' credit; in Dublin two or three, but if he goes himself to the Hall he gets ready money. The London factor has six per cent. for selling it and advancing the money as soon as sold, and a half per cent. for warehouse room and insurance from fire. . . . The spinners in this district earn from 3d. to 4d. per day, and weavers 10d. to 1s. 4d. The weavers in
the country on the road to Lurgan keep a pack of hounds; every man has a hound, and, joining them together, they hunt hares. The pack is no sooner heard than all the weavers leave their looms, and away they go after them by hundreds. This much amazed me, but I was assured it was very common. At Lurgan, Mr. Brownlow walked with me to the market, to show me the way the linens were sold. The cambrics are sold early, and through the whole morning, but when the clock strikes eleven, the drapers jump upon stone standings, and the weavers instantly flock about them with their pieces; the bargains are not struck at a word, but there is a little altercation whether the piece will be one halfpenny or one penny a yard more or less, which appeared to be useless. The draper's clerk stands by him, and writes his master's name on the pieces he buys, together with the price; and giving it back to the seller he goes to the draper's quarters and awaits his coming. At twelve it ends, and then there is an hour for measuring the pieces and paying the money, for nothing but ready money is taken, and this is the way the business is carried on at all the markets; 3,000 pieces are sold a week at 35s. each on an average, or about £5,250, equal to £273,000 per annum, and this all made in a circumference of not many miles."

A great deal of the raw material of the linen industry—flax—was grown in Ireland, but much was also imported from abroad. The small linen manufacturer suffered greatly at the hands of the retail dealer in flax seed, who was a profiteer of the worst sort, often selling at £4 18s. a hogshead the flax seed which he had purchased at 2s. 4d.; and frequently passing off defective seed. To remedy this evil, Parliament provided that the seller of flax seed should be held to warrant its quality, and imposed penalties on the seller of bad seed.

In order to encourage the home growth of flax, Parliament granted £2,000 a year in premiums, and also

1 Young, Tour. vol. i., p. 128, et. sq. 2 Dobbs. Trade of Ireland.
3 3 Geo. III., c. 34. 4 10 Geo. I., c. 9.
granted bounties on the importation of foreign hemp and flax seed. In 1775 the British Parliament granted a small bounty on the import of flax into Ireland, and in 1780 the Irish bounty was discontinued, being commuted by premiums awarded on home-grown flax. In spite of this encouragement, flax-growing does not seem to have attained any great magnitude in Ireland; possibly the moist climate was unsuitable. The culture of flax in the South was impeded by the high tithes which the clergy demanded in respect of it, while it made more progress in the North, where the tithe was only sixpence an acre.

An Act of Parliament provided that any barren land reclaimed should be exempt from tithes for hemp or flax for seven years.

(c) The Cotton Industry.

Although the cotton manufacture seems to have made some progress in Ireland towards the end of the seventeenth century, it failed to attain any considerable importance during the greater part of the eighteenth. The Navigation Laws had the effect of preventing the direct importation of the raw material of the industry, and, of course, the finished article could not be exported direct to the Colonies. The British market was closed to Irish cottons by a high duty on imported cottons amounting to twenty-five per cent.; and by an Act passed in 1721 which prohibited the inhabitants of Great Britain from wearing any article manufactured of cotton which was not made in Great Britain. Even the Irish market was not secured to the Irish manufacturers, as English cotton goods were admitted to Ireland at a very low duty. The only attempt made by the Irish Parliament to protect the cotton industry was in 1738, when an Act was passed imposing an additional import duty of sixpence a yard on cottons; but British cottons were expressly

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\(^1\) 6 Anne, c. 9; 27 Geo. II., c. 2.  \(^2\) 15 & 16 Geo. III., c. 4.  \(^3\) 19 & 20 Geo. III., c. 33.  \(^4\) Murray, Commercial Relations, p. 118.  \(^5\) Grattan's Speeches, vol. ii., p. 86.  \(^6\) 5 Geo. II., c. 9.  \(^7\) 3 & 4 William and Mary, c. 5; 3 & 4 Anne, c. 4.  \(^8\) 7 Geo. I., c. 7.
exempted from the duty, which consequently proved of no substantial service.1

This discouragement, although it succeeded in keeping the cotton manufacture from growing as it would have done in the ordinary way, did not entirely extinguish it. It would appear from reports furnished to the Linen Board in 1753 that a variety of cotton manufactures had been introduced at Innishannon and Cork by some French prisoners of war who had settled there;2 and apparently a fairly extensive business was done in the manufacture of coarse muslins and calico sheetings in Dublin and Cork some years later.3 The existence of a fairly large number of cotton manufacturers may be inferred from an Act passed in 1763 to prevent combinations to raise wages being entered into by such persons.4 The foundation stone of the industry which attained such large proportions in the closing years of the century was laid in 1771, when an enterprising citizen of Belfast imported some of the improved machines, which had recently been invented, into his native city.

(d) The Silk Industry.

The silk industry was founded in Dublin towards the end of the seventeenth century by some of the Huguenot immigrants and rapidly attained considerable dimensions. The manufacture received much encouragement from Parliament. In 1705 the duties on silk goods imported from abroad were raised; in 1729 they were raised again; while in 1745 they were further increased to a sum which amounted to a prohibition. During the years 1720-7 raw silk and thrown undyed silk to the average amount of 17,613 lbs. were imported annually. The finishing of this raw material must have provided considerable employment. In 1730 it was said that 300 looms were kept busy in Dublin in the manufacture of garment silks, and a great number

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1 11 Geo. II., c. 1. 2 Examinator's Letters, Dublin, 1786. 3 Mutcholland, Ireland and Her Stable Industry; Whitelaw and Walsh, History of Dublin, p. 972. 4 3 Geo. III., c. 34, s. 23.
in making slighter fabrics. For many years the industry continued to flourish, and many new branches of it were started, notably the manufacture of poplin, which consisted of a combination of silk and worsted wool.

Towards the middle of the century a decline set in. Much dissatisfaction was felt by the journeymen silk-weavers on account of the glut that was caused by over-production, and the custom of getting the work done by unpaid apprentices. In spite of the prohibitive duties, French silks continued to be imported—chiefly by smugglers, or mixed with British silks. In 1763 the competition had proved so formidable that only fifty looms were working at garment silks. The home industry received very unfair treatment at the hands of the retail merchants, who found they got more profit by "pushing" the imported article.

In 1764 the Dublin Society, determined to resuscitate the dying industry, opened the Silk Warehouse in Parliament Street and gave a ten per cent. premium on all Irish-made silks. The beneficial effects of the opening of this warehouse were felt immediately, and with this encouragement the manufacture rallied, and in a few years gave employment to 3,000 looms and 19,000 persons. The extent of this revival is shown by the fact that 91,209 lbs. of raw and thrown silks were imported annually from 1774 to 1784. The only place outside Dublin in which the industry took root was in Lisburn, where a branch of it was founded by a Huguenot named Goyer; this enterprise flourished until 1798, when it was broken up during the Rebellion. But the import of finished silks also continued to increase, and the Irish product found itself gradually replaced by the foreign article. Much discontent was caused by the passing of the "Spitalfields Act" in 1779, by which it was provided that the wages of silk weavers were in future to be fixed by the Dublin Society.

(e) The Brewing Industry.

In the last years of the seventeenth century a good deal of brewing was done in Ireland, and the industry continued to progress during the early years of the eighteenth, until it was checked by discouragements and restraints. Dublin and Cork came to be the great brewing centres, and about 1740 the amount of beer annually produced in these cities amounted to about half a million barrels. The Irish excise duty was lower than the British, the former being about four shillings per barrel of strong beer and ninepence per gallon of small beer, and the latter about eight shillings a barrel on strong beer.

This slight advantage, however, was more than counterbalanced by many disadvantages imposed by English legislation. In 1720 the drawback which had previously been given on English hops exported to Ireland was discontinued. No doubt as a result of this, the Irish brewers began to import more hops from foreign countries, but this practice was stopped in 1731 by an Act which provided that no hops should be imported into Ireland except from Great Britain. The result of this Act was to give the English hop farmer the monopoly of the Irish market, as the growing of hops in Ireland was found to be impracticable, in spite of much encouragement from the Dublin Society, partly owing to the lack of capital in the country and partly because of the shortage of timber, caused by the improvident dealing of the Irish landlords with their woods. The English brewer, moreover, was enabled to flood the Irish market with his produce, as the import duty on British beer into Ireland was only ten per cent., whereas the duty on Irish beer imported into England was so high as to amount to a prohibition.

It is not surprising that the Irish brewing trade failed to succeed under these many discouragements. The

1 Petty, Treatise of Ireland, 1687, p. 595.
2 Coyne, Ireland Industrial and Agricultural, p. 453.
3 Coyne, op. cit., p. 452.
4 Geo. I., c. 1.
5 Geo. II., c. 15.
6 Newenham, p. 103.
7 Murray, Commercial Relations, p. 82.
Dublin Society did all it could to revive it by means of premiums and instruction, but, nevertheless, it gradually gave way before English competition. In 1771 things had become very bad, and in that year a Committee was appointed by Parliament to inquire into the condition of the industry. The evidence before the Committee showed that, whereas in 1740 there were seventy brewers in Ireland, there were only thirty in 1770; and that the English brewers, by means of English drawbacks and low Irish duties, were able to sell porter in Ireland cheaper than the Irish brewers could brew it. The following table, which is taken from Newenham, shows that, while the English imports were steadily increasing, the beer brewed in Ireland was becoming less year by year:

Table showing the Average Annual Import of Ale and Beer and quantities of Strong and Small Beer which paid Duty, 1700-1800.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Four Years ending</th>
<th>Average Annual Import of Beer and Ale: Barrels</th>
<th>Average Annual amount of strong Beer paying duty: Barrels</th>
<th>Average Annual amount of small Beer paying duty: Barrels</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dec 25 1704</td>
<td>285</td>
<td>No figures before 1748 available</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mar 25 1708</td>
<td>125</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1712</td>
<td>74</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1716</td>
<td>107</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1720</td>
<td>285</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1724</td>
<td>288</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1728</td>
<td>277</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1732</td>
<td>968</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1736</td>
<td>771</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1740</td>
<td>1,338</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1744</td>
<td>4,499</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1748</td>
<td>7,904</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1752</td>
<td>14,985</td>
<td>603,917</td>
<td>231,977</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1756</td>
<td>17,896</td>
<td>568,899</td>
<td>200,271</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1760</td>
<td>14,659</td>
<td>496,536</td>
<td>177,947</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1764</td>
<td>21,969</td>
<td>611,870</td>
<td>173,926</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1768</td>
<td>32,564</td>
<td>558,657</td>
<td>144,701</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1772</td>
<td>43,932</td>
<td>476,021</td>
<td>140,843</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1776</td>
<td>57,882</td>
<td>458,008</td>
<td>115,460</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1780</td>
<td>57,974</td>
<td>454,688</td>
<td>132,217</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The restrictions on the brewing trade were deeply resented by Hely Hutchinson. "Beer they export to us in such quantities as almost to ruin our brewing: but they prevent our exportation to them by duties equal to a prohibition. Of malt, they make large exports to us to the prejudice of our agriculture, but have absolutely prohibited our exportation of corn to them. Hops they do not allow us to import from any other place, and proclaim such importation to be a common nuisance. They go further, and, by laying a duty on the export and denying the drawback, oblige the Irish consumer to pay a tax appropriated to the payment of the British debt."'

(f) The Distilling Industry.

There was one industry which flourished during this period the success of which was more disastrous to the country than its failure would have been. Amongst the many complaints of depression with which the Irish Commons Journals abound, there is only one to be found from the distillers, who seem to have enjoyed uninterrupted prosperity while every other industry was falling to pieces. This may be accounted for by the fact that spirits was the one production for which the Irish manufacturer was sure of finding the home demand at all times equal to the supply, and also to the fact that it was encouraged, or rather not hampered, by the Government, on account of the large revenue which it produced. Any attempt, moreover, to interfere with the progress of the distillers was bitterly opposed by the landed gentry, who regarded them as good customers for their grains. Nor was this industry saddled with any oppressive taxation; until the remedial legislation of 1791 the Excise Duties on spirits always remained low—8d. a gallon until 1760, then 1od. a gallon, and later 1s. 2d. a gallon. Malt, moreover, was not taxed at all until 1785.

1 Hely Hutchinson, Commercial Restraints, p. 156.
4 1 Geo. III., c. 5. 5 15 & 16 Geo. III., c. 8.
The following figures' give a good idea of the growth of this industry from 1720 to 1780, and also of the quantities of spirits imported into the country during these years:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Four years ending</th>
<th>Average Annual Import of Foreign Spirits</th>
<th>Average Annual Home-made Spirits which paid duty</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gallons</td>
<td>Gallons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1724</td>
<td>368,698</td>
<td>130,749</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1728</td>
<td>372,349</td>
<td>169,377</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1732</td>
<td>376,616</td>
<td>155,716</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1736</td>
<td>445,690</td>
<td>224,251</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1740</td>
<td>501,103</td>
<td>224,110</td>
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<tr>
<td>1744</td>
<td>499,338</td>
<td>319,233</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1748</td>
<td>381,213</td>
<td>430,062</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1752</td>
<td>778,308</td>
<td>589,549</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1756</td>
<td>1,198,898</td>
<td>540,082</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1760</td>
<td>904,330</td>
<td>284,253</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1764</td>
<td>1,340,685</td>
<td>613,677</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1768</td>
<td>2,419,118</td>
<td>594,368</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1772</td>
<td>2,606,930</td>
<td>781,332</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1776</td>
<td>2,132,562</td>
<td>1,031,687</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1780</td>
<td>1,606,152</td>
<td>1,142,229</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These figures only show the quantities of spirits on which duty was paid, which was a very different thing from the quantity produced in the country, and must be supplemented by [1] the quantity distilled by the small distillers on which no duty was paid, and [2] the yet larger quantity distilled by unlicensed persons. The existence of a large number of small distillers was a great evil in Ireland, as their output could not be thoroughly checked. In 1755 most of the stills were only of sixty or seventy gallons' capacity, and many were even smaller, and in 1797 there were 1,152 licensed stills in Ireland. The smallness of some of these may be judged by the fact that, in 1780, there were 76 in Athlone, 75 in Cavan, 91 in Dublin, 86 in Maryboro', 93 in Naas, and 100 in Strabane. It was well known that many of these small distillers only returned a fraction of what they produced. "An account having been

1 Newenham, App. XIII.
kept of the working of every distillery in the kingdom throughout the year, it was found that they worked in a most unequal manner, that some of them worked constantly; that others worked for eight or nine months and stopped for the remainder of the year; others worked for one, two, or three months in the year, while others worked but for one or two days in the month, and so seldom for the whole year that it was manifest it was impossible that such men could live by their trade so carried on; the officers who visited such distilleries found on these morning visits such marks as evidently showed that the stills had been at work all night, such as finding the works in which the stills were set hot and the room warm; some of these distillers were known to have double sets of workmen, yet could rarely be found at work in the daytime; they pretended that they had not a demand for their spirits, and yet they either went to great expense in erecting distilleries, or took them from others at a high rent; it was plain that the licensing such persons to distil, who did not apparently work sufficient to pay their servants' wages, was but furnishing them with means to distil clandestinely."

An attempt was made to put a stop to this practice in 1780 by an Act of Parliament which made every distiller give security to work his stills at least four months in the year, and to lock them up and hand the key to a Revenue Officer when they were not actually working.²

It would be impossible to judge of the quantity of spirits which was produced by unlicensed persons. As a rule, these spirits were of the most noxious kind, and were rendered more pungent by the addition of nux vomica and ratsbane.³ A writer in 1783 says:—"When a farmer has a redundancy of grain he converts it into malt himself, and either distils it himself or goes to the next public or private still with it. So that the farmer (except in a few of the level counties) is generally his own maltster, and

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219 & 20 Geo. III., c. 13.
frequently his own distiller, and, of course, he is also a retailer of whiskey. It might surprise some readers to be told that it is common to see several sacks of grain in a ditch, or any large hole which contains water, in the first stage of malting; and such is the Irish farmer’s steep for his grain, and he finishes the process of malting it in his barn.”

(g) The Glass Industry.

During the seventeenth century the manufacture of glass seems to have progressed to a certain extent in Ireland, and it certainly showed every sign of expanding into a flourishing industry in the earlier years of the eighteenth. At that time, although Irish glass could not be sent to the Colonies by reason of the Navigation Acts, or to England by reason of high duties, it was in a position to compete with other glass both at home and in foreign countries, and, with the encouragement of this extensive market, it seems to have shown signs of developing. Several glass houses were opened in Dublin, and did a considerable trade; and in 1729 a glass-house was erected in Waterford, where all sorts of flint glass were made.

The success of the Irish glass industry must have aroused the jealousy of the English manufacturers, for, in 1746, an Act was passed prohibiting the export of glass from Ireland, and also prohibiting the import of glass into Ireland from any country except Great Britain. The effects of this Act were extremely injurious to the growing industry; the Waterford glasshouse ceased to work, and was not re-opened until after the grant of free trade; nobody could be found to work the glass house in Cork in 1753, in spite of premiums offered by the Dublin Society; and a glass-house which was opened at Dungannon, rapidly came to grief. The Dublin industry must also have suffered severely, for in 1752 an advertisement states that the advertiser was the only

1 A Remedy for the Distillers of Ireland, Dublin, 1783.
2 19 & 20 Geo. II., c. 12.
manufacturer of glass in Ireland. A few small attempts were made to revive the industry from time to time, but without any success, and the imports of English glass increased steadily from year to year.¹

Perhaps the best indication of the disastrous effects of this restrictive legislation was the success which the industry obtained when it was subsequently repealed in 1779. "Had it not been," says Newenham, "for this violent and unwarrantable act, it is not unlikely that Ireland would have surpassed and undersold Britain in the glass manufacture—for in respect of the raw materials taken together, the former is as favourably circumstanced as the latter; and in respect of the principal ingredient of the crown glass manufacture much more so; and in respect of the cheapness of labour it also had the advantage."

(h) The Pottery Industry.

The pottery industry during these years never attained any importance. A traveller in the North of Ireland in 1708 wrote:—"In Belfast we saw a very great manufacture of earthenware which comes nearest to delft of any made in Ireland, and really not much short of it. 'Tis very clear and pretty and universally used in the North, and I think not so much owing to any peculiar happiness in the clay, but rather to the manner of heating and mixing it up."² The subsequent history of this industry is buried in obscurity, the only evidence of it having existed being one specimen of pottery dated "Belfast, 1724."³ Some Quakers from Staffordshire tried to introduce the earthenware manufacture into Wexford, but failed, and many Staffordshire manufactories set up in Dublin later in the century, being attracted by the presence of great quantities of pipe-clay which had been found in Clonmel. There is also evidence that potteries on a small scale were worked at Rostrevor, Limerick and Waterford.⁴

¹I am indebted for most of the information on this subject to a paper by Mr. M. S. D. Westropp, on Glass Making in Ireland, contained in the Proc. R.I.A., vol. xxix., Sec. C.
²Newenham, p. 105. ³Molyneux. Journey to the North, 1708.
⁴Benn, History of Belfast.
⁵The information on this subject is taken from a paper by Mr. M. S. D. Westropp, contained in the Proc. R.I.A., vol. xxxii., Sec. C.
The Irish provision trade may be said to date from the year 1666, when the importation of cattle, sheep, swine, bacon, beef and pork into England from Ireland was prohibited. Before that date there had been a large and growing trade in all these articles; during the three years following the Restoration an average of 60,000 head of cattle had been imported into England annually from Ireland; and the excellence of the Irish article, coupled with the low price at which it was sold, had tended to injure the English cattle-breeding industry. The price of English live stock had been brought down as a result of Irish competition, and this fall in price caused a decline in rents. Under these circumstances, the English landlords and cattle breeders petitioned Parliament that something should be done to hinder the free importation of Irish cattle, and, in answer to these petitions, an Act was passed prohibiting the importation of Irish cattle into England between 1st July and 20th December in each year. In spite of the fact that this Act caused acute distress in Ireland, the English breeders were not satisfied, and further petitions were presented to Parliament, demanding the total prohibition of the importation of Irish live stock. Another Bill was introduced, and, although it met with great opposition in the House of Lords, was passed into law. This Act provided that all great cattle, sheep, and swine, and also all beef, pork, and bacon imported into England from Ireland, except for necessary provisions, should be forfeited, the importation of either fat or lean cattle being "unnecessary, destructive of the welfare of this kingdom, and a public nuisance." This Act was extended by subsequent statutes, which also prohibited the importation of Irish mutton, lamb, butter and cheese. In 1667, Scotland followed suit and forbade the importation of Irish cattle.

3 Par. Hist., vol. iv., p. 338. 4 18 Car. II., c. 23.
5 20 Car. II., c. 1; 22 Car. II., c. 2; 22 & 23 Car. II., c. 2.
As may be imagined, the effect of this legislation was to cause acute distress in Ireland. The cattle trade with England formed by far the most important part of the Irish export trade, and the destruction of that trade practically deprived Ireland for the time being of her livelihood. Nor did England derive any noticeable benefit; the price of meat rose; wages went up in proportion to the price of provisions; and rents did not rise as had been expected.¹

Ultimately the effect of these Acts was greatly to benefit Ireland and injure England. "The prohibition," says Hely Hutchinson, "though a great, was but a temporary distress, and in its consequences greatly promoted the general welfare of this country." Previous to the prohibition, Ireland had found such a convenient and ready market in England for her young bullocks that very little attention was paid to the breeding cows for milking or of oxen for slaughter, but now all was changed. The difficulties of transporting cattle long distances by sea were too great to allow of their being exported in large quantities to foreign countries, and the Irish traders turned their attention to the production of meat and dairy produce instead.² In 1669 Sir William Temple was struck by the growth of the Irish provision trade:—"Until the transportation of cattle into England was forbidden by the late Act of Parliament, the greatest trade of ready money here was derived by the sale of young bullocks which, for four or five summer months of the year, were carried over in very great numbers. Few cows were bred up for the day more than served the consumption within, and few oxen for draught, which was all performed by rascally small horses, so as the cattle sold generally for slaughter within or exportation abroad were of two, three, or at best four years old, and those such as had never been either handled or wintered at hand-meat, but bred wholly upon the mountains in summer and upon the withered long grass of the lower grass lands in the winter. The effect hereof was very

² Murray. Commercial Relations, p. 34.
pernicious to this Kingdom in what covered all these commodities; the hides were small, thin and lank; the tallow much less in quantity and of quicker consumption. Little butter was exported abroad, and that discredited by the housewifery of the Irish in making it up; most of what was sent coming from their hands who alone kept up the trade of the dairies because the breed of their cattle was not fit for the English markets. But, above all, the trade of beef for foreign exportation was prejudiced and almost sunk. For the flesh being young and only grass-fed was thin, light, and moist, and not of a substance to endure the salt, or be preserved by it for the long voyages or a slow consumption. Besides, either the unskilfulness or carelessness or knavery of the traders added much to the undervalue and discredit of these commodities abroad, for the hides were often made up very dirty, which increased their weight, by which that commodity is sold when it comes in quantities abroad. The butter would be better on the top and bottom of the barrel than in the middle, and would be sometimes filled up or mingled with tallow—nay, sometimes with stones. The beef would be so ill-chosen or ill-cured as to stink many times before it came to Holland. After the Act in England had wholly stopped the transportation of cattle, the trade of this Kingdom was forced to find out a new channel—a great deal of land was turned to sheep, because wool gave ready money for the English markets, and by stealth for those abroad. The breeders of English cattle, in Ireland, turned much to dairying, or else by keeping their cattle to six or seven years old, and wintering them dry made them fit for the beef trade abroad; and some of the merchants fell into care and exactness in barrelling them up, and hereby the improvements in this trade were grown so sensible in the course of a few years that, in the year 1669, some merchants in Holland assured me that they had received parcels of beef out of Ireland which sold current and very near the English, and of butter which sold beyond it.””

1 Temple, *Trade of Ireland*, 1672.
Ireland found the way of salting, barrelling, and exporting her beef. So that in lieu of exporting 70,000 head of live cattle to England at 40s. a head, which cost England but £140,000, and which they manufactured afterwards, and had all the hides and tallow into the bargain, Ireland now manufactures and exports that beef to the value of £200,000 and butter worth £200,000 more; about 3,000 raw hides to England; 70,000 raw hides to France and Spain, and about £70,000 worth of tallow."

The English foreign trade suffered by this competition. Formerly, English beef, hides and tallow had been exported in very large quantities, but at the beginning of the eighteenth century they were everywhere undersold by the Irish article, which caused loss of profits owing to the low rents and low rate of wages in Ireland. The effect of the Irish competition was also felt in the British Plantations and in foreign Plantations as well. Incidentally, the increase in this trade led to an increase in the volume of Irish shipping. Of course, the diversion of the export trade from England to foreign countries also diverted the import trade. The Irish ships which carried provisions abroad did not return empty, and thus Ireland began to supply from France and Holland many of the needs which she had previously supplied from England. Before 1663, Ireland had on an average imported English manufactures and commerce to the amount of £210,000 a year, but the quantity had fallen to £20,000 in 1675. Another important injury which England suffered was the loss to some extent of the trade she had done in victualling ships. The reputation of Irish provisions was so high, and their price so low, that foreign and even English ships found it cheaper to victual at Irish than at English ports.

In course of time the provision trade grew to a position of great importance. During the eighteenth century it might be described as forming, with the linen trade, Ireland's staple industry. It was enabled to attain to this

1 Representation of the State of the Trade of Ireland, Dublin, 1750.
2 Murray, Commercial Relations, p. 35.
3 Coke, England's Improvement by Foreign Trade, 1675.
4 Murray, Commercial Relations, p. 37.
magnitude by the natural suitability of Ireland for the production of cattle, and also by the fact that it was practically the only trade which was not smothered by restrictions. No restraint was placed on the exportation of provisions either to foreign countries or to the Colonies. The Navigation Acts interfered slightly, but not seriously, with the Colonial trade. The only market closed was the English, and even this was partially opened in 1759, when, owing to the high price of provisions in England, an Act was passed allowing Irish hogs, lambs, tallow and grease to be imported duty free into Great Britain for a limited time. In 1770 raw hides and skins from Ireland were allowed to be imported into Great Britain. Under these favourable conditions the provision trade continued to flourish. It was said in 1737 that the quantity of beef, butter, tallow and hides exported from Ireland was greater than that form any other country.

The Southern ports—Cork, Waterford, and Limerick—derived great prosperity from this traffic, and it is interesting to note that a great part of the profits of the trade went to Catholic dealers and graziers. From the year 1759, when the English market was opened, the trade increased still more; in 1764 it was said that the exports of beef and butter from Cork were greater than those from any other town in the British Empire, and that the quantity of beef killed in that town between Michaelmas and Christmas was prodigious. The principal market for cattle was Ballinasloe, where the fair continued a fortnight, and the tolls were worth £600 a year.

The great success which the provision trade attained was a doubtful benefit to Ireland. It certainly caused a great extension of pasture at the expense of tillage, and this led to much emigration, and the consequent evils which have been fully considered above; also the country came to depend for its prosperity on this one trade, with the result that any temporary depression in the provision

1 32 Geo. II., c. 12—Subsequently extended periodically until 1780.  
2 10 Geo. III., c. 8.  
3 *Treatise on Tillage*, Dublin, 1737.  
4 *Bush, Hibernia Curiosa*, Dublin, 1764.
trade caused acute distress throughout the South and West of Ireland. As we shall see, it was the embargoes on the export of Irish provisions in 1778 which rendered the Irish commercial situation so intolerable as to lead to the agitation which culminated in the grant of free trade.

The following table, taken from Newenham, shows the extent of the provision trade during the period 1700-80:

**Table showing the quantities of Beef, Butter, Pork, and the number of Live Cattle exported from Ireland from the year 1700 to 1780 in periods of four years.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year ending</th>
<th>Average annual export of live cattle, No.</th>
<th>Average annual export of beef, Brls.</th>
<th>Average annual export of butter, Cwts.</th>
<th>Average annual export of pork, Brls.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dec. 25, 1704</td>
<td>494</td>
<td>70,833</td>
<td>92,219</td>
<td>13,727</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mar. 25, 1708</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>66,105</td>
<td>111,498</td>
<td>2,848</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>150</td>
<td>85,532</td>
<td>140,265</td>
<td>3,986</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>210</td>
<td>110,288</td>
<td>186,978</td>
<td>8,202</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>231</td>
<td>117,966</td>
<td>186,449</td>
<td>7,794</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>376</td>
<td>133,597</td>
<td>147,452</td>
<td>8,575</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>307</td>
<td>135,064</td>
<td>175,749</td>
<td>10,545</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>110</td>
<td>145,205</td>
<td>153,727</td>
<td>12,206</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>47</td>
<td>148,962</td>
<td>147,121</td>
<td>11,530</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>14</td>
<td>150,495</td>
<td>161,212</td>
<td>11,640</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>128</td>
<td>127,990</td>
<td>154,310</td>
<td>11,820</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>23</td>
<td>123,846</td>
<td>201,666</td>
<td>16,092</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
<td>176,325</td>
<td>237,345</td>
<td>20,063</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>29</td>
<td>163,525</td>
<td>206,307</td>
<td>34,910</td>
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<td></td>
<td>1,029</td>
<td>161,235</td>
<td>207,246</td>
<td>37,138</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2,344</td>
<td>195,869</td>
<td>237,564</td>
<td>49,101</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1,298</td>
<td>193,434</td>
<td>283,681</td>
<td>43,138</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1,012</td>
<td>203,869</td>
<td>276,281</td>
<td>42,804</td>
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<td>4,176</td>
<td>199,705</td>
<td>269,786</td>
<td>56,630</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4,178</td>
<td>171,486</td>
<td>248,584</td>
<td>79,290</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1Newenham. Appendix ix.
CHAPTER XX.

THE REMOVAL OF THE RESTRAINTS.

We have seen that the result of the commercial policy of the English Parliament was that the only industries which were allowed to flourish in Ireland were the linen manufacture and provision trade. It is obvious that when a country is reduced to depending upon one or two manufactures, any depression which affects those, or one of them, must have a disastrous effect on the country generally. As we have seen, the condition of Ireland all through the century was going from bad to worse, but there is no reason to suppose that things could not have kept going as they were for several years longer if the staple manufactures of the country had not simultaneously encountered a period of distress. In the decade 1770-80, however, both the provision and the linen trades met with serious reverses, which plunged the country into a state of acute commercial depression, and had the most disastrous effects both on the private wealth and the public revenues of Ireland.

The event which, to a large extent, paralysed the linen trade was the strained relations between England and America, which first took the shape of non-importation agreements, and culminated in the American War. The closing of the American market for Irish linens deprived Ireland of her best customers, and the effect of this was felt in all branches of the linen trade. Never before had there been such quantities of linen lying unsold in the Linen Hall, although the price
was much reduced; in 1774 more than one-third of the weavers through the whole kingdom were unemployed; in County Longford, where, twenty years before two thousand looms were at work, there were in that year less than twenty; and in the years 1771-4 ten thousand Irish weavers had emigrated to America and Great Britain, and others had turned day labourers and were sunk in the deepest distress. "The decline of the linen manufacture of Ireland," says an Englishman, writing in 1774, "is notorious; it has been for some time most fatally sensible to individuals, but the calamity is now becoming general, and threatens in some measure the ruin of the country. Thousands have removed from the Kingdom . . . . the emigration is alarming." The same writer attributes the depression largely to the collapse of credit caused by the failure of some large Dutch and English banks, and also to the fact that foreign linens were superseding Irish in the English market. It was also said that Ireland was suffering from a glut caused by over-production.

On top of this trouble in the linen trade came a series of reverses in the provision trade. An Order in Council of January 21st, 1776, enacted that "No provisions of any kind can be exported from any Irish port, except beef, pork, butter and bacon to Great Britain, and from thence to any part of the British Dominions, with the exception of the revolted Colonies, and also to any ships or vessels in the King's service." In the following October it was further ordered that provision ships sailing to Great Britain must be under convoy. In spite of the great distress which these embargoes caused in the country, they were more severely enforced than ever in the following year, and by an Order in Council, dated May 29th, 1778, it was enacted that "No provisions should be exported from Ireland, even when laden on British ships and going to Great Britain, until further orders," and, at the same time, a general embargo was placed on all ships in Irish ports.

2 Thoughts on Present State of Linen Trade, London, 1774.
It is quite obvious that these restrictions must have caused acute distress in the country. The linen trade had been to some extent paralysed by the American War, and it is no exaggeration to say that the country was dependent for its commerce on its provision trade, which was now so fatally injured. "The farmer, the grazier, the landlord, all experienced a portion of the national misfortune; the holders of feeding or pasture grounds could no longer sell their cattle; the great market at Cork was glutted and overstocked. Tenants could not pay their rents, the graziers were no longer able to make good their engagements, and the speculative merchant was undone." Petitions were sent to Parliament from all parts of the country protesting against the embargoes, which, in view of the storm of opposition they had aroused, were gradually relaxed. On the 19th June, 1779, provisions were allowed to be exported in ships sailing under convoy to the British Dominions and fleet, but not to Great Britain; and the general embargo was taken off all vessels coasting from port to port in Ireland, and on those employed in the linen trade with Great Britain. In August, ships laden with spun worsted or yarn were allowed to sail from Cork to Great Britain, and a little later butter was permitted to be exported to Great Britain. Towards the end of the year the general embargo on all ships in Irish ports was taken off, but the general exportation of provisions for foreign countries was still prohibited, and even to Great Britain, with the exception of butter.

The following account of the effects of the embargoes was sent by Pery to Sir R. Heron, and is printed in the *Life of Grattan*:

"In consequence of the first embargo, now near two years subsisting, the merchants of Ireland, in particular those of Dublin and Limerick, have suffered considerably; and, on the strictest inquiry, it is found that numbers of them

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1 View of Present State of Ireland, London, 1780.
2 Plowden, vol. i., p. 447.
3 Vol. i., p. 336.
are ruined in their circumstances by this severe embargo of so long a continuance. Conformable to the proclamation, they sent their provisions to the ports of Great Britain, which occasioned such quantities at the English markets that they became invendible at any price, notwithstanding public auctions were almost daily advertised.

"These merchants complain that they have quantities of these provisions still remaining in London, some one year, and some near two years; that they can in London prove by certificates from most of the principal contractors for Government, and from the merchants dealing from London to our islands, that these provisions are now so much perished by being so long in London that they are totally unfit for either Government or private consumption; that they have wrote to their agents, rather than have their properties thrown into the Thames, to solicit liberty to send those damaged provisions to some neutral port, such as Holland, or the Dutch West Indies, where they may be of some value, but all applications have been refused. One merchant in Limerick is ready to make affidavit that he has in London, of beef and pork, now near two years, what cost him about £6,000—all his own property—now in a perishing state, and, by the long time on hand, is neither fit for Government or any of our islands.

"The port of Cork has not these complaints, as all the victuallers and convoys calling there give them more frequent opportunities to vend their provisions.

"The Order of the 13th August, 1778, precluding butter, except to Great Britain only, must be productive of great losses to the farmers of the southern parts of Ireland, where they have great quantities of coarse butter, only suitable to the demand from Germany, Holland, and Portugal, and totally unfit for the English markets. This kind of butter must, therefore, remain on the farmer's hands, and the Bremen and Holland ships that come for it return home in their ballast, with the loss of their freight.

"The Order of the 29th May, still in force, precluding any ships laden with beef or pork to sail, though bound
for Great Britain, must be productive of the greatest loss to this kingdom. For under such a long and continued restriction, now at the eve of our slaughtering season, what merchant will venture to deal with the graziers for their great quantity of cattle, which the graziers must actually kill in October and November, and lie under the necessity to sell at the mercy of a very few contractors in the port of Cork? They, also, have great quantities, ordinary and middling cow beef, quite unfit for his Majesty’s islands, army, fleet or garrisons. The consequence attending these continual restrictions must be fatal to this country, and cause an entire scarcity of money and credit. A Scotch sloop really bound for Port Glasgow, with a quantity of fifty-four barrels butter (of last year), fifty-one barrels common cargo port, and forty-five barrels very ordinary cow beef, remains at heavy charges at Limerick, by means of embargo, since the 27th June last, now above two months; she is called the Jenny of Glasgow; John Urie, Master.

"In consequence of the Order of the 29th May, 1778, any provision really intended for any port of Great Britain cannot have permission but by special order from Council; the merchant in Ireland, thus applying, must be almost a month in suspense before he can have the determination of his petition, and in that uncertain state will not hire any vessel to freight, and if he should succeed in a licence, possibly may not get a ship to hire at the time such licence came to his hands; every such licence is attended with an expense of five to six guineas, though but a vessel of forty tons."

The depression caused by this distress in the linen and provision trades was not confined to these trades alone; it was acutely felt in the soap, tallow, paper, silk, and cotton trades as well, and the years 1771-8 also witnessed a great decline in the silk industry. In the year 1778 the manufacturers of

1 And see Charlemont MSS., I., 49.
2 Remarks on Decay of Linen Manufacture in Ireland, Dublin, 1774.
3 I.C.J., XI., Appendix, 153.
Dublin exhibited a spectacle of unparalleled misery. Men, exhausted with hunger, were seen everywhere fainting in the streets. "The present state of Ireland," wrote Hely Hutchinson, "teems with every circumstance of national poverty. Whatever the land produces is greatly reduced in its value; wool is fallen one-half of its usual price, and wheat one-third, black cattle of all kinds in the same proportion, and hides in a much greater. Buyers are not had without difficulty at those low rates, and from the principal fairs men commonly return with the commodities they brought there; rents are everywhere reduced; the farmers are all distressed, and many of them have failed; where leases expire tenants are not easily found; the landlord is often obliged to take his lands into his own hands for want of bidders, and finds his estate fallen one-fourth in value. The merchant justly complains that all business is at a stand, that he cannot discount his bills, and that neither money nor paper circulates. In this and the last year above twenty thousand manufacturers in Dublin were reduced to beggary for want of employment. . . . Public and private credit are annihilated."

The following account of the distress caused by the embargoes is contained in an anonymous state paper published in the Fortescue correspondence:—"It is not easy to conceive the ruin and misery which was brought upon Ireland by an act of power which suspended at once and for so long a period one great branch of Irish trade which was almost the sole dependence of the Southern and Western provinces. But the evil was felt more or less in every part of the island, and by every description of men. I sincerely believe that no people ever experienced a more dreadful and general distress."

Commercial distress of this intensity was bound to produce financial consequences, and so, we find, it did. The expenses of the Irish Government had been steadily

2 Commercial Restraints, p. 2.
3 Fortescue Corr., Ill., 541.
increasing since 1770 owing to the augmentation of the army, and the growing pension list, while, at the same time, owing to the conditions of the country, money could not be raised. £20,000 had to be borrowed from the principal Dublin Banks, but was immediately spent, and as a last resource the Lord Lieutenant had to beseech the British Ministry for a loan of £50,000 on the credit of the Tontine. No reply was received to this communication for some time, and in the meantime the Dublin bankers had announced that the condition of the country was such that they could not raise another £20,000 to lend to the Government. In June, however, the Bank of England advanced 50,000 guineas to the Irish Government on the security of Debentures for Government loan in Ireland, and, at the same time, the rate of interest on the Irish Tontine was raised from 6½ to 7½ per cent.¹

It is no wonder that, with things in such a state, Irish politicians began to demand some relief, and the obvious relief to look for was free trade. As usual, the political demand was preceded by what we should now call a journalistic agitation; for some years pamphleteers on both sides of the Channel had advocated free trade as a measure which would be beneficial both to England and to Ireland, and, moreover, a few small steps had been taken in this direction by the British Parliament. The Newfoundland and other fisheries were thrown open to Irishmen; the prohibition of the export of Irish wool was relaxed so as to enable the Irish to clothe their own troops abroad; the importation of Irish rape seed into Great Britain was permitted; and a small bounty was granted by Great Britain on the importation of flax into Ireland.²

The Parliamentary campaign was opened in the Irish Parliament by Grattan in February, 1778, on which occasion he drew attention to the financial condition of the country and the commercial depression, and moved that an address be presented to the King on the state of the

¹ Murray, Commercial Relations, pp. 193-4 Charlemont MSS., vol. i., p. 50
² Murray, Commercial Relations, p. 191.
nation. The motion, however, was lost, as the House thought the matter should be proceeded with more gradually. In England the campaign was opened on April 2, when Lord Nugent moved in the House of Commons that "the House should resolve itself into a Committee to take into consideration the several Acts of Parliament relating to the trade and commerce of Ireland." He observed that the conduct of Great Britain towards the sister kingdom had been no less impolitic than unjust, and that the present state of affairs called particularly on the country to enter into a readjustment of the Irish trade laws. Edmund Burke supported the motion, and Mr. Baker contended that the restrictions on the trade with Ireland defeated themselves, and, instead of promoting the staple manufactories of England, had the direct contrary effect.¹ The motion was agreed to without opposition, and on the 8th April the findings of the Committee were presented to the House. After some debate the House resolved on the next day to agree to the following Resolutions,² which it ordered to be put into the form of a Bill:—

I. Resolved, that it is the opinion of this Committee that all goods, wares and merchandise being the product or manufacture of the Kingdom of Ireland, woollen and woollen manufactories only excepted, all commodities of the growth, product or manufacture of Great Britain legally imported into Ireland, or foreign certificate goods legally imported from Great Britain into Ireland, be permitted to be exported directly from the said kingdom in British ships navigated according to law, to be imported into any of the British Plantations, and to any of the settlements belonging to Great Britain on the Coast of Africa.

II. Resolved, that it is the opinion of this Committee that all goods, wares, merchandise, being the product of any of the British Plantations or of any Settlement belonging to Great Britain on the Coast of Africa, be permitted to be carried from thence into the said Kingdom of Ireland, tobacco only excepted.

III. Resolved, that it is the opinion of this Committee that the provisions of 19 Geo. II., chap. 12, which prohibit the exportation of glass from Ireland manufactured in that Kingdom be repealed with respect to such glass exported directly from Ireland to any place except to Great Britain.

IV. Resolved, that it is the opinion of this Committee that the duties now payable on the importation of cotton yarn being the manufacture of Ireland into Great Britain do cease and be no longer paid.

V. That it is the opinion of this Committee that all sail-cloth and cordage of the manufacture of Ireland be permitted to be imported from Ireland into Great Britain free of duty.

The passing of these resolutions was a signal for an unparalleled outburst of opposition all over Great Britain. The mere recital of the petitions presented to Parliament fills fifteen pages of the Commons Journals. Petitions were received from all parts of England and Scotland, from Dorsetshire, Somersetshire, Aberbrothock, Lancaster, Liverpool, Warrington, Preston, Wigan, Chester, Stockport, Glasgow, Bristol, Walsall, and Worcester. All trades were represented; the majority of the petitions were from those interested in the sail-cloth manufacture, who predicted that the resolutions, if passed into law, would have the effect of completely ruining their trade; many were from the cotton traders who saw nothing but desolation as the outcome of the fourth Resolution; the glass manufacturers, the iron masters, the brass makers, glove makers, tallow chandlers and soap boilers—all trades agreed that anything in the nature of free trade for Ireland would spell ruin for English industry.

Opposition from so many and such powerful organisations was not to be ignored, and Lord North did not dare to proceed with the original resolutions, but, by way of compromise, presented to Parliament two attenuated measures which were rapidly passed into law. By these Acts, permission was given to Ireland to export several of the "enumerated" articles direct to the plantations, but woollens, cottons, glass, hops, hats, coal and gunpowder were excepted absolutely, and iron and iron wares were excepted until the Irish Parliament should have imposed certain prescribed duties on their exportation. Ireland was forbidden to import any goods direct from the Plantations, but Irish cotton spun
yarn was allowed to be imported into Great Britain duty free, and a small encouragement was given to the cultivation of tobacco and hemp in Ireland. Vessels built in Ireland were henceforth to be regarded as British built, and to receive the bounties given in the Newfoundland and South Sea Fisheries. It was provided, however, that all manufactures allowed to be exported from Ireland should be liable to the same duties and drawbacks as those placed upon similar articles of British make on their exportation from Great Britain.¹

These measures were obviously insufficient to meet the Irish case, or to relieve the distress in that country. The concession relating to the fisheries was of no value, as it was provided that no bounty would be given to any ship which did not belong to a person residing in that part of the Empire from which the ship was fitted or cleared out. This meant, in fact, that no Irishman would receive the bounty, as all the Irish trade at the time was carried on in British built ships.² The Irish Commons Journals are filled with petitions from all over Ireland; from the woollen drapers of the City of Dublin; the master clothiers of the same City; the principal merchants who sold goods to the Irish woollen warehouse and the manufacturers of silk, wool, linen, and cotton. One of the petitions sets out that the working people and their families to the number of many thousands were reduced to the most extreme poverty, and that the condition of the unemployed poor was deplorable.³ But more convincing arguments than petitions or resolutions were now brought forward—the non-importation agreements and the Volunteers.

Non-importation Agreements had been a favourite device in Ireland throughout the century. In the years 1703, 1705, and 1707, the Irish House of Commons resolved that it would greatly benefit the Kingdom if the people used none other than the manufactures of their country, and had agreed to set an example themselves in

this way. In 1720, Swift had recommended the adoption of such an agreement in his famous pamphlet, *A Proposal for the Universal Use of Irish Manufacture in Clothes and Furniture of Houses, etc.*, utterly rejecting and renouncing everything wearable that comes from England, wherein he remarked: "I heard the late Archbishop of Tuam mention a pleasant observation of somebody's—that Ireland would never be happy till a law were made for burning everything that came from England, except their people and their coals. Nor am I even yet for lessening the number of those exceptions." Throughout the century the same suggestion is frequently found in contemporary pamphlets: "It is not sufficient for anyone to say that such and such a part of my dress is Irish; the whole man, his family, his house, and his equipage must confess themselves patriots."

"We resolve, as fathers and mothers of families, to use no sort of clothes and furniture which are not manufactured in Ireland."

But the agreements to boycott English manufactures were now taken up systematically for the first time. The Grand Juries all over the country passed resolutions in favour of non-importation leagues; such resolutions were signed by Grattan, Flood, Charlemont, Newenham, and other equally influential men. On April 26th a large meeting was held in Dublin, and it was unanimously resolved to use nothing but Irish goods, and to boycott any tradesman who was known to import any of his wares from England. A "black list" of such traders was published daily in the newspapers. The Volunteers would have no uniforms but those made in Ireland; and it was noticed that the Irish ladies did more even than the Volunteers to render the agreement a success by their steady boycott of English or foreign clothes. These agreements must have been felt very

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1 *Irish Commons Journal*, vol. iii., p. 195.
3 *Madden, Reflections and Resolutions for the Gentry of Ireland*, Dublin, 1738; see *Mitchell, History of Ireland*, c. xix.
severely by the English manufacturers; the non-importation agreements of 1784 were mild in comparison with these, as they did not extend beyond Dublin, but they nevertheless caused such distress in certain English trades as to call for Parliamentary action; and it may be imagined how severely these resolutions were felt when we consider that they were sedulously observed by all classes in all parts of the country.

England understood this argument; the other argument which she understood was the threat of the Volunteers, who threatened that, if necessary, the demand for free trade would be supported by armed force.

On February 15, 1779, the matter again came before the British Parliament. On that date Lord Newhaven moved that the House should resolve itself into a Committee to consider the best means of granting Ireland an export trade. He enlarged upon the distress of the country, and said that the Export Bill granted in the last session would be nugatory if Parliament did not also grant an import trade. On this occasion the motion was opposed by Sir Thomas Egerton, who said that the distresses of Britain were equal to those of Ireland, that it was no time to create disturbances by giving away the trade of the country, and that the proposals would arouse a clamour of a very alarming kind. Sir George Young thought that the greater part of Ireland's misfortunes came, not from the restrictions on trade, but from the errors of her internal policy. Lord North was of opinion that his measures of the previous year were sufficient, and should be given time to produce their good effects. Edmund Burke supported the motion; he said that it was arguments such as those used by the opponents of the motion which had lost America to Britain for ever, and would, in all probability, some day prove the destruction of the British Empire. Nothing came of this debate, and the subject was again raised on May 11th in the House of Lords, when Lord Rockingham proposed that

1 Lords Committee on Trade, 1785.
the House should present an address to the King requesting that he would direct his Ministers to prepare and lay before Parliament such particulars relative to the trade and manufactures of Ireland as might enable Parliament to take action. The motion was carried and the Address presented, and the King answered that he would give directions accordingly. Nothing, however, was done, and on the 2nd June Lord Shelbourne proposed that the Lords should present a second Address to the King requesting that His Majesty should order to be lodged before the House an account of such measures as had been taken in consequence of the preceding address. On the same day, the Earl of Upper Ossory moved a vote of censure in the Commons on the Ministers for neglecting to take action, but this motion was rejected.

Events now moved rapidly in Ireland. On October 12th the Irish Parliament met. The Address from the Throne was vague and unsatisfactory, and Grattan immediately moved an amendment demanding Free Trade, and a further amendment was moved "That it was not by temporary expedients but by free trade alone that this Nation is now to be saved from impending ruin." The Address was presented to the Lord Lieutenant, but the answer was again vague and unsatisfactory. On November 4 a great demonstration was held in College Green, when the Volunteers hung notices on their cannon with the inscription, "Free Trade or a speedy Revolution." "A free trade or — — ." Further disturbances amongst the working classes also took place in Dublin, and the excitement was so great that some sort of action was imperative. On November 24th Grattan moved in the Commons, "That it would be inexpedient to grant new taxes," and this motion was carried.

The battle was now won. On December 6 the Opposition in the British House of Commons proposed a vote of censure on the Government in the following

terms:—"That it is highly criminal in His Majesty's Ministers to have neglected to take effectual measures for the relief of the Kingdom of Ireland, and to have suffered the discontents of that kingdom to rise to such a height as evidently to endanger a dissolution of the constitutional connected between the two Kingdoms." A few days later Lord North introduced into Parliament his Resolutions granting a large measure of free trade, and these Resolutions were all passed into law before the end of January. The relevant sections of these Acts are here set out in full:—

20 Geo. III., c. 6.

From and after the passing of this Act, so much of an Act of Parliament made in the tenth and eleventh years of the reign of King William the Third (intituled, An Act to prevent the exportation of wool out of the Kingdoms of Ireland and England into foreign parts; and for the encouragement of the woollen manufactures in the Kingdom of England); and so much of any other Act or Acts of Parliament made in Great Britain which prohibit or in any manner restrain the exportation of Cloth, Serge, Bays, Kerseys, Says, Frizes, Druggets, Cloth-Serges, Shalloons, or any other Drapery Stuffos, or woollen manufactures whatsoever, made up or mixed with wool or wool flocks from the Kingdom of Ireland into foreign parts, shall be, and the same are hereby repealed and made void.

And it is hereby further enacted by the Authority aforesaid, That, from and after the passing of this Act, so much of an Act, made in the Nineteenth Year of the Reign of his late Majesty King George the Second (Intituled, "An Act for granting to His Majesty several Rates and Duties upon glass and upon spirituous Liquors; and for raising a certain sum of money by annuities and a Lottery to be charged on the said Rates and Duties; and for obviating some Doubts about making out Orders at the Exchequer for the moneys advanced upon the Credit of the Salt Duties granted and continued to His Majesty by an Act of the last session of Parliament") as relates to the exportation of glass, glass bottles or glass of any kind or denomination whatsoever from or out of the kingdom of Ireland, shall be, and the same is hereby repealed and made void.

20 Geo. III., c. 10.

... Be it enacted by the King's Most excellent Majesty by and with the advice and consent of the Lords Spiritual and Temporal and Commons, in this present Parliament assembled, and by the authority of the same, that any goods, wares, or merchandise, of the growth, produce, or manufacture of the British Colonies or Plantations in America or the West Indies, or of any Settlement belonging to Great Britain on the Coast of Africa and which by any Act or Acts of Parliament are required to be imported

from such Colonies, Plantations, or Settlements into Great Britain; and also any other goods, which having been in any way legally imported into the said Colonies, Plantations, or Settlements, may now or hereafter be legally exported from thence for Great Britain, shall and may be laden in and exported from such Colonies, Plantations, or Settlements respectively and in like manner imported directly from thence into the Kingdom of Ireland; and that any goods or commodities of the growth, production, or manufacture of Great Britain, legally exported from thence into Ireland, or of the growth, production, or manufacture of any other part of Europe; and any goods or commodities of the growth, product, or manufacture, of the East Indies or other places beyond the Cape of Good Hope, which are now required by any Act of Parliament to be shipped or laden in Great Britain, to be carried directly from thence to any British Colony or Plantation in Africa or America; as also any other goods, wares, or merchandise, which now or hereafter may be legally shipped or laden in Great Britain, to be carried directly from thence, and imported into any Colony or Plantation in America or the West Indies, or into any British Settlement on the Coast of Africa; shall and may be shipped and laden at any Port or Place in the Kingdom of Ireland and exported directly from thence and in like manner imported into any British Colony or Plantation in America or the West Indies or into any British settlement on the Coast of Africa; anything in the said hereinbefore recited Acts, or either of them, or any other Act or Acts of Parliament made in Great Britain, or any usage or custom, to the contrary notwithstanding: subject nevertheless to the conditions hereinafter expressed.

Provided always, and it is hereby further enacted by the authority aforesaid, that the importation and exportation allowed by this Act, shall commence from and as soon, and shall have continuance so long, and in such respective cases only, as the goods, or any of them, which are hereby allowed to be imported from the said Colonies, Plantations, or Settlements into Ireland, or to be exported from Ireland into the said Colonies, Plantations, or Settlements, shall be liable, by some Act or Acts of Parliament to be made in the Kingdom of Ireland, to equal Duties and drawbacks and shall be made subject to the same securities, regulations, and restrictions, in all other respects, as the like goods now are, or hereinafter may be, liable and subject to upon being imported from the said Colonies, Plantations, or Settlements, into Great Britain, or exported from thence to such Colonies, Plantations, or Settlements respectively; in the consideration of which equal Duties and drawbacks, due attention may be given to and allowance made for, any Duty or importation, or any part of the same, which shall be retained in Great Britain, or not drawn back, or not compensated by Bounty in Great Britain, upon the export of any such goods, wares, or merchandise, from thence to Ireland, as also for any Duty paid on importation of such goods, wares, or merchandise into Ireland, so as the said goods, wares, or merchandise respectively be not exported from Ireland with less incumbrance, and Duties or importations than now do, or hereafter shall, remain upon the like goods when legally exported from Great Britain.

And it is hereby further enacted by the authority aforesaid, that during the continuance of this Act, so much of the hereinbefore recited Act, made in the twenty-second and twenty-third
years of the Reign of King Charles II., as directs or requires the
word Ireland to be left out of any Bond taken for any ship or
vessel that shall load any of the enumerated commodities in any
British Plantation in America, Asia, or Africa, shall be and the
same is hereby repealed and made void; anything in the said
recited Act or any other Act or Acts of Parliament to the contrary
notwithstanding.

And it is further enacted by the authority aforesaid, that so
much of the Act of the fourth year of His present Majesty's Reign,
as is hereinbefore recited, shall not extend or be construed to
extend, to subject to seizure and forfeiture, any goods, wares, or
merchandise, which by this Act, or by any other Act or Acts of
Parliament may now or hereafter, be legally imported from Ireland
into any of the British Colonies or Plantations in America, or any
British Settlement on the Coast of Africa; Provided the Master,
or other person taking the charge of the ship or vessel carrying
such goods, shall produce a Tocquet or Tocquets, clearance or
clearances, from the proper officer, or officers, of His Majesty's
Customs, certifying that the said goods were laden on board the
said ship or vessel in some Port of Great Britain, or in some Port
of Ireland, respectively.

Provided also, and it is hereby further enacted by the
authority aforesaid, that if it shall so happen that any additional
Duty shall be imposed, or any alterations shall be made in the
drawbacks or otherwise, upon any goods as aforesaid imported into,
or exported from Great Britain, by any Act of Parliament that may
hereafter be made in this Kingdom at any time that the Parliament
of Ireland shall not be sitting; that then and in such case the
liberty of importation and exportation granted by this Act, shall
have continuance, and remain in full force, with respect to such
goods, until the end of four calendar months after the meeting of
the then next Session of Parliament in Ireland; and if the Parlia-
ment of Ireland shall be sitting at the time that any such additional
Duty shall be imposed, or any such alteration shall be made in
Great Britain, then, and in such case, the liberty of importation
and exportation granted by this Act shall have continuance, and
remain in full force, upon such goods as aforesaid, until the end
of four calendar months from the time that such additional Duty
shall be laid, or such alteration made, in case the Parliament of
Ireland shall so long continue to sit without Prorogation or
Dissolution, and in case it shall within that time be prorogued or
dissolved, then the liberty of importation and exportation afores-
said shall have continuance, and remain in full force, until the
end of four calendar months next after the meeting of the then
next Session of Parliament in Ireland.

Provided always, and be it declared and enacted by the
authority aforesaid, that nothing hereinbefore contained shall
extend to, or be construed to extend to, the imposing any condition
or restriction upon or in respect of any goods, wares, or mer-
chandise, which by an Act passed in the Eighteenth year of His
present Majesty's Reign, Intituled an Act to promote the export-
tation of certain goods directly from Ireland into any British
Plantation in America or any British Settlement on the Coast of
Africa; and for further encouraging the Fisheries and Navigation
of Ireland; or which by any other Act or Acts of Parliament may
now be legally exported from Ireland to any of the British Colonies
or Plantations in America and the West Indies, or to the British
Settlements on the Coast of Africa, or which may now be legally imported into Ireland from any of the Colonies, Plantations, or Settlements aforesaid; anything hereinbefore contained to the contrary notwithstanding.

Provided also, and it is hereby further enacted by the authority aforesaid, that this Act shall not extend or be construed to extend, to allow any person or persons to trade from, or in, any Colony or Plantation in America, during such time and in such manner, as the trade or intercourse of Great Britain with such Colony or Plantation is or shall be prohibited or restrained by any Act or Acts of Parliament made, or hereafter to be made, in this Kingdom; but whenever trade and intercourse shall be permitted between Great Britain to such Colony or Colonies, the same trade or intercourse shall, in like manner, be permitted and allowed between Ireland and the said Colony or Colonies.

20 Geo. III., c. 18.

WHEREAS it is expedient to repeal the several Acts of Parliament hereinafter mentioned, so far as the same restrain the trade and commerce of Ireland, May it therefore please Your Majesty that it may be enacted; and be it enacted by the King's Most excellent Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and Commons, in this present Parliament assembled, and by the authority of the same, That from and after the passing of this Act, so much of an Act of Parliament made in the Nineteenth Year of the Reign of King Henry VII. (Intituled, Coin), and so much of any other Act or Acts of Parliament, made in Great Britain, which prohibit the exporting, carrying, or conveying of coin of gold or silver out of this realm into Ireland, shall be, and the same is and are hereby repealed and made void.

And it is hereby further enacted by the authority aforesaid, That, from and after the passing of this Act, so much of an Act of Parliament made in the ninth year of the Reign of Queen Anne (Intituled, an Act for laying a Duty upon Hops), and so much of any other Act or Acts of Parliament, made in Great Britain, which prohibit the importation of Foreign Hops into the Kingdom of Ireland; and for taking off the drawbacks upon hops exported for Ireland; which enact, that no part of the Duties shall be repealed or drawn back for any Hops (whether the same be of Foreign or British growth) which shall be exported or shipped for exportation from Great Britain for Ireland, shall be, and the same is and are hereby repealed and made void.

And Whereas, by an Act of Parliament, made in the twenty-first year of the Reign of His late Majesty King George the Second (Intituled, an Act for enlarging and regulating the trade into the Levant Seas), it is, amongst other things, enacted, that every subject of Great Britain, desiring admission into the Company of Merchants of England trading into the Levant Seas, commonly called, or, known by the name of, The Turkey Company, shall, upon request for that purpose made in the manner by the said Act directed, be admitted into the said Company; and that the goods permitted to be exported or imported by persons made free of the said Company, shall be exported from and imported into Great Britain only; and it is hereby further enacted by the authority aforesaid, that such goods as may lawfully be exported from or imported into Great Britain, in British ships, by any person or persons
free of the said Company, by virtue of the said recited Act, or any
other Act, made in this Kingdom, shall and may, in like manner,
be exported from, or imported into, any Port or Place in the King-
dom of Ireland, by any person admitted or to be admitted into, and
made free of the said Company, in British or Irish ships or vessels
to be legally navigated, on paying such amounts or sums of money
as shall be assessed and charged on all goods, wares, or merchan-
dise, to be exported and imported as aforesaid, or on any ships
laden with the same, for defraying the necessary expenses of the
said Company; anything in the said recited Act to the contrary
notwithstanding.

Provided always and it is hereby further enacted by the
authority aforesaid that the Oath required by the said recited Act
to be taken by persons upon their admission to their freedoms in
the said Company, shall and may be taken before, and administered
by, two of His Majesty's Justices of the Peace in and for the
Kingdom of Ireland.

Burke described what had happened as follows:—
"The British Parliament in a former session, frightened
into a limited concession by the menaces of Ireland, fret
frightened out of it by the menaces of England, was
again frightened back again, and made a universal sur-render of all that had been thought the peculiar reserved
incommunicable rights of England. We were taught
wisdom by humiliation. No town in England presumed
to have a prejudice, or dared to mutter an objection." It
is certainly true that the combined action of the Volun-
teers and the non-importation agreements, coming as they
did when England was harassed by the American War,
were causes which brought about this remedial legisla-
tion. Thus, measures which might have been dictated
by justice, or even by self-interest, were not conceded
until they were wrested by the combined force of
economic boycott and of military menace.5

At first the trade concessions created universal satis-
faction in Ireland, and the Irish Parliament showed its
gratitude by promptly passing a Bill granting drawbacks
on goods imported from foreign markets when re-exported
to British Colonies in America, or the West Indies, or
to the British Settlements on the Coast of Africa, and
also placing the Irish trade with America and the

1 Speech of Edmund Burke at the Bristol Guildhall, Dublin, 1780.
2 Adam Smith was a strong supporter of the grant of free trade to Ireland; see a
letter which he wrote to H. Dundas in the English Historical Review, vol. i., p. 399.
West Indies on the same footing as the British trade with those markets. New taxes were also granted by the Irish Parliament as a token of gratitude. It seems to have been thought that the Millenium had come, and that, Free Trade having been obtained, industry and prosperity would follow as a matter of course. Large numbers of English operatives came to Ireland in the hope of obtaining speedy and good employment, but their hopes were not realised. The fact was that Ireland was still at a great disadvantage compared with England in the Colonial trade. The many years of industrial depression which she had passed through had left her short of capital wherewith speedily to increase her trade; she suffered, moreover, from not possessing her own fleet of merchant ships; but, above all, the Colonial trade was, to a great extent, useless, because Ireland was not allowed to export Plantation produce to Great Britain; nor was she allowed to trade direct with the territories included in the East India Company's Charter, or with the territories between the Cape of Good Hope and the Straits of Magellan.

The free trade concessions had, moreover, been wrested from England in a moment of weakness, and might be repealed at any time. It was widely recognised that what England had given England might take away: "The more valuable our free trade promises to be, the more earnestly should we endeavour to secure it. It was given merely on the grounds of expediency; the language of Lord North was clear and explicit to that effect, . . . . . and it might be taken away if thought expedient by England." Thoughtful Irishmen, therefore, became more and more of the opinion that free trade, unless accompanied by legislative independence, was a gift of doubtful benefit. Colour was lent to this fear by a couple of incidents which happened in the year 1780. In February of that year it was suggested that an embargo should be

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1 20 Geo. III., chap. 11.
2 Thoughts on the Establishment of New Manufactures, Dublin, 1783.
3 The Strong Box Opened, Dublin, 1780.
4 Essay on Necessity for Protecting Duties, Dublin, 1783.
5 Murray, Commercial Relations, p. 230.
6 Moderation Unmasked, Dublin, 1780.
placed on the export of all Irish provisions from Cork. The Lord Lieutenant prevented such a measure by pointing out that it would create "much political discontent, if not dangerous violence." A second incident which created alarm was the rejection by the English Privy Council of a protective duty which the Irish Parliament proposed to place on refined sugar coming into Ireland. It was felt by Irish traders that this duty was essential for the existence, not to speak of the prosperity, of the Irish sugar refiners, and this interference of the English Parliament created a storm of ill-feeling throughout the country. On the 5th of September, 1780, a representative meeting of citizens passed a non-importation agreement in Dublin.

It was also felt that England was not doing her best to aid Ireland's interest in the dispute which then existed with Portugal on the subject of the admission of Irish wool. A large consignment of Irish wool had been sent to Lisbon after the free trade concession, but the Portuguese refused to admit it, and pleaded as their reason a treaty which they had concluded with England in 1703 to take no woollens but British. The Irish thought that British should include Irish, but, as the Portuguese pointed out with a good deal of reason, at the date of the treaty Irish woollens were not allowed to be exported at all, and, therefore, could not be within the meaning of the treaty. At the same time, they tried to close the market against Irish linens. The closing of this market robbed Ireland of its best foreign customer, as the French and Spanish markets were closed on account of the war.

Ireland's fears were increased by another incident which had just taken place in the British Parliament. Lord Abingdon, an eccentric Member, had brought in a proposal to assert the sole and exclusive right of Great Britain to regulate her external commerce, and of all Kingdoms under her Sovereignty, including Ireland; and, although this proposal got no encouragement in Parliament, it had the effect of exciting much discontent in

Ireland. It was felt that, as long as England continued to legislate for Ireland, questions similar to these might be expected to arise, greatly to the detriment of Irish commerce.

The feeling in the country on this question was very strong. Irish juries refused to convict offenders against any British Penal Statute which the juries considered did not legally apply to Ireland. Moreover, the Volunteers again became active. The course of events for the next few months belongs to political, and not to economic history; suffice it to say that in May of 1782 the Act of 6 George I., which asserted the right of the English Parliament to legislate for Ireland, was repealed. The Irish, however, were not yet satisfied; it was thought that the simple repeal of that Act did not completely mend matters, and that a further Act should be passed whereby the English Parliament would categorically renounce its right to legislate for Ireland. Moreover, just at this time, some English Acts were passed which might be read to include Ireland; for instance, an Act was passed to allow the importation of sugars from the West Indies into any of the ports of His Majesty's dominions—which might be held to include Ireland. Again the Irish agitation increased, aided by the Volunteers, and, on January 22, 1783, the British Parliament passed an Act renouncing all legislative supremacy over Ireland.

\[2\] 22 Geo. III., c. 53.
\[3\] 23 Geo. III., c. 28.
IRELAND had now obtained large measures of free trade, combined with security for their continuance. The effect of the legislation, however, was by no means fully to remove all the Irish commercial grievances. The foreign trade was free; the trade to the Plantations was reasonably free; but the old difficulties which existed in the trade with Great Britain itself still remained. The condition of the Irish-British trade was very unfair to Ireland; whereas British goods of all sorts were admitted into Ireland either free, or at a very low duty, no Irish goods (except some provisions and plain linen cloth) were admitted into Britain without heavy duties, while many Irish goods were prohibited from being brought into Britain at all. The table on pages 246-7, which is from the Irish Commons Journals, shows the great inequality which existed in this respect.

The situation of Ireland in respect of her trade with Britain—the Channel trade, as it was called—was well described by a Member of the Irish Parliament as follows:—"The consequence of our free trade on its present foundations will be that we shall have permission, nay encouragement, to import our raw materials to Great Britain; while our markets will be glutté and our warehouses filled with the manufactures of that country, for it is nonsense to suppose that we shall ever be able to cope

1 Vol. xi., App., p. 141.
with a powerful rival at foreign markets while we are thus in a manner prohibited from supplying our home consumption—our commercial system is a code of inconsistencies—against all other countries, when there is no longer danger of rivalship, we have perfect security by high prohibitory duties—against England, from which every danger is to be apprehended, we have no protection whatever. We are sedulously cautious when we have nothing to fear, and we are rashly unguarded when we have everything to dread. England compels us to receive all her manufactures at low rates, and imposes large and prohibitory duties on the importation of all our fabrics, except linens, and they are only excepted, because, as I shall hereafter prove, she finds her advantage in admitting them. The ignorant or the interested may call this kind of intercourse trade; a custom-house clerk, or a castle-runner may call it a free trade; but the voice of enlightened integrity will call it merciless and insulting tyranny."

Just at this time an acute commercial depression, caused partly by a bad harvest in England which rendered the home supplies of Irish corn insufficient, and partly by the Portuguese woollen dispute, tended to accentuate the evils of the system under which such distress became possible. There is no doubt that the country was in a very bad state, and the newspapers of the time speak of great distress and disorder in Dublin. although it was hinted in some quarters that the distress was, to some extent, fostered by the manufacturers, who knew that, whenever there was a slackness, the gentry of the country got up large subscriptions to help the industry affected.

The alleviation of this distress was imperatively called for, and the mind of the people was directed to the subject of protective duties. It was generally argued that, if England raised tariffs against Irish manufacture, the

1 Griffith, Thoughts on Protecting Duties, Dublin, 1781.
3 Considerations on Effect of Protecting Duties, Dublin, 1783.
Duties payable in Great Britain on the importation of Irish goods; and bounties on exports of British Manufactures, in Irish money.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Import Duties</th>
<th>Inland Excise</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Bounties on exports of British manufacture</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All manner of woollen cloth, the yard</td>
<td>£ 2 6 4</td>
<td>£ 0 5 11</td>
<td>£ 2 6 4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stuffs of all sorts made or mixed with wool, the yard</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sugars, refined, the cwt.</td>
<td>£ 5 6 9</td>
<td></td>
<td>£ 5 6 9</td>
<td>£ 1 8 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beer or ale the barrel (32 gals.)</td>
<td>£ 0 1 5</td>
<td>£ 0 1 7 10</td>
<td>£ 0 1 9 3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>And besides if valued at 20/-</td>
<td>£ 0 5 11</td>
<td>£ 0 1 7 10</td>
<td>£ 1 3 9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spirits, the gallon</td>
<td>£ 0 3 0</td>
<td>£ 0 9 1</td>
<td>£ 0 1 2 1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cotton manufactures, per cent.</td>
<td>£ 29 15 10</td>
<td></td>
<td>£ 29 15 10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>And besides for every £100 value, gross price at the candle</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cotton and linen mixed, per cent.</td>
<td>£ 17 17 6</td>
<td></td>
<td>£ 17 17 6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linen cloth, printed, per cent.</td>
<td>£ 29 15 10</td>
<td></td>
<td>£ 29 15 10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stockings, silk, the pair</td>
<td>£ 65 10 10</td>
<td></td>
<td>£ 65 10 10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stockings, thread or cotton, the dozen pair</td>
<td>£ 0 12 6</td>
<td></td>
<td>£ 0 12 6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>And besides of cotton, for every £100 value, gross price at the candle</td>
<td>£ 17 17 6</td>
<td></td>
<td>£ 17 17 6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wrought silks</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Substantial bounties</td>
<td>£ 1 4 5</td>
<td></td>
<td>£ 1 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Checks, the piece</td>
<td>£ 0 3 11</td>
<td></td>
<td>£ 0 3 11</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>And besides, per cent.</td>
<td>£ 35 15 0</td>
<td></td>
<td>£ 35 15 0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bed timber, per cent.</td>
<td>£ 29 15 10</td>
<td></td>
<td>£ 29 15 10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Duties payable in Ireland on the importation of British goods; and bounties on export of Irish manufacture.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Import Duties</th>
<th>Inland Excise</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Bounties on Export</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Old Drapery, the yard</td>
<td>£ 0 s. 0 d.</td>
<td>£ 0 s. 0 d.</td>
<td>£ 0 s. 0 d.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Drapery, the yard</td>
<td>£ 0 s. 0 d.</td>
<td>£ 0 s. 0 d.</td>
<td>£ 0 s. 0 d.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sugars, refined, the cwt.</td>
<td>£ 1 13 11</td>
<td></td>
<td>£ 1 8 2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beer or ale, the barrel</td>
<td>£ 0 1 2</td>
<td></td>
<td>£ 0 1 2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spirits, the gallon</td>
<td>£ 0 2 3</td>
<td></td>
<td>£ 0 2 3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cotton Manufactures, per cent.</td>
<td></td>
<td>£ 9 18 5</td>
<td>£ 9 18 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cotton and linen mixed, per cent.</td>
<td></td>
<td>£ 9 18 5</td>
<td>£ 9 18 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linen cloth, printed, per cent.</td>
<td></td>
<td>£ 9 18 5</td>
<td>£ 9 18 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stockings, of silk, the pair</td>
<td>£ 0 3 11</td>
<td></td>
<td>£ 0 3 11</td>
<td>8d. per lb.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stockings, Thread or cotton, per cent.</td>
<td></td>
<td>£ 9 18 5</td>
<td>£ 9 18 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wrought silk, the lb.</td>
<td>£ 0 7 5</td>
<td></td>
<td>£ 0 7 5</td>
<td>1/7 per lb.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hops, the cwt.</td>
<td></td>
<td>£ 1 0 8</td>
<td>£ 1 0 8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leather manufactures, per cent.</td>
<td></td>
<td>£ 9 18 5</td>
<td>£ 9 18 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gloves of silk or leather, doz. pair</td>
<td>£ 0 2 11</td>
<td></td>
<td>£ 0 2 11</td>
<td>1/7 per lb.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Candles of tallow, the cwt.</td>
<td>£ 0 5 6</td>
<td></td>
<td>£ 0 5 6</td>
<td>[if silk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Starch, the cwt.</td>
<td>£ 0 6 5</td>
<td></td>
<td>£ 0 6 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soap, the cwt.</td>
<td>£ 0 5 11</td>
<td></td>
<td>£ 0 2 11</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>And besides, per cent.</td>
<td>£ 4 19 9</td>
<td></td>
<td>£ 4 19 9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Checks, the piece</td>
<td>£ 0 1 3</td>
<td></td>
<td>£ 0 1 3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bed timber, per cent.</td>
<td>£ 9 18 5</td>
<td></td>
<td>£ 9 18 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
only way to equalise matters was to retaliate. The
demand for protective duties was not a new one; it had
first been heard as early as 1780 from the sugar refiners
and the woollen and linen manufacturers; but it now
became very widespread and imperative. Of course, there
is no doubt that, theoretically, the imposition of protective
duties would have been a good thing, but there was a
great danger that the English would retaliate either by
imposing duties on Irish linens, which might ruin the linen
trade, or by prohibiting the export to Ireland from Eng-
land of certain commodities such as coal, iron, bark, or
salt, which were essential for the carrying on of Irish
industry. This was the essential feature of the situation;
England was in a position to ruin the Irish linen, tanning,
glass and provision trades, and also the Irish breweries by
stopping the supply of hops. No doubt, Ireland could
have supplied herself with the raw materials of these
industries from abroad in the course of time, but a tem-
porary and possibly prolonged paralysis of Irish industry
was an injury which England certainly had it in her power
to inflict. Nor could Ireland retaliate effectively; Ireland
obtained by far the greater part of the raw materials of her
industry from England, whereas England only obtained
a fraction of the raw material of her industry from Ireland.1

These arguments were ever present to the minds of
Irish Statesmen, but the manufacturers still continued their
agitation. On April 2nd, 1784, the question of protective
duties was raised in Parliament by Mr. Gardiner, who said
that the people of England would think it no cause of
enmity with Ireland simply to follow their own example;
that what was good for one was good for the other; and
that it was impossible to undersell the English in foreign
markets if the English continued to undersell the Irish in
the Irish market. He pointed out, moreover, that merely to
establish manufactures without protection had generally
ended in the ruin of the undertaker, as the English merchant

1Irish Commons Journals, vol. x., pages 72-73; Thoughts on Newspapers,
Dublin, 1785.
2Free Thoughts on the Present Crisis by a Country Gentleman, Dublin, 1785.
immediately flooded Ireland with goods, which he sold at a loss for the time being. Mr. Gardiner's proposal was opposed by the Attorney-General, who thought protective duties would be a dangerous experiment, as they might imperil the linen manufacture, and deprecated the bartering of a certain good for an uncertainty.

The distress in Dublin, which, however, showed no sign of abating, rendered some change of commercial policy absolutely necessary from the Irish point of view. As we have seen, the only remedy suggested in Ireland was the adoption of protective duties. While theoretically these duties might have been effective, it was realised that, in fact, they would have been met by such measures of retaliation in England as to render the situation worse rather than better. In England, on the other hand, the feeling at the time was one of fear of the adoption of protective duties in Ireland. While the situation which would inevitably have arisen on their adoption would, no doubt, have operated to the detriment of some Irish industries, it was no less certain that English trade would suffer considerably. The operation of the non-importation agreements of the previous year had alarmed English manufacturers; the evidence before the Lords Committee of trade in that year was unanimous in ascribing the great falling off in the export trade to Ireland to these agreements. It was also felt in England that the customs laws simply had the effect of increasing the activity of smugglers; vast quantities of Irish salt were smuggled into Great Britain; and there was also an Irish clandestine trade in soap and candles.1 It is, therefore, clear that both from the English and Irish points of view some change in the existing situation was desirable.

As early as March, 1784, Pitt was in correspondence with Orde, the Secretary in Ireland, on the subject of a commercial treaty between the two countries. His idea was that, in return for the benefit of a free trade between Britain and Ireland, Ireland should be prepared to make

1 *English Lords Committee on Trade, 1785.*
some contribution towards the ever-growing expenses of the Empire. The Duke of Rutland, the Lord Lieutenant of the day, was fully alive to the Irish opposition which might greet a scheme of this kind. He pointed out to Pitt that there was a party in Ireland who looked on free trade as an evil rather than a good, and that the proposed contribution to Imperial expenditure might, unless managed with extreme delicacy, lead to violent resistance.

Pitt, after carefully considering the whole matter, reduced his scheme to a series of propositions, which he proposed to bring before the Parliaments of both countries, and sent his scheme to Orde to be first introduced into the Irish Parliament.

On February 7th, 1785, Orde introduced the ten propositions into the Irish House of Commons. They were as follows:—

I. Resolved, That it is highly important to the general interest of the British Empire that the trade between Great Britain and Ireland be encouraged and extended as much as possible; and for that purpose, that the intercourse and commerce be finally settled and regulated on permanent and equitable principles for the mutual benefit of both countries.

II. Resolved, That towards carrying into full effect so desirable a settlement, it is fit and proper that all articles, not the growth or manufacture of Great Britain or Ireland, should be imported into each kingdom from the other, reciprocally, under the same regulation, and at the said duties, if subject to duties, to which they are liable when imported directly from the place of their growth, produce, or manufacture; and that all duties originally paid on importation into either country, respectively, shall be fully drawn back on exportation to the other.

III. Resolved, That for the same purpose, it is proper, that no prohibition should exist in either country against the importation, use, or sale of any article, the growth, product, or manufacture of the other; and that the duty
on the importation of every such article, if subject to duty, in either country, should be precisely the same in the one country as in the other, except where an addition may be necessary in either country, in consequence of an internal duty on any such article of its own consumption.

IV. *Resolved*, That in all cases where the duties on articles of the growth, produce, or manufacture of either country, are different on the importation into the other, it would be expedient, that they should be reduced in the kingdom where they are the highest, to the amount payable in the other, and that all such articles should be exportable from the kingdom, into which they shall be imported, as free from duty as the similar commodities or home manufactures of the same kingdom.

V. *Resolved*, That for the same purpose, it is also proper, that in all cases where either kingdom shall charge articles of its own consumption, with an internal duty on the manufacture, or a duty on the material, the same manufacture when imported from the other, may be charged with a further duty of importation, to the same amount as the internal duty on the manufacture, or to an amount adequate to countervail the duty on the material, and shall be entitled to such drawbacks or bounties on exportation, as may leave the same subject to no heavier burden, than the home-made manufacture; such farther duty to continue so long only as the internal consumption shall be charged with the duty or duties, to balance which it shall be imposed, or until the manufacture, coming from the other kingdom, shall be subjected there to an equal burden, not drawn back or compensated on exportation.

VI. *Resolved*, That in order to give permanency to the settlement now intended to be established, it is necessary, that no prohibition, or new or additional duties, should be hereafter imposed in either Kingdom, on the importation of any article of the growth, product, or manufacture of the other, except such additional duty as may be requisite to balance duties on internal consumption, pursuant to the foregoing resolution.
VII. **Resolved,** That for the same purpose, it is necessary farther, that no prohibition, or new or additional duties, should be hereafter imposed in either kingdom, on the exportation of any article of native growth, produce, or manufacture from thence to the other, except such as either kingdom may deem expedient, from time to time, upon corn, meal, malt, flour, and biscuits; and also except where there now exists any prohibition which is not reciprocal, or any duty which is not equal in both kingdoms, in every which case the prohibition may be made reciprocal, or the duties raised so as to make them equal.

VIII. **Resolved,** That for the same purpose, it is necessary, that no bounties whatsoever should be paid, or payable, in either kingdom, on the exportation of any article to the other, except such as relate to corn, meal, malt, flour, and biscuits, and such as are in the nature of drawbacks or compensations for duties paid, and that no duty should be granted in this kingdom on the exportation of any article imported from the British plantations, or any manufacture made of such article, unless in cases where a similar bounty is payable in Britain, on exportation from thence, or where such bounty is merely in the nature of a drawback or compensation of, or for duties paid over and above any duties paid thereon in Britain.

IX. **Resolved,** That it is expedient, for the general benefit of the British Empire, that the importation of articles from Foreign States should be regulated from time to time, in each kingdom, on such terms, as may afford an effectual preference to the importation of similar articles of the growth, product, or manufacture of the other.

X. **Resolved,** That it is the opinion of this committee, that for the protection of trade, whatever sum the gross hereditary revenue of this kingdom, after deducting all drawbacks, repayments, or bounties granted in the nature of drawbacks over and above the sum of £, should be appropriated towards the support of the naval force of the Empire in such manner as the Parliament shall direct.
The propositions were, on the whole, well received, although one gentleman in the House of Commons remarked: "It is well for the Right Hon. Gentleman (Mr. Orde) that he is in a civilised country; had he made such a proposition in the Polish Diet he would not have lived to carry back an answer to his master." Mr. Gardiner properly criticised the propositions as being such as to take some years to produce any benefit owing to the great superiority of England over Ireland in capital, skill, and connections. On 9th February several members led by Mr. Flood asked that the propositions might be postponed in order that they might be more fully considered, but the Government refused to grant any more time, and on the 11th February they were again introduced into the House of Commons. Meanwhile, the House had resolved itself into a Committee to consider the propositions, and Grattan had opposed the last proposition on the ground that it did not provide that the Irish expenses should be first met out of the Revenue. The Government accepted an amendment proposed by him, namely, that the tenth proposition should be split into two as follows:—

(X.) That it is essential to prevent as much as possible an accumulation of national debt, and that the annual revenue should be made to equal the annual expenditure.

(XI.) That for the better protection of trade, whatever sums the gross hereditary revenue of this Kingdom (after deducting all drawbacks, repayments, or bounties, granted in the nature of drawbacks) shall produce over and above the sum of £656,000 in each year of peace, wherein the annual revenues shall be equal to the annual expenses, and in each year of war without regard to such equality, shall be appropriated towards the naval force of the Empire, in such manner as the Parliament of this Kingdom shall direct. The propositions were introduced in this amended form, and, in spite of some opposition from Flood, were passed unanimously.

The eleven propositions, as amended, were remitted to

England, and were introduced by Pitt into the English House of Commons on 22nd February in a speech of great ability. He opened by recalling the history of the subject: "In treating this important question, he would beg to call their attention to what had been and what was the relative situation of the two countries. They would recollect that from the Revolution until a period within the memory of every man who heard him the system had been that of excluding Ireland from the enjoyment and use of her own resources; to make that kingdom completely subservient to the opulence and interests of this country, without suffering them to share in the bounties of nature, in the industry of her citizens, or making them contribute to the general interests or strength of the Empire." He went on to show that, whereas the grant of free trade and legislative independence had revolutionised the foreign and Colonial trade of Ireland, it had done nothing to affect the trade between Ireland and Great Britain: "that, therefore, what had been done was viewed by the people as insufficient; and clamours were excited in Dublin and suggestions published of putting duties on the production of Great Britain. . . . There were but two possible systems for countries situated in relation to one another like Great Britain and Ireland. The one of having the smaller completely subservient and subordinate to the greater; this system we have tried in respect of Ireland. The other a participation and community of benefits and a system of equal fairness which, without tending to aggrandize the one or depress the other, should seek the aggregate interests of the Empire." Pitt then proceeded to foretell the effects of the propositions: "It was requisite to inquire what would be the effects produced by giving this extension to Ireland . . . . what would likely be the extent of the boon; would it be more than that Ireland would be able to send to Britain what she might have imported from the Colonies above what was necessary for her own consumption? Was it likely that she was to become the

1 Pitt's Speeches, vol. i., p. 136.
emporium and mart of the Empire, as people said she would? He could not believe that would ever be the case." He then went on to enlarge on the benefit which England would derive from the Irish contribution to Imperial expenses. It is interesting to note that Pitt's chief argument in favour of the propositions being accepted in England was their utter uselessness to Ireland.

A storm of opposition greeted the propositions both in and out of Parliament; one petition was sent by eighty thousand Lancashire operatives; and sixty-two other petitions were rapidly presented. Committees of the Lords and Commons were appointed to consider the whole question, and the evidence of the British manufacturers was unanimous that the effect of the propositions would be gravely to injure English interests. As Grattan said: "They contemplated the low price of provisions and labour in Ireland; they mistook the symptoms of poverty for the seeds of wealth; in Ireland's raggedness they saw riches in disguise; and in destitution itself they discovered a powerful rival to the capital, revenue and commerce of Great Britain." The attitude of the British merchants called forth the vigorous denunciation of Arthur Young, who wrote in favour of the propositions. He pointed out that the same arguments had been used by the manufacturing interest in 1779, when the grant of free trade to Ireland was proposed; that it was then the universal opinion that British industry would be ruined as a consequence of Irish competition; but that, as a matter of fact, not one of these predictions of disaster had been realised.

The opposition throughout the country, however, was so strong that Pitt did not dare to proceed with his original propositions, but altered them in many respects, and reintroduced them in their amended form—this time numbering twenty paragraphs, which came to be known as the "twenty resolutions." They were as follows:

1 Grattan's Speech in Irish H. of C., 20 Mar., 1787.
I. That it is highly important to the general interests of the British Empire, that the intercourse and commerce between Great Britain and Ireland, should be finally regulated on permanent and equitable principles, for the mutual benefit of both countries.

II. That it is consistent with the essential interests of the manufactures, revenues, commerce, and navigation of Great Britain, that a full participation of commercial advantages should be permanently secured to Ireland, whenever a provision equally permanent and secure should be made by the Parliament of that kingdom, towards defraying, in proportion to its growing prosperity, the necessary expenses, in time of peace, of protecting the trade and general interests of the Empire.

III. That towards carrying into full effect so desirable a settlement, it is fit and proper that all articles not the growth or manufacture of Great Britain or Ireland, except those of the growth, produce, or manufacture of any of the countries beyond the Cape of Good Hope to the Straits of Magellan, should be imported into each kingdom from the other reciprocally under the same regulations, and at the same duties (if subject to duties) to which they would be liable when imported directly from the country or place from whence the same may have been imported into Great Britain or Ireland, respectively, as the case may be; and that all duties originally paid on importation into either country, respectively, except on arrack and foreign brandy, and on rum, and all sorts of strong waters, not imported from the British Colonies in the West Indies, shall be fully drawn back on exportation to the other; but nevertheless, that the duties shall continue to be protected and guarded as at present, by withholding the drawback, until a certificate from the proper officers of the revenue in the kingdom, to which the export may be made, shall be returned and compared with the entry outwards.

IV. That it is highly important to the general interests of the British Empire, that the laws for regulating trade and navigation should be the same in Great Britain and
Ireland, and, therefore, that it is essential towards carrying into effect the present settlement, that all laws which have been made, or shall be made in Great Britain, for securing exclusive privileges to the ships and mariners of Great Britain, Ireland, and the British colonies and plantations, and for regulating and restraining the trade of the British colonies and plantations, such laws imposing the same restraints, and conferring the same benefits on the subjects of both kingdoms, should be in force in Ireland by law to be passed by the Parliament of that kingdom for the same time, and in the same manner as in Great Britain.

V. That it is further essential to this settlement, that all goods and commodities of the growth, produce, or manufacture of British or foreign colonies in America, or the West Indies, and the British or foreign settlements on the coast of Africa, imported into Ireland, should on importation be subject to the same duties and regulations as the like goods are, or from time to time shall be, subject to upon importation into Great Britain, or if prohibited to be imported into Great Britain, shall be prohibited in like manner from being imported into Ireland.

VI. That in order to prevent illicit practices, injurious to the revenue and commerce of both kingdoms, it is expedient that all goods, whether of the growth, produce, or manufacture of Great Britain or Ireland, or of any foreign country, which shall hereafter be imported into Great Britain from Ireland, or into Ireland from Great Britain, should be put by laws to be passed in the Parliaments of the two kingdoms, under the same regulation with respect to bonds, cockets, and other instruments to which the like goods are now subject in passing from one port of Great Britain to another.

VII. That for the like purpose it is also expedient, that when any goods, the growth, produce, or manufacture of the British West India Islands, or any other of the British colonies or plantations, shall be shipped from Ireland for Great Britain, they should be accompanied with such original certificates of the revenue officers of the said
colonies as shall be required by law on importation into Great Britain; and that when the whole quantity included in one certificate, shall not be shipped at any one time, the original certificate properly endorsed, as to quantity, should be sent with the first parcel; and to identify the remainder, if shipped within a time to be limited, new certificates should be granted by the principal officers of the ports in Ireland, extracted from a register of the original documents, specifying the quantities before shipped from thence, by what vessels, and to what ports.

VIII. That it is essential for carrying into effect the present settlement, that all goods exported from Ireland to the British colonies in the West Indies, or in America, or to the British settlements in the coast of Africa, or to the countries beyond the Cape of Good Hope to the Straits of Magellan, should from time to time be made liable to such duties and drawbacks, and put under such regulations as may be necessary, in order that the same may not be exported with less incumbrance of duties or impositions than the like goods shall be burthened with when exported from Great Britain.

IX. That it is essential to the general commercial interests of the Empire, that so long as the Parliament of this kingdom shall think it advisable, that the commerce to the countries beyond the Cape of Good Hope, to the Straits of Magellan, shall be carried on solely by an exclusive company, having liberty to import into the port of London only; no goods of the growth, produce, or manufacture of the said countries shall be allowed to be imported into Ireland, but through Great Britain; except dye-stuffs, cotton, or other wool and spiceries, which may be imported into Ireland from foreign European countries, so long as the same are importable from foreign European countries into Great Britain; and that it shall be lawful to export such goods of the growth, product, or manufacture of any of the countries beyond the Cape of Good Hope, to the Straits of Magellan, from Great Britain to Ireland, with the same duties retained thereon as are now
retained on their being exported to that kingdom, but that
an account shall be kept of the duties retained and not
drawn back on the said goods exported to Ireland, and
that the amount thereof shall be remitted by the Receiver-
General of His Majesty's customs in Great Britain, to the
proper officer of the revenue of Ireland, to be placed to
the account of His Majesty's revenue there, subject to the
disposal of the Parliament of that kingdom; and that the
ships going from Great Britain to any of the said countries
beyond the Cape of Good Hope, to the Straits of Magellan,
should not be restrained from touching any of the ports
in Ireland, and taking on board there any of the goods of
the growth, produce, or manufacture of that kingdom;
and that no ships be allowed to clear out from Ireland for
any of the said countries, but such ships as shall be
freighted by the said company, and which shall have sailed
from the port of London; and that whenever the commerce
to the said country shall cease to be carried on solely by
such an exclusive company, the goods, the growth, pro-
duce, or manufacture of the said countries beyond the
Cape of Good Hope, to the Straits of Magellan, should
be importable into Ireland from the same countries from
which they may be importable into Great Britain, and no
other.

X. That no prohibition should exist in either country
against their importation, use, or sale of any article the
growth, product, or manufacture of the other, except such
as either kingdom may judge expedient from time to time
upon corn, meal, malt, flour, and biscuits; and except such
qualified prohibitions at present contained in any Act of
the British or Irish Parliaments, as do not absolutely
prevent the importation of goods or manufactures, or
materials of manufactures, but only regulate the weight,
the size, the package, or other particular circumstances,
or prescribe the build or country, and dimensions of
the ships importing the same; and also except on ammuni-
tion, arms, gunpowder, and other utensils of war
importable only by virtue of His Majesty's licenses; and
that the duty on the importation of every such article (if subject to duty in either country) should be precisely the same in one country as in the other, except where an addition may be necessary in either country, in consequence of an internal bounty in the country where such article is grown, produced, or manufactured, and except such duties as either kingdom may judge expedient from time to time upon corn, meal, malt, flour, and biscuits.

XI. That in all cases where the duties on articles of the growth, produce, or manufacture of either country, are different on the importation into the other, it is expedient that they should be reduced in the kingdom where they are the highest, to the amount not exceeding the amount payable in the other, so that the same shall not be less than ten and a half per centum upon any article which was charged with a duty on importation into Ireland of ten and a half per centum, or upwards, on the 17th day of May, 1782; and that all such articles shall be exportable from each kingdom into which they shall be imported, as free from duties as the similar commodities of home manufacture in the same kingdom.

XII. That it is also proper that in all cases where the articles of the consumption of either kingdom shall be charged with an external duty on the manufacture, the same manufacture, when imported from the other, may be charged with a farther duty on importation, adequate to countervail the internal duty on the manufacture, except in the case of beer imported into Ireland, as far as relates to the duties now charged thereon; such farther duty to continue so long only as the internal consumption shall be charged with the duty or duties to balance which it shall be imposed; and that where there is a duty on the raw material of any manufacture in either kingdom, less than the duty on the like raw material in the other, or equal to such duty, such manufacture may, on its importation into the other kingdom, be charged with such a countervailing duty as may be sufficient to subject the same, so imported, to burthens adequate to those which the manufacture
composed of the like raw materials is subject to, in consequence of duties on such material in the kingdom into which such manufacture is so imported; and that the said manufacture so imported shall be entitled to such drawbacks or bounties on exportation as may leave the same subject to no heavier burthen than the home-made manufacture.

XIII. That in order to give permanency to the settlement now intended to be established; it is necessary that no new or additional duties should be hereafter imposed in either kingdom on the importation of any article of the growth, product, or manufacture of the other, except such additional duties as may be requisite to balance duties on internal consumption, pursuant to the foregoing resolution, or in consequence of bounties remaining on such article when exported from the other kingdom.

XIV. That for the same purpose it is necessary farther, that no new prohibition or new or additional duties should be hereafter imposed in either kingdom on the exportation of any article of native growth, produce, or manufacture, from the one kingdom to the other, except such as either kingdom may deem expedient from time to time, upon corn, meal, malt, flour, and biscuits.

XV. That for the same purpose it is necessary that no bounties whatsoever should be paid or payable in either kingdom, on the exportation of any article to the other, except such as relates to corn, meal, malt, flour, and biscuits, and except also the bounties at present given by Great Britain on beer and spirits distilled from corn, and such as are in the nature of drawbacks or compensations for duties paid; and that no bounties should be payable in Ireland on the exportation of any article to any British colonies or plantations, or to the British settlements on the coast of Africa, or on the exportation of any imported article from the British plantations, or from the British settlements on the coast of Africa, or British settlements in the East Indies, or any manufacture made of such articles, unless in cases where a similar bounty is payable
in Great Britain on exportation from thence, or where such bounty is merely in the nature of a drawback or compensation of or for duties paid over and above any duties paid thereon in Great Britain; and that where an internal bounty shall be given in either kingdom on any goods manufactured therein, and shall remain on such goods when exported, a countervailing duty adequate thereto may be laid upon the importation of the said goods into the other kingdom.

XVI. That it is expedient for the general benefit of the British Empire, that the importation of articles from foreign countries should be regulated from time to time in each kingdom on such terms as may effectually favour the importation of similar articles of growth, produce, or manufacture of the other, except in the case of materials or manufacture which are or hereafter may be allowed to be imported from foreign countries duty free; and that in all cases where any articles are or may be subject to higher duties on importation into this kingdom from the countries belonging to any of the States of North America than the like goods are or may be subject to when imported as the growth, produce, or manufacture of the British colonies and plantations, or as the produce of the fisheries carried on by British subjects, such articles shall be subject to the same duties on importation into Ireland from the countries belonging to any of the States of North America as the same are or may be subject to an importation from the said countries into this kingdom.

XVII. That it is expedient that such privileges of printing and vending books, as are or may be legally possessed within Great Britain, under the grant of the Crown or otherwise, and the copyrights of the authors and booksellers of great Britain, should continue to be protected in the manner they are at present by the laws of Great Britain; and that it is just that measures should be taken by the Parliament of Ireland, for giving the like protection to similar rights and privileges in that kingdom.

XVIII. That it is expedient that the regulations should
be adopted with respect to patents to be hereafter granted
for the encouragement of new inventions, so that the
rights, privileges, and restrictions therein granted and
contained shall be of equal force and duration, throughout
Great Britain and Ireland.

XIX. That it is expedient that measures should be
taken to prevent disputes touching the exercise of the
right of the inhabitants of each kingdom to fish on the
coasts of any part of the British dominions.

XX. That the appropriation of whatever sum the
gross hereditary revenue of the kingdom of Ireland (the due
collection thereof being secured by permanent provisions)
shall produce after deducting all drawbacks, repayments,
or bounties granted in the nature of drawbacks, over
and above the sum of six hundred and fifty-six thousand
pounds in each year, towards the support of the naval
force of the Empire, to be applied in such manner as the
Parliament of Ireland shall direct, by an Act to be passed
for that purpose, will be a satisfactory provision, propor-
tioned to the growing prosperity of that kingdom, towards
defraying in time of peace the necessary expenses of pro-
tecting the trade and general interests of the Empire.

Although it is quite obvious that the twenty resolutions
promised very much less benefit to Ireland than the
eleven propositions, they were, nevertheless, strenuously
opposed in the British Parliament. Fox attacked them
in a speech of great eloquence, but, in spite of the opposi-
tion, they were passed, and were then sent to Ireland to
be laid before the Irish Parliament.

In Ireland, the twenty resolutions met with a storm of
opposition both in and out of Parliament. Dublin was
flooded with pamphlets, in which they were condemned.
The changes which gave the most offence were those
proposed by the fourth resolution dealing with Navi-
gation Laws—which was felt to be an attack on the
freedom of the Irish Parliament to legislate—and the
exception of the East Indian trade. It was pointed out by
the pamphleteers that the resolutions really gave Ireland
nothing which she had not already, and only made her position worse. "Ireland has at present," said one writer, "the market with the British Colonies in the West Indies and on the coast of Africa open to her merchants on the same terms as it is open to Britain. After the expiration of the present charter of the Company to America, the East Indies will be also open to her. Her trade with the United States is unclogged and unfettered, a trade which has been the great object of her commercial desires, which alone would afford a market to all her articles of export. To all the countries of Europe, Great Britain excepted, she can export every article of her merchandise, whether native or imported, and she can then bring back in return every article she wishes without any restraint. In every one of these branches, which embrace the whole trade that Ireland does or can enjoy, the new system in this amended state will operate to her disadvantage." "Ireland, after such an agreement, attempting to enter into any competition as a manufacturing or commercial country with Great Britain, would be like a child who, after submitting to have his hands and feet bound, should attempt to wrestle with Hercules." The same writer pointed out the significant difference between the first resolution in its original form and as amended: "It may not be amiss to observe," he says, "that the very object of the whole settlement has been altered by Mr. Pitt, for, as originally proposed in Ireland, it was to encourage and extend as much as possible the trade between the two kingdoms, but Mr. Pitt rejects the idea of extending the trade and confines his object to regulate. . . . Ireland ought not to grant any other considerations for a participation of commercial advantages but a like indulgence to Great Britain . . . . any pecuniary compensation would be a tribute." Of the fourth proposition he remarks: "Everything that

1 Letter from Irish Gentleman in London to his Friend in Dublin. 1785.
2 Candid Review of Mr. Pitt's Twenty Resolutions, attributed to Forbes. 1785.
3 Candid Review.
constitutes the independence of the Irish nation is to be sacrificed by that resolution."

On Friday, 12th August, Mr. Orde asked leave to bring in the twenty resolutions. The motion was opposed by Grattan and Flood. Grattan stigmatised the amended resolutions as a breach of faith: "Mr. Pitt was pledged to the eleven propositions; this offer was the propositions, ours the taxes; he took the latter but forgets the former. . . . . The English could safely afford to bargain for no new prohibitions—they had put on every prohibition which might be of value long ago." Flood's speech was a masterpiece of eloquent indignation; he strongly attacked the second resolution: "Mr. Orde, when he first mentioned the idea of tribute, did so with a trembling diffidence, and mentioned it not as a condition with the British, but as stupendous generosity on the part of Ireland. Then delicately and timorously it was ushered in at the end of the propositions in the first stage, but in the last exposition it stands immediately after the preamble—and in a different form, as a peremptory command and absolute condition."

The third resolution galled him particularly: "We read with surprise of a Roman Pontiff granting one hemisphere to one prince, and another hemisphere to another prince, but here we see half the hemisphere cut off from Ireland under a parenthesis. This proposition takes in another object, it strikes at our trade in foreign spirits, and consequently must injure our whole trade and intercourse with France, Spain and Portugal and America." His comment on the tenth proposition was as follows:—"The tenth proposition retains all prohibitions now existing under British or Irish statutes; in the English statute book these are many, and the Acts ought to have been specifically referred to that their extent might be considered. In the Irish statutes we are rather short in prohibitions as to anything that is British; the reciprocity in this instance is like the reciprocity in the rest—a one-handed reciprocity. But this proposition

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1 See also Mr. Pitt's Reply to Mr. Orde, with a Defence of Truth, Dublin, 1785: and Address to the King and People of Ireland, Dublin, 1785.
requires not only that the internal duties of the importing country, but also the bounties of the exporting country, should be brought into account, and that the countervailing duty should be increased by both. The infancy of our manufacturing trade and the poverty of our people have forced us into a variety of bounties and encouragements in order to give some spring to the languor of the country. Every encouragement of this sort will be carried to account against our trade, and will raise the amount of the countervailing duty which is meant to protect the market of Britain against the admission of Irish manufacturers—thus all our bounties so necessary to our weakness must be relinquished, or will become a burden on the export to that market of Britain, which is the only thing offered to Ireland in exchange for the market of the world." He also waxed indignant with justice over the omission from the last resolution of the provision that the revenue of Ireland should equal the expenditure before any payment was made to Great Britain. In the end, leave to bring in the Bill was voted by 127 to 108; such a small majority, however, was equivalent to a defeat; and Mr. Orde did not proceed with the resolutions.

Ireland did not lose anything by the failure of the Commercial Propositions to pass into law. The grievance of which the Irish manufacturer complained was not so much that he was unable to compete successfully in the British market, as that he was undersold by the British manufacturer in Ireland. The obvious remedy for this state of affairs was the imposition of protecting duties in Ireland, not the abolition of such duties in Great Britain. The imposition of such duties might or might not have been expedient in view of the power of Great Britain to retaliate in other directions, and, as we have seen, the better opinion in Ireland was that such duties would have been unwise. It was, therefore, necessary that some commercial treaty should be signed with Great Britain, whereby Irish manufacturers might be protected. The eleven propositions
were certainly not calculated to achieve this end; instead of raising tariffs, they lowered them; and, furthermore, took away from the Irish Parliament the power of granting bounties on export. Mere equality of duties between England and Ireland did not mean an equality of encouragement for English and Irish industry; the English manufactures were worked on a large scale, and had been established many years; the Irish, on the other hand, were still in their infancy, and needed artificial encouragement. Nothing less than higher duties in Ireland than in England would have been adequate to meet the requirements of the Irish situation.

But whatever may be said in favour of the eleven propositions, there is nothing at all to be said in favour of the twenty resolutions. In addition to the disadvantages to which we have drawn attention in the last paragraph, they further fettered the liberty of the Irish Parliament in a most important direction—the making of laws regulating navigation. They also excluded the Irish trader from the commerce of half the globe, and rejected the one provision in the financial resolution on which the Irish Parliament had insisted. The Irish Parliament deserves nothing but praise for having rejected these proposals.

The question of a commercial arrangement between Ireland and England was raised again in 1794, when Grattan proposed that the relations between the two countries should be placed on a basis of complete reciprocity. The Government, however, refused to go into the question, owing to the lateness of the session, but it appears that there was no objection on the part of the English Government to the formation of such an arrangement, and that there would have been no difficulty in passing it through the Irish Parliament.¹ The subject, however, was allowed to drop, and was not revived until 1796, when Grattan again proposed an equalisation of the duties on import in England and Ireland. On this

¹ Lecky, vol. iii., p. 188; I.P.D., vol. iv., p. 50.
occasion the proposal was rejected by the House of Commons. Of course, the whole commercial relations of the two countries were put on a new basis by the Act of Union, a measure which, as we shall see, included all the disadvantages and none of the advantages of the Commercial Propositions.

1 Lecky, vol. iii., p. 450.
CHAPTER XXII.

Irish Industries During the Period of Freedom.

(a) The Woollen Industry.

The progress of the woollen industry during the period of Grattan’s Parliament cannot be judged solely by the table of imports and exports. If we were to take the table of exports as an index to the extent of the industry, it would show that the woollen manufacture increased at a rapid rate for the first few years of the free trade period, and then declined to an almost negligible magnitude; but, as a matter of fact, this was not the course which events took, as towards the end of the century by far the greater part of the wool manufactured in Ireland was used for home consumption. We must remember that during the years in question the population of Ireland, and consequently the demand for all classes of goods, increased at a rapid rate, and that this increase in population was, with a great part of the community at least, accompanied by an increase of prosperity. A more reliable index than the table of exports of manufactured wool would be afforded by the table of the exports of the raw material. We should find, on examining this latter table, that the exports of unmanufactured wool had sunk to nothing at the end of the century, showing that the Irish manufacture was sufficiently large to use up all the raw material which the country produced.

Of course, it could not be expected that the woollen manufacture, after the long course of depression which it
had gone through, could, by the mere repeal of the restrictive legislation, spring back immediately to its former prosperity and importance. During the greater part of the century the art of the finer branches of the woollen manufacture was forgotten in Ireland through disuse; and, owing to the fact that the only branch of the manufacture which was pursued during that period was that of coarse stuffs, the quality of wool produced in the country had deteriorated. The great increase in the cattle trade had, no doubt, operated to displace the sheep of the country to a large extent by cattle, and this, coupled with the inability of the Irish to import any English wool, was a very serious hindrance to the rapid progress of the woollen manufacture. Another cause which operated to retard the revival of this manufacture was the competition which was encountered in the Irish markets by the large importations of English woollen goods, which were allowed to be imported into Ireland on the payment of 5½d. a yard on old drapery, and less than 2d. a yard on new. The Irish woollens were, of course, kept out of the English markets by duties amounting to a prohibition.

Possibly the prosperity of the woollen manufacture was further retarded on account of the fact that, as it grew, it tended to become localised in Dublin, which was, of all places in Ireland, the most unsuitable for the successful growth of an industry, owing to the dearness of provisions and consequent necessity for high wages, the bad conditions of housing, the drinking habits which prevailed to such a large extent, and the prevalence of an almost chronic state of industrial unrest owing to the combinations amongst the journeymen of the City. This last circumstance was felt to be so serious that Parliament made several efforts to move the industry into the country by granting premiums on machinery set up more than ten miles from Dublin. Modern methods of manufacture were very slow to appear in the wool industry, largely, it is to

1 Murray, Commercial Relations, p. 272.
2 25 Geo. III., c. 48; 27 Geo. III., c. 13, etc.
be feared, owing to the attitude of the operatives in Dublin. Wakefield, writing in 1814, noticed that the state of the manufacture at that time had improved very little from what it had been in the middle of the previous century.¹

It would not be surprising, in view of these many disadvantages, if the woollen industry had not increased at all, but, as a matter of fact, it did thrive to a considerable degree. The relaxation of the restrictions in 1779 was followed by a great effort to produce large quantities of wool for the Colonial market, and the exports from that year until 1785 increased very rapidly, as is shown by the following table² of exports:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year ended March 25th</th>
<th>New Drapery</th>
<th>Old Drapery</th>
<th>Flannels</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yards</td>
<td>Yards</td>
<td>Yards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1780</td>
<td>8,653</td>
<td>494</td>
<td>230</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1781</td>
<td>286,859</td>
<td>3,740</td>
<td>27,049</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1782</td>
<td>336,607½</td>
<td>4,633</td>
<td>8,641</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1783</td>
<td>538,061</td>
<td>40,589</td>
<td>11,416</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1784</td>
<td>666,298</td>
<td>35,329</td>
<td>49,382</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1785</td>
<td>770,031½</td>
<td>34,249¼</td>
<td>60,542½</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

"The woollen manufacturers," says a writer in 1784, "can contend in foreign markets with those competitors who, if you believe themselves, are able to beat them in the domestic market; you see that they are gaining yearly on those foreign competitors, though they themselves live in the most unfit place in the Kingdom for any manufacture—in the metropolis—in the city of sloth, drunkenness, faction and dear provisions, and even then they can increase in trade, so very favourable has the free trade availed them."³ This great increase in export is certainly very remarkable, but it is possible that a great deal of it was more apparent than real, owing to the general cessation, in 1779, of the smuggling of wool from the country. In any event, it was an artificial increase, which

¹ Wakefield, vol. i., p. 760. ² Murray, Commercial Relations, p. 269. ³ Letter to the Linen Manufacturers, Dublin, 1784; and see Sheffield, Trade of Ireland, 1785.
was not destined to be kept up; indeed, in 1784, owing to over-production, there was a glut in the market, and very serious distress and disturbances in Dublin in consequence. After 1785 the export of woollens remained more or less steady for about ten years, when a remarkable decrease began to appear, and at the same time the imports of woollens into Ireland increased substantially:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year ended March 25th</th>
<th>New Drapery</th>
<th>Old Drapery</th>
<th>Flannels</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yards</td>
<td>Yards</td>
<td>Yards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1786</td>
<td>349,628</td>
<td>10,435</td>
<td>64,216</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1787</td>
<td>206,849</td>
<td>15,329</td>
<td>17,251</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1788</td>
<td>315,111</td>
<td>7,747</td>
<td>61,003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1789</td>
<td>363,196</td>
<td>7,833</td>
<td>55,015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1790</td>
<td>352,022</td>
<td>8,312</td>
<td>64,297</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1791</td>
<td>320,491</td>
<td>15,085 ½</td>
<td>60,850</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1792</td>
<td>384,396</td>
<td>18,669</td>
<td>65,484 ½</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1793</td>
<td>140,294</td>
<td>19,489</td>
<td>53,093</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1794</td>
<td>206,547</td>
<td>21,237</td>
<td>86,276</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1795</td>
<td>105,283</td>
<td>22,739</td>
<td>63,967</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1796</td>
<td>174,036</td>
<td>128,630</td>
<td>96,685</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1797</td>
<td>149,760</td>
<td>16,839</td>
<td>33,857</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1798</td>
<td>94,420</td>
<td>1,150</td>
<td>3,090</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1799</td>
<td>61,844</td>
<td>2,753</td>
<td>1,074</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1800</td>
<td>33,288</td>
<td>2,196</td>
<td>17,352</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Imports, 1786—1800.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>New Drapery</th>
<th>Old Drapery</th>
<th>Flannels</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1786</td>
<td>251,365</td>
<td>315,097</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1787</td>
<td>380,708</td>
<td>488,415</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1788</td>
<td>590,748</td>
<td>650,717</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1789</td>
<td>518,150</td>
<td>647,626 ½</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1790</td>
<td>504,551 ½</td>
<td>653,898 ½</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1791</td>
<td>562,282 ½</td>
<td>775,060 ½</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1792</td>
<td>471,227 ½</td>
<td>808,363 ½</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1793</td>
<td>372,024</td>
<td>815,140</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1794</td>
<td>229,943</td>
<td>421,227</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1795</td>
<td>411,219</td>
<td>734,213</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1796</td>
<td>539,538</td>
<td>1,121,539</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1797</td>
<td>483,966</td>
<td>1,175,339</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1798</td>
<td>253,957</td>
<td>836,073</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1799</td>
<td>667,417</td>
<td>1,269,857</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1800</td>
<td>1,264,994</td>
<td>2,233,975</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 Murray, Commercial Relations, p. 269.
It does not follow from these figures that the woollen manufacture decreased in magnitude; on the contrary, the universal opinion of contemporary observers was that it increased; and the change in the comparative imports and exports must be accounted for by the increased consumption of wool at home. In 1798, Wallace drew attention to the fact that a great deal of wool was used by the peasantry: "The inhabitants of the South and West are to a man clad in woollen. Both sexes, indeed, seem equally fond of this manufacture, and in many instances the man may be said to be loaded rather than clothed with it, for in the heat of summer, besides a coat and waistcoat, he uniformly wears a woollen greatcoat of several pounds weight. The clothing of the women from head to foot is generally of wool." Foster, in his speech on the Union, commented on the fact that Ireland no longer exported any unmanufactured wool, which, in his opinion, pointed to the fact that all the wool produced in Ireland was used at home, and that, consequently, the industry was on the increase. Newenham, in 1805, wrote as follows: "The woollen manufacture has greatly increased in Ireland during the above period. The increase of the manufacture of the finer sorts of woollen goods has not, I believe, been very great; that of inferior sorts certainly has. The woollen manufacture is carried on in Dublin, Cork, Waterford, Bandon, Carrick-on-Suir, Tallow, Lismore, and the Queen's County and other places. But the greater part of the wool produced in Ireland is consumed by the lower orders of the country people, who, generally speaking, get it manufactured at home for their own use. It is this increased consumption, in consequence of their numerical increase, that has had the greatest effect in reducing the exportation of it."

It was Wakefield's opinion, in 1814, that the manufacture was still on the increase, in spite of the increasing

1 Wallace, Manufactures of Ireland, p. 115.
2 Speech of Foster in the Irish House of Commons, 11th April, 1799.
3 Newenham on Population of Ireland, 1805.
imports and decreasing exports. In the year 1800 there were in Dublin 91 master manufacturers, and 4,038 hands employed in the woollen manufacture; there were 1,491 persons employed in the manufacture of stuff serge, and 720 in the carpet manufacture.²

(b) The Linen Industry.

Very little need be said about the progress of the linen industry during these years, as it was one of unexampled prosperity and success. The old trade in plain linens increased at a rate never before known, and, in addition, a new and profitable trade in coloured linen grew up with the Colonies. The exports of cambrics and lawns progressed rapidly until 1794, when a treaty was entered into between England and France permitting the importation of French cambrics into England; the Irish cambric trade received a temporary set back as a result of this concession, but the treaty only lasted for two years, and at its cessation the cambric trade again commenced to expand. At the same time, many improvements were introduced into the manufacture; in 1791 an invention was worked for the first time by which two webs of linen could be woven at the same time; and in 1795 chloride of lime was used for bleaching cloth and yarns, and proved a great advantage. Foster, in his speech on the Union, in 1799, said that in the 78 years from 1704 to 1782 the linen export rose from 1 to 32; from 1782 to 1796 it rose from 32 to 88, and in 1799 the trade was in a state of extreme prosperity; that Irish linens had risen 35 per cent. above their usual value, and that even at that price they were being bought by the English merchants on the green before they could go to market; and that they were beating the German and Russian linens in the American markets, where they were preferred even to the Scotch.³ The following table shows the export of linens from Ireland:

¹ Wakefield, vol. i, p. 718.
² Butt, Irish Land and Irish People, p. 95.
³ Foster Speech on the Union, 11th April, 1799.
Linen Manufactures exported from Ireland to all Parts, 1780—1800.1
(Compiled from the Custom House Books in the National Library, Dublin).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year ended March 25th</th>
<th>Plain Linen</th>
<th>Coloured Linen</th>
<th>Cambric and Lawn</th>
<th>Mixed Goods</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yards</td>
<td>Yards</td>
<td>Yards</td>
<td>£</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1780</td>
<td>18,746,902</td>
<td>7,319</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>145</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1781</td>
<td>14,947,265</td>
<td>111,295</td>
<td>404</td>
<td>414</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1782</td>
<td>24,970,303</td>
<td>74,422</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>1,148</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1783</td>
<td>16,039,705</td>
<td>160,127</td>
<td>1,975</td>
<td>8,319</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1784</td>
<td>24,961,898</td>
<td>347,098</td>
<td>5,734</td>
<td>Not entered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1785</td>
<td>26,677,647</td>
<td>226,186</td>
<td>3,686</td>
<td>9,382</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1786</td>
<td>28,168,666</td>
<td>359,731</td>
<td>1,052</td>
<td>4,443</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1787</td>
<td>30,728,728</td>
<td>264,421</td>
<td>3,745</td>
<td>5,216</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1788</td>
<td>35,487,691</td>
<td>157,723</td>
<td>4,876</td>
<td>7,345</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1789</td>
<td>39,344,633</td>
<td>104,598</td>
<td>2,739</td>
<td>4,616</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1790</td>
<td>37,322,125</td>
<td>144,088</td>
<td>5,877</td>
<td>14,522</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1791</td>
<td>39,718,706</td>
<td>116,037</td>
<td>5,475</td>
<td>9,628</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1792</td>
<td>45,581,667</td>
<td>108,703</td>
<td>11,270</td>
<td>16,998</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1793</td>
<td>43,312,057</td>
<td>123,862</td>
<td>2,712</td>
<td>14,339</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1795</td>
<td>42,780,840</td>
<td>282,501</td>
<td>7,325</td>
<td>45,115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1796</td>
<td>52,895,841</td>
<td>715,341</td>
<td>5,726</td>
<td>25,563</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1797</td>
<td>36,559,746</td>
<td>483,715</td>
<td>14,034</td>
<td>12,619</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1798</td>
<td>33,497,171</td>
<td>189,885</td>
<td>6,949</td>
<td>14,546</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1799</td>
<td>38,466,289</td>
<td>356,740</td>
<td>3,903</td>
<td>5,345</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1800</td>
<td>35,676,908</td>
<td>213,142</td>
<td>13,242</td>
<td>10,940</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(c) *The Cotton Industry.*

In 1771 the cotton industry was introduced into Belfast; at first children in the Asylum were employed spinning cotton yarn, but afterwards the business increased so much that a company was formed and carding machines and spinning jennies were erected.2 It is probable that the industry would never have increased beyond a certain point had it not been for the grant of free trade, which enabled the Irish manufacturer to import his cotton yarn direct from the Plantations. After this concession, the cotton industry made rapid strides, and no other manufacture, with the exception of the linen, increased at anything like the same rate in Ireland during the same period.

The Irish Parliament gave much encouragement to this new manufacture; bounties on the home sale of cotton

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1 Murray, *Commercial Relations*, p. 283.
2 Marmion, *History of the Maritime Ports of Ireland*.
were granted in 1783, and bounties on the export in the following year. A few years later very high protective duties were laid on the importation of cottons into Ireland; duties from forty to fifty per cent. on plain calicoes, and thirty-five per cent. on plain muslins, and other high duties on coloured, worked or figured cottons. Parliament also granted large sums to a gentleman named Brooke to establish the cotton manufacture at Prosperous in Co. Kildare, and further encouragement was given by the Linen Board and the Dublin Society.

It is probable that the real secret of the rapid growth of the cotton manufacture did not lie in these encouragements, so much as in the fact that it was in this industry that the improvements in manufacturing methods were introduced earlier than in any other. In 1784 the first mill driven by water for spinning cotton yarn was erected in Belfast, and the improved methods which were gradually coming into use in England were, to a large extent introduced into the Irish factories, although it was said in 1798 that the Irish operatives were very much behind the English in the benefit which they derived from them owing to their inferior industrial skill. The wages paid in this industry were higher than in any other; at Prosperous the men were paid tenpence and the women sixpence a day. The rapid progress of the industry may be judged from the alarm which was felt by the English cotton manufacturers at the great competition which they experienced from the Irish products.

The principal seat of the industry was at Belfast, where, in the year 1800, it gave employment to 27,000 people. At first the factory at Prosperous succeeded very well, but it failed about 1794 owing to the financial difficulties of the owner. The industry spread all over Ireland, and factories were set up at Slane, Balbriggan, Finglas, and in Co. Waterford. At first it looked as if the industry

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1 23 & 24 Geo. III., c. 1. 2 24 Geo. III., c. 5.
3 Murray, Commercial Relations, p. 281.
4 Marmion, History of Maritime Ports, p. 72.
5 Wallace, Manufactures of Ireland, 1785.
6 Sheffield, Trade of Ireland, 1785.
7 English Lords Committee on Irish Trade, 1785.
8 Lowry, Story of Belfast.
9 Murray, Commercial Relations, p. 280.
might prosper in Dublin, but this success, like that of
many other industries in that city, was frustrated by the
action of the workers. Owing to some dispute between
them and the masters, the whole industry was broken up,
and in 1808, out of three hundred looms which were still
working, only one hundred were in the possession of
master manufacturers, the others being worked by indepen-
dent operatives. Of course, under a system of this kind,
improvements could not be introduced, or a large scale
production attained, and consequently the industry
languished. The increase of the industry may be judged
from the following figures, showing the imports of the
raw materials used:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Cotton Wool</th>
<th>Cotton Yarn</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>25th March, 1783</td>
<td>3,236</td>
<td>5,405</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25th March, 1796</td>
<td>13,171</td>
<td>283,085</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5th January, 1803</td>
<td>13,159</td>
<td>628,046</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In 1802 the cotton manufacture supported 600,000
people; 20,500 looms were then at work distributed as
follows:

- 10,000 in Ulster
- 3,500 in Dublin and Kildare
- 1,500 in Wicklow and Carlow
- 2,400 in Meath, Westmeath, King’s and Queen’s Co.
- 3,000 in Cork, Waterford and Limerick

(d) The Silk Industry.

The silk industry did not progress satisfactorily under
Grattan’s Parliament. An Act which had been passed in
1779 with the object of benefiting the industry really did it
harm. This was the “Spitalfields Act,” which provided
that the wages and prices for work of journeymen silk
weavers, within the City of Dublin and the adjacent
liberties should be regulated, settled, and declared by the
Dublin Society, upon application being made to it.
Penalties were imposed upon journeymen who asked for or

1 Whitelaw and Walsh, History of Dublin, p. 976.
3 Whitelaw and Walsh, History of Dublin, p. 972.
4 19 & 20 Geo. III., c. 24.
combined to obtain wages at a higher rate. The Dublin Society was given complete powers of superintendence over the industry in other respects by means of regulations and bye-laws. According to Mr. Webb, this Act operated against the progress of the manufacture: "The Act gave the power of fixing wages to a body of men who, however intelligent and well-intentioned, could not be so well acquainted with the difficulties and changing conditions of the trade as those who were regularly engaged therein. It took from masters and workmen the power of freely bargaining as to the rate of wages, a power which is essential in a trade subject to such fluctuations as the silk trade is. The result was that the rate of wages and prices of work were fixed and unalterable. Changes in the rate of payment only took place on occasions of extraordinary alterations in the trade. The consequence was that the trade was greatly hampered, and suffered from the effects of the 'Spitalfields' Act, so called in imitation of a similar Act obtaining in Spitalfields, London."

In 1784 the committee appointed by Parliament to inquire into the state of Irish industries was tendered some interesting evidence about the silk industry. In that year half the looms in Dublin were idle, and about three thousand people unemployed. In the ribbon branch about a third of the looms and half the employés were idle. The depression was said to be owing to the increased quantity of imported silk.

In 1786 the Silk Warehouse was closed, and the funds appropriated to it were arranged to be applied for the benefit of the industry in other ways. In 1793 it was stated that 1,200 looms were being worked in Dublin. The following account of the industry in 1798 is given by Wallace:—"This industry is in a most progressive state. . . . Last summer it was more prosperous than for many years. . . . In modes principally used for cloaks we already emulate the best production in England, and have almost a monopoly of the home market. A great number

3 Webb, p. 149.
of silk weavers in Dublin are also employed on Persians. By far the greater ribbons made in Dublin are woven by women and girls under fifteen years old."

On the whole, the silk industry did not progress favourably, but rather declined. This was only to be expected, as the industry laboured under two grave disadvantages. The raw material had to be imported through Great Britain, who still had a monopoly of the East India trade, and the quantity of imported foreign and British silks, woven where raw materials were to be easily obtained, grew larger every year.

It is doubtful, however, whether the decline of this industry was such a loss as it has sometimes been suggested. The silk manufacture was always somewhat of an exotic growth in Ireland, and would never have flourished, even to the extent it did, had it not been artificially encouraged by large grants of public money. It never took root outside Dublin, and, as long as the East India trade continued to be in the hands of rivals, it could never hope to attain to a position of great importance in the national economy of the country.

(E) The Brewing Industry.

The grant of a free trade had no immediate effect on the prosperity of the Irish brewing industry, which, as we have seen, had continued to decline from the middle of the century. The industry remained at about the same volume as in 1780, in spite of the rapidly increasing population. The period was also marked by a very great rise in the quantities of English beer imported. The following figures are taken from Newenham:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Four years ending March 25th</th>
<th>Average annual imports of beer and ale</th>
<th>Average annual quantity of home-made strong beer</th>
<th>Average annual quantity of home-made small beer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1784 Barrels 56,641</td>
<td>Barrels 459,861</td>
<td>Barrels 177,138</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1788 Barrels 61,720</td>
<td>Barrels 388,131</td>
<td>Barrels 170,187</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1792 Barrels 106,692</td>
<td>Barrels 455,699</td>
<td>Barrels 215,902</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1Wallace, Manufactures of Ireland.  2Newenham, Appendix XIII.
The state of the brewing industry received the attention of Parliament in 1791, when Grattan raised a question about it, in view of the constantly increasing consumption of spirits, and of the growing prevalence of drunkenness in the country. "The state of the brewing," said Grattan, "on a comparison with its state thirty years ago, is that of a very rapid decline; the decrease is about one-third; the increase of importation is nearly two-thirds." He attributed this decline in the industry to many causes—the dearness and inferiority of the Irish barley; the prohibition against the importation of hops from Flanders; the superiority of the English malt liquors which were imported; the too high duties with which the industry was burdened, and the extraordinary regulations to which it was subjected. The duties to which he referred were the excise duties which had been imposed on sale at varying rates from the beginning of the eighteenth century. At first the rate had been 2s. 6d. a barrel on strong ale and 3d. a barrel on small ale, but later it had been increased to 4s. 6d. a barrel on the former and 10d. on the latter. Moreover, in 1785, malt had been subjected to an excise duty of 2s. 6d. per barrel.

The extraordinary regulations which Grattan referred to were contained in a long series of statutes, which endeavoured to control the brewing trade in every branch of its activity, but which, instead of encouraging it, had merely the effect of making it impossible for anybody to carry it on without excessive interference from revenue officers and inspectors. Amongst other things the price of ale had been regulated by various statutes. To remedy this state of things, Grattan proposed to take off all the excise duties on ale, and to put a further duty on malt with the object of increasing the taxation of spirits. This proposal was opposed by Beresford, who argued, no doubt with some truth, that the diminution in the amount of the excise duties did not indicate a diminution in production,

1 Irish Parl. Deb., vol. xi., p. 69. 2 4 Wm. and Mary, c. 3. 3 4 Geo. 1., c. 2.
but simply pointed to the fact that the brewers had become increasingly expert in evading the payment of duties. He pointed out that there were in Ireland eighteen hundred retailing brewers, and that the average duty paid by them would show that they only produced, on an average, nineteen barrels of ale each in the year, and that more than one-half of them showed by the return that they did not even produce one barrel. He also drew attention to the fact that the country was over-run with shebeeners, who produced large quantities of ale on which no duty was ever paid.

Grattan’s proposal that the excise duty should be taken off was not adopted, but the duties were, nevertheless, reduced to 2s. 6d. a barrel on strong ale, and 10d. on small ale.¹ In the following year the excise on the small ale was lowered to 9d., and these duties were then continued from year to year.² Another statute of 1791 repealed all the old regulations which hampered the brewers, and substituted a code of new and more workable ones in their place. The price of ale was fixed at not more than 6s. a barrel for small ale, and not less than 11s. 6d. a barrel for strong, and the retail price of the former was fixed at a penny per quart.³ About the same time, foreign hops were admitted into Ireland at a duty of only a penny per lb. above the duty payable on the British hops when hops were above a certain price.⁴ In the course of a few years the malt tax was increased; in 1795 to 3s. 3d. per barrel; in 1796 to 5s. 3d., and in 1799 to 6s.; in 1795 the whole excise duty on ale was taken off.⁵

Unfortunately, there are no figures available showing the quantities of ale brewed in Ireland after the passing of these Acts,⁶ but it is possible to judge of the great increase in the industry which took place by the figures on the next page, which show the striking decrease in the import of British beer.

¹ 31 Geo. III., c. 1. ² 32 Geo. III., c. 1. ³ 31 Geo. III., c. 16.
⁴ 34 Geo. III., c. 1. ⁵ 35 Geo. III., c. 1.
⁶ See a rough calculation in Castlereagh Corr., vol. iii., p. 175.
Year ending March 25 | Strong Ale and Beer Imported. (Barrels)
---|---
1792 | 125,059
1793 | 125,057
1794 | 76,255
1795 | 72,398
1796 | 55,738
1797 | 67,188
1798 | 50,919
1799 | 25,178
1800 | 19,709

In 1805, Newenham noticed the great quantity of beer then brewed in Ireland: "The porter breweries in general, and several of the principal ale breweries of Ireland, were established subsequently to the year 1790. The three greatest porter breweries in the city of Cork were established in 1792, 1795, and 1797. The porter and ale breweries of the new and flourishing town of Fermoy were established about seven or eight years ago." Four years later the same writer was of opinion that the people of Munster were rapidly changing from spirit to beer drinking, and that the porter breweries in Cork vied in extent with some of the principal ones in London. In 1814, Wakefield noticed the existence of flourishing breweries in Cork, Fermoy, Limerick, Waterford, Roscrea, Dublin, Belfast, Navan, Armagh, Dungannon and other places.

(F) The Distilling Industry.

The Act of 1780 regulating the distilling industry had a good effect in checking the growth of small distillers, but nevertheless the total quantity of spirits produced in the country rapidly increased. This may be judged from the following figures:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Half year ending</th>
<th>Number of Stills</th>
<th>Produce in Gallons</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Michaelmas, 1780</td>
<td>1212</td>
<td>686,539</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lady Day, 1781</td>
<td>855</td>
<td>1,100,766</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The following figures\(^1\) give the increase in the distilling from 1780 to 1792:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Four years ending</th>
<th>Average Annual Import of Foreign Spirits.</th>
<th>Average Annual Home-made Spirits which paid duty</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1784</td>
<td>Gallons 999,902</td>
<td>Gallons 1,768,042</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1788</td>
<td>1,407,999</td>
<td>1,872,486</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1792</td>
<td>1,163,609</td>
<td>3,189,133</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The rapid growth of drunkenness during these years attracted the serious attention of Parliament in 1791, when Grattan moved a Resolution that the drinking of spirits had become a great national evil, and should be discouraged as far as possible.\(^2\) In the same year the excise on spirits and the duties on imported spirits were raised, and the distilling industry was put under many severe restrictions. An attempt was made to do away with the small distilleries by a provision that no stills should be licensed for less than 500 gallons, and the obtaining of retailers’ licences was made more expensive and more difficult.\(^3\) As we have seen in dealing with the brewing, the effect of this Act was greatly to increase the consumption of beer, but it is remarkable that the quantity of spirits distilled in the country also increased very greatly, as may be judged from the following figures:\(^4\):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Four years ending</th>
<th>Average Annual Home-made Spirits which paid duty</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1796</td>
<td>Gallons 3,834,878</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1800</td>
<td>4,131,453</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In spite of the strict regulations contained in the Act of 1791, the production of illicit distilling seems to have gone on much the same as before. Some idea of the magnitude of this evil may be gathered from the fact that, between the years 1802 and 1806, 13,439 stills, 1,198

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\(^1\) Newenham, App. XIII.  
\(^2\) *I.P., Deb.*, XI., p. 66.  
\(^3\) 31 Geo. III., chaps. 1 and 16.  
\(^4\) Newenham, App. XIII.
heads and 9,732 worms were seized by the revenue officers. In 1811, Wakefield wrote: "I am convinced, whatever penal laws or regulations may be made, it is almost impossible to extirpate illicit distilleries from the mountains. It has been represented to me, and I believe with truth, that they are erected in the kitchens of baronets and in the stables of clergymen. The mountains are covered with them, and they are to be met with in the very last places where an English excise officer would expect to discover them."  

(g) The Glass Industry.

One of the most beneficial effects of the free trade legislation was the removal of the restrictions on the export of Irish glass. Every encouragement was given to the glass industry in 1786, when the importation into Ireland of all glass except that of the manufacture of Great Britain was forbidden. As a result of the free market which the Irish glass obtained, the industry progressed by leaps and bounds. In spite of the fact that most of the materials for the Irish glass manufacture were imported from England, and that the wages of those engaged in the industry were higher in Ireland than in England, the Irish glass was able to undersell the English, and consequently soon obtained a monopoly of the home market, and also came to be exported in large quantities.

In Dublin, large quantities of fine flint glass were manufactured, the annual value of the flint glass produced by one firm alone amounting to £7,000, and considerable quantities of crown glass were also made. In 1783 a large flint glass manufactory was opened in Waterford, where, from 1786 to 1794, glass to the value of £1,000 a year was made. The industry was also carried on extensively in Belfast, where flint glass, crown glass, bottle glass, and

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window glass were made. Other factories were opened in Cork, Newry, and Ballycastle.

All these factories seem to have thrived: "The houses in Dublin which are in the American glass trade have generally orders from New York sufficient to occupy them entirely for two years. . . . . There are five flint houses now working, two in Dublin, two in Belfast, and one in Waterford." The following table from Miss Murray's *Commercial Relations* gives a good idea of the increase in this industry.

Glass Exported from Ireland to all Parts, 1782—1800. (Compiled from Custom House Books in National Library, Dublin).

N.B.—Before 1782 no Glass was exported from Ireland.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year ending March 25th</th>
<th>Ware</th>
<th>Drinking Glasses</th>
<th>Cases</th>
<th>Bottles</th>
<th>Vials</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>£</td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>Dozen</td>
<td>Number</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1782</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1783</td>
<td>172</td>
<td>9,910</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>532</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1784</td>
<td>424</td>
<td>20,736</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2,808</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1785</td>
<td>593</td>
<td>1,680</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1,320</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1786</td>
<td>717</td>
<td>672</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>444</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1787</td>
<td>220</td>
<td>2,136</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>17,280</td>
<td>10,656</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1788</td>
<td>713</td>
<td>8,480</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>162</td>
<td>10,656</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1789</td>
<td>768</td>
<td>25,236</td>
<td>50½</td>
<td>253½</td>
<td>18,360</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1790</td>
<td>2,696</td>
<td>49,413</td>
<td>249</td>
<td>332</td>
<td>19,584</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1791</td>
<td>3,225</td>
<td>65,308</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>1,202</td>
<td>17,481</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1792</td>
<td>4,679</td>
<td>113,384</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>1,200</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1793</td>
<td>4,197</td>
<td>131,234</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1,240</td>
<td>24,480</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1794</td>
<td>2,065</td>
<td>175,157</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>2,676</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1795</td>
<td>5,751</td>
<td>139,386</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>21,961</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1796</td>
<td>5,617</td>
<td>234,651</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>6,121</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1797</td>
<td>3,765</td>
<td>589,078</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>2,855</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1798</td>
<td>2,890</td>
<td>61,611</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>10,455</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1799</td>
<td>2,674</td>
<td>58,160</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>10,543</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1800</td>
<td>3,392</td>
<td>48,522</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(H) The Paper Industry.

The paper industry also progressed; in 1785 the English manufacturers of paper expressed alarm at the growing prosperity of their Irish rivals; and in 1791 an

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1 Wallace, Manufactures of Ireland, 1798.
2 English Lords Committee on Irish Trade, 1785.
English traveller who visited the paper mills at Chapelizod and at Saggart thought they were fully equal to any he had seen in England or Holland. "The improvements in the paper manufacture," said Crumpe, "are well known; the sales in the home market are proportionately increased, and it bids fair in a small space of time to supply it completely."  In 1798 Wallace noted that it was progressing in magnitude every year.

(1) The Pottery Industry.

After 1780 the pottery manufacture did not revive. Josiah Wedgwood, in his evidence before the English Lords Committee on Trade, in 1785, stated that a pottery had been started in Dublin, for which skilled workers had been brought from Staffordshire, but that it had failed. "If there exist any manufacture of this kind beyond a few coarse tiles, and still coarser earthenware, it is so trivial as to deserve no notice." Foster, in his speech on the Union, said that there was not then a single pottery in Ireland, but, as a matter of fact, coarse potteries were in existence in Belfast, Youghal, Waterford, and Newry. Strangely enough, the flint stones which were used in the Staffordshire potteries were exported from Ireland, but the advantage derived from the proximity of the raw material was more than outweighed by the distance which coal would have had to be conveyed to Irish potteries.

(1) The Tanning Industry.

An industry, which, contrary to the general rule, went steadily down during the period of Grattan's Parliament, was that of the tanneries. This was caused largely by the growing practice of exporting live cattle, also by the increasing demand for green leather abroad; by the rise of

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1 Bowden, Tour Through Ireland, 1791.
3 Wallace, Manufactures of Ireland, p. 265.
4 Wallace, Manufactures of Ireland. 1798.
6 Newenham, p. 49.
the price of bark, and by the growth of tanning industries in the countries which had formerly been the largest customers for Irish leather. The improved methods which were at this time being introduced into the tanning industry elsewhere were not introduced in Ireland, and this may have helped to depress the industry; moreover, a tax was laid by the Irish Parliament upon leather—a tax which Wallace disapproved of as falling directly on the manufacture itself.

(k) The Shipbuilding Industry.

We have very little evidence of Irish shipbuilding in the eighteenth century, but it seems to have existed on a small scale. The great modern shipbuilding industry of Belfast was begun in 1791, when a Mr. Ritchie visited Belfast and was impressed by the suitability of the port for building ships. At that time there were only six jobbing ship-carpenters in the town. In the following year Mr. Ritchie returned with ten skilled workmen, and in 1796 commenced to build a graving dock, which was not completed until 1800. The following table, which is to be found in Wakefield, purports to give the number of ships built and registered in Ireland from 1788 to 1800, but it does not say where they were built, and they must have been very small, or else we should have some independent evidence of the industry which produced them:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1788</td>
<td>38</td>
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<tr>
<td>1789</td>
<td>72</td>
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<td>1790</td>
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<tr>
<td>1800</td>
<td>18</td>
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</table>

The shipbuilding industry flourished in Dublin on a small

1 Wallace, Manufactures of Ireland, 1798, p. 284. 2 Wakefield, vol. i., p. 721.
6 Benn, History of Belfast, p. 353.
scale, but the industry was ruined early in the nineteenth century by troubles with the workers. ¹

(1) The Provision Industry.

It would not be surprising to learn that the great increase of tillage that followed Foster's Act was accompanied by a falling off in the provision trade, but, as a matter of fact, no such falling off occurred. "It seems," says Newenham, "that tillage has not really, though apparently, gained on pasturage; but that tillage and pasturage have conjointly gained most surprisingly on the waste and unproductive land of Ireland; and that consequently a vast addition has been made to that which Adam Smith considers 'by far the greatest, the most important, and the most durable part of the wealth of every extensive country.'"³ The table opposite, which is taken from Murray's Commercial Relations, shows that there was not any diminution in the export of provisions taken as a whole; whereas the amount of beef exported decreased, the amount of pork, bacon, live bullocks, cows, and hogs increased in a greater proportion.

A tendency to export live cattle, and thus to deprive Ireland of the greater part of the benefit accruing from the provision trade, was noticed towards the end of the century; to counteract this tendency Parliament increased the export tax on live cattle from 1s. 6d. to 6s.,⁴ without, however, producing much effect.⁵ It must be remembered that the volume of the provision trade during these years cannot be judged by the exports alone; the great increase of trade which took place increased the quantities of provisions supplied to ships in Irish ports; a very large army was maintained in Ireland for several years; and the rapid growth of population greatly increased the home consumption.⁶

¹ Webb, Industrial Dublin Since 1698.
² Newenham, Essay on Population, 1865, p. 188.
³ 33 Geo. III., c. 1.
⁴ Wallace, Manufactures of Ireland, 1798.
⁵ Newenham, p. 219.
Provisions Exported from Ireland, 1780—1800.
(Compiled from the Custom House Books in the National Library, Dublin).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<td>68,653</td>
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<td>1,049</td>
<td>123,183</td>
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CHAPTER XXIII.

Wages in Irish Industry.

It was commonly said by English merchants and statesmen in the time of Grattan's Parliament that the rate of wages paid in Ireland was lower than that paid in England, but this statement should not be accepted without examination. It must be remembered that those who made it were largely interested in the matter in question, and that it was always put forward by English merchants as a reason on which to ground their opposition to the relaxation of any of the restraints which fettered Irish trade. So long as they could induce Parliament to believe that the wages of labour in industry in Ireland were substantially lower than in England, there was a valid ground for contending that Irish manufacturers could undersell the English in a free market; whereas the truth of the matter was that, animated as they were by the mercantile ideas prevailing at the time, they were afraid of competition, quite apart from any such considerations.

This subject was very carefully considered by Arthur Young, and the result of his investigations is very important, as it shows that the plea of the English manufacturers was quite unfounded. Indeed, as far as any difference of wages could be established between the two countries, it was generally in favour of Ireland; some allowance, however, must be made for the slight difference between the English and Irish rates of currency. The following passage contains the result of his inquiries:
""It has been asserted at the bar of the House of Commons that the price of weaving labour is 4s. a week in Ireland, and 8s. in England: meaning, I suppose, on an average. This is an instance, and a remarkable one, how little reliance is to be placed on such examinations, commenced after some favourite measure is to be carried, or apprehended evil deprecated. At a time when no public question was in agitation, when party and commerce were not in any union, and there was no temptation, because no motive, to deceive, I went from one end of Ireland to the other, and made innumerable inquiries into the state of all these manufactures, and particularly the price of labour. I had my intelligence at the fountain head; for the principal master manufacturers gave it me, and it was confirmed by the men. I found the average of linen-weaving was, in fine goods, 8s. 6d. per week, and in coarse ones, 6s. 3d.; I did not meet with a single instance where it was as low as 4s. This was not the price in any particular period, but general when the men had employment.

""If it is said that some years have elapsed since those inquiries, the reply is plain: no change has taken place since in the rates of labour, but what have been temporary, and owing to stagnations that have nothing permanent in them; my private intelligence, long since received, assures me of this, and it is confirmed by a variety of authority.

""As this point of manufacturing labour has had a great stress laid on it, in my opinion very absurdly, I shall add another circumstance or two. I found in the woollen fabrics, in the County of Cork, at Kilbrac, that combers earned 10s. per week, and weavers the same, losing one day in eighteen. At Castlemartyr, combers 8s., and in other woollen fabrics in that country, combers from 8s. to 10s., and weavers 7s. If, then, combing prices were not quite so high as in England, they are high enough to banish every idea of Ireland rivalling us from lowness of labour. I found, some years ago, on similar inquiries in England, that, upon an average of nine places, men earned 8s. 5d.
a week; in sixteen others—men, 7s. 6d.; women, 4s. 7d., and children, 2s. 8d. A weaver in Norwich, with his boy included, did not earn more than 7s. a week on the average, but with industry could make more; Darlington linen weavers, 7s. to 8s., but some so low as 3s.

"Upon the whole, these prices will not allow us to conjecture that the real value of labour in Ireland is lower than it is in England; and, if one takes into account the greater cheapness of provisions, the sure encourager of idleness, and consequently of bad work, we shall be convinced that the article labour is more in favour of the English manufacturer than of his Irish rival; but let it ever be remembered that this comparison depends on skill, and habitual and steady exertion, which certainly renders labour in that view uniformly cheaper in the dearest countries. I have on another occasion taken notice of the nominal cheapness of husbandry labour in Ireland—it is 6½d. a day—and I aver that pay (nor do I speak ignorantly, having had above forty labourers in my employ there) is really dearer, though so much nominally cheaper, than 2s. would be in Suffolk. It would be very difficult to convince me that something of this sort is not likewise found in manufactories. If it is not, what are the principles that govern a well-known fact, that we can undersell the Irish in some branches of their favourite manufacture—linen?

"While the information of the day is subject to so much error and deception, particulars gained and declared previous to this public agitation are valuable. Mr. Arbuthnot, inspector of the linen manufacture in Ireland, was employed in 1782 to examine the fabrics of the kingdom, and report their state and situation. In his report in that year he describes the great undertaking in the cotton branch at Prosperous. These are the prices of labour he nominates: A sheeting-weaver, who earns only 10s. or 11s. a week, will, in the cotton, earn 13s. to 15s. A lad of thirteen who had served a year earned 8s. or 9s.; active lads at the spinning jenny, 11s. to 15s.
The same unimpeached authority was informed in Limerick by the woollen manufacturers that the price of woollen weavers were then higher than in England; and by Messrs. Lane, near Cork, that Irish weavers will not work so much in the day as the English. Does not this tally exactly with the result of all my inquiries in Ireland, and confirm the suspicion I just now hinted that the nominal rates of labour deceive, and that the real superiority is with England.

"... At Belfast, Cork and Waterford, seamen in peace were paid 28s. to 30s. a month, but in war from 40s. to 60s. The peace price in England is 25s. to 30s."

Arthur Young's statement is borne out by other contemporary writers, and by such other evidence as it is possible to procure. For instance, a committee was appointed by the Irish House of Commons in 1784 to inquire into the state of industry. Particular attention was devoted to the question of the woollen industry, and it was suggested that the progress of the industry might be hampered by demands on the part of the workmen for inordinately high wages. A query was sent to the master manufacturers, asking their opinion whether the people would work on the same terms as the people of England. The answer was that "the working people of the woollen manufacture do engage that if the work of this country is secured by the legislature so as to enable their masters to give them permanent employment, they will work as cheap and as well as is done in any part of England." There is no suggestion here of lower wages being given in Ireland than in England—quite the contrary.

The state of affairs in the cotton trade was the same. Captain Brooke was several times in danger of his life from his workmen because he refused higher wages than were given in Manchester; and it was stated in 1798 that the cotton worker's wages were then fifteen per cent.

3 Foster's Speech on the Union.
higher than in England. In every other industry it was the same; silk workers' wages in Ireland were fifteen per cent. higher than in England; the wages of hosiers and glass workers were "considerably higher."

We have seen, when treating of the subject of combinations amongst labourers, the bad effect that these combinations had on the progress of industry in Ireland, and it may not be out of place to emphasise here again the fact that, during the closing years of the eighteenth century, the Irish workman was to a large extent his own worst enemy. Wherever workmen combined together to discuss wages, rates as high as, if not higher than, those current in England were demanded and enforced, quite regardless of the fact that the Irish industries were small and struggling. Doubtless, to some extent, this demand was a justifiable one, and reasonable, in view of the fact that, owing to the small number of industries in existence, the demand for women's and children's labour was small, and a workman's family was, consequently, a burden, and not a benefit. It must also be remembered that the formation of illegal and oppressive combinations by the working people was almost entirely due to the fact that Catholics were excluded from the guilds by the Penal Laws. But the demand was, nevertheless, a hardship on the employer, who could not hope to undersell his old-established English rivals unless he could produce his commodities at a lower cost; and in so far as it hampered the manufacturer, it indirectly injured the workman himself.

1 Wallace, Manufactures of Ireland, p. 211; see Castlereagh Corr., vol. iii., p. 206.
2 Wallace, pp. 210, 215, 239.
3 Webb, History of Trades Unionism, App. I.
CHAPTER XXIV.

THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION IN IRELAND.

The industrial revolution did not take place in Ireland at quite such an early date as it did in England. Perhaps the best way to compare the progress of the revolution in the two countries is to examine the appearance of each of the symptoms by which it was marked.

The first feature of the industrial revolution to strike the notice of an observer was a very rapid increase in population. This increase in population in England is summarised by Toynbee:¹ "Before 1751 the largest decennial increase, so far as we can calculate from our imperfect materials, was 3 per cent.; for each of the next three decennial periods the increase was 6 per cent.; between 1781 and 1791 it was 9 per cent.; between 1791 and 1801, 11 per cent." This great increase was due to the growth of the factory system, and to the extension of manufacture due to the improvements which had recently been introduced. It is true that during the same period there was a noticeable increase in the population of Ireland,² which was, as we have seen, as rapid as that in England, but, upon examination, it would appear that the rise in Irish population was due to causes quite different from those operating in England. There were several causes which tended to increase the rate of the growth of population in Ireland; the absence of the poor laws and of the consequent system of settlement rendered the labouring class more free to move about in search of work than they were in England; and the low standard of housing accommodation which

¹ Industrial Revolution, p. 67. ² See Chapter on Population, supra.
the Irish peasant was content with took away the restraint which tended to keep down the growth of the English agricultural class, who were loth to marry until they were provided with suitable and substantial housing. Moreover, the Irish were accustomed to marry at an earlier age than the English, and were encouraged to have larger families owing to the extremely low standard of comfort with which they were content. The fact that the staple food of the country was potatoes, which could be grown with a fraction of the labour necessary to grow wheat, operated to make the poor somewhat improvident of the future. Towards the end of the century the natural tendency to a rapid increase of population was increased, in the first place by the stoppage of emigration to America as a result of the war, and subsequently by the great extension of tillage and consequent sub-division of holdings which followed the passing of Foster’s Act in 1784. Thus, although the population of Ireland increased at least as rapidly as that of England during the latter half of the eighteenth century, the increase was in no way symptomatic of the coming of an industrial revolution, as it was in England, but was due to quite different causes.

The mere growth of the population was not so characteristic a feature of the events which were happening in England as was the distribution of the people between the towns and the country. The period we are considering was notable in England for the increase of large towns at a hitherto unprecedented rate. "If we turn to the principal towns," says Toynbee, "we shall find in many of them an extraordinary growth between the end of the seventeenth century and the time of Adam Smith. While the population of Norwich had only increased during this period by about one-third, and that of Worcester by half, the population of Sheffield had increased sevenfold, that of Liverpool ten-fold, of Manchester five-fold, of Birmingham seven-fold, of Bristol more than threefold." 1 In Ireland there was no increase of the urban

1 Industrial Revolution, p. 11.
population at all comparable to this; the population of Dublin, which, in 1725, was 110,000, and in 1753, 128,000, had only increased in 1775 to 150,000, and in 1798 to 182,000;¹ and the rate of increase in the other large towns of Ireland seems to have been also small, and in no way disproportionate to the general increase of the population of the country. To this general statement there is one notable exception—in 1757 the population of Belfast was 8,549; in 1782, 13,105; in 1791, 18,320; while in 1813 it had grown to 27,832.² This is an exception which clearly proves the rule, for, as we have seen, Belfast was the principal seat of the one industry into which the improved methods, which were then beginning to come into force in England, were introduced at an early date, namely, the cotton industry. Indeed, far from the growth of the great towns as the centres of industry being the order of the day, there was a distinct tendency in the opposite direction. The concentration of the wool and hosiery workers in Dublin had ever been a complaint by those interested in Irish industrial affairs; it was said that the workers laboured under disadvantages owing to the high price of provisions and the insanitary conditions of town life; but the real cause of complaint would seem to have been the danger which Parliament felt from the too great proximity of large bodies of workers who were prone to combine and agitate on the least provocation; however, whatever the reason, efforts were made by Parliament to move the woollen industry from Dublin to country districts.³

"Another point to be considered," says Toynbee, "is the relation of rural and urban population. According to Gregory King, writing in 1696, London contained 530,000 inhabitants, other cities in market towns 870,000, while villages and hamlets numbered four millions. Arthur Young, seventy years later, calculated that London contained one-sixth of the whole population, and remarked

¹ Whitelaw and Walsh. History of Dublin.
² Benn, History of Belfast.
³ 26 Geo. III., c. 48; 27 Geo. III., c. 13, etc.
that the half of England was found in towns.'" In Ireland no such disproportion came about. The growth of population, being due to the operation of Foster's Act, took most effect in the country districts, where great numbers of workers must have been required to produce the large quantities of corn which were exported after that Act. In 1805, Newenham estimated that the amount of tillage was at least six times what it had been in 1785, and that the rural population had grown not only in the same, but in a greater proportion; and four years later expressed the same opinion: "The great number of people employed in the linen and cotton manufactures, the only extensive ones which have as yet flourished in Ireland, is inconsiderable in proportion to the number employed, directly or indirectly, in agriculture. Three hundred thousand weavers and spinners is as many as the linen manufacture can at present employ, if the whole of their time were devoted thereto; and probably little more than sixty thousand are engaged in the cotton manufacture. But three hundred and sixty thousand form a very small portion of the class of labourers in Ireland.'"

Next to the increase and changed distribution of the population, the most striking feature of the industrial revolution in England was the great agrarian changes which took place. "An agrarian revolution plays as much a part in the great industrial change of the end of the eighteenth century as does the revolution in manufacturing industries. What were the agricultural changes which led to the notable decrease in the rural population? The three most effective causes were—the destruction of the common field system of cultivation, the enclosure on a large scale of common and waste lands, and the consolidation of small farms into large." None of these changes took place in Ireland. There was no common field system of cultivation to be destroyed; there were no commons or waste lands on a

large scale to be enclosed; and, as regards the size of farms, the tendency was diametrically in the opposite direction to that in England, owing to the increased tillage which followed Foster's Act. Indeed, the salient feature of Irish agriculture during the closing years of the century was the excessive sub-division which was everywhere taking place. There were two incidental features in the English agrarian revolution which should be noticed; one was the great improvements in the methods of agriculture owing to the introduction of farming on a large scale, the other was the rapid rise of rents.¹ We have seen, in dealing with the state of agriculture in Ireland, that this period was not marked by any noticeable raising of the standard in that respect; and, while undoubtedly rents rose, this was owing to the rapid rise of population, and to the greatly increased tillage which followed Foster's Act, and not, as in England, to the improved quality and price of the products of the land.

Another striking feature of the industrial revolution was the great improvement in manufacturing processes which were then coming into universal use. The cotton industry was the first to be revolutionised: "Four great inventions altered the character of the cotton manufacture—the spinning jenny patented by Hargreaves in 1770; the water frame invented by Arkwright the year before; Crompton's mule introduced in 1779, and the self-acting mule first invented by Kelly in 1792, but not brought into use till Robertson improved it in 1805."² Again, the iron manufacture underwent changes of far-reaching importance by the introduction, in 1735, of the method of smelting iron by pit coal. From that date the new process rapidly spread: "The works which had formerly been chiefly carried on in Sussex passed to districts in the neighbourhood of coal, and a new impulse was given to the manufactures by Cort, who, in 1783 and 1784, introduced the process of puddling and rolling iron. The

¹Toynbee, p. 71.
²A very good account of these changes is to be found in Lecky, England in the Eighteenth Century, vol. vii., p. 267.
great period of the English iron manufacture was still to come, but even in the eighteenth century its progress was only less than in the cotton manufacture. In 1740 the quantity of pig-iron made in England and Wales was estimated at 17,000 tons; in 1796 it was 125,000; in 1806 it was 250,000. The progress of manufacture was further increased by the vast works of inland navigation which were then being constructed, and the good effect of these new communications, as well as of the new processes, was soon felt in every manufacture. Possibly the greatest revolution of all was the introduction of steam, which was employed in 1785 in the cotton manufacture, and was generally adopted as the motive power in all manufactures during the last twenty years of the eighteenth century.

This great revolution was scarcely felt at all in Ireland, where the processes and improvements which were changing the whole aspect of English life were but slowly introduced. As late as 1814, Wakefield complained of the slowness with which the division of labour was being carried out in Ireland: “Little progress can be made in Ireland in manufactures without a proper division of labour, which is still a great deficiency in that country. In every large undertaking, recourse is always had to the assistance of some director or overseer, even when the labour is performed by lathe-work; because such a person possessing competent skill and experience takes a more comprehensive view of the whole business than any common workman is capable of doing. Hence he is enabled to distribute the different parts of the work to those best qualified for the execution of them, and to assign to each labourer his fit proportion, by which means the whole is completed in a shorter time and in a much better manner. But in Ireland the minute divisions of land, and the manner in which the inhabitants are scattered over the country render it necessary for labour of various kinds to be performed by the same individual, and thus each family

2 Lecky, op. cit., vol. vii., p. 279.
becomes the manufacturer of their own clothing and of everything else that they use. Most of the raw materials being supplied either by their flocks, or the produce of their land, they are better able to continue this system, and to dispense with the use of articles imported or made by regular workmen. In arts carried on in this manner, improvement is impossible; and, while the same system exists, no taste can be excited for a superior mode of life, nor will much encouragement be given to the establishment of manufactories. Except in the cotton branches and the curing of provisions, this pernicious system is everywhere observed; it pervades all ranks, from the nobleman who makes his own candles, cultivates his own patch of flax, and has it spun by his servants, to the cottier, whose wife and daughter spin and manufacture the frieze and woollen stuffs, which serve them as clothing.”

The one manufacture into which English methods were to a large extent introduced was that of cotton, but even in this the Irish methods fell far behind the British: “If we possess the machinery which they use, we are not so adroit as the English manufacturers in the use of it.” The state of the cotton manufacture, looked at from the point of view of the industrial revolution, may be judged from the following description from Wakefield:—“Instead of the raw material being purchased by the weaver and sold afterwards in a manufactured state, the cotton yarn is either given out by the master manufacturer to the weaver, who receives so much per piece for his labour, or it is woven, as in England, in looms established within the buildings belonging to the manufacturer. Besides, there are here no females employed in spinning for a wretched pittance, scarcely sufficient to procure them support, as is the case in the linen manufacture; all the spinning is performed by machinery, a method which embraces two advantages: the work is not only done at a cheaper rate, but as the person employed at the jennies must attend to

1 Wakefield, I., p. 760.
2 Letter from Mr. Brooke, Dublin, 1786.
3 Wallace, Manufactures of Ireland, 1798.
them while going, the fixed number of hours is thus worked out in the course of every week." But apparently it was only in Belfast and the North that this promising state of affairs prevailed. In Dublin the progress of the industry was so hampered by labour troubles that the trade was broken up, and in 1816, out of three hundred looms which were working in Dublin, only one hundred were in the employment of masters, the other two hundred being worked by independent contractors. The result, as may be imagined, was ruinous to the further progress of the industry in Dublin.²

In the iron industry, Ireland was still much behind England, for, although, as we have seen, the smelting of iron by pit coal was introduced in the latter country as early as 1735, it was not practised in Ireland until 1790, and then only on a very small scale at Arigna.³ In the linen industry, the improved methods were very slow to appear. In 1811 a manufacturer told Wakefield that "the spinning of linen yarns by machinery was not practised in Ireland until within these few years. There are now—that is, in 1811—several manufactories on this principle in some parts of the country, though not so many as might be expected." The leading cause of the slowness of the improvement in the linen manufacture was the low price of labour, which arose from the fact that the workers in the North of Ireland were almost wholly dependent on this industry for employment, and were, therefore, bound to work at a very low wage.⁴ It is surprising to note that even in 1814 in many places the flax was raised, spun into yarn, and woven into cloth by the same person and his family,⁵ and this industry, as well as agriculture, were both still being hampered by the old system of the one man being both a manufacturer and a farmer.⁶

The improved methods were practically not introduced into the woollen manufacture at all. "England, ³Report of Arigna Ironworks, Dublin, 1801. ⁴Wakefield, I., p. 682. ⁵Wakefield, I., p. 690. ⁶Whitelaw and Walsh, History of Dublin, p. 975. ⁷Ib., p. 701.
with her long experience, her more extensive capital, conditions with respect to skill, is far before Ireland. The invention of machinery constitutes part of her skill, as the general adoption of it shows her wisdom. The woollen manufacture abounds with numerous and glaring instances of our backwardness in this respect."

Apparently at the very end of the century the principle of the division of labour was scarcely recognised in this industry. "At present, he who is this week engaged in weaving durants or stuffs made of single worsted, three quarters of a yard wide, will probably next week be turned to double stuffs, or stuffs made of strong worsted doubled and twisted, and not more than 15 or 16 inches wide; the following week it is possible he may be employed in weaving tabbinets or poplins of which the warp is silk; and from this lightest kind of work may turn perhaps to the heaviest kind of worsted manufacture. The rapidity of these transactions produce the worst effects on the manufacture.""  

Fifteen years later, Wakefield made the same complaint, and attributed the slowness of the introduction of improvements into the Irish woollen industry to the fact that the people were accustomed to work up the wool for their own cloth, and not to bring it into market at all. In 1809, machinery on a large scale was worked at Celbridge, but apparently this remained the solitary instance of the new methods in Ireland: "The manufacture of woollen goods is everywhere prevalent without due division of labour which could render it of any value to the country." Again, in the tanning industry, Ireland was far behind England; about the end of the eighteenth century great improvements had been introduced into the English tan yards, machinery being employed for breaking the bark, and for separating the bad parts from the good, but none of these improvements were known in Ireland in 1814.  

1 Wallace, Manufactures of Ireland, p. 68.  
2 Wallace, Manufactures of Ireland, p. 153.  
3 Wakefield, vol. i., p. 758.  
4 Wakefield, vol. i., p. 271; Charlemont MSS., ii., 307.
Steam as the motive power of manufacture does not appear to have been employed in Ireland during the eighteenth century, although, as we have seen, it was quite common in England. The Irish Parliament was ever anxious to avoid passing any measure which might tempt the English to retaliate by prohibiting the exportation of English coal to Ireland, but the only industries which were mentioned in the debates as being likely to suffer if this were done were those of glass and iron; and these were the only industries mentioned by Wallace in 1798 as being likely to suffer if the price of coal were increased. This would seem to show that steam was not then largely employed as a motive power in Ireland.

Indeed, the general industrial progress of Ireland seems to have been far behind that of England, and the principle of the division of labour to have been introduced much more slowly and reluctantly. In 1814, Wakefield gave the following surprising account of the state of affairs in this respect in the country districts:—

"In Ireland the scarcity of tradesmen and mechanics in the country places renders it necessary for the lower orders to construct and make every article or implement for themselves, and hence they acquire by habit a readiness of turning their hand to anything; a family spins, weaves and manufactures its own linen and frieze; those who use candles make them themselves; and all these people at the same time cultivate a small piece of land, and raise food sufficient for their maintenance."

It would appear, therefore, that the industrial revolution did not take place in Ireland at as early a date as in England. This subject has, perhaps, been treated at too great length, but its importance will appear when we reach the chapter dealing with the economic achievement of Grattan's Parliament. Connolly, in his *Labour in Irish History*, contends that the cause of the increased prosperity of Ireland in the last years of the eighteenth century was due, not to the action of the independent Irish

1 And see *Examiner's Letters*, Dublin, 1786.
2 Wakefield, vol. i., p. 676.
Parliament, but to the Industrial Revolution. It will, therefore, be important when we come to examine the connection between Grattan’s Parliament and the contemporary prosperity of Ireland to be able to gauge the exact influence on Irish affairs of the Industrial Revolution. If the facts and conclusions of the present chapter be correct, it is clear that the extent of such influence must have been negligible.
PART IV.
PUBLIC FINANCE.

CHAPTER XXV.

Public Revenue and Expenditure—1700-1780.

In the management of her public revenue and expenditure, Ireland was largely subservient to England. By far the greater part of the Irish revenue was completely free from the control of Parliament, and was consequently at the disposal of the King, or rather the Government of the day, who did not scruple to use it for their own purposes to the neglect of the public services for the upkeep of which it had been originally granted. The basis of the revenue law of Ireland was the legislation of Charles II., which followed on the confiscations after the rebellion of 1641, and which provided that, in return for the King's surrender of his right to the full benefit of these forfeitures, he should be granted a large hereditary revenue. The older forms of Crown property were mostly done away with, and the new revenue then granted was vested for ever in the King and his successors. The most important sources of this revenue were (1) the Crown rents arising from the confiscations of Henry VIII., and from the counties forfeited after the rebellion of Tyrone; (2) the quit rents arising out of property forfeited after the rebellion of 1641; (3) the hearth money, and (4) the Excise and Customs duties, and licences for
selling ale, wine, spirits, etc., at the rates fixed in the schedules to the Acts.

That these sums were intended by Parliament to be applied to the upkeep of the public services of the country is abundantly clear from the Acts by which they were granted; the excise was stated to be “for the pay of the army and for defraying other public charges in the defences and preservation of the Kingdom”; the tunnage and poundage “for protecting the trade of the Kingdom at sea and augmenting the public revenue”; the hearth money “for public charges and expenses”; and it was expressly provided that the money raised by ale licences should not be charged with pensions in favour of individuals. The only parts of the hereditary revenue which were clearly the private property of the King were the prisage on wines, the lighthouse duties, and the small casual revenues which, combined, never reached £15,000 a year. Parliament, however, in granting the revenue in perpetuity, had put it out of its own power to see that the money it had voted was properly applied, and, as we shall see, the Irish hereditary revenue was the fund which was resorted to by the Government to reward the private services of those who had done, or who undertook to do, the backstairs work of the King or his ministers. One result of this state of things was that the English Parliament was ever jealous of Irish prosperity, knowing that an increase of Irish trade or commerce would have the effect of augmenting the King’s Irish revenue, and of increasing the possibility of his being able to govern England without that frequent recourse to Parliament for funds, which was then looked on as the great guarantee of English liberty. It is probable that this consideration played a greater part in determining the English Parliament’s policy of discouraging Irish prosperity than is generally supposed.

As long as the hereditary revenue was sufficient to pay the expenses of Government, the King was completely

independent of the Irish Parliament, and it was only when there was a deficit and it became necessary for the King to seek for additional revenue that Parliament got an opportunity of inquiring into the state of the public purse. In 1692 such an occasion arose. The great expenses in connection with the Jacobite Wars of 1690 had rendered the hereditary revenue insufficient, and consequently Parliament was summoned by Lord Sydney in 1692. This Parliament saw the first of many conflicts which were waged between the English Privy Council and the Irish Parliament on the subject of the right of the latter to originate its own bills of supply. Two money bills which had originated in the English Privy Council were sent over to Ireland to be passed; one of them was rejected as a protest against what was considered a breach of privilege; and the other was passed solely owing to the extreme exigencies of the time. At the same time, the House of Commons passed the following resolutions in assertion of their rights:—"Resolved, that it was and is the sole and undoubted right of the Commons of Ireland in Parliament assembled, to prepare and resolve the ways and means of raising money. (2) Resolved, that it was and is the undoubted right of the Commons to prepare heads of bills for raising money." The Crown was very indignant at these resolutions, and Parliament was dissolved immediately; the views of the Irish and English judges were obtained on the question, and their unanimous opinion was in favour of the King and against Parliament.†

The merits of this dispute are more properly the subject of constitutional than of economic history, and have been ably dealt with by writers on that subject.‡ It is sufficient for the present purpose to state that the precise point in dispute was whether the right of initiating new taxes for Ireland should lie with the English Privy Council or with the Irish Parliament. It is quite clear

2 Macartney, Account of Ireland, p. 113.
that if the former body could be held to possess that formidable power, England would have at hand another weapon wherewith she could readily wound Irish interests. It is unnecessary to argue that the material progress of a country may be helped by wise and hindered by oppressive taxation. Moreover, as we have seen, the right of the House of Commons to control supply was the only thing that ensured that Parliament would occasionally be summoned, and that stood between Parliamentary Government—such as it was in Ireland—and an absolute tyranny.

However, in spite of the importance of the subject, the House of Commons took no further steps to insist on its privilege, and, for a long succession of years, passed whatever money bills the English Privy Council chose to send them. In 1761 the question was again opened. In that year the Irish Lords Justices represented to the Government that the feeling on the subject was again high, and that any money bill which originated in England would probably be rejected. The Government, however, did not act on this advice, but sent over the money bill for the year which, as they had foretold, passed successfully, its path having been smoothed in advance by the usual dismissals of enemies and promotions of friends.¹

In 1769 the question was put forward as the main feature in the programme of the then newly-formed "Patriot" party. The usual money bill, which had originated in England, was brought forward, and, in spite of the most strenuous efforts by the Government, was rejected "because it did not take its rise in the House of Commons." The House, however, was satisfied with this assertion of its rights, and, having struck its blow, proceeded to pass the very bill it had just rejected. Indeed, the question cannot be said to have been determined one way or the other, as it was never denied that Parliament might reject any bill presented to it, and its motives for rejecting any particular bill were of no great

¹ Lecky, II., 62. ² I.C.J., VIII., 323.
importance to the Government. The same farce was repeated in 1773.

Another question which gave rise to a contest between the King and the Irish Parliament on the subject of the purse arose in 1731. A fund had been provided for the payment of the principal and interest of the National Debt, and the Government was anxious that this sum should be granted to the King and his successors for ever, whereas the popular party wished to grant it only from session to session. The latter proposal was carried by a majority of one vote.

In 1749 the jarring interests of King and Parliament came into conflict on a similar matter. The unusual prosperity which followed the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle had resulted in a surplus of £200,000, which it was resolved to apply to the payment of the National Debt. Heads of a Bill for this purpose were sent to England, but the Government took the view that the surplus belonged to the Crown, and could not be disposed of without the King's consent. The session of 1751 was accordingly opened by the Duke of Dorset with a speech, wherein he signified the royal approval of the appropriation of part of this surplus to the reduction of the debt. The House of Commons, incensed at this breach of its privilege, passed the bill, but omitted to take any notice of the King's assent. When the bill was returned from England, it was found that a preamble had been inserted, signifying the consent of the King, but the House of Commons was not prepared to pursue the matter further, and passed the bill in its altered form. The same question arose in the session of 1753, which was opened by the Lord Lieutenant with a speech giving the King's consent to the appropriation of part of the surplus to the further reduction of the debt. Again the bill was passed without noting the consent, and again it was returned with the consent inserted. On this occasion the House was

1 Lecky, II., 102; Plowden, I., 396.
2 Plowden, I., 434. 3 Lecky, I., 459.
stronger, and rejected the bill in its altered form. The answer of the Government was to dismiss from their offices all those who had voted against the bill, and to apply the surplus to the payment of the debt without troubling about anyone's consent.

Thus, the Irish Parliament got the worst of its struggle with the King on the question of finance. In order to get even with him, it had recourse to a system which may be described as cutting off its own nose to spite its face. Having despaired of getting an efficient control of public expenditure, it determined to keep that expenditure as high as possible, so that the King should always have to resort to Parliament for more and more money. From 1753 onwards it became the custom to grant large sums every session, nominally for public works, such as canals, bridges, and the encouragement of industry, but really for the private aggrandisement of the members and their friends. It was also sought to burden the hereditary revenue as much as possible. The bounty on the inland carriage of corn granted in 1757 was imposed in perpetuity on that revenue, by being made payable out of the revenue in the hands of the Collector of Taxes in Dublin port. A similar provision was made in the case of the fishery bounties granted in 1763. The whole expense of collecting and managing the taxes was also placed on the hereditary revenue.

As a matter of fact, in regard to the actual amount of taxation which they had to pay, the Irish people had little grievance during the greater part of the eighteenth century. By far the greater part of the revenue was raised by means of the Customs and Excise duties, the hearth money, and the Crown and quit rents. These last were a perfectly fair tax, as it was only right that those who had received large grants of land from the State should in some way recompense the State. The Excise duties, which were imposed by one of the Acts of Settlement, consisted

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1 Lecky, 1., 461; Plowden, State of Ireland, 1., 306.
2 Macartney, Account of Ireland, p. 142.
3 Murray, Commercial Relations, p. 180.
4 14 & 15 Car. II., c. 8.
of two parts—an inland excise on all beer, ale, and spirits, and an import excise on all goods imported into Ireland, with the exception of jewels, bullion, coins, victuals, arms, and ammunition. The Customs duties consisted of tunnage on wines and spirits imported, and poundage on all other imports and on all native exports. The rates at which these duties were laid were set out in the statutes creating them, and were not at all excessive, judged by the standard of the seventeenth century. The only direct tax which the poor had to pay was the hearth money, which consisted of a yearly tax of two shillings on each hearth and stove. Even this tax did not affect the very poor, for it was provided that it should not be payable by any person occupying a house of less than the annual value of eight shillings, and who did not occupy land of that annual value, and who was not possessed of goods or land of the value of four pounds.

Thus we see that the poor were in no sense oppressed by reason of any tax comprised in the hereditary revenue, and, with regard to the "additional" duties imposed by Parliament, they were in an equally favourable position. Indeed, these additional duties were, for the greater part of the century, a comparatively insignificant part of the whole revenue. In 1695 a land tax was imposed, but was only in operation for two years, and was never revived. In 1715 additional duties were granted on beer, ale, spirits and tobacco, and these duties were continued from year to year. The first substantial grant of additional revenue was made in 1727, when duties on beer, ale, spirits, wines, muslin, silks, molasses, and treacle were imposed. None of these commodities could be said to constitute necessaries of life. At the same time an eminently fair tax was laid on the salaries of absentee office holders. From this date no further new taxes were granted by Parliament until 1773, with the exception of the loan duties, which were wholly appropriated to pay the interest and

1 14 & 15 Car. II., c. 9.  2 See Bacon's Book of Rates, 1737.  3 14 & 15 Car. II., c. 17.  4 1 Geo. II., c. 1 and c. 4.
liquidate the principal of the national debt, and certain small duties appropriate to particular purposes. The former mainly consisted of small taxes on vinegar, hops, earthenware, coffee, soap-waste, cider, and similar non-essential commodities; while the latter were largely made up of duties on cards, dice, plate, carriages and other luxuries. In 1773, owing to the increasing expenditure of the Government, new duties were imposed, for the first time, as we have said, since 1727. Again they were made up of taxes which could not possibly press hard on the poor, being composed of stamp duties on paper, vellum, parchment, legal documents, newspapers, pamphlets, and almanacks. In 1775, duties were laid on imported meal, bread, flour, biscuits, and wheat, but these were part of a scheme to encourage tillage in Ireland, and any increase which they might occasion in the price of food would doubtless have been more than counterbalanced by the increased employment which they would create.

On the whole, it would appear that the Irish were lightly taxed during the early years of the eighteenth century. “Poisonous as were the laws in restraint of trade,” says Froude, “unequal as was the executive government to the repression of the most vulgar crimes, the administration of Ireland possessed a single merit. If it did nothing, it cost little.” Arthur Young was much struck at the lowness of Irish as compared with British taxation, and drew up the following table, comparing the two:

| British Revenue of £13,000,000 paid by 9,000,000 people is | £1 9 0 a head. |
| Irish Revenue of £1,000,000 paid by 3,000,000 people is | £0 6 8 a head. |
| British Revenue of £13,000,000 paid by 72,000,000 acres is | £0 3 6 an acre. |
| Irish Revenue of £1,000,000 paid by 25,000,000 acres is | £0 0 10 an acre. |

1 Clarendon, Revenue of Ireland, 1791. 2 15 & 16 Geo. III., c. 6. 3 15 & 16 Geo. III., c. 3. 4 English in Ireland, II., 4. 5 Young's Tour, II., 226.
British Revenue of £13,000,000 paid by a rental of £24,000,000 is £0 10 10 in the £
Irish Revenue of 1,000,000 paid by a rental of 6,000,000 is £0 3 4 in the £

But it must be remembered that Ireland was incomparably poorer than England, and of much less taxable capacity. Whatever satisfaction may be derived from the thought that the necessaries of life were not taxed in Ireland must be tempered by the reflection that the necessaries of life in that country were so mean and poor as to be almost incapable of bearing a tax. "Shall we tax leather where no shoes are worn," exclaimed a member of the House of Commons, "or tallow where no candles are burnt? What tax can be raised upon the necessaries of life when they consist wholly of roots and water?" There is an amusing pamphlet preserved in the Royal Irish Academy suggesting means of raising a revenue, wherein the writer expresses the opinion that Parliament should lay a duty on swearing, gambling, and drunkenness, as these were the only things left in Ireland to tax.

On the whole, however, the Irish had little to complain of in the way of taxation. The injustices which distinguished Irish finance during the period we are considering did not appertain to revenue, but to expenditure. Here we may invert Froude's epigram, and say that if the Government cost little, it did nothing. The British taxpayer may have been more heavily burdened than the Irish, but the money which he had to pay was at least spent for his own benefit; the Irish taxpayer, on the other hand, contributed to a fund which was spent on any and every purpose rather than the improvement or even the good government of Ireland. Some of the tribute went into the pockets of English job-hunters; some to the upkeep of the friends and mistresses of the King; some to an army which was largely employed abroad fighting England's battles; and some into the pockets of his own

2 Infallible Scheme to Pay the Public Debt in Six Months, Dublin, 1731.
corrupt and insatiable representatives. If the question
of Irish taxation is regarded from this point of view, it
assumes a somewhat less favourable aspect. The man who
pays a pound for a return which he enjoys, may pay
more, but certainly receives better value, than he who
pays a shilling for no return whatsoever.

The first respect in which the Irish expenditure was
wasteful was the collection of the revenue. The expendi-
ture of the Revenue Board increased from £69,790 in
1750 to £121,933 in 1770, and the expenditure of the
Commissioners of Account increased sevenfold between
1757 and 1770. One of the measures which the Irish
Parliament greatly disapproved of in Townshend's
administration was his adding to the numbers of the Com-
missioners of Account, and dividing the Customs and
Excise departments. This greatly increased the expenses
of collecting the revenue, but the Boards were re-united
a few years later. In 1778 the cost of collecting the revenue
of Great Britain was 7½ per cent. of the revenue, while the
cost of collecting that of Ireland was 17¾ per cent. There
were, undoubtedly, reasons which, to some extent,
explained this discrepancy: the great number of small
Excise payers; the number of ports which had to be
watched, and only a few of which paid any substantial
duties; and the many additional duties which were placed
on the Commissioners of Revenue outside the mere col-
lection of taxes; but there is no doubt that the collection
of revenue was the occasion of much peculation and fraud.

A grievance which was very severely felt was the
practice of granting most of the great Irish offices to
Englishmen who never came to reside in the country,
whereby a great part of the country's revenue went abroad
without any return being received. Until 1770 the Vice-
roys were usually absent about four-fifths of their time.
In 1702 a correspondent from Ireland complained that all
the great offices were held by deputy, including the Master

1 Baratariana. 2 Lecky, vol. ii., pp. 110 and 117.
3 Clarendon, Revenue of Ireland, pp. 147 and 148.
of the Rolls, Clerk of the Council, Registrar of the Chancery, etc. In 1724, Swift complained that all the highly-paid officials were English. Lord Berkeley was Master of the Rolls; Lord Palmerston, First Remembrancer; Doddington, Clerk of the Pells; Southwell, Secretary of State; Burlington, Hereditary High Treasurer; Arden, Under-Treasurer; while four of the Commissioners of Revenue lived in England. Every Chancellor until Fitzgibbon was an Englishman, and usually every chief of the common law courts. In the Church, every Primate during the eighteenth century was an Englishman; of the eighteen Archbishops of Dublin and Cashel, ten were Englishmen; indeed, the great majority of those who held high offices in the Church of Ireland were English, and many of them never come to Ireland at all. Swift compared Ireland to a hospital where all the household officers grew rich, while the poor, for whose sake it was built, were starved. Prior, in his list of absentees, written in 1729, stated that £300,000 was remitted annually to England by way of salaries and pensions; that, amongst other high officers, the Lord Treasurer, Vice-Treasurer, Commissioners of Revenue, Auditor-General, Master of the Rolls, Chief Remembrancer, Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant, Clerk of the Pells, and the Secretary of State were absentees, and that two-thirds of the general officers and one-fourth of the commissioned officers of the army, drawing pay amounting to £40,000 a year, also lived in England. The list of absentees published in 1769 stated that sums remitted abroad in salaries had increased; that, in addition to the officers mentioned as absentees in 1729, eleven bishops and several deans then resided abroad.

The Irish Parliament made many attempts to put an end to this evil. In 1727 it imposed a tax of four

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1 Letter Quoted in Lecky, vol. i., p. 198.
2 Swift, Fourth Draper's Letter: and see a letter from Dean Swift to the Duke of Dorset, 14th Jan., 1735; Sackville MSS., I., 159.
4 Murray, Commercial Relations, p. 163.
5 Short View of the State of Ireland: The Tribune, Dublin, 1729, p. 19.
6 Prior, List of the Absentees, 1729.
7 Morris, List of Absentees, 1769.
shillings in the pound on the salaries of persons holding offices and employments in Ireland, who resided in England for more than six months in the year, but the whole good was taken out of the measure by the provision that the King might exempt any office-holder from payment of the tax. The consequence of this exemption was that the tax never produced any very large amount; the highest amount ever yielded was in 1730, when £8,720 was produced, but the amount decreased from that year until 1753, when it was only £1,947. This had been caused by the practice which had developed of the King granting an additional pension to cover the amount payable by way of tax. The tax, consequently, proved of no use, and was dropped in 1753. In 1769 a similar tax was again imposed, this time with no provision authorising the King to exempt office-holders from its operation. An ingenious attempt was made by the Government to reimburse those from whose salary the tax had been deducted by a grant out of the revenue, but this attempt was so resented by Parliament that it was not renewed.

By far the greatest grievance which the Irish taxpayer was under was caused by the system of granting to the King's friends and dependants pensions charged on the Irish revenue. The English Parliament exercised strict supervision over grants of this kind, and consequently it was usually the more disreputable of the King's adherents who were charged on the Irish establishment. The habit of quartering on Ireland persons who could not be safely or largely provided for in England was inveterate. The Duke of St. Albans, the bastard son of Charles II., enjoyed an Irish pension of £800 a year; Catherine Sedley, the mistress of James II., had another of £5,000 a year. William bestowed confiscated lands exceeding an English county in extent, on his Dutch favourites, Portland and Albemarle, and a considerable

1 10 Geo. I., c. 4.
estate on his former mistress, Elizabeth Villiers. The Duchess of Kendal and the Countess of Darlington, the two mistresses of George I., had pensions of the united value of £5,000. Lady Walsingham, the daughter of the Duchess of Kendal, had an Irish pension of £1,500. Lady Howe, the daughter of Lady Darlington, had a pension of £500. Madame de Walmoden, one of the mistresses of George II., had an Irish pension of £3,000. The Queen Dowager of Prussia, sister of George II.; Count Bernsdorf, who was a prominent German politician under George I., and a number of other less noted German names, may be found on the Irish pension list."

These pensions were of three kinds—Civil, French and Military. The Military pensions were a small matter, and caused no complaint. The French pensions were granted to French Protestant refugees, and early in the century were considered a great grievance, but the necessity for them having largely disappeared about 1740, the pensions themselves were little heard of after that date. The Civil pensions included all the others, not only those granted to public servants and retired officials, but also those granted to a miscellaneous collection of Royal dependants—English and foreign.

The Irish Parliament was always watchful of the pension list, and as early as 1701 struck off £16,000, which was appropriated to this purpose. Little was heard in Parliament, however, on this subject until the matter became acute owing to the rapid growth of pensions which took place in the closing years of the reign of George II. In 1755 the Civil pensions amounted to £38,003; in 1757 they had risen to £51,583; in 1761 to £64,127; in 1763 to £70,752, and in 1767 to £86,741. Each of these increases was the subject of Parliamentary complaint, and it is a striking commentary on the small powers possessed by the Irish Parliament in the matter of finance that such substantial increases in the pension list could be made in

direct defiance of Parliamentary opinion. In 1757 the House of Commons passed resolutions denouncing the increase of pensions as alarming, but its first serious protest was made in 1763, when the Commons resolved themselves into a committee of the whole House to take the matter of the pensions into consideration, and shortly afterwards the House passed a resolution to the effect that the pensions on the Civil establishment were an intolerable grievance. The Government gave a distinct assurance that the King would not grant any more pensions for lives or years except upon extraordinary occasions; but this promise was flagrantly violated, and in the following few years the list attained larger proportions than ever. A further attempt was made in 1765 to reduce the pension list, again without success, and again in 1778, when the House of Commons unanimously resolved that the granting of so much of the public revenue in pensions was an improvident disposition, an injury to the Crown and of detriment to the public.

In spite of this opposition, the pension list continued to grow steadily, as may be seen from the following figures:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year ending March 25th</th>
<th>Total Pensions</th>
<th>Percentage of Pensions to Revenue</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1765</td>
<td>£86,447</td>
<td>5.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1767</td>
<td>£83,625</td>
<td>4.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1769</td>
<td>£87,950</td>
<td>4.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1771</td>
<td>£84,285</td>
<td>5.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1773</td>
<td>£89,078</td>
<td>7.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1775</td>
<td>£92,650</td>
<td>6.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1777</td>
<td>£99,137</td>
<td>6.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1779</td>
<td>£97,029</td>
<td>6.09</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The increase was caused by a number of new salaries being annexed to minor offices, mostly sinecures, to the creation of new employments, and the annexing of great salaries

2 Plowden, vol. i., p. 373.
4 Murray, Commercial Relations, p. 186.
to obsolete offices. What irritated the Commons more than anything else was the knowledge that the granting of such pensions was quite illegal, although it was out of their power to prevent this breach of the law being continued. All the hereditary revenue had, by the statutes creating it, been allocated to the upkeep of specific public services, with the exception of the quit rents and crown rents and the ale licences, and, with regard to this last source of revenue, there was a specific statutory provision that it should not be charged with pensions. The only revenue which the Crown possessed absolutely for its own use were small duties never amounting in any year to more than £15,000; so that it was perfectly obvious that the pensions, being charged on the revenue at large, were, in fact, charged on sums which had been voted by Parliament for public services.  

Another drain on the Irish establishment for which the people got a very poor return was the upkeep of the army. The Irish army was always much larger in proportion to the size of the country than the English army; the former consisting of a peace establishment of 12,000, whereas the latter consisted of only 17,000. The size of the Irish army was, of course, accounted for by the fact that there was no Mutiny Act in Ireland, and that the King was legally entitled to maintain as large a force as he could find money to pay for; and secondly by the fact that the Irish revenue was largely at his complete disposal. The army was organised on a most extravagant scale; the staff of general officers cost £22,000 a year, whereas that in England cost only £11,000 a year; great numbers of the officers were absentees living in England; the expense of general officers paid by Ireland rose in the two years from 1761 to 1763 from £32,000 to £45,000, and, although the vote for the ordnance had more than quadrupled in the same period, there was not as much artillery

in Ireland as on a fair-sized warship. Moreover, the army was constantly employed abroad, thereby adding another form of absenteeism to those which were already draining the country. In 1715 great numbers of the Irish soldiers were sent over to Scotland to aid in putting down the rebellion, and in 1719 they were sent to England to help to resist a threatened invasion. In fact, the Irish army was sent abroad to aid England on every occasion during the century when the necessity arose. Until the end of the reign of William III., it was usual for the English Government to pay the Irish regiments sent abroad for foreign service, but, after that date, Ireland always had to pay her own troops, even when they were serving abroad, although at times the difference between the rates of Irish and English pay was made up by the English Government. The amount of money which went out of Ireland for this purpose between 1751 and 1778 was £1,401,925.

Although the peace establishment of Ireland was, as we have said, 12,000 men, this number was frequently augmented in time of war. In 1759 six new regiments were raised to aid England in her struggle against France in North America; two years later five new battalions were raised on account of the rupture with Spain; between the years 1761 and 1763 the Irish establishment amounted to 24,000 men, while 33,000 recruits were sent abroad to fill up gaps in English regiments.

In 1767 the Government was very anxious to augment the Irish establishment from 12,000 to over 15,000 men, but when this augmentation was proposed it was at first defeated in Parliament; some months later, however, Parliament agreed to this increase on the condition that 12,000 men should permanently be kept in Ireland. During the American War, however, 4,000 of this home establishment were allowed by Parliament to go abroad.

3 Murray, Commercial Relations, p. 161.
4 Hely Hutchinson, Commercial Restraints, p. 49.
5 Murray, Commercial Relations, p. 162.
6 Lecky, vol. ii., p. 94. 7 9 Geo. III., c. 10.
to assist England in America, and half the expenses of these troops while abroad were paid out of the Irish funds.¹

In 1780 the Irish army was put on a new footing by the Mutiny Act, which, however, was unlike the English Mutiny Act, inasmuch as it was enacted in perpetuity, and not from year to year.² The following figures³ show the annual amount spent on the military establishment in Ireland in each year from 1700 to 1780:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year ended 25th Dec.</th>
<th>Year ended 25th Dec.</th>
<th>Year ended 2nd March</th>
<th>Year ended 25th March</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>£</td>
<td>£</td>
<td>£</td>
<td>£</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1700</td>
<td>381,200</td>
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<td>347,470</td>
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<tr>
<td>1701</td>
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<td>1702</td>
<td>278,286</td>
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<td>1703</td>
<td>218,316</td>
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<td>317,915</td>
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<td>236,790</td>
<td>1725</td>
<td>381,692</td>
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<td>1705</td>
<td>239,398</td>
<td>25th Mch.</td>
<td>319,069</td>
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<td>1732</td>
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<td>1733</td>
<td>366,591</td>
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<td>1736</td>
<td>309,862</td>
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<tr>
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<td>317,772</td>
<td>1737</td>
<td>313,260</td>
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<tr>
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<td>336,685</td>
<td>1738</td>
<td>367,731</td>
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<tr>
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<td>350,034</td>
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<tr>
<td>1720</td>
<td>331,028</td>
<td>1741</td>
<td>334,525</td>
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There was another source of expenditure which might appear at first sight to have been for the public benefit, but which, in fact, was administered so corruptly as really to confer no benefit on anybody except the Members of Parliament and their friends. As we have seen, after the Constitutional question which arose in 1753 about the disposal of the surplus of that year, Parliament determined |

that no similar question should arise in the future, and, therefore, granted large sums every session for the purpose of erecting and maintaining public works, and for the encouragement of various manufactures.\(^1\) The amounts granted for these purposes for the rest of the century were very large indeed; the following account of the sums thus granted between 1753 and 1767 will give some idea of their magnitude\(^2\):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>£</th>
<th></th>
<th>£</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td>Newry River</td>
<td>9,000</td>
<td>Wicklow Harbour</td>
<td>6,850</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drumglass Colliery</td>
<td>118,220</td>
<td>St. Patrick’s Hospital</td>
<td>6,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lagan River</td>
<td>40,304</td>
<td>Public Roads...</td>
<td>5,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shannon River</td>
<td>31,500</td>
<td>Dungarvan Aqueduct</td>
<td>1,300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand Canal</td>
<td>73,000</td>
<td>Hospital for Soldiers’ Children</td>
<td>7,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blackwater River</td>
<td>11,000</td>
<td>Lying-in Hospital</td>
<td>19,300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lee River</td>
<td>2,000</td>
<td>Mercer’s Hospital</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barrow River</td>
<td>10,500</td>
<td>Shannon Bridge</td>
<td>2,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Suir River</td>
<td>4,500</td>
<td>Kilkelly Bridge</td>
<td>9,150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nore River</td>
<td>25,000</td>
<td>Cork Bridge ...</td>
<td>4,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Borne River</td>
<td>36,988</td>
<td>Kildare Bridge</td>
<td>600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skerries Pier</td>
<td>3,500</td>
<td>St. Mark’s Church</td>
<td>2,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enver Pier</td>
<td>1,870</td>
<td>St. Thomas’s Church</td>
<td>5,440</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dunleary</td>
<td>18,500</td>
<td>St. Catherine’s Church</td>
<td>3,990</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balbriggan Pier</td>
<td>5,250</td>
<td>St. John’s Church</td>
<td>12,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bangor Pier</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>Building Churches</td>
<td>12,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Killyleagh Pier</td>
<td>1,200</td>
<td>Roofing Athlone Church</td>
<td>476</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sligo Pier</td>
<td>1,300</td>
<td>Cashel Church</td>
<td>800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Antrim River</td>
<td>1,359</td>
<td>Dingle Quay ...</td>
<td>1,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ballast Office</td>
<td>43,000</td>
<td>Munterkenny Colliery</td>
<td>2,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Widening Dublin Streets</td>
<td>42,000</td>
<td>Marine Nursery</td>
<td>1,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trinity College</td>
<td>31,000</td>
<td>Road round Dublin</td>
<td>1,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limerick Quay</td>
<td>7,773</td>
<td>Dundalk ...</td>
<td>2,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cork Harbour</td>
<td>6,500</td>
<td>Whale Fisheries</td>
<td>1,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cork Workhouse</td>
<td>1,500</td>
<td>Dry Dock ...</td>
<td>2,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Londonderry Quay</td>
<td>2,900</td>
<td>Mills at Naul...</td>
<td>3,498</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shandon St., Cork</td>
<td>1,500</td>
<td>Ballycastle ...</td>
<td>3,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Lord Longford...</td>
<td>3,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If these large sums had been spent on the purposes for which they had been voted, they would, no doubt, have greatly benefited the country, but, as a matter of fact, they largely went to the aggrandisement of private individuals or Members of Parliament and their friends.\(^3\)

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1 Macartney, Account of Ireland, p. 135.
3 Macartney, Account of Ireland, p. 135; Plowden, vol. i., p. 309.
Wallace, writing in 1798, stated that the lack of enterprise in Ireland was due in a large measure to the spirit of jobbing by which for so many years "the redundance of the Irish Treasury was lavished in futile and abortive projects, until the public mind became so disgusted by work carried on by public grants that at length no money could be obtained for the most laudable undertakings." "

Large grants were given for the encouragement of particular manufactures, but here again the original good intention of the legislature was frustrated by corruption and jobbing. Many of the manufacturers to whom grants were made gave up business the moment they received them; in one case a large grant was made to the proprietor of a glass-house in Dublin, and the following day he burnt his premises and left the country with the grant. The usual procedure was to go bankrupt, and thus gracefully to retire from business. The jobbery to which these grants gave rise was open and unashamed; Members of Parliament would mutually arrange in loud tones over the floor of the House to support each other's jobs for mutual considerations. Even the Dublin Society, the channel through which a great deal of this money was distributed, was not free from the taint of corruption; on one occasion it granted £500 to a certain manufacturer, but, on receipt of a message from an influential member of the Government that he would be grateful if the grant could be increased, immediately raised the amount of his grant to £2,000. In 1763, Parliament decided that the abuses of this kind had become so great that in future premiums should be awarded on the quality or quantity of goods manufactured and not granted to individuals. This evil may be largely accounted for by the fact that there was no rule in the Irish Parliament corresponding to the rule in England that all grants of supply must originate with the Government. In Ireland, if a Member

1 Manufactures of Ireland; and see Young's Tour, II., 130.
2 Primate to Lord G. Sackville, 11th March, 1753, Sackville MSS., I., 193.
3 Caldwell, Parliamentary Debates, p. 135. 4 Ib.
5 Caldwell, Parl. Debs., pp. 303 and 7. 6 Ib.
RECEIPTS AND EXPENDITURE
1700 – 1780

RECEIPTS
EXPENDITURE
of Parliament were under an obligation to a friend, his usual mode of repaying it was to propose a resolution that a grant of some thousands of pounds of public money should be made to his friend, if a manufacturer for the encouragement of his industry, and if a landowner for the drainage of his property.¹

These ever-increasing expenses were not met by a corresponding increase of revenue, and the result was a deficiency every year. The table on page 326, which is compiled from the account published in 1869 of the finances of the Irish Parliament, shows the amount of revenue and expenditure for every year from 1700-1780.² The gradually-increasing annual deficits are clearly shown on the accompanying diagram.

These annual deficiencies were made up partly by imposing additional taxes, but to a much greater extent by the increase of the National Debt. "God knows how we miserable creatures came by that fashionable thing—a National Debt," exclaimed Swift, but, if he had known the degree to which the debt was going to swell in later years, he would not have complained so bitterly of the small debt of 1727. The amount of the debt at the beginning of the century was only £16,000, which was increased to £66,000 in 1715 by reason of a loan raised in that year. In 1717 it stood at £90,000, but Parliament saw that it should be kept down as much as possible, and by means of annual reductions it had decreased to about £66,000 in 1723.³ Although these amounts were small, they were the subject of constant complaint by Parliament, which made efforts every session to reduce the debt still more on the ground that it was more than the country could be expected to bear. "There cannot be a stronger proof of the want of resources in any country," wrote Hely Hutchinson, "than that a debt of so small an amount should alarm the persons entrusted with the government of it." Indeed, the anxiety betrayed by the

¹ Swift McNeill, History of Irish Constitution, p. 110; Clarendon, p. 103.
² Parliamentary Papers, 1868-8, vol. 35.
³ Hely Hutchinson, Commercial Restraints, p. 27.
House of Commons by reason of this insignificant burden is a striking proof of the state to which Ireland had been reduced by the restraints on her commerce and industry.

Receipts and Expenditure 1700—1780. (Figures given in British Currency)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year ending Dec. 25</th>
<th>Total Net Revenue</th>
<th>Total Expenditure</th>
<th>Year ending Mar. 25</th>
<th>Total Net Revenue</th>
<th>Total Expenditure</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>£</td>
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<td>1741</td>
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<td>597,505</td>
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<td>1762</td>
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Mar. 25

<table>
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<th>£</th>
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<th>£</th>
<th>£</th>
<th>£</th>
<th>£</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>1727</td>
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<td>400,053</td>
<td>1780</td>
<td>556,414</td>
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</tr>
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</table>
The miserable condition of the country during the following few years which witnessed the great famine of 1729 produced constant deficits in the revenue, with the result that the debt was largely increased. In 1725 it amounted to £119,215, and in 1733 it had grown to £371,312. However, from that time forward it was steadily reduced by votes in every session, and in the years of great prosperity which followed the Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle it was completely liquidated. A series of votes of large amounts in the sessions during those years succeeded in wiping off the whole debt in 1754. This was, no doubt, a matter of much congratulation, and has been frequently applauded as a strong proof of the sagacity of those responsible for Irish finance; but there is another aspect of the matter which should be considered:—"That Government and the House of Commons should for such a length of time have considered the reduction and discharge of this debt as a matter of such great importance, and that nearly forty years should have passed before the constant attention and strict economy of both could have accomplished that purpose, is a strong proof of the weakness and poverty of this country during that period."1

The relief thus afforded was but temporary, for during the next twenty-five years the debt increased at a much greater rate and to a much larger figure than before. As we have seen, one result of the constitutional conflict of 1753 was that Parliament became lavish in its grants of money for public works, so that no surplus should exist. In its anxiety to prevent a surplus, it usually succeeded in creating a deficit. The expenditure of the period 1760-1779 grew rapidly, owing chiefly to the great expense of the army and to the augmentation of the military establishment in 1769. The civil expenditure, principally the pension list, also increased rapidly. These continual deficits were almost altogether made good by borrowing, and the extent of which may be judged by the figures on the next page.

1 Hely Hutchinson.
The National Debt of Ireland, unlike that of Great Britain, was not established on any permanent basis, and those who lent money to the Government were dependent for their security entirely on the loan duties imposed by Parliament from session to session. "In Ireland," said Lord Macartney, "there is really no security given to the public creditors for what sums they may advance; certain taxes called the loan-duties are every session granted, and appropriated first to the payment of the interest of the debt, and secondly to the payment of the principal. But these duties are never granted for a longer term than two years; so that if any interruption was given to the regular meeting of the Irish Parliament, the duties would fail, and till they were revived the debentures would be of no value." No default, however, was made in the payment of the interest on the debt, and the fact that the security was considered very good is proved by the fact that the rate of interest given became smaller as the debt increased. The rate of interest given at various periods was as follows:—

<table>
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<th>Year</th>
<th>Amount of Debt.</th>
</tr>
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<td>£931,696</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1779</td>
<td>£1,017,600</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 Account of Ireland, p. 156: see Clarendon, p. 70, sq.
2 Clarendon, Revenue of Ireland, 1791, p. 93.
RATE OF INTEREST PAID ON NATIONAL DEBT 1700–1780.
IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY. 329

It will be noticed that the rate of interest rose in the period 1769-1779. This was caused by the acute distress which characterised these years owing to the depression in the linen trade and to the embargo on the export of provisions. Indeed, during the last years of this period the Government found it extremely difficult to raise money at all. In 1773 recourse was had to tontine annuities, with benefit of survivorship, at six per cent. The sum of £650,000, proposed to be raised, was divided into shares of £100, and for every share one life was allowed to be nominated, and the lives were divided into three classes. No dividend of the interest arising from the shares of those who died in each class was to be made until it yielded a clear one-half per cent. among the survivors; and the increased interest never was to be more than the principal advanced by each subscriber. The greater part of the subscriptions to this tontine was made in England, and the amount of the annuities remitted to England was found to be an additional drain on the already straitened specie currency. In spite of this disadvantage, however, another tontine was resorted to in 1775, and another in 1778. The last one was a failure, and consequently the Government found itself completely out of funds. All payments from the Treasury were stopped; a loan of £20,000 was refused by the Dublin bankers, and public credit was finally restored only by means of a loan of £50,000 from the British Government. In the following year, money was raised for the first time in Ireland by means of a lottery; 42,000 tickets were issued at five pounds each, and the winner of the lottery received a prize of £210,000 paid in four per cent. debentures.

1 Plowden, I., 424.  2 Plowden, I., 441-456.  3 Murray, Commercial Relations, p. 194.  4 19 & 20 Geo. III., chaps. 2 and 10.
CHAPTER XXVI.

PUBLIC REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE—1780-1800.

FROM the financial point of view, the twenty years of Grattan's Parliament is divided into two clearly defined periods—the first period comprising the years 1780-1793, and the second the years 1794-1800. During the earlier of these two periods the Irish Parliament was wholly responsible for the conduct of affairs in Ireland; the internal condition of the country was tranquil and prosperous; and the situation was not complicated by international disputes. The second period, on the other hand, was that of the beginning of the great French war; Ireland, as well as England, was plunged into altogether unprecedented and exceptional expenditure for military purposes; while these foreign troubles were aggravated immeasurably by the serious internal unrest which culminated in the Rebellion.

The financial characteristics which marked the first of these periods into which the existence of Grattan's Parliament may be divided were a rapid increase of revenue, a very much less rapid increase of expenditure, and an almost stationary National Debt. These years also saw a great reform achieved in the many abuses which had rendered the public expenditure of earlier years so oppressive. The practice of giving offices to absentees was to a large extent checked; the pension list was frequently attacked and finally reformed; the growth of the army was kept within reasonable bounds; and the administration of the moneys granted for public purposes was put under correct supervision. The second period, on the other hand, was
marked by a hitherto unprecedented rise in the expenses of the military establishment; by an augmented revenue composed largely of taxes which pressed heavily on the necessaries of the poor; by annual deficits of ever-growing magnitude; and by the creation of a National Debt of crushing proportions.

The unsatisfactory financial conditions which, as we have seen, prevailed in the years 1777-9, could not be remedied immediately, and accordingly we find that in the first few years of Grattan’s Parliament the expenditure exceeded the revenue. The resulting deficits were made good by loans, but the increase of the National Debt was a matter of so much anxiety to the House of Commons that a determined effort was made to equalise receipts and expenditure. For this purpose, new duties were granted in 1785 on malt, and further payments for licences for chandlers, paper-hangers, grocers, goldsmiths, tanners, hawkers and pedlars were imposed.¹ These duties were calculated to bring in about £140,000 a year, but, as a matter of fact, they produced about £190,000, and had the result of equalising revenue and expenditure for the next few years, as the following figures² show:—

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year ending March 25</th>
<th>Total net Income</th>
<th>Total net Expenditure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1781</td>
<td>£739,850</td>
<td>£1,015,266</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1782</td>
<td>764,375</td>
<td>837,508</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1783</td>
<td>1,106,504</td>
<td>1,313,727</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1784</td>
<td>1,013,869</td>
<td>1,142,264</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1785</td>
<td>881,064</td>
<td>1,008,725</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1786</td>
<td>1,127,918</td>
<td>1,178,845</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1787</td>
<td>1,228,484</td>
<td>1,177,509</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1788</td>
<td>1,260,282</td>
<td>1,349,716</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1789</td>
<td>1,233,411</td>
<td>1,235,021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1790</td>
<td>1,381,281</td>
<td>1,295,883</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1791</td>
<td>1,313,477</td>
<td>1,384,088</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1792</td>
<td>1,368,414</td>
<td>1,395,950</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1793</td>
<td>1,363,800</td>
<td>1,363,388</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹ Clarendon. Revenues of Ireland, p. 54.
In regard to the incidence of taxation, the Irish Parliament showed much consideration for the poor. We have seen that the only direct tax payable by the poorer classes in Ireland was the hearth money. The removal of the abuses which had arisen in connection with this tax was first suggested by Conolly, who raised the matter in Parliament in 1787. He stated that this burden weighed very heavily upon the small farmers and cottiers in the country. "The very Act creating hearth money," he said, "originated in injustice, and was continued in oppression. The tax was given in England and Ireland to Charles II., in lieu of his right to wardship and marriage. The poor felt none of this oppression; they cared not who their children married; not so the rich; but still the tax was, by the rich, put upon the poor. At the Revolution in England, King William took away the tax, and substituted a window tax in place of it; the house of a poor man having only six windows was exempted. Compare an English house with six windows to an Irish house with only one hearth—which was the poorer?" He was answered by Burgh, who argued, soundly enough, that the tax was really paid by the landlord and not by the labourer, and that the only result of remitting the tax would be to raise rents everywhere. Even if the tax were paid by the labourer, he went on to argue, it could be paid by his consenting to work on three or four more days in the year—"four of his saints would pay the whole of his hearth money." The reform was not made in that session, but came about six years later. By an Act of 1793 the whole subject of hearth money was put on a new basis; no tax was to be paid by persons having only one hearth unless they owned lands of an annual value of more than five pounds, or goods and chattels worth more than ten pounds; and the rate at which the tax was assessable was fixed at 4s. 4d. for two hearths; 6s. 6d. for three; 9s. 9d. for four; 12s. 5d. for five; and 2s. 8½d. per hearth when the number was six or more.²

¹ I.P.D., VIII., pp. 397-400; and see Fortescue MSS., III., 549. ² 33 Geo. III., c. 14.
In the same year the whole system of revenue was revolutionised; the hereditary revenue was abolished; and the old distinction between it and the additional duties ceased to exist. It was enacted that from that year the whole revenue was to form a consolidated fund; that the annual sum of £145,000 was to be paid to the King for all the expenses on the civil list except pensions; that a sum not exceeding £124,000 per annum was to be applied to the payment of pensions until the whole amount of the pensions should be reduced to £80,000 per annum; and that when the list had been reduced to that amount, an additional £80,000 per annum should be granted with the civil list of £145,000, making in all £225,000 per annum, which should go to the payment of all the expenses of the civil list, including pensions.

The excessive expense of collecting the revenue also engaged Parliament: in 1783 the question was raised by Grattan, who stated that the expense of collection in 1758 amounted to £81,000, or 13 per cent., whereas in 1783 it had increased to £180,000, or 16 per cent. This increase had been caused by the creation of a fund for providing pensions for superannuated officers and to the creation or continuance of a host of useless officers—land carriage officers, coast officers, and hearth money officers. During the ten years 1772-1782 the salaries paid to land carriage officers amounted to £12,000, and the seizures made by them only amounted to £1,000; during the same period the cost of maintaining the revenue cruisers was £140,000, and the value of the seizures made by them £40,000. No effective check to this extravagance was provided by Parliament, and the cost of collection seems to have grown more rapidly than the revenue itself. As we have seen, it amounted in 1783 to 16 per cent.; in 1789 it reached 18 per cent.

In other departments, however, Parliament succeeded in effecting substantial reforms. The question of

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granting important offices to absentees was raised in 1784. The Chancellorship of the Exchequer, had, in 1763, been granted to an Englishman named Hamilton, who had resided almost altogether in England, and had left the duties of his office to be performed by deputy. The salary of the place was £1,800 a year, but Parliament considered the residence of the Chancellor in Ireland so important that it agreed to purchase the office from Hamilton for a pension of £2,500 a year, so that it might be bestowed on an Irishman. Two years later the important office of Master of the Rolls was granted for the first time in the eighteenth century to an Irish resident. In the course of the next couple of years the Vice-treasurership and the Clerkship of the Crown and Hanaper were rescued from absentees. A reversionary grant of the office of Chief Remembrancer which had been made to Grenville, an Englishman, in 1786, formed the subject of an angry debate in 1789, when this particular species of absenteeism was again censured in Parliament. The absentee tax of twenty per cent. was also continued from year to year, with good results.

The pension list was also frequently assailed. A pension of £1,700, which had been granted to Orde, was much resented in the House of Commons. In 1786 an important debate on this subject took place when Mr. Forbes proposed a resolution that the amount of pensions was a grievance on the nation and called for redress. The motion was supported by Grattan and Curran. "This polyglot of wealth," said the last-named speaker, "this museum of curiosities, embraces every link in the human chain; every description of men, women and children, from the exalted excellence of a Hawke or a Rodney to the debased situation of the lady who humbleth herself that she may be exalted. But the lessons it inculcates form its greatest perfection; it teaches that sloth and vice may eat that bread which virtue and honesty may starve.

1 Lecky, II., 411. 2 Ib., p. 459. 3 Piowden, II., 255.
4 Piowden, II., 256. 5 Lecky, II., 464.
for after they have toiled to earn it. It directs the minds of men to an entire reliance on the ruling power of the State who feeds the ravens of the royal aviary that cry continually for food. It teaches them to imitate those saints on the pension list, that are like the lilies of the field: they toil not, neither do they spin, and yet are arrayed like Solomon in all his glory. In fine, it teaches a lesson, which, indeed, they might have learned from Epictetus, that it is sometimes good not to be over-virtuous; it shows that, in proportion as our distresses increase, the munificence of the Crown increases also; in proportion as our clothes are rent, the royal mantle is extended over us." The Government, however, was too strong to be moved by either eloquence or argument, and the motion was rejected.2

In 1788 Mr. Forbes resumed the attack, with a request that a list of the pensions granted since the last session of Parliament should be read. He attacked the propriety of many of these new pensions, and also drew attention to the increasing expenditure that was being incurred in building town and country houses for Government servants. The matter was warmly debated, but the Government again carried the day.3 The list went on increasing in spite of these protests, and in 1790 another attempt was made to reform the abuse, but again without success.4

The pension question had in later years assumed a somewhat new form. In the early years of the century, up to the year 1768, the chief complaint was that pensions were granted to persons who had no connection with Ireland, and who had never performed any services for the country—often the King’s friends and mistresses. Under the administration of Townshend, pensions were applied for a new purpose, namely, the corruption of Parliament itself. In England it was illegal for any pensioner to sit in Parliament, but the law was otherwise in Ireland, and the Government was consequently able to

1 I.P.D., VI., 282. 2 Plowden, II., 146.
3 Plowden, II., 185-92. 4 Plowden II., 286.
secure a majority in the House of Commons by means of buying the votes of recalcitrant members with pensions. This new practice rendered the old evil still more obnoxious to the independent members of the House; as long as pensions were granted only to English and foreign hangers-on of the Government, the evil complained of was at most a flagrant waste of public money; but the new abuse which had crept in aimed a blow at the very liberty of Parliament itself.¹

On the whole, the pension list increased considerably during these years. In 1781 it stood at £91,538, or 5.13 per cent. of the revenue, while in 1792 it had increased to £124,581, or 7.67 per cent.² In the latter year, however, the whole matter was reformed and put on a new basis. By an Act which passed in the memorable session during which so much beneficial legislation was carried out, it was provided that no pension of more than £1,200 should be granted until the list was reduced to £80,000 per annum, and that then no pension of more than £1,200 a year should be granted to any person except a member of the Royal Family, or on a special address from Parliament.³ In the same session another Act was passed absolutely disqualifying pensioners from sitting or voting in Parliament.⁴

The administration of the army was conducted with great economy. In 1781 an Act was passed allowing the temporary withdrawal to England of 5,000 of the 12,000 men who were supposed to be kept in Ireland.⁵ In 1783 an attempt was made by Flood to reduce the peace establishment, but this was opposed by Grattan on the ground that Ireland contributed nothing to the support of the navy. Flood’s motion was lost, and the question was not renewed.⁶ In 1788 the army was remodelled on a scheme which necessitated a slight increase in its numbers, by increasing every regiment from eight to ten companies. The recruiting service was also placed on a

¹ Grattan’s Speeches, II., 270. ² Murray, Commercial Relations, p. 186. ³ 33 Geo. III., c. 34. ⁴ 33 Geo. III., c. 41. ⁵ 21 & 22 Geo. III., c. 58. ⁶ Plowden, II., 47-52.
new basis, which called for the addition of about a thousand extra men. The whole cost of these charges was reckoned at about £30,000 a year. The following figures show the annual cost of the Army Establishment for each year 1781-1793:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year ending March 25</th>
<th>£</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1781</td>
<td>629,162</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1782</td>
<td>500,212</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1783</td>
<td>609,131</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1784</td>
<td>488,985</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1785</td>
<td>502,156</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1786</td>
<td>606,591</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1787</td>
<td>569,793</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1788</td>
<td>580,857</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1789</td>
<td>571,036</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1790</td>
<td>598,771</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1791</td>
<td>672,248</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1792</td>
<td>615,499</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1793</td>
<td>614,546</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As we have seen, Ireland did not make any regular contribution to the upkeep of the navy. While this was but the barest justice during the long period of restriction when Irish commerce was driven from the seas, it was felt, after the free trade concessions of 1779, that it would be fair for Ireland to help in some way to uphold the instrument which guarded her overseas trade. Accordingly, in 1782, Grattan proposed, and the House of Commons passed, a measure authorising a sum of £100,000 to be borrowed to raise 20,000 men for the navy. It must be remembered that if the Commercial Propositions had come into effect, Ireland would have had to bear a large share of the burden of the naval expenses of the British Empire. One of the propositions was that if, in any year, the hereditary revenue exceeded a certain sum, the surplus should be appropriated to the maintenance of the navy in the manner directed by the Irish

1 Clarendon, Revenues of Ireland, p. 129.
Parliament. But these propositions never passed into law, and consequently, until the Union, with the exception of one vote of £200,000 in 1795, Ireland was under no expense for the upkeep of the navy.

The sums granted by Parliament for the execution of public works and the encouragement of industry increased during these years. From 1780-85 the annual sum granted for these purposes was about £50,000; between 1785 and 1790, about £100,000; and between 1790 and 1793 about £150,000. Very large grants were sometimes made for special purposes—for instance, in 1783, £50,000 was given to the proprietors of the Grand Canal, and £25,000 to Captain Brooke to aid him in establishing his cotton manufactory in County Kildare. The principal objects of this bounty were the County Infirmaries, Public Coal Yards, the Dublin Society, the Foundling Hospital, Protestant Schools, the erection of public buildings, and the cotton and linen manufactures. Several thousands were also raised every year by means of the specially appropriated duties for the encouragement of the linen manufacture and inland navigation, and for the improvement of Dublin. These grants were frequently the occasion of much corruption and jobbery, but this abuse was, to a large extent, remedied by an Act of 1793, which provided that all public works should thenceforth be under the supervision of a new department called the Board of Works.

We have seen that deficits occurred in the years 1780-85, and that these deficits were made good by loans. In 1781, £260,000 was raised by means of a loan at 4 per cent., and £40,000 by means of Treasury Bills bearing interest at the rate of threepence per cent. per diem. Further money was raised in the same year by the creation of the Bank of Ireland. In 1783 a further loan was voted by means of debentures and Treasury Bills aided

1 Official Tables, Parl. Pap., 1858-9, vol. 35. 2 Plowden, II., 74.
3 Buckingham to Grenville, 18th Oct., 1788, Fortescue MSS., I., 358.
4 33 Geo. III., c. 31. 5 21 & 22 Geo. III., c. 16.
by a lottery if the Lord Lieutenant thought this to be advisable. In 1785, £150,000 was raised by debentures at four per cent., and £50,000 by Treasury Bills at threepence per cent. per diem. From that year onwards, as we have seen, the revenue equalled the expenditure, so that the creation of any further debt became unnecessary. As a result of this sound finance, the funds of the country rose greatly in value; the debentures which, in 1785, bore a very low value, had risen in 1787 to par, and the Treasury Bills were at a premium. The Government, therefore, determined to reduce the interest on a part of the debt, with the assistance of a lottery; 2,000 debentures of £100 at 3¼ per cent., and 1,000 Treasury Bills bearing interest at the rate of 3½d. a day, were offered to the public; at the same time a lottery of 40,000 tickets at £5 each was opened, stock corresponding to the full amount of which was to be paid in prizes. By this scheme a reduction was made of ½ per cent. per annum upon £400,000 capital of debentures, and a reduction of a penny per day per cent. on £100,000 value of Treasury Bills. In the following year, the interest on the whole remainder of the debt was similarly reduced. The success of this scheme is a striking proof of the high state of public credit under the first years of Grattan’s Parliament. It was stated in Parliament in 1788 that the public funds in Ireland were much higher than those in England, and it was confidently predicted that the public debt of Ireland would never again be increased. As a matter of fact, the debt was not increased until 1793, when, as we shall see, circumstances quite beyond the control of the Irish Parliament involved Ireland in a situation, in which, through no Irishman’s fault, retrenchment and prudent finance, were no longer possible.

1 Clarendon, Revenues of Ireland, pp. 113-4.
2 Clarendon, p. 121.
3 lb., p. 128.
4 I.P.D., VIII., pp. 238, 239.
The following table shows the state of the National Debt during the period 1783-93:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year ending March 25</th>
<th>Funded Debt</th>
<th>Unfunded Debt</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>£</td>
<td>£</td>
<td>£</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1783</td>
<td>1,410,092</td>
<td>507,692</td>
<td>1,917,784</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1784</td>
<td>1,410,092</td>
<td>557,169</td>
<td>1,967,261</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1785</td>
<td>1,386,152</td>
<td>750,785</td>
<td>2,136,937</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1786</td>
<td>1,462,652</td>
<td>794,400</td>
<td>2,257,052</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1787</td>
<td>1,632,221</td>
<td>627,369</td>
<td>2,259,590</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1788</td>
<td>1,586,068</td>
<td>627,369</td>
<td>2,213,437</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1789</td>
<td>1,586,068</td>
<td>627,369</td>
<td>2,213,437</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1790</td>
<td>1,586,068</td>
<td>627,369</td>
<td>2,213,437</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1791</td>
<td>1,586,068</td>
<td>627,369</td>
<td>2,213,437</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1792</td>
<td>1,586,068</td>
<td>627,369</td>
<td>2,213,437</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1793</td>
<td>1,625,298</td>
<td>627,369</td>
<td>2,252,667</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

On the 1st February, 1793, war was declared between England and France, and the period of retrenchment came to an end. The military establishment was immediately raised to 20,232 men, 17,000 of whom were to be retained for home defence; in 1796 it was again raised, this time to 22,246, 19,012 to be retained in Ireland; in 1797 it was increased to 40,901, of whom 27,667 were to remain in Ireland, and another 10,000 in either Great Britain or Ireland. In the following year the situation was aggravated by the outbreak of the rebellion. Although the establishment authorised that year was smaller than in 1797—namely, 32,854 men—the military forces had been augmented in another way by the establishment of the Yeomanry, for whose upkeep large sums were voted. In addition to these military expenses, £200,000 was granted towards manning the navy in 1795.

The sums spent on the army increased at a much more alarming rate than the army itself, as the following figures show:

1 Financial Relations Committee, 1895, App. I., p. 323.
2 33 Geo. III., c. 16.  
3 36 Geo. III., c. 2.
4 37 Geo. III., c. 3.  
5 35 Geo. III., c. 6.
IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year ending March 25</th>
<th>Amount of Army Expenditure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>£</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1793</td>
<td>614,546</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1794</td>
<td>745,827</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1795</td>
<td>1,553,362</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1796</td>
<td>1,855,368</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1797</td>
<td>2,032,130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1798</td>
<td>3,401,759</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1799</td>
<td>3,865,533</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1800</td>
<td>4,596,760</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 months ending January 5</td>
<td>2,757,193 ¹</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Of course, the revenue did not increase with this increase of expenditure, and large deficits accumulated every year. An attempt was made in 1797 to stem this dangerous tendency by the imposition of high duties on sugar, tea, wines, salt, skins, hides, auctions, some glass ware, paper hangings and malt houses.² It will be noticed that on this occasion the Irish Parliament was driven into imposing taxes which pressed heavily on the articles consumed by the poor, contrary to the principles of taxation on which it had always acted previously. The following table³ shows the annual revenue and expenditure during the period 1793-1800:—

Revenue and Expenditure, 1793—1801.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year ending March 25</th>
<th>Total net Income.</th>
<th>Total Expenditure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>£</td>
<td>£</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1794</td>
<td>1,178,872</td>
<td>1,580,869</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1795</td>
<td>1,475,216</td>
<td>2,508,866</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1796</td>
<td>1,551,592</td>
<td>2,802,933</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1797</td>
<td>1,703,109</td>
<td>3,101,553</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1798</td>
<td>2,084,069</td>
<td>4,678,122</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1799</td>
<td>2,145,749</td>
<td>5,373,322</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1800</td>
<td>3,017,758</td>
<td>6,615,959</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 months to January 5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1801</td>
<td>2,204,163</td>
<td>4,625,699</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

² 37 Geo. III., chaps. 8 and 28.
These annual deficits were made good by means of loans, and the National Debt consequently increased at an unprecedented rate, as will be seen from the following figures:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year ending March 25</th>
<th>Funded in Ireland £</th>
<th>Funded in England £</th>
<th>Unfunded £</th>
<th>Total £</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1794</td>
<td>1,969,975</td>
<td>904,292</td>
<td>2,874,267</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1795</td>
<td>2,940,914</td>
<td>1,061,538</td>
<td>4,002,452</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1796</td>
<td>4,469,406</td>
<td>1,107,692</td>
<td>5,577,098</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1797</td>
<td>5,376,975</td>
<td>1,160,492</td>
<td>6,537,467</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1798</td>
<td>6,366,294</td>
<td>2,909,596</td>
<td>9,275,890</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1799</td>
<td>8,107,181</td>
<td>6,813,066</td>
<td>15,920,247</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1800</td>
<td>9,824,504</td>
<td>11,932,881</td>
<td>23,757,385</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 months to January 5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1801</td>
<td>12,001,698</td>
<td>14,839,521</td>
<td>28,841,219</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Naturally, the larger the debt became, the more reluctant the public were to lend their money to the Government. The £100 five per cent. debentures could not be sold at a higher price than 63; and the Bank of Ireland called for a repayment of part of the money it had advanced. Some idea may be gathered of the onerous terms on which the money was raised by the fact that, although the total deficits only amounted to £16,000,000, it was necessary to issue loans of the nominal value of £26,000,000 to meet them.

The figures we have given of the finances of Grattan's Parliament clearly establish two facts. They show that during the first eleven years of legislative independence the expenditure of Ireland kept fairly level; and that thenceforward until the Union the expenditure increased year by year mainly under the head of military services at a formidable rate. It may be fairly assumed that this great increase was due to two causes—the war commenced in 1793 and the internal disturbances which culminated in Rebellion. These words, which have

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2 Murray, Commercial Relations, p. 324.
been embodied in the report of one of the ablest and most representative commissions of recent years, form a striking verdict in favour of the wisdom of the financial administration of Grattan's Parliament. During the first eleven years of its existence, while it was permitted to manage its own affairs, it succeeded in stemming the tide of increasing expenditure; in raising the revenue without inflicting any hardships in the way of taxation; in re-establishing the soundness of national credit; in reducing the interest payable on the debt; and in reforming most if not all of the abuses which had characterised the financial administrations of earlier years. The events which happened in 1793 were quite beyond the control of Parliament; war was declared by the King, guided by advisers, who included no Irish representative of any kind; and the House of Commons found itself bound to vote huge sums for the furtherance of military campaigns which it had in no way authorised.

The increased expenditure of the last years of the century, therefore, in so far as it was due to the war, must in no sense be attributed to the extravagance or recklessness of the Irish Parliament. It has been suggested, however, that it must be blamed for great costs incurred in the suppression of the Rebellion, which, it is said, would never have broken out if the country had been properly governed. To this allegation there is, of course, a complete constitutional answer, namely, that the Government of the day was in no sense a Parliamentary one, and that the House of Commons had no share in the executive. But even if this answer could be refuted; if it could be successfully urged that a vigilant Parliament could, by obstructing the Government or withholding supplies, have checked the negligence, if not provocation, that was operating at the time, there is still a satisfactory answer to be made—namely, that the expense of putting down the rebellion was only a very small fraction of the expense of fighting the French War, and could not, if it stood alone, have possibly embarrassed the financial resources
of the country. This matter was carefully considered by the Financial Relations Commission of 1896, by whom the following interesting figures were compiled:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year ending March 25th</th>
<th>Estimated military expenditure in peace</th>
<th>Estimated additional expenditure owing to French War</th>
<th>Estimated additional expenditure owing to disturbed state of Ireland</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1794</td>
<td>£585,000</td>
<td>£161,000</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1795</td>
<td>£585,000</td>
<td>£969,000</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1796</td>
<td>£585,000</td>
<td>£1,270,000</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1797</td>
<td>£585,000</td>
<td>£1,447,000</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1798</td>
<td>£585,000</td>
<td>£2,085,000</td>
<td>£732,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1799</td>
<td>£585,000</td>
<td>£1,447,000</td>
<td>£1,834,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1800</td>
<td>£585,000</td>
<td>£1,447,000</td>
<td>£2,565,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 months to 5th Jan., 1801</td>
<td>£478,000</td>
<td>£1,085,000</td>
<td>£1,234,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The financial administration of Grattan’s Parliament may be summarised as follows:

(1) During the period 1780-1793 a successful attempt was made to re-establish the balance between income and expenditure; the National Debt was kept stationary, and the rate of interest on that Debt was reduced; and the many abuses which had characterised the expenditure of public money were reformed.

(2) During the period 1793-1800 the national expenditure increased at an unprecedented rate, while the revenue increased at a much slower rate; the National Debt increased to an alarming extent; and it became increasingly difficult for the Government to raise money on loans.

(3) The dangerous financial situation of the latter period was caused (a) to a very large degree by a cause outside the control of the Irish Parliament, namely, the European War, and (b) to a small degree by a cause within the control of the Irish Parliament, namely, the Rebellion of 1798.
CHAPTER XXVII.

COINAGE.

The essential feature of the Irish coinage in the eighteenth century was the absence of an Irish mint. The Irish had again and again petitioned, without effect, for a mint. In 1634 both Houses of Parliament addressed King Charles I., beseeching him that such an establishment should be erected, and that the coin of Ireland should be of the same standard and value as that of England, but the petition was refused. In 1700 the Lords Justices strenuously urged that a mint should be erected, but again the request was not complied with.

The result of the absence of a mint was that there was, properly speaking, no Irish coinage; the gold and silver coins of all foreign countries, as well as the English guinea and crown, had circulated in Ireland from an early period, the value of the same being ascertained by weight, and proclamations were issued from time to time regulating the rates at which foreign coins should pass. The Proclamation in force at the beginning of the eighteenth century was dated 29th May, 1695; this Proclamation, after reciting that, owing to the great rise in the value of gold and silver abroad, the foreign coins circulating in Ireland were being carried out of the Kingdom in great quantities, and that it was necessary to stop this drain, fixed as follows the rates at which foreign money should pass in Ireland:

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1 Carte, Life of Ormond, vol. i., p. 79.
Twopence was to be allowed for any grain deficient in the weight on any piece of gold, and three half-pence for any half pennyweight wanting in any piece of silver. It has been said that the English coins circulating in Ireland were raised in value at the same time—the guinea to 26s., the half-guinea to 13s., the crown to 5s. 10d., the half-crown to 2s. 11d., the 1s. to 1s. 2d., and the 6d. to 7d.¹

These rates were changed in 1701. A Proclamation dated June 2nd in that year fixed the rates as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gold</th>
<th>Dwt. grs.</th>
<th>£ s. d.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Spanish or French Pistole</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Spanish or French half-Pistole</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Silver</th>
<th>Dwt. grs.</th>
<th>£ s. d.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Ducatoon</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The half-Ducatoon</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The quarter-Ducatoon</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Mexico, Sevil, or Pillar Piece of Eight, the Rix Dollar, Cross Dollar, and all other Dollars, and the French Lewis</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The halves do. do. do.</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The quarters do. do. do.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The old Peru Piece of Eight</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The half old Peru Piece of Eight</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The quarter old Peru piece of Eight</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Crusado of Portugal</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The half-Crusado of Portugal</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Simon surmised that the value of the English coins was again changed at this time, the guinea being reduced to 23s., the half-guinea to 11s. 6d., the crown to 5s. 5d., the half-crown to 2s. 8\(\frac{1}{2}\)d., the is. to 1s. 1d., and the 6d. to 6\(\frac{1}{2}\)d.¹

An Irish Act of Parliament² was passed in 1709 to prevent the counterfeiting of foreign coin; and the value of foreign coins was slightly altered by a Proclamation of July 30, 1712.³

In a Proclamation dated 1714 several new coins were recited as being current, and their values proclaimed as follows:—

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gold</th>
<th>Dwt. grs.</th>
<th>£ s. d.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The French Lewis d'or of the new species</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1 2 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The half-French Lewis d'or of the new species</td>
<td>2 (\frac{14}{2})</td>
<td>0 11 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The quarter-French Lewis d'or of the new species</td>
<td>1 (\frac{7}{2})</td>
<td>0 5 6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Silver</th>
<th>Dwt. grs.</th>
<th>£ s. d.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The French silver Lewis of the new species</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>0 5 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The half-French silver Lewis of the new species</td>
<td>9 (\frac{18}{2})</td>
<td>0 2 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The quarter-French silver Lewis of the new species</td>
<td>4 (\frac{21}{2})</td>
<td>0 1 4(\frac{1}{2})</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The next Proclamation on the subject is dated 1725, when the new gold coin of Portugal was made current at the following rates⁴:—

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>New Gold Coin of Portugal</th>
<th>Dwt. grs.</th>
<th>£ s. d.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Half do.</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>4 0 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quarter</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2 0 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Half Quarter</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1 0 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sixteenth</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5 0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The values fixed by these Proclamations do not seem to have been in exact accord with the real value of silver and gold at the time, the silver being undervalued in proportion to the gold; and some of the gold coins valued at a lower rate than others. The result was that most of the coins

¹ Simon, p. 67. ² 8 Anne, c. 6. ³ Simon, p. 68. ⁴ Simon, p. 71.
silver coin and a great deal of the gold was carried out of the Kingdom, and this left the country very short of money, to the great detriment of trade. The reform of the currency was the subject of much ill-informed and acrimonious discussion in 1729, but nothing was done by the Government until eight years later.¹

In 1737 a Proclamation, dated August 29th, re-fixed the values of the coins in circulation as follows²:—

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Coin Type</th>
<th>Dwt.</th>
<th>s.</th>
<th>d.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Guinea</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>1 9 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and all other pieces of the same species in proportion.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Moidore</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0 14 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The half-Moidore</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>17½</td>
<td>0 7 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The quadruple Pistle or double Doubloon</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3 13 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Spanish or French double Pistle or Doubloon, or double Louis d'or</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>1 16 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Spanish or French Pistle</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0 18 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The half Spanish or French Pistle</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0 9 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The quarter Spanish or French Pistle</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0 4 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The French Louis d'or of the new species</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1 2 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The half French Louis d'or of the new species</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>14½</td>
<td>0 11 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The quarter French Louis d'or of the new species</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7½</td>
<td>0 5 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The piece of new gold of Portugal</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3 17 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The half piece of new gold of Portugal</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5½</td>
<td>1 18 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The quarter piece of new gold of Portugal</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>14½</td>
<td>0 19 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The half-quarter piece of new gold of Portugal</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7½</td>
<td>0 9 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The sixteenth piece of new gold of Portugal</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3½</td>
<td>0 4 11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the Dublin Gazette of October 20, 1750, a list of foreign coins current in Ireland is given. According to this list, the values of the Spanish quadruple Pistle and its divisions had fallen since the last Proclamation, as they are given as follows:—

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Coin Type</th>
<th>Dwt.</th>
<th>s.</th>
<th>d.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Spanish quadruple Pistle</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3 11 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Spanish double Pistle</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>1 15 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Spanish Pistle</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0 17 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The half-Pistle</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0 8 11½</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The quarter-Pistle</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0 4 5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the following year a Proclamation was issued stopping the currency of the Spanish quadruple Pistole, and its divisions, and declaring that they should be no longer legal tender for any amount.

A radical change in the coinage system of the Kingdom was effected by a Proclamation dated March 18, 1775, which abolished the currency of all foreign coins, and declared that no persons should, after that date, be obliged to take any payment in any coin save only His Majesty's coin current in Great Britain. From this time on, the gold coinage of Ireland consisted of the guinea and its divisions. In the year 1797, Spanish dollars were once more made current by a Proclamation dated September 7, but were again withdrawn from currency by a Proclamation dated October 19, 1798. They seem, however, to have circulated in the country until a much later date.¹ In 1780 the prohibition which had existed from the time of Henry VIII. against the exportation from England to Ireland of English gold or silver coin was repealed.² This relief would have been given thirty years sooner, had it not been strongly opposed at the time by the Governor of the Bank of England.³

The weighing of coin must have been a matter of great importance, and the licence to make weights which might be used for this purpose was granted to successive licencees during the century. The last grant seems to have been made about 1785, and from that time onwards anyone who wished could make money-weights, provided that, after being tested and found true, they were struck with the official stamp.⁴

So far, we have spoken of gold and silver coins. It is clear, of course, that no system similar to that prevailing in relation to gold and silver coins could exist with regard to the copper coinage. The copper coinage of Ireland also suffered from the lack of a mint. The practice in

this case was that the King should give grants or patents to private individuals to mint coins. In 1660, Charles II. granted such a patent to Sir Thomas Armstrong, permitting him to coin farthings for twenty years, and in 1680 Sir William Armstrong and Col. Geo. Legge obtained a patent for twenty-one years granting them the right to issue copper halfpence. This patent was sold to John Knox in the year of its issue, and he, in turn, sold it to Col. Roger Moore. When King James came to Ireland he took the coinage into his own hands, and struck vast quantities of brass money which he made current by a Proclamation dated 18th June, 1689. The metal was the worst kind of brass, and the coinage was of the basest possible quality. William III., however, abolished this coinage, which had caused so much trouble in the country, and Col. Roger Moore proceeded to act under his patent, and coined such a quantity of money that the currency became undervalued.

Owing to the importation of a great quantity of debased coin, the state of the coinage about 1720 became very degraded. It was said that there was a serious shortage of copper coins, but this was contradicted by other writers. In consequence, however, either of the debased state of the coinage, or of the shortage thereof, it was decided that a new copper coinage should be issued for Ireland, and in 1722 George I. granted a patent for that purpose to William Wood, an English iron merchant, giving him the right during fourteen years from that date to coin halfpence and farthings with copper, to be uttered and disposed of in Ireland and not elsewhere. It was provided that the whole quantity coined should not exceed 360 tons of copper, whereof 100 tons only were to be coined in the first year, and that one avoirdupois pound weight of copper could not be converted into more farthings or halfpence than would make 30 pence. Wood agreed to pay the King £800 a year for the privilege, and £200 a year to the King's Clerk or Controller of the

1 Letter from Archbishop King, dated 17th October, 1724, quoted in Monck Mason's History of St. Patrick's Cathedral.
IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

coinage. The storm of opposition which greeted this proposal is well known. The patent was petitioned against by the Lords Justices and Council, both Houses of Parliament, and the Grand Juries of the City and County of Dublin. The principal objections to the new patent were based first on the fact that the amount of metal from which 30 pence were to be struck in Ireland was only deemed sufficient to provide 23 pence in England, and that the Irish penny would thereby become of debased value, and secondly, on the excessive proportion which the copper coinage would bear to the whole currency in Ireland. In England the copper coinage only constituted one hundredth part of the whole coinage of the Kingdom; whereas in Ireland it would thenceforth constitute one-fourth. Gold and silver, it was feared, would consequently be displaced by copper, the former being exported to England. It is not any part of our subject to relate the history of the controversy which this question provoked; the Drapier’s Letters form an epoch-making event in Irish history; suffice it to say that the opposition was so great that Wood felt himself obliged to relinquish his patent in 1724. From that time onwards no more private patents to individuals were granted. The shortage of copper coin became more acute than usual about 1735, and merchants, in order to provide themselves with change, made copper and silver tokens in great quantities. In 1736 the King ordered an issue of copper coin in the London mint for circulation in Ireland, and in 1737 a certain quantity of this coin was sent across. Further issues of the same coinage took place at various intervals throughout the century—in 1766-69-75-81 and 82.

Until the very end of the century there was never a sufficiency of copper coinage in the country, to the great disadvantage of trade and commerce. For many years, change of a guinea could not be obtained at a fair or

1 Boulter's Letters, I., 10.
market without payment of an exorbitant commission. The result was that merchants and traders sought to provide themselves and their customers with substitutes, and they, therefore, issued a large number of tokens which circulated freely, some locally and some generally throughout the country, during the last years of the century. The Cronebane halfpenny, struck in 1789 by the Irish Mining Co., circulated very widely, and, according to Lindsay, formed the bulk of the Irish copper currency during the last decade of the century. Indeed, in the more remote parts of the country, away from towns, the use of money was by no means general during the eighteenth century. As late as 1814 Wakefield observed that all transactions amongst the country people were effected by tally, and the circulation of either coins or tokens was almost unknown.

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1 Lindsay on *Irish Coinage*, 1839, p. 63, where a full list of the tokens issued will be found. 2 Wakefield, II., 17.
CHAPTER XXVIII.

Banking.

The discouragement which trade and commerce experienced on account of the wretched condition of the currency was exaggerated by the banking system which prevailed throughout the greater part of the century. Whereas the Bank of England was founded in 1695, and the Bank of Scotland in 1696, Ireland was without a National Bank until 1783. "For a long period, therefore," writes the most competent historian of Irish banking, "the credit organisation of the country was in the hands of a number of so-called bankers, individuals with little or no capital, but issuing notes without restriction, who were enabled to trade on the credulity of the people." In the seventeenth century, business corresponding to that now done by bankers was conducted by brokers, who brought borrowers and lenders together in consideration of a commission on the loan. This business was regulated by the statute 10 Ch. I., c. 22, which fixed the maximum rate of commission at 5s. per cent. for the original loan, and 12 pence per cent. for every renewal. Other banking functions were performed by goldsmiths and general traders, who issued promissory notes against deposits. In 1709 notes thus issued were rendered transferable by endorsement, and from this Act may be traced the growth of the gigantic circulation of more or less worthless paper with which the country was flooded in later years.

1 Malcolm Dillon, History of Banking in Ireland. 2 8 Anne, c. 11 (Ir)
Every shopkeeper was at perfect liberty to issue, on his own account, not alone notes, but, even if he so desired, silver and copper coin. This dangerous power was unregulated by any law; the only occasions on which the law interfered were when a more than usually serious failure occurred, when Parliament would, by means of a special Act, bolt the stable door after the departure of the horse.

Of course, some firms devoted their whole energy to banking alone, and in this way there arose many of the rich families which, in later years, came to adorn the Irish House of Lords. In 1735 there were already five big banking houses in Dublin—James Swift and Co., of Eustace Street; Hugh Henry, of Upper Ormond Quay; Nuttall and McGuire, of Lower Ormond Quay; La Touche and Kane, of Castle Street; and Joseph Fade and Co., of Thomas Street. Failures were frequent at all times, but the years 1755-6 saw such a spread of ruin in the banking world as had never been seen before. "Owing to the great shortage of coin, bankers were tempted to open and circulate their notes. Bankers have set up in numbers as cobblers do their stalls, with some show of leather and a seat for their work. They collect old shoes and boots sufficient for their purpose, and then off they march." These failures were largely caused by the great reaction which followed the prosperity of 1748. A Select Committee of the House of Commons was appointed to inquire into the state of public credit, and recommended, as the result of its deliberations, that persons in future setting up as bankers should register their real and personal estate in a public register, so that the public might ascertain what security was available to honour their notes; that the names of the issuers should be stated on all notes; and that bankers should not be permitted to trade as merchants. All these recommendations, except

1 Lawrence. The Interest of Ireland in its Trade and Wealth Stated, London, 1682.
2 Remarks on Conduct of Messrs. W—ks & D—n, Dublin, 1755.
the first, were embodied in the statute 29 Geo. II., c. 16. In 1759 another Act was passed forbidding a banker from making a marriage settlement on his son or daughter that would be good against his creditors, and from issuing notes or receipts bearing interest after that date.1 This legislation very singularly failed to obtain its object, for in 1760 there arose a worse crisis in the banking world than at any previous time. In that year, three out of the six Dublin banks failed, and the other three, though they kept open, refused to discount any bills, and practically ceased to carry on business. The shock to credit was so severe that Parliament was obliged, on the petition of a number of Dublin merchants, to support the three solvent banks to the extent of £50,000 each.

In 1767 there were four banks in Dublin, two in Cork, and one in Waterford, and the number seems to have remained almost stationary until 1797. The first bank was established in Belfast in 1752, and broke up in 1757. The town was without a bank until 1787, when several sprang up, but they had all collapsed before 1798.2

In 1797 the Bank Restriction Act prohibited the Bank of Ireland from making payments in coin. This led to greatly increased issues on the part of the existing private banks, and also to the growth all over the country of mushroom banks which grew up in the night, issued notes to a large amount, and then closed down before the time came for honouring their promises. The Report of the House of Commons Committee, which sat in 1804 to report on the circulating paper, specie and current coin of Ireland, states that in 1797 there were about twelve banks in Ireland; that in the next three years numerous banks started and failed, so that in 1800 there were only eleven still open; in 1801 there were twenty-three; in 1802, twenty-nine, and in 1804, forty.

But these figures only deal with the recognised banks, and we must not be led by them to believe that these concerns represented the sole issues of notes in Ireland. On the

1 33 Geo. II., c. 14. 2 Benn, History of Belfast.
contrary, every little shopkeeper was able to issue I O U notes, which circulated freely in his own district. In Youghal alone, we are told, notes were issued by ten grocers, three general shopkeepers, one stationer, one chandler, one hardware shopkeeper, two bakers, one corn factor, one cabinet-maker, one shoemaker, one linen draper, one wool comber, and one firm of registered bankers. It is easy to imagine the petty tyranny to which such a system would give rise, as well as the low state of credit which it would inevitably cause. Indeed, the poorer Irish were deeply ignorant in the most elementary money matters. They are said to have preferred notes to gold on account of the issuer's personal signature being present on the former, whereas it was absent on the latter; and on one famous occasion the Dublin mob, infuriated against one of the Beresfords, could think of no better way of wreaking vengeance upon him than by burning big bundles of notes issued by his bank. In Wakefield's time Ireland was flooded with notes for small amounts, as low as threepence halfpenny, many of them forged.¹

As early as the year 1695 the merchants of Dublin had petitioned the Government to found in Ireland a bank similar to the Bank of England, which had been recently opened. In 1720 a number of powerful noblemen petitioned the King, "in view of the great scarcity of coin which every day increased," for permission to start a public bank. The King, in reply, authorised the Lord Lieutenant to grant a Charter and commission to erect a bank. In September, 1721, the House of Commons passed a resolution "that the establishment of a public bank upon a solid foundation under proper regulations and restrictions will greatly contribute to the restoring of the credit and support the trade and manufactures of this Kingdom," and leave was given to bring in the heads of a bill on the resolution.² The capital of the bank was to be £500,000, of which £100,000 was to be paid up; no person was to hold more than £4,000.

stock; the bank would be authorised to issue bills not exceeding the amount of its capital; and not more than five per cent. was to be charged for advances.\(^1\) A subscription list was opened, but public opinion was against the scheme, which was bitterly ridiculed by Swift.\(^2\) It was argued in particular that, as the bank would depend for its existence on the King's charter, it could be suppressed at any time if it appeared to be really benefiting Irish trade. The chief arguments in favour of the bank were the swindling of their creditors by the private banks, and the shortage of coin.\(^3\) When the matter came on again in Parliament, the House of Commons had changed its mind, and passed a resolution "that the erecting or establishing a public bank in this Kingdom will be of the most dangerous and fatal consequence to the trade and liberties of this nation."\(^4\) It is possible that this change of attitude may have been prompted by the constitutional consideration that the proposal originated in England.\(^5\)

Nothing more was heard about a National Bank for more than half a century. In 1780, however, with the general revival in trade which was then taking place, the project was again mooted. The need for a great public bank was keenly felt, as it was seen by all that Irish trade and commerce were suffering severely from the instability of the existing system. "The complaints against the present bankers," says Jebb, writing in 1780, "are that they are dastardly; have narrow selfish views; that they will not extend their credits in proportion to the extension of trade; and that they are capricious in their discounts, issuing paper money abundantly at one period, and standing still at another without any obvious rule to direct the dealers to guard against the calamity."\(^6\) The result of this state of affairs

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was the statute 21 and 22 Geo. III., c. 16, by which the Bank of Ireland was founded. The capital of the bank, which was to be £600,000, was to be lent to the Government at four per cent. No other persons exceeding six in number were henceforth to take up or owe any sums on their bills payable on demand or for less than three months. This gave the bank practically a monopoly. The charter was renewed in 1791 by 31 Geo. III., c. 22, whereby the capital was raised to £1,000,000, and in 1797, by 37 Geo. III., c. 50, a further issue of £500,000 capital was sanctioned. From the first the bank was a great success, and won the whole-hearted confidence of the public.¹

The legal rate of interest on borrowed money at the beginning of the eighteenth century was ten per cent., at which it had been fixed by a statute of 1635. In 1703 it was reduced to eight per cent.,² in 1722 to seven per cent.,³ and in 1731 to six per cent.⁴ In 1788 it was proposed to reduce the rate to five per cent., owing to the greatly increased prosperity of the country. This proposal was opposed in Parliament on the ground that the rate should be kept higher in Ireland than in England, as otherwise it would be difficult to borrow money on the security of Irish landed property, owing to an idea which was prevalent in England that the security on such loans had been rendered unsafe by the bad administration of the law in Ireland.⁵ The proposal was, nevertheless, passed, and from that time the legal rates in Ireland and England were the same.⁶

¹ See an interesting series of articles on "The Old Dublin Bankers," and "The Old Provincial Bankers," which appeared in several volumes of the Journal of the Institute of Bankers in Ireland.  
² 2 Anne, c. 16.  ³ 8 Geo. I., c. 13.  ⁴ 5 Geo. II., c. 7.  ⁵ I.P.D., VIII., 313 sq.  
⁶ Lecky, II., 492.
CHAPTER XXIX.

METHODS OF COMMUNICATION.

At the beginning of the eighteenth century the roads in Ireland were maintained by the joint effort of the landowners and labourers in each parish; the former were obliged by law to furnish for the repair of the roads horses and vehicles for six days in each year, and the latter were obliged to labour for the same space of time. When this joint effort proved insufficient, the Grand Jury of the county was empowered to raise whatever sum might be necessary to complete the work. This system was to a large extent varied by legislation in the course of the century. It was provided in 1705 that no greater sum than twenty pounds should be raised at any quarter sessions for any purpose "except for taking or killing tories, rapparees, or robbers." In 1720 an Act was passed prohibiting the raising of money by Grand Juries for roads or bridges unless two credible persons should swear that the works were necessary. In 1727 it was provided that no money should be raised for making or repairing roads, except at Assizes; that all new roads should be at least thirty feet wide; and that roads to be repaired should be paved or gravelled to the width of ten feet.

In 1760 the system of road-making was varied by an Act which provided that no labourer should be forced to labour on the roads unless he were paid a wage for so doing; that old roads should be widened to the width of twenty-one feet; and that no presentment should be made

1 4 Anne, c. 6.  2 6 Geo. I., c. 10.  3 1 Geo. II., c. 17.
for the repair of any road less than twenty-one feet wide. Some years later, disturbances broke out in the North on account of the inequality between the burdens laid on the labourers and on the landlords. This was the beginning of the Oakboy organisation, which, in later years, caused so much trouble.¹

In 1771, Grand Juries were empowered to grant presentments for narrow roads through mountainous or unimproved parts,² and in 1777 they were empowered to make contracts to keep the roads in repair.³

The independent Irish Post Office was constituted in 1784, and amongst the other powers given to the Postmaster-General was that of widening and straightening old roads, and of constructing new ones for the benefit of the mails.⁴ After the rebellion of 1798 several excellent military roads were constructed.⁵

Thus, for the greater part of the century, the control of the Irish roads was in the hands of the Grand Juries—in other words, of the county gentry. No doubt, this led to some abuses; roads were known to be closed because they interfered with the amenities of a gentleman’s demesne;⁶ and, on the other hand, roads were frequently constructed at the public expense simply to facilitate private convenience. But, on the whole, the good in the system outweighed the bad; and the multiplication of roads designed for private convenience ultimately served the convenience of the public. Certainly the course of the eighteenth century was marked by a remarkable improvement both in the number and the excellence of the roads.

In the early part of the century the roads were in a deplorable condition. In 1728 we read: "The whole inland carriage of the country is performed by small feeble cattle, either in high loads which scarcely exceed two hundred-weight, or truckle cars on which, in summer time, when the roads are dry and cattle strong, a horse may

¹ Gordon, History of Ireland, II., 242. ² 11 & 12 Geo. III., c. 29. ³ 17 & 18 Geo. III., c. 22. ⁴ See 32 Geo. III., c. 32. ⁵ Wakefield, I., 662. ⁶ Consideration for Promoting Agriculture, by Lord Molesworth, Dublin, 1723.
IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

draw about four hundred-weight; but in other seasons of the year there is little or no land carriage, for these little machines would be swallowed up in the bad roads." Two years later Swift complained that "the highways are almost everywhere scandalously neglected. All over the Kingdom the roads are deplorable; and what is more particularly barbarous is that there is no sort of provision made for travellers on foot; no, not even near Dublin, except in a few places, and in a most wretched manner."

Doubtless, as the result of the Road Acts, an improvement soon began to appear. Whitefield, who visited Ireland in 1738, was struck by the excellence of the roads; Bush, in 1764, found them "good for riding, but by no means equal to the English for a carriage"; and Young, in 1776, wrote as follows:—"For a country so very much behind us as Ireland to have got suddenly so much the start of us in the article of roads is a spectacle that cannot fail to strike the English traveller exceedingly. But from this commendation the turnpikes in general must be excluded; they are as bad as the bye-roads are admirable. The effect of the Act passed seventeen years ago in all parts of the Kingdom is so great that I found it perfectly practicable to travel upon wheels by a map. I will go here; I will go there; I could trace a route upon paper as wild as fancy could dictate, and everywhere I found beautiful roads, without break or hindrance to enable me to realise my design. In a few years there will not be a piece of bad road, except turnpikes, in Ireland. It is not to the system singly that Ireland is indebted for the goodness of her roads; another circumstance calls materially for observation, which is the vehicle of carriage; all land carriage is performed with one-horse cars or carts. The well-made roads preserving themselves for so many years is owing to this practice of using one-horse cars." In 1780 another

1 Quoted in Newenham, p. 35.
2 Swift, Answer to Several Letters, Dublin, 1730: and see Some Useful Cautions to the Public, Dublin, 1734.
3 Tyerman, Life of Whitefield, I., 147.
4 Hibernia Curiosa. 5 Tour II., 73.
English traveller greatly admired the Irish roads, and Newenham, in 1809, was of opinion that they had greatly improved since Young’s time, and that even the turnpike roads were much better than they had been formerly. It was said by Wakefield that one reason for the excellence of the roads was the absence of trees and hedgerows, which would have prevented them from drying quickly after rain. The use of broad-wheeled carts was encouraged by an Act of Parliament of 1795.

The great canals constructed in Ireland in the eighteenth century have frequently been quoted as an example of the wisdom and public spirit of the Irish Parliament, but, as a matter of fact, they were simply the excuse for voting large sums of public money into private pockets. When Arthur Young expressed surprise at the incomplete condition of the Grand Canal in 1776, the answer he received was: "It is a job; it was meant to be a job; you are not to consider it as a canal of trade, but as a canal for public money." In England, canals followed trade; as soon as a greatly increased volume of traffic was noticed between two points, some private individual or corporation would construct a canal to accommodate it; in Ireland, on the other hand, it was expected that trade would follow the canals; and that what was wanted to revive the decaying industry of the country was a cheap means of transit. Parliament, actuated partly by this false notion, and partly by the less excusable motives of corruption and jobbery, voted very large sums of money for the construction of canals in all directions.

The earliest statute on the subject was passed in 1715. This Act, entitled "an Act to encourage the draining and improving of the bogs and unprofitable low grounds, and for easing the inland carriage and conveyance of goods from one part to another within the Kingdom," authorised certain named persons, "at their proper costs and charges," to make the River Shannon navigable for

1 Twiss. Tour in Ireland, p. 117. 2 I., 659. 3 35 Geo. III., c. 27.
4 Tour, 11., 129. 5 2 Geo. I., c. 17.
boats, lighters, etc., from Limerick to Carrick-on-Shannon. Full powers were given to these persons for the execution and maintenance of the works, and certain tolls were authorised. Commissioners were nominated as arbitrators between the undertakers and the owners of land adjoining the river. Similarly appointed commissioners were authorised to nominate undertakers for the districts drained by the Liffey, Rye, Boyne, Brosny, Barrow, Bann, and many other rivers.

Apparently the only navigation work carried out under this Act was on the river Maigue, connecting the town of Adare with the Shannon. The failure of the Act was said to be due to the fact that no undertaker would come forward under the conditions laid down. In 1729 a new Act was passed appointing the Lord Lieutenant, the Lord Chancellor, the four Archbishops, and eighty other persons to be Commissioners to put the Act of 1715 into force, with power to encourage tillage, and to employ the poor on works of public benefit. Funds were provided for twenty years (afterwards extended) by duties on gold and silver plate and playing cards, known as "tillage duties."

In 1751 these Commissioners were appointed a body corporate, but this corporation was dissolved in 1787. It was found that there was great waste of public money owing to the inability of so large a body to superintend the making and expenditure of grants. The system which was substituted was to put the projects in the hands of local bodies or companies, and to grant aids to private undertakers proportionate to their private subscriptions. Between the years 1730 and 1787, £351,946 was issued out of the tillage duties for the purpose of inland navigation; and, in addition, £505,436 was granted from Parliamentary Grants and Grants by Royal Letters and local duties.

Apparently the new system was not a success; the

1 3 Geo. II., c. 3: Clarendon, Revenue of Ireland, p. 80. 2 25 Geo. II., c. 10.
improvident expenditure of public money was still complained of, and there was a reversion to the former system of a central body in 1800, when an Act was passed enabling the Lord Lieutenant to appoint five persons to be directors of all works relating to inland navigation.\(^1\) A grant of £500,000 was made, and all the works (except the Shannon Navigation) unfinished at that date were subsequently completed.

On the whole, the money spent on canals during the eighteenth century would seem to have been so much waste. They certainly had not the effect of promoting tillage, or of encouraging the working of the coal-mines—the two principal objects aimed at. In Wakefield's time they were of no use to the country except to carry a few passengers, and to bring a small amount of turf to Dublin.\(^3\) The tolls in force were utterly exorbitant—for example, it cost more to carry goods by canal from Carlow to Dublin than to carry the same goods by sea from Dublin to London.\(^3\)

The following is a full list of all navigations commenced under the provisions of the Act of 1729:\(^4\):

1. The Newry Navigation, consisting of a canal from Lough Neagh to Newry, and a tidal channel thence to Warrenpoint; length, 25 miles. The original cost was £38,326, and the concern was handed over to a local corporation in 1787, and vested in the Directors of Inland Navigation in 1800.

2. The Lagan Navigation from Belfast to Lough Neagh; length, 26 miles. This canal was begun in 1753, completed at a cost of £43,304, and handed over to a company in 1779.

3. The Tyrone Navigation from Blackwater River to Coalisland, 4 miles. This canal was completed at a cost of £25,813, was handed over to a local corporation in 1787, and transferred to the Directors of Inland Navigation in 1800.

\(^1\) Canals and Waterways Commission, 1906-7.
\(^2\) Wakefield, I., 237.  \(^3\) Wakefield, I., 643.
\(^4\) Canals and Waterways Commission, 1906-7, vol. i., App. II.
4. The Shannon Navigation from Limerick to the north end of Lough Allen was not completed till 1852, at a cost of £800,738. Its total length was 143 miles, with branches totalling 15 miles.

5. The Maigue Navigation, a tidal river from Adare to the Shannon, about 9 miles. This navigation was completed at a cost of £2,698, transferred to a local corporation in 1787, and to the Directors of Inland Navigation in 1800.

6. The Grand Canal from Dublin to Ballinasloe, with branches, 209 miles, was commenced in 1755, and in 1772 was transferred to the Grand Canal Company. The work was completed under the Directors of Inland Navigation. The total cost amounted to £1,137,580.

7. The Barrow Navigation from Athy to St. Mullins, 40 miles, was begun in 1759, handed over to a local corporation in 1790, and ultimately amalgamated with the Grand Canal Co. The cost was £239,000.

8. The Boyne Navigation from Drogheda to Navan, 19 miles, was handed over to a local corporation in 1787, and transferred to the Directors of Inland Navigation in 1800.

In addition to these undertakings begun by the Commissioners, two works were begun by private individuals, assisted by public grants, namely:—(1) The Royal Canal from Dublin to Richmond, Co. Longford, 95 miles, begun in 1789 by the Royal Canal Company, and completed by the Directors of Inland Navigation at a cost of £1,421,900; and (2) The Foyle Navigation from Strabane to the River Foyle, 4 miles, begun in 1787 by the Marquis of Abercorn.

The Irish Post Office was placed on an independent footing in 1784. The rates charged for the carriage of letters were twopence for any distance under fifteen miles, threepence for any distance between fifteen and thirty miles, and fourpence for a greater distance. There was

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1 23 & 24 Geo. III., c. 17.
a penny postal service set up for the district within a radius of four miles from the G.P.O., Dublin. An early attempt to communicate by telegraph was made by Richard Lovell Edgeworth in 1794.¹

¹ Charlemont Correspondence. II., 287; Trans. R.I.A., vol. vi.
CHAPTER XXX.

Towns.

As we have seen when dealing with the Industrial Revolution, the latter half of the eighteenth century was remarkable in England for the rapid growth of a number of great industrial towns. No corresponding movement took place in Ireland, where the rate of growth in urban population did not, with one conspicuous exception, exceed that of population in the whole country, and where, towards the end of the century, the chief feature was an unprecedented increase of the small farmer class. As we have also seen, the commercial restraints, imposed on Irish trade by the English Parliament, had the effect of crushing Ireland industrially; in the absence of a foreign market, it was impossible to achieve large scale production in any manufacture, and the greater part of the population was driven for support to the soil.

The absence of flourishing and successful industries, which was so prominent a feature of the "period of restriction" in Ireland, prevented the existence of any large industrial towns. The country, on the whole, drew its livelihood from agricultural pursuits of one kind or another, either pasture or tillage, and the only economic function of the country towns was to serve as centres of distribution, where the farmers and graziers might dispose of their products and purchase such few commodities as they did not manufacture themselves. The only cities which had anything approaching an industrial life of their
own were Dublin, Cork, and, at a later date, Belfast. Dublin was chiefly employed in the pursuit of such remnants of the wool industry as English legislation had permitted to survive; a comparatively flourishing silk manufacture also provided employment in the metropolis; Cork was busily engaged in the preparation of provisions for foreign markets; while the principal manufactures which employed Belfast towards the end of the century were those of cotton and linen.

In 1776, Young recorded that "the towns of Ireland have very much increased in the last twenty years," but we have no reason to suppose that the towns increased at a greater rate than the population of Ireland as a whole. In England at that date the towns were increasing, whereas the rural population was decreasing, or, at least, stationary; this was, of course, the direct result of the introduction of improved methods of manufacture. No such improved methods, generally speaking, were introduced into Ireland until the very end of the eighteenth or beginning of the nineteenth century, with one exception—namely, in the cotton manufacture. The seat of this one exceptional industry was Belfast, and this was the one town in Ireland which showed the symptoms of an abnormal increase of population towards the end of the eighteenth century.

As we have said, the chief feature of the Irish town was that it acted as a centre of distribution, and in this capacity it probably took away from more than, it added to the economic efficiency of the country. Dobbs, in his Essay on the Trade of Ireland, complained that the cultivation of flax was hindered by the exorbitant profits made by the retail dealers in flax-seed; here we see the root of an evil which has persisted to the present time, and which, to some extent, has been remedied in recent years by the application of the principles of co-operation. Every article, moreover, which was sold in the market of a country town in Ireland was burdened with the payment

1 Tour. vol. ii., p. 254.
of exorbitant tolls and market dues, often amounting to five or six per cent. of the value of the purchase. In 1763 Parliament provided that all articles connected with linen and cotton should be exempt from these tolls. The fruitfulness of these tolls secured that the inhabitants of the corporate towns were free from all local taxation, but agriculture was depressed, and the price of farm produce raised.

The industrial progress of the Irish towns was undoubtedly impeded by the Penal Laws, which excluded the Catholics from all corporate life. Indeed, Catholics were excluded from Limerick and Galway altogether, and they were not admitted to the trade guilds in any other town. In addition to being excluded from the guilds, they were burdened with the payment of an illegal duty called quarterage, which went to the support of the very guilds from which they were themselves excluded. This was an imposition similar to that with which the Jews were fettered in Germany and Sicily. Indeed, the position of the Catholics was in more ways than this somewhat parallel to that of the Jews in mediæval Europe. Excluded from all useful industry, they betook themselves to unproductive occupations, and many of them attained to riches in the character of merchants. They were debarred by law from the purchase of land, and consequently from investing their savings in the one safe security which the country offered at that time; and, therefore, were driven to lending their money to their necessitous neighbours on poor security, and at a high rate of interest. No doubt, this was the origin of the gombeen-man of later years, the small Catholic trader, who was also a usurer.

But even the retail trade of the country town never grew to any large proportions; the small farmers and cottiers were to a very great extent self-supporting in the

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1 Considerations on Considerations. Dublin, 1724.
2 Select Committee on Tolls and Customs, 1826.
3 3 Geo. III., c. 34.
4 Scully, Penal Laws, c. iii.
5 Wyse, Catholic Association, i., 85.
sense that they were accustomed to make most of what they wanted in their own homes, and had not yet reached the stage of looking to shops to provide them with their requirements. The rapid growth of towns was further prevented by the exceedingly high rents which were demanded for urban dwellings. Many of the Irish towns were the property of a single landlord, who was, therefore, in a position to demand monopoly prices for his land. The rents in some country towns in Ireland were higher than in London; in Roscrea, for example, moderate-sized houses were let at two hundred pounds a year.

It must not be concluded that, because some of the country towns contained comparatively large and dense populations, they were, therefore, useful or productive economic communities. The better class in such towns was frequently composed of a crowd of drunken idlers, usually middlemen; while the lower class generally contained an altogether disproportionate number of beggars. "What spoils the figure and appearance of the much greater number of even the larger towns in Ireland," wrote an English traveller in 1764, "is the generality of dirty entrances to them, and the long strings of despicable huts or cabins that most of them are prefaced with. . . . . The inland towns especially, into which you are introduced through a line of fifty or a hundred of these habitations of poverty or oppression on either hand. . . . ."

The industrial wealth of Dublin centred in the woollen industry, and, of course, the suppression of the export of woollens dealt a heavy blow at the metropolis. Whatever remnants of the wool manufacture survived during the earlier part of the eighteenth century tended to become localised in Dublin; and although this, no doubt, benefitted the city, it was probably detrimental to the progress of the industry owing to the spirit of combination

3 Newenham on Population, p. 233.  4 Benn, History of Belfast, p. 596.
5 Bush, Hibernia Curiosa.
which was so rife amongst the city journeymen. Drink also played an important part in weakening the industrial value of the Dublin workman. The only other industry that achieved any eminence in Dublin was the silk industry. The high price of provisions and the insufficiency of housing accommodation rendered Dublin an unsuitable centre for the growth of industry; about the middle of the century keen distress was frequently experienced, but substantial relief was provided by the Act granting bounties on the inland carriage of corn. After the establishment of Grattan's Parliament, Dublin increased in wealth, and assumed the true aspect of a metropolis, but the progress in this direction was rather social and political than industrial, and does not concern us here. Indeed, the tendency of this period was to remove the wool industry into the country parts, and Parliament, as we have seen, granted large sums of public money to achieve this object. It is customary in recent years to attribute the prevalence of the terrible tenement house system to the passing of the Act of Union, but, as a matter of fact, this system had grown into a very serious evil during the last years of the eighteenth century. The following figures, which only pretend to be approximate, indicate the growth of Dublin during the eighteenth century:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1682</td>
<td>69,080</td>
<td>Whitelaw and Walsh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1725</td>
<td>110,860</td>
<td>Webb, Industrial Dublin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1728</td>
<td>146,075</td>
<td>Whitelaw and Walsh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1753</td>
<td>128,570</td>
<td>Rutty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1779</td>
<td>150,000</td>
<td>Campbell, Philosophical Survey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1798</td>
<td>182,370</td>
<td>Whitelaw and Walsh</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In 1652, Boate placed Cork fifth amongst the Irish towns arranged in order of importance, but it rapidly

1 Supra, Chapter V.  
2 Supra, Chapter IV.  
3 Lecky, II., p. 493.  
4 25 Geo. III., c. 48: 27 Geo. III., c. 13, etc.  
5 Whitley Stokes, Project for the Restoration of Internal Tranquillity in Ireland. Dublin, 1799.
grew in numbers and in wealth, and throughout the eighteenth century was always looked on as the second city in Ireland. In 1775, according to Campbell, it was twice as big as Limerick, which, in 1650, had surpassed it in size.¹ In 1750 the population of Cork was assessed at 70,000;² and in 1810 it numbered 80,000 people.³ The great prosperity of Cork was due directly to the provision industry, of which it was the chief centre. In 1748 it was said that nearly a hundred thousand bullocks were killed in the city every year between August and Christmas;⁴ and some years later Bush described the provision trade which he saw carried on as "prodigious."⁵ "Cork," wrote Arthur Young in 1776, "is one of the most populous places I have ever been in. It was market day, and I could scarcely drive through the streets, they were so amazingly thronged; on the other days the number is very great."⁶ The average exports from the port amounted to over a million pounds.⁷

Limerick also derived a good deal of profit from the provision trade. The population, which in 1760 was assessed at 25,000,⁸ had increased in 1775 to 30,000,⁹ and in 1821 to 60,000.¹⁰ "Here are docks, quays, and a custom-house," said Arthur Young. ".... This port of Limerick carries all the marks of a flourishing place."¹¹

Waterford was an important centre of the fishing industry, and was also the seat of several small manufactures.¹² Galway, on the other hand, presented the spectacle of a decaying town, in which all enterprise was dying out, and all commerce languishing. Although, in Boate’s time, it had been reckoned the second city in Ireland, in 1762 it only contained 14,000 inhabitants.¹³

Boate remarked that Belfast was, in 1650, hardly comparable with an English market town, and in 1725 it was low amongst the towns of Ireland.¹⁴ Towards the

⁴ Hibernia Curiosa, 1764. ⁵ Tour, vol. I., p. 332. ⁶ Ibid. ⁷ Lecky, I., 343.
¹¹ Young, Tour in Ireland, I., 466-7; Smith, History of Waterford.
¹² Dobbs, Trade of Ireland, 1729.
¹³ Hardiman, History of Galway.
end of the eighteenth century, however, the population of Belfast increased very rapidly; from 8,549 in 1757 to 13,105 in 1782; 18,320 in 1791; and 27,832 in 1813. As we have already explained, this is accounted for by the success of the linen, and still more, of the cotton manufactures. The next most important towns after those we have mentioned were Londonderry, Kilkenny, Wexford, Drogheda, and Dundalk.

1 Benn, History of Belfast.
2 Commission on Municipal Corporations in Ireland, 1835.
CHAPTER XXXI.
LOCAL TAXATION AND POOR LAWS.

In addition to the burdens which the people had to bear in the form of general taxation, they were also oppressed by very high local taxes. The local government of Ireland in the eighteenth century outside the corporate towns was in the hands of the Grand Juries. These bodies were necessarily unrepresentative, as they were drawn only from the propertied class. This meant that, whereas Catholics were not legally ineligible to serve as jurymen, they were practically excluded from the juries owing to their disabilities connected with property. The Grand Juries had very extensive powers, and were enabled by Parliament to make presentments for a great many different purposes—for making new roads, repairing and ironing old roads, for the upkeep of bridges and drains, for compensation for malicious damage, for rewards for the conviction of offenders, for fines on parishes where illicit stills were found, for the diocesan schools, for the payment of high and petty constables, Clerks of the Crown and Peace, and for the erection and upkeep of court-houses, jails, and houses of correction.¹

The whole of the assessment levied for this purpose was paid by the actual occupier of the soil, and no part by the landlord or middleman. This was a grave injustice, as the occupier was also burdened with the payment of high rent and tithes. Moreover, the assessment was

¹ A Collection of the Statutes now in force in Ireland which Concern all Grand Juries, Dublin, 1789.
made on the area of a holding, and not on its value, so that the tenant of a farm of poor boggy land had to pay the same as the tenant of a farm of the same size of rich cultivated land. Parliament made several attempts to remedy this injustice, but without any result, as the Grand Juries neglected to perform the duties assigned to them. Certain of the assessments were authorised to be levied on the Catholic inhabitants of a district exclusively. The large sums raised by the Grand Juries were largely spent in jobbery and corruption: "It is well known over most parts of the country what use is made by Grand Juries of the powers given them to levy cess for making roads and bridges. Jobs upon jobs, the one more infamous than the other, serve to support the interest of some rich men in the country." Another ground of complaint arose from the exorbitant expenses incurred in the administration of county business, which was chiefly caused by the fact that the county officers were paid by emoluments and not by salaries. The disturbances which were caused for so many years by the Oakboys were provoked in the first instance by the oppression which the people suffered under at the hands of the Grand Juries. The people were forced to contribute their personal labour to the making of roads, and it was felt as a great injustice that their labour should be often requisitioned for the making of roads which were of no use to the county, and which were merely a convenience or an ornament to the residences of the Grand Jurymen or their friends.

In 1772 the amount raised by the Grand Juries was calculated at £130,000; in 1779 it was put at £140,000.\footnote{Arthur O'Connor, \textit{State of Ireland}, 1798; Wakefield, I., 662.} The arbitrary cess of the Grand Juries is a lamentable grievance, and falls heavier on the poor than any checks

\footnotesize{\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{1} Arthur O'Connor, \textit{State of Ireland}, 1798; Wakefield, I., 662.
  \item \textsuperscript{2} Anne, c. 9; 1 Geo. II., c. 15: 33 Geo. II., c. 8.
  \item \textsuperscript{3} Select Committee on Grand Jury Presentments in Ireland, 1815.
  \item \textsuperscript{4} Letter quoted at Lecky, vol. ii., p. 49; Froude, II., 126.
  \item \textsuperscript{5} Select Committee on Grand Jury Presentments in Ireland, 1815. App. 3: \textit{Thoughts and Suggestions on Improving Condition of Irish Peasantry}, by R. Bellew, London, 1808.
  \item \textsuperscript{6} Lecky, vol. II., p. 49.
  \item \textsuperscript{7} Hely Hutchinson, \textit{Commercial Restrictions of Ireland}, p. 75.
\end{itemize}}
imposed by the Government." In 1787 the oppression by the Grand Juries was said to be one of the main causes of the spread of Whiteboyism: "Do we know not that among the real grievances of the distressed peasantry of this country, the shameful and prodigal grants of their money by the rural thanes of their county to those most abandoned miscreants, the perjured road-makers, bridge-makers, and affidavit men, is one of the most crying and most notorious?" In 1791 the amount of the cess was estimated at £250,000. In 1795 it had risen to £300,000 per annum, and in 1798 it was stated to have been tripled within the previous few years. At the time of the Union it was estimated at £470,000 a year.

In the corporate towns there was usually no necessity for the raising of a revenue by means of taxation, as the majority of the corporations were the owners of considerable property. Indeed, as a rule, there was a surplus remaining over at the end of the year, which was usually dissipated by the members of the corporation in festivities. Another source of income possessed by the Irish towns was furnished by the tolls and market fees that were charged. Thus the farmers from the surrounding country contributed to the upkeep of the county by their payment of county cess, and to the upkeep of the towns by their payment of tolls on market days.

Until the nineteenth century there was no system in Ireland, with a few local exceptions, corresponding to the English Poor Law. No doubt, this difference was due, in the first place, to the disturbed and unsettled state of Ireland at the time that the English Poor Law was introduced, and, later, "differences of race and religion and other unfavourable causes united to prevent the growth of that orderly gradation of classes, and that sympathy between one class and another which exists in every well-

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1 Some Observations on Ireland by a Member of the Dublin Society, Dublin, 1779.
2 Considerations on Present Disturbances, by D. Trant, Dublin, 1787.
3 Clarendon, Revenues of Ireland, p. 90.
4 Thoughts and Facts relating to the Increase of Agriculture, by R. Griffith, Dublin, 1795.
5 Arthur O'Connor, State of Ireland, 1798.
6 Commission on State of Poor in Ireland, 1830.
conditioned community." There were several statutes of the Irish Parliament providing punishment for vagabonds and beggars who were able to work, but there was no provision for the relief of the genuinely needy and deserving poor.

In 1710 an Act was passed,\(^2\) for the erecting of a workhouse in the City of Dublin, and for maintaining the poor thereof. This Act created a corporation of governors and guardians of the poor to "relieve and set at work all vagabonds and beggars, and provide necessaries for them," arrest and bring up children under five found begging, and to apprentice them out when they grew up. Power was given to raise money by licences for hackney coaches and sedan chairs and by a tax on houses. In 1715 power was given to the ministers and church wardens in all parts of the country to apprentice children found begging.\(^3\) In 1735 an Act was passed providing a workhouse for Cork on the same lines as the one in Dublin, and for the relief of foundling children,\(^4\) and provision was made for the sending of Dublin children to the Cork hospital, and vice versa, so that they might be separated from their parents, and saved from the danger of being brought up as Papists.\(^5\) The "explanation of the fact that institutions of this kind were found necessary for the cities before they were for the country is that Dublin and Cork were flooded with beggars who congregated there from all the country districts, and it was absolutely essential for the peace of the cities that some means of employing and supporting these vagrants should be provided. No similar institution was provided for Belfast, but the bane of travelling beggars became so great that the citizens in 1757 established a workhouse by voluntary contributions on the same lines as those in Dublin and Cork."\(^6\)

In 1771 the Foundling Hospital and the workhouses in Dublin were separated,\(^7\) and in the same year provision

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2 2 Anne, c. 19. 3 2 Geo. I., c. 17. 4 9 Geo. II., c. 25. 5 Lecky, I., 231.
6 Benn, *History of Belfast*, p. 596. 7 11 & 12 Geo. III., c. 11.
was made for the relief of foundling children in the other cities of Ireland, a provision which was extended to the whole of Ireland two years later.

In 1771 a statute was passed which, had it been acted upon, might have provided a satisfactory system for the relief of the poor, but the powers given were voluntary, and were not generally used. By this Act, corporations were appointed in every county and city with power to badge the poor and to license them to beg, and, as soon as they had sufficient funds, to build hospitals to be called workhouses, or houses of industry, divided into four sections for the relief of (1) poor helpless men, (2) poor helpless women, (3) men able to labour, and (4) women able to labour. The Grand Juries of every county were authorised to present from £200 to £400 towards the erection of these houses of industry, and the Grand Juries of cities to present from £100 to £200 for the same purpose. This Act was a failure, partly because it was not compulsory on the corporations to apply it, and partly because the funds provided were insufficient. In 1830 only twelve houses of industry had been built under the Act—eight in Munster, three in Leinster and one in Dublin.

Provision was made for the relief of the sick poor in 1765, when the clergy of the established church were created a perpetual corporation for the erection of infirmaries, and the Grand Juries were authorised to present from £50 to £100 for this purpose; fever hospitals were also erected in some places by special Acts of Parliament. No provision seems to have been made for lunatics until after the Union, although Grand Juries were authorised in 1787 to present a small sum for insane wards in the county infirmaries.

It has been said that the absence of a Poor Law was not such a hardship on the poor as

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1 11 & 12 Geo. III., c. 15. 2 13 & 14 Geo. III., c. 24. 3 Commission on the State of the Poor in Ireland, 1830. 4 5 Geo. III., c. 20. 5 Commission on the State of the Poor in Ireland, 1830. 6 Commission on the Poor of Ireland, 1804.
might be imagined, as the evils of the English Poor Law were so great that its absence was rather an advantage than the reverse, and the Irish Parliament was accustomed to make large grants for the support of charitable institutions, and in time of distress for the direct relief of the sufferers. But on the other side it may be said that a Poor Law like the English would have prevented much of the destitution that undoubtedly existed. In England the landholder was bound to the support of the poor of his parish; and one of the results of extreme poverty among the poor was to increase the poor rate payable by the landholder. "To the people living on the soil," said Isaac Butt, "it is impossible to conceive a wider or more complete variation between the laws of the two countries. The Irish and the English labourers were living under systems of Government as different as those of England and Russia. No illustration, no language, can convey an adequate idea of the difference between an English labourer—entitled to demand from the guardians as many loaves of good wheaten bread as he and his children, however numerous, could eat—and that of the miserable Kerry cottier."

There was one institution in Ireland which might have been productive of the most valuable economic results, had not its administration been ruined by bigotry and mismanagement. The Charter schools were founded in 1733, with the twofold object of bringing up Irish children in the Protestant religion, and of providing them with a sound industrial training. Unfortunately, the former object was generally considered of more importance than the latter, with the result that the industrial education furnished in the Charter schools was so neglected as to be of no substantial value to the country. The idea that literary and technical education should proceed side by side showed wisdom on the part of those who founded the schools, but the good intentions of the founders were successfully frustrated by the ignorance and cruelty of the

1 Lecky, vol. ii., p. 504.  2 Irish People and Irish Land, p. 185.
schoolmasters. In spite of the lavish grants of money which they received from Parliament, the Charter schools never contained more than sixteen hundred pupils at any time.¹

¹ See Lecky, I., 233; Froude, I., 574; Wakefield, II., 410-4; Report of Commission on Irish Education, 1821; Godkin, Education in Ireland, ch. 3; Newenham, p. 185.
PART V.
POLITICAL INFLUENCES.

CHAPTER XXXII.
THE CAUSES OF IRISH MISERY.

The different influences which tended to depress the condition of the Irish people during the eighteenth century have already, to a large extent, been indicated when treating of the particular branches of Irish prosperity which were most directly affected. The aim of the present chapter is to summarise the results of these various influences, and to show their relation to and interaction on each other. The principal causes which tended to impede Irish prosperity, and to prevent the country from progressing along the lines of normal development, may be briefly summed up as follows:—(1) The Restraints on Irish Trade, and the consequent ruin of manufacturing industry; (2) The evil land system; (3) The Penal Laws; (4) Absenteeism; and (5) The Political Dependence of the Irish Parliament. These causes were not independent, but interrelated; and the result of each of them was not simply to produce certain bad effects in a particular sphere of Irish life, but also to exaggerate and intensify the bad effects produced by all the others. There were also many minor causes productive of economic depression—such, for instance, as the destruction of the woods—but, as these only produced effects in certain limited spheres, they have not been included in the present chapter; they are more properly dealt with in the sections of the book dealing with the particular subjects to which they relate.
The economic policy of European statesmen in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries was inspired by what is known as the Mercantile Theory. They were persuaded, not indeed that money is the only form of wealth, but that the accumulation of wealth in that form gave a nation an advantage over its rivals. The economic arguments for this view were reinforced by the need of money for the support of the growing standing armies of the great States, and the increasing magnitude and duration of campaigns conducted in foreign and distant countries. "By the seventeenth century, warfare was vastly changed. Formerly there had been a hasty expedition and a fixed battle, and the matter was settled by courage; but at the time of which we write the whole art of war seemed in a manner reduced to money, and that prince who could best find money to feed, clothe, and pay his army, not he who had the most valiant troops, was surest of success and conquest." The measures adopted in order to secure an augmentation of the nation's stock of money were prohibitions on the export of specie, and encouragements to the export of other commodities, in the hope that such exports would be paid for in money. On the other hand, the importation of goods from abroad was discouraged, lest the payments made for them might necessitate the export of precious metal. It is clear, however, that no State could be in a position to prohibit all importations, however desirable such a prohibition might have been from the point of view of the statesmen of the time; various articles of consumption, some of them necessaries of life, could not, for one reason or another, be produced at home, and must needs be imported from abroad. On the other hand, exportation of home-produced commodities could not be increased beyond a certain point, unless some equivalent commodities were accepted in return; no nation could buy unlimited quantities of goods without selling some of its own productions; no State (except some El Dorado) was in a position to

IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

export money indefinitely. The prohibition of imports being impossible, the practicable policy which commended itself to the statesmen was to bring about conditions of trade in which exports should exceed imports in value. The excess should then be paid for in money. The country obtaining this advantage was said to have a "favourable balance of trade."

When a country is thus selling more than it is buying, the international "rate of exchange" is in its favour, and this is a state of affairs extremely satisfactory to its merchant class. In any state in which the merchants have a voice in determining policy, such a balance of trade will consequently be encouraged. As a matter of fact, the economic policy of European States in the seventeenth century was largely determined by statesmen on the representations and advice of the merchant class, who succeeded in impressing on ministers the desirability of a "favourable balance of trade." The system of economic policy which had as its aim the attainment of such a balance thus came to be rightly designated the "Mercantile System." The two great means, then, of enriching the country were considered to be restraints upon importation and encouragement of exportation. There was a third means also employed which was really a corollary of the other two, namely, encouragement to the importation of raw materials, so that they might be worked up and the finished product exported. We shall find that all the restrictive measures directed by the English Government against Irish trade fell under one of these three heads.

In the reign of Charles II, the importation of goods into England was restricted by high duties imposed upon all goods imported from foreign countries, including Ireland. As a result of these tariffs, many classes of Irish goods were practically excluded from the English market. These restrictions were at no time relaxed, except when such relaxation was necessary in the interests of England. For instance, an English statute passed in
1696 to permit the importation of Irish bar-iron free of duty was prefaced thus: "Whereas the scarcity and dearness of iron in this Kingdom have of late much discouraged the manufactures thereof, etc." This statute presents a rather good example of the attitude of English statesmen towards the economic interests of Ireland. Not only was it passed, as appears from its very preamble, for the benefit and convenience of England, but it was passed also in direct opposition to the interests of Ireland, where the recent destruction of the woods had made it a matter of importance that the surviving timber should be sparingly consumed, and that it should not be used in great quantities in the smelting of iron.  

The various British statutes which were passed from time to time admitting Irish provisions into England were passed only for brief periods, and with the object of keeping down prices in England. The Navigation Acts were restraints analogous to restraints on importation, as they secured the monopoly of a large industry, namely, shipping, for English capital to the exclusion of Irish and foreign.

The exportation of English produce was further encouraged by diminishing exports from Ireland as far as possible. England was always anxious to keep as large a market as possible for her goods, and consequently to put rival traders out of business. The Irish woollen exports competed effectively with the English woollen manufactures in foreign markets, and the obvious way to relieve the English industry of this competition was to suppress the Irish; and this, as we have seen, was done in 1698. The rising Irish glass industry was similarly destroyed in 1746. The exportation of English goods was further encouraged by the persistent refusal of the English Government to allow the Irish Parliament to place protective duties in Ireland on the importation of English goods. England thus succeeded in ruining the foreign market for Irish

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1 8 & 9 Will. III., c. 20.  
2 See Chapter XV., supra.
goods, and in securing a monopoly of the Irish market for English goods. The import of raw materials into England was encouraged by the low duties at which flax and wool were admitted; while, at the same time, the export of these raw materials from England was prohibited. On the same principle, the importation into England of Irish unwrought iron was encouraged, as already mentioned. On the other hand, coal, which was a raw material, or rather a necessary for the carrying on the processes of some Irish industries, was burdened with a duty on export from England of five shillings a ton.

Thus, all the weapons of the mercantile system were put into force in favour of English trade in the eighteenth century, with disastrous results to Ireland. The question immediately arises, why should Ireland have suffered so much more than any other country by England's adoption of the mercantile methods. The same weapons were used against France, Spain, and every other country, and yet these countries were not reduced to a state of poverty, nor were the industries of those countries destroyed as those of Ireland were.

The answer to this question is that the mercantile system assumed a number of independent nations, each of which employed all the devices of the system in its own favour; as long as a nation could use the same weapons in retaliation as had been used against it, it could hold its own by encouraging its own manufactures to the detriment of its rivals. Thus, although some nations might progress faster than others, owing to their natural resources or their wealth in colonies, still every nation was at liberty to progress along its own lines, although, of course, none would progress so rapidly as if the system of free trade were adopted. The reason Ireland suffered so much under the mercantile system was that her power of retaliation was paralysed, as her Parliament was dependent, and unable to use against other countries the weapons which were used against Ireland. If the Irish Parliament had been able to impose high duties on the
importation of English goods, or to prohibit the exportation of raw material from Ireland, Irish industry would not have been so grievously affected; but no measure of this kind was ever even attempted, as the hopelessness of its chance of passing the English Privy Council was at all times realised. Indeed, the matter went further than this. If it was merely a case of the Irish Parliament not being in a position to pass beneficial laws, the state of affairs would not have been so desperate; the peculiar hardship of Ireland was that laws injurious to her trade could be passed by an outside body. This is shown by the woollen and glass prohibitions. The political subordination of Ireland to England entailed as a consequence the subordination of Ireland’s economic interests to those of England, and to this extent Ireland’s position was no better than that of a colony.

In many respects, it is true to say that Ireland was, for trade purposes, in the position of a colony of England—for instance, in the application of the Navigation Laws, and certain laws which allowed colonial produce to be shipped to a few named English ports only, and in the fact that her foreign trade was regulated by the English Parliament. On the other hand, the Colonies had many benefits which Ireland had not. Outside matters of foreign trade, their assemblies were absolutely independent—a valuable difference in the matter of public finance, as the Colonies were lightly taxed, and were burdened with no military expenses. Again, it was only certain enumerated colonial products that were confined to the English market, and many of the most important colonial products were not so enumerated—for instance, grain, lumber, salt, provisions, fish, sugar and rum, which could be freely exported to any part of the world. It was Ireland’s staple commodity, namely wool, which was deprived of its foreign market, and in this respect Ireland seems to have been worse off than any of the Colonies. It is true that the articles which the Colonies might freely export were all raw produce, but this was a matter of comparative
unimportance in new countries. Besides, in return for the monopoly of the market which England secured in the enumerated commodities, a preference was given to the colonial produce; no preference, except in the matter of linen, was ever given to Irish manufactures. In this respect, Ireland was treated like a foreign country. Perhaps the most serious advantage which the Colonies enjoyed over Ireland was their liberty to trade freely with each other, whereas, as we have seen, Ireland was scarcely allowed to trade with the Colonies at all. To sum up, Ireland had all the disadvantages of both a colony and a foreign country without any of the advantages of either.

The motives which induced English statesmen to adopt this policy towards Irish trade were, in the first place, the ordinary motives operating in every country where the mercantile system prevailed, aided by the peculiar powers which England possessed of imposing its will on the Irish Parliament. In 1673 Sir William Temple frankly stated the English policy in this matter:—

"Regard must be had to these points whereon the trade of Ireland goes to interfere with any main branches of the trade of England, in which case the encouragement of such trade ought to be declined, and so give way to the interest of trade in England."

There was an additional consideration which doubtless had important consequences, namely, the desire of the English Parliament to keep Ireland poor lest the King might increase his Irish revenues, and so attain a position where he could govern in England without the necessity of resorting to Parliament for supplies. The memory of the conflicts between the Stuart Kings and their Parliaments, and the struggle of the Revolution, were too fresh in the minds of the Parliaments of William III. to permit them to close their eyes to the dangers which might arise, if the King succeeded in obtaining a large independent revenue, with which to equip an army from Ireland. Later in the eighteenth century the desire to keep Ireland poor was

1 See Adam Smith, bk. iv., ch. 7. 2 Hely Hutchinson, Commercial Restraints, p. 103. 3 Letter to the Earl of Essex, 1673.
largely founded on fear of France, and an apprehension lest a rich and prosperous Ireland might break away from England and form an alliance with England's enemy. This aspect of English policy in Ireland was clearly appreciated by Montesquieu, who foretold that wise English statesmanship would be directed to keeping Ireland poor.¹ As we shall see, one of Castlereagh's confidential correspondents stated quite frankly that, from the English point of view, Ireland's growing prosperity tended to make her "dangerous."

It has frequently been stated that too much importance has been attached to the part played by the trade restrictions in the hindrance of Irish prosperity, and that Ireland could, by wise measures, have developed her internal trade, and thus grown rich, in spite of those restrictions. Possibly the trade restrictions occupied an inordinately important part in the Irish view of the situation, but it must be remembered that the Irish statesmen of the time were also influenced by the ideas of the mercantile system, and in attaching perhaps too much weight to foreign trade, were only following the example of the rest of the world.² But it would be difficult to exaggerate the part played by the trade restrictions in the hindrance of Irish prosperity. There is no doubt that the direct result of these restrictions was the ruin of many of the most important Irish industries. The Irish manufacturer was not even allowed the benefit of the Irish market, where his goods were undersold by English products which were admitted into Ireland at low duties, which the Irish Parliament was powerless to raise.

The result of this destruction of industrial prosperity was to throw an undue proportion of the population on the land for a subsistence. But, as we have already seen, no such subsistence could be derived from the soil under the land system which then prevailed. The recent confiscations, and the universal feeling of insecurity, together with the widespread prevalence of absenteeism, dis-

¹ *Esprit de Lois*, bk. 27, ch. 19. ² See Berkeley's "Querist."
couraged the landlords from improving their lands, and from extracting from the soil the full return which it was capable of yielding; on the other hand, the Penal Laws prevented the majority of the tenant class from such an interest in their holdings as would warrant the outlay required for the proper, not to say the intensive, cultivation of their lands. Nor could a Catholic's money be employed in the improvement of land. Another result of the Penal Laws which we have already considered was the tendency to convert the lands held by Catholics into pasture, thus depopulating large areas of the country.¹

Undoubtedly, the Irish Parliament was largely to blame for the enactment and retention of the Penal Laws, and to this extent may be accused of having contributed to the causes producing Irish distress. But it must be remembered that the foundation of the whole penal system was laid by the English statute,² which put the Irish Parliament under the control of the dominant and conquering party. If that Parliament directed its legislation to the aggrandisement of the few and the impoverishment of the many, it was simply using for its own benefit the weapon with which England had so unjustly furnished it. In any event, such patriotic legislation as it might have attempted, would have been frustrated by the English Privy Council.

The part which the English Government played in this matter is aptly illustrated by an incident which occurred in 1762, when the Irish Parliament passed the heads of a bill to legalise the practice of Catholics lending money on the security of freehold land. The English Privy Council refused to sanction this measure, in spite of the fact that the illegality of such mortgages was one of the main impediments in the way of the improvement of agriculture in Ireland.³

Another cause which operated to depress the country was the spread of absenteeism in one form or another—

¹ See p. 169, supra. ² 3 W. and M., c. 2. ³ O'Connor, History of Irish Catholics, pp. 290-2.
the landlords lived in England; the greater part of the pensions charged on the public purse was sent abroad; a large part of the army was frequently on foreign service; and the sons of a great number of the Protestants received their education in England. These receivers of money remitted abroad paid no taxes, and withdrew a great deal of coin from the country, and the result was that interest in Ireland was, until 1788, higher than in England, and that the course of exchange was, consequently, always against Ireland. The habits of idleness and drunkenness, which undoubtedly existed to such a large extent, were a consequence rather than a cause of Irish misery.

It must be remembered that the economic condition of Ireland in the eighteenth century cannot be attributed to one cause alone; all the causes which we have mentioned acted on and aggravated each other. The industrial restrictions acted on the evils of the land system by throwing the whole population on the soil for support; the land system re-acted on industry by discouraging the accumulation of capital, and so on. Again, even had the land system been a good one, it is scarcely possible to believe that the agricultural interests in the country could have flourished, so long as the Parliament was unable to protect Irish corn against the competition of the much-encouraged English farmer.

The fact must never be lost sight of that the real causes of Ireland's distress were political—the English conquest and Irish Parliamentary dependence. The evils of the land system resulted from repeated confiscations and the feelings of insecurity thus created, and from the inequitable substitution of feudal tenures for a system of land ownership based on a fundamentally different conception; the commercial restraints were caused by the hostility of England, and above all, by the inability of the Irish Parliament to retaliate. "Never, perhaps, was the physical misery of a country more directly connected by clear and overwhelming evidence with its national destruction and its political degradation—with its
trampling down by the iron heel of conquest and the sub-
jection of its people to religious and social slavery.'" The
truth of this observation will be apparent from the con-
cclusions arrived at in the next chapter, which deals with
the progress made under Grattan’s Parliament. It will
there be seen that one of the results of the existence of an
independent Parliament in Ireland was that the industrial
resources of the country were developed to a degree not
before attained, and that the period of legislative freedom
was also one of economic progress and general
prosperity.

1 Butt, *Irish People and Irish Land.*
CHAPTER XXXIII.
GRATTAN'S PARLIAMENT.

The question whether the economic condition of Ireland did or did not improve under the regime of Grattan's Parliament is one of great importance. It has always been a commonplace amongst Irish historians until recent years that the progress made during that time was very great, and that it constituted a strong argument in favour of the re-establishment of an independent legislature in Ireland. A serious doubt, however, was cast on this generally established opinion in a remarkable and suggestive book which appeared in 1910—James Connolly's *Labour in Irish History*—wherein it was suggested, in the first place, that the improvement made, if any, was not at all so great as was popularly supposed; secondly, that any improvement that was made was in no sense due to Grattan's Parliament, but to independent causes, which were in no way political; and thirdly, that, in spite of a possible improvement in the trade and commerce of the country, no improvement was felt by the lower classes, whose interests were totally neglected by Parliament, which was representative only of the landlord class. It is proposed, here, to examine, in the first place, the evidence which we possess of the progress which Ireland made during the period 1782 to 1800, and secondly, to show that the conclusions which Connolly bases on this evidence are, to a large extent, unsupported.
The progress of industry in Ireland under Grattan's Parliament has been already fully dealt with in a previous chapter. It has been seen that the export of raw wool totally ceased, and that the woollen manufacture showed some signs of re-attaining its old prosperity; that the cotton manufacture grew at a very rapid pace, and in a few years attained considerable dimensions; that the progress of the linen manufacture was uninterrupted; that the brewing industry was re-established in Ireland, without, however, in any way injuring its flourishing rivals, the distilleries; that the glass manufacture became a serious rival to that of England; and that, in spite of the greatly increased export of corn, the provision trade did not suffer, but, on the contrary, continued to expand. Several smaller industries also made successful progress, and Ireland gave promise of being able soon to supply herself with many commodities which she had previously imported from abroad.

During the same period a notable rise in rents took place. Arthur Young, in 1779, estimated the average rental of Ireland at 11s. an acre. Theobald McKenna, in his *Essay on Parliamentary Reform*, published in 1793, said that the rents had tripled and often quadrupled within the previous forty years; and Newenham, in 1809, wrote: "Since the year 1782 the rent of land, which a short time before that year had begun to fall in many places, has much more than doubled in all parts of Ireland, and more than trebled with many. . . . If Mr. Young was grounded in computing the rental of Ireland at six millions in 1778, there can be no hesitation in stating it as upwards of fifteen millions at present." In 1814, Wakefield calculated the average rent per acre throughout Ireland at £1 7s. 1d.

The increase of population during these years has been dealt with in the first chapter of this book, where it was pointed out that the population in 1780 was, as nearly

1 Young, *Tour in Ireland*, vol. ii., p. 16.  
as can be estimated, about 3,000,000, and in 1800 had grown to almost 5,000,000. This represents an increase of about 60 per cent. in twenty years—a much more rapid rate than was experienced in Ireland at any previous time. The wages of labour also increased more in the twenty years 1780-1800 than they had risen in the previous forty years; in 1729 the average wage in summer was sixpence a day and in winter fourpence; in 1779 it was sixpence halfpenny a day; while in 1811 it had risen to a shilling a day.

The disabilities which weighed so heavily on Catholics were also to a large extent removed. In 1781 Catholics were given the fullest powers of dealing with land; in the same year certain occupations which had previously been closed to them were opened; and in 1793 they obtained the electoral franchise. These relaxations had the happiest effect on the industrial character of the people.

It would appear to be quite obvious from these facts that considerable progress was made in Ireland during the period of Grattan’s Parliament. The criteria of progress in any country during a given period have always been the growth of industry, rise of rents, and growth of population, and all these features of progress were conspicuous in Ireland during the period we are considering. The opinions of contemporaries on a matter of this kind, however, are also of great value, and the following quotations from contemporary speeches and writings fully bear out the view put forward that the progress made during these years was very marked. The flourishing state of the country was a constant matter of congratulation in the Irish Parliament. In 1790 the Chancellor of the Exchequer said that it was his pride and happiness to declare that he did not think it possible for any nation to have improved more in her circumstances since 1784 than Ireland had done; and in 1795 the Address to the King contained a reference to the "unexampled
prosperity and growing resources of the nation.'” 1 “What is the state of Ireland at this moment?” exclaimed a member of the House of Commons in the same year, “A state of unexampled prosperity; the landlord gets his rent to the hour; the tenant finds money for the produce of his land the moment he brings it to the market; and the manufacturer finds employment and payment to his satisfaction.” 2 Perhaps the most notable tribute to the growing prosperity of the country is to be found in Foster’s great speech against the Union: “Has Scotland advanced as much in prosperity since the Union as Ireland? The population of Scotland was one million at the Union, and Mr. Pitt says it is a million and a half now, but Ireland has increased hers threefold without an Union, and Scotland only one-half with it! Why don’t he refer to their agriculture, which is peculiarly applicable to this question, because its rise began in Ireland with the constitution of 1782. It has risen since that period to the value of full a million yearly, including the decrease of import, the immense accession of home demand, and the increasing export. I will take the year 1796 because Mr. Dundas selected it, and you will find, by comparing the imports of that year with those of 1783, the great spring which the free constitution has given to trade and commerce. The general export rose in 78 years to 1782 from 1 to 5, and in 14 years after 1782 from 5 to 10. The linen export in the 78 years rose from 1 to 32, and in the last 14 from 32 to 88; so that the general export rose as much in the past 14 years as it had done during the preceding 78 years, and linen exports trebled in that time.” 3

The pamphlets which were written for and against the Union in 1799 are full of references to the same subject. “The increase of civilisation,” says one, “the extension of manufacture, the progress of the fine arts, was never so rapid in any country as this”; 4 and we find the statement in another that “Commerce has of late years increased

1 J.P.D., XV., 155.  2 J.P.D., XV., 168.
3 Foster’s Speech on Union, 31st April, 1799.
4 Letter to Theobald McKenna, Dublin, 1779.
beyond our hopes.'" "We may everywhere read in large characters the ameliorated state of the public fortune in the improved condition of our land, in the increased number of buildings, both public and private, throughout our towns, etc." A large and representative meeting of the gentlemen, clergy and freeholders of Dublin was held in January, 1799, at which the following resolution was passed unanimously: "That the legislative independence of Ireland has been the means of improvement and prosperity to this country, rapid beyond example." Even Castlereagh, who did more than any other man to put an end to Grattan's Parliament, was of this opinion; in a debate in 1803 he said: "No power in Europe had made more rapid strides in wealth and general happiness in the last fifteen years than Ireland"; and he gave expression to the same opinion in a memoir printed in the *Castlereagh Correspondence*. Newenham, whose views on Irish affairs are of such value, was also of the same opinion: "The progress of Ireland towards national opulence and conspicuity subsequently to the independence of her trade, especially of her legislative independence, was extremely rapid."

One cause which, by itself, contributed materially to this result was the decline of absenteeism which followed the establishment of Grattan's Parliament. In 1796 the preamble to a statute sets out that owing to the increased prosperity many persons of good fortune were coming to settle in Ireland.

Indeed, the best evidence of the growing prosperity of the country was the anxiety which English statesmen betrayed for a union. Mr. Charles Bushe described the Union as a denial of the rights of nature to a great nation from an intolerance of its prosperity. In the *Castlereagh Correspondence* there is a suggestive memorandum of the

1 *Arguments for and against Union Considered*, Dublin, 1798.
2 *Thoughts on Union*, by Joshua Spencer, Dublin, 1798.
3 *Account of Meeting, etc.*, Dublin, 1799.
4 *Parliamentary History*, vol. 36, p. 1709.
5 *Castlereagh Correspondence*, vol. iii., p. 204.
6 *View of Ireland*, p. 247.
7 *Life of Grattan*, vol. iii., p. 211.
8 *36 Geo. III., c. 48.
9 *Life of Grattan*, vol. v., p. 86; and see ib., p. 4.
arguments for the Union, in which the then dangerous state of the country was put down to six causes, one of which was "the general prosperity of the country, which has produced great activity and energy."

It is quite impossible, in view of this volume of evidence, both from the facts which we know, and from contemporary observers, to deny that the period of Grattan’s Parliament was one of great and growing prosperity in Ireland. It has been suggested, however, in the book to which reference has already been made, that this prosperity would have occurred in any event, and that the fact that the Parliament was free was an irrelevant matter. "We will admit," says Connolly, "that Ireland was prosperous under Grattan’s Parliament, but we must emphatically deny that such prosperity was in any infinitesimal degree produced by Parliament. Here again the socialist philosophy in Ireland provides the key to the problem—points to the economic development as the true solution. The constant advance of trade in the period in question was almost solely due to the introduction of mechanical power, and the consequent cheapening of manufactured goods. It was the era of the industrial revolution when the domestic industries we had inherited from the middle ages were finally replaced by the factory system of modern times. The prosperity of Ireland under Grattan’s Parliament was almost as little due to that Parliament as the dust caused by the revolutions of the coach-wheel was due to the presence of the fly, who sat on the coach, viewed the dust, and fancied himself the author thereof. And, therefore, true prosperity cannot be brought to Ireland except by measures somewhat more drastic than that Parliament ever imagined." This statement of Connolly’s involves two propositions—first, that the progress which was made in Ireland was caused by the industrial revolution; and secondly, that it was not caused in any way by the Parliament then in existence.

1 Castlercagh Correspondence, vol. iii., p. 55.
2 Connolly, Labour in Irish History, c. 5.
It is proposed here to consider these propositions separately.

The answer to the suggestion that the industrial revolution was the cause of the prosperity of Ireland in the years 1780-1800 is that the industrial revolution had hardly begun to develop in Ireland at that time. This subject has been fully dealt with above in Chapter XXIV., where it was pointed out that the industrial revolution made much later and slower progress in Ireland than in England owing to the lesser wealth and comparatively undeveloped condition of the former country; that the accompanying English agricultural revolution had no counterpart in Ireland; that the Irish growth of population, though simultaneous with the English, was due to different causes, and that Wakefield was much impressed as late as 1814 by the failure of the Irish to introduce the improved industrial methods and machinery of the time.

It will be pretty clear, therefore, that the part which Connolly ascribes to the industrial revolution in Irish economic progress is much exaggerated; his second statement, that Grattan’s Parliament was in no way to be thanked for the prosperity of the country, would seem to rest on an equally fallacious basis. If there was one feature of Irish life which more than another distinguished the last fifteen years of the century as a period of improvement, it was the rapid growth of tillage which took place all over the country. How can this be stated to be owing to the industrial revolution? Must it not be perfectly obvious to anyone with a knowledge of the period that the direct and efficient cause of this great advance was Foster’s Corn Law—one of the earliest measures of the independent Parliament. It has been seen that before the year 1782 all the efforts which Parliament made to encourage tillage were unsuccessful owing to the fact that no bounties could be given on the export of corn sufficient to counteract those given in England. In 1782, for the first time, it became possible to grant such encouragements, and two years later they were granted, the immediate
result being the great growth of tillage, which was such an outstanding feature of the latter years of the century. Here, then, is one example of the connection between legislative independence and economic prosperity.

The connection is no less obvious in the case of the progress of industry. It has been said that the great advances made in the linen, glass and cotton industries were owing to the removal of the commercial restrictions in 1779—in other words, were owing to British, and not Irish, legislation. It is true that these industries could never have advanced as they did had the commercial restraints not been removed; and it is equally true, no doubt, that these restraints could not have been removed without an Act of the British Parliament; but it has been seen, in dealing with this branch of the subject, that the removal of the commercial restraints was of little effect in itself until it was accompanied by the granting of legislative independence. The power which had relaxed the restrictions might at any time impose them again; indeed, as has been seen above, attacks were made on Irish commerce by the British Parliament almost immediately after the free trade legislation. The granting of legislative independence, on the other hand, secured to the Irish manufacturer the market which the free trade legislation had opened to him. Without this security, is it probable that large capital would have been invested in those manufactures; or, again, would a Parliament dependent on that of Great Britain have been in a position to grant the encouragement to industry which the Irish Parliament granted? The result of these encouragements, as has been seen, was to enable Irish manufacturers to compete with British; is it not clear that encouragements calculated to produce these results would never have been tolerated if the British Government had retained control of Irish legislation?

Indeed, the Irish Parliament fought the battle for the Irish trader in every direction. The embargoes which had

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1 See Chapter XX, supra.
exercised such a ruinous influence on the provision trade were never again attempted when it was known that the Parliament was free and independent; the Portuguese trade was opened on account of Parliamentary agitation; and national credit was put for the first time on a sound basis by the establishment of the Bank of Ireland. In this respect the Irish Parliament presents a striking contrast to other assemblies of the time—for instance, the French Revolutionary Parliaments. The case of the brewing industry is possibly as good an illustration as could be found of the practical connection in the way of cause and effect between Parliamentary activity and industrial progress. It will not be denied by anybody that, if beer is to be drunk in a country at all, it is better that home-made beer should be drunk than beer imported from abroad. The Irish Parliament was of this opinion in 1791, and consequently passed certain measures to stop the then rapidly-increasing import of English beer into Ireland. From that year onwards the import rapidly declined, and the home industry flourished correspondingly.

It is impossible, indeed, to resist the conclusion that there was a close and intimate connection between the measures of the Parliament and the growth of the wealth of the country. "The nation darted into manhood at once;" said Grattan; "young Ireland came forth like a giant rejoicing in his strength. Public prosperity was crowded on the heel of the statute (of legislative independence), all the powers of nature seemed to stand at the right hand of Parliament. The leading causes of this were as apparent as the fact; the country became cultivated, because the laws that deprived the Catholics of an interest in the soil were repealed, and an opportunity was given to the operation of the Corn Laws; her trade increased, because the prohibitions on her trade were removed; and the prohibitions were removed because she asserted her liberty." Newenham, who was by far the most enlightened writer on Irish economic affairs at the time,

expressed the opinion in 1809 that the measures of Grattan's Parliament had "operated powerfully in rescuing Ireland from the state of poverty into which she had fallen."

Connolly's third allegation against Grattan's Parliament is that it was a capitalist body, and consequently did not consult the interests of the lower classes, whose condition was not at all improved during the course of its existence. Indeed, he attacks Grattan as being an enemy of the common people, and thus would indirectly seem to blame the Parliament to some extent for the condition of the poor. Whereas, on the one hand, any prosperity which the country attained during this period was due to outside causes, any poverty or misery which was experienced was due to Parliament. It is hoped that the preceding paragraphs have successfully answered the first of these allegations, and it is proposed to answer the second of them in those that follow.

It is a matter of some difficulty to arrive at a conclusion as to what exactly was the condition of the poor during these years, as a good deal of contradiction exists amongst contemporary writers on the subject. There is no doubt, however, that the condition of the poor did not improve to the extent which one might have hoped; and during the very last years of the eighteenth century especially, it would seem to have been extremely low. A pamphlet written in 1794 described the state of the poor as "as bad as ever"; and another pamphlet, written in the same year, says: "Whatever may be said of national prosperity, whether such a thing exists or not, certain it is the common people have no share in it; the judicial and impartial observer will say that their condition is growing daily worse." "This kingdom has made great advance in civilisation, and its constitution has been improved; great improvements have been made in commerce and agriculture. But I really very much doubt whether the state of

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1 Newenham, p. 207.
2 Thoughts on the Present State of the Cottiers in this Kingdom, Dublin, 1794.
3 Account of Disturbances in County Meath, Dublin, 1794; and see Grievances of Ireland, Dublin, 1795.
the labouring poor has kept pace with other improvements." The following passage, written in 1796, gives a painful description of the poverty then prevailing:

"The East part of the Capital displays some grandeur in palaces, public buildings, and works, which, instead of disguising, rather make more glaring, the huge poverty, the gigantic misery that fills this great city, in every garb, in every shape of human woes and gradation of wretchedness, from those who excite gentle compassion to those that petrify with horror; every street and lane, every place of public resort, are crowded with the squalid victims of oppression, while in the silent recesses of bashful woe, famine, nakedness, and their concomitant distresses, consume their thousands. Such pomp and pageantry alongside abject poverty, such magnificence in buildings and equipages, coupled with the filth of mud cabins and the rags that disfigure our poor, among whom may rank almost the whole of the industrial classes—such expensive decoration, when not the legitimate offspring of public and private wealth growing from solid improvements and extensive commerce, is at once a wanton misapplication of capital, which would be better employed in forwarding the tillage of barren lands, or in infant manufactures than in flattering the pride of individuals. Well, let us pass from this gorgeous mask of Ireland's distress, and take a view of the provinces. Wherever we turn our eyes, we are everywhere stared in the face by the poverty, the nakedness, the miserable filthy styes of a distressed, woe-worn peasantry."

In 1797 a Member of Parliament described the peasantry as the most miserable on the face of the earth, and Arthur O'Connor, in the following year, said that the people of Ireland were worse housed, worse clothed, and worse fed than the subjects of any other country in Europe. The condition of the poor in Dublin is vividly portrayed by Whitley Stokes: "A small room sets for

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1 Letter from Michael Sandys to Henry Grattan, Dublin, 1795.
2 Ireland's Mirror, Dublin, 1796.
4 Arthur O'Connor, State of Ireland, 1798.
three or four guineas a year; the family who take it have lodgers, who pay them 6½d. a week for room to lie down on a bed of straw if they have it. Thus, nine or ten people live in a room ten feet square; thirty is a low average for one of such houses. In Charles Street, I understand, they run up to ninety. In estimating the price of the lodgings held by the poor, the quality ought to be considered; their lodgings are floored with dirt never removed; the windows are often unglazed, or so decayed that they cannot be opened, and the place of glass is often supplied with wood; the roof is out of repair; the small rear is one dunghill which is not removed for years, perhaps; the stairs are the ashpit. The inhabitants of Merrion Square may be surprised to hear that in the angle behind Mount Street and Holles Street there is now a family of ten in a very small room, of which eight have had fever in the last month."

"If I were to attempt to paint the state of Ireland," said a writer on the Union in 1799, "I might dip my pencil in black and exercise my talent in painting the dismal; I might sketch out a picture of wretchedness such as could be equalled in Europe only by the devastated plains of La Vendée." "I admit," wrote a pamphleteer in 1808, "that agriculture has been much extended, and that the export trade has considerably increased; but it by no means follows as a necessary consequence that the condition of the peasant has been improved; and, if we take into account the depreciation of money, which certainly has not been attended by anything like a proportionate advance in the price of labour, and also the unexampled rise in the rents of land, and the consequent dearness of all necessaries of life, I think I can hardly be charged with having advanced a paradox if I say that the principal effect produced on the condition of the Irish peasant by the extension of tillage, the increasing export, and the rise of rents, is to make it necessary for him to

2 Observations on the Union, by G. Moore, Dublin, 1799; and see Hoare's Tour in Ireland, 1806.
toil six days in the week for a subsistence often inferior to what he formerly could procure by the labour of four.’”

These quotations from credible witnesses would certainly seem to show that the state of the poor at the end of the century was very low, but certain evidence to the contrary must also be considered. In the first place, it is noticeable that all the above quotations are from writers after 1793, the date of the outbreak of the French War; and that prior to the outbreak of that war and the consequent rise in the price of provisions, the condition of the poor does not seem to have been so appalling. Crumpe said that the situation of the peasant had, since the settlement of the constitution, been daily improving; and the references in Parliament to the poverty of the country are not nearly so numerous before as after that date. A contemporary writer pointed out that a good many estimates of the condition of the poor were formed by those who had only seen the outsides of their habitations, and that this was not a fair criterion to judge by, as, for many reasons, the peasant increased his consumption in other respects before he turned his hand to improve his cottage. “To build a house for his family is not always an easy matter for the Irish peasant; the scarcity of timber and of walling is an additional impediment. In the tillage counties, if the peasant arrives at better circumstances, it is after a course of painful industry, and money so acquired is not readily parted with. He is more desirous of taking more land than of improving his house. He lives in the same sort of habitation that he has been used to, and that his poorer neighbours inhabit; but he hires labourers and servants who live in his house, and increases the number of his household without increasing their accommodation. In those parts where the lands are let to middlemen, the peasant wishes still to conceal his substance, and he is especially unwilling

1 Thoughts and Suggestions on the means of Improving the condition of the Irish Peasantry, by R. Bellew, London, 1808.
2 See Trant. Considerations on Present Disturbances, Dublin, 1787.
4 See Cairne’s Political Essays, p. 130.
to build a good house, which would only raise the rent of his farm."

It is very difficult, in view of the many contradictory statements on the subject, to arrive at a satisfactory opinion, but there is one test which would seem to be of even more value than the statements of contemporary writers, namely, the official figures showing the quantities of different articles which the poor consumed. From this point of view the extra taxation of 1797 is important. As has been seen, it was constantly stated at an early period of the century that it would be useless and unremunerative to tax certain articles, such as leather, in Ireland, because they were not used by the poorer classes; but in 1797 such taxes were imposed, and apparently were remunerative. The accompanying diagram illustrates the increase

in the quantities of different commodities consumed in Ireland in the period 1782-1803, and the increase of population between those dates. The articles chosen are those, the whole of which had to be imported from abroad, and the whole consumption of which could, therefore, be accurately measured; and the increase of population is based on the assumption that the population in 1782 was about 3,000,000—a conservative estimate—and in 1803, 5,000,000—a liberal estimate. Indeed, the increase in population was probably less, in proportion to the increase in consumption, than appears from the diagram; but even as it stands the diagram shows that the increase in the consumption of articles of common use amongst the poor increased during those years at a more rapid rate than the population. The only conclusion that can be drawn is that the average consumption per individual of these commodities was greater at the end of the period of Grattan’s Parliament than at the beginning; and that consequently the average Irishman was, in a purely material sense, better off.

On the whole, then, the conclusion to be drawn is that, although the poor were in a low state, their condition was not so hopelessly retrograde as that suggested by Connolly. The idea that the Irish Parliament was negligent of their interests is quite unfounded. As we have seen, the only tax which at all pressed on the poor was the hearth money, and this was reformed in 1793. Parliament, moreover, in repealing the Penal Laws, did more to benefit the economic position of the poor than it could have done by any other measure. A perusal of the Parliamentary debates will show that the members of the Irish Parliament, both of the Government and patriot parties, were constantly anxious to improve the position of the poor by every means in their power, and were vigilant in examining the grievances which oppressed them.

As a matter of fact, the causes which tended to degrade the poor in Ireland were almost altogether beyond the control of Parliament. The first of these was the cottier
system, which, as has been shown by Mill, was inconsistent with the prosperity of the peasantry. The rents under this system being determined by competition, the growth of population pressed directly on the soil, and tended to raise rents without raising the wages of labour. If there had been a high standard of living in 1784, when the rapid increase of population first began, prudential checks might have been brought into play to prevent the population growing so rapidly as to lower the scale of living; as it was, there was nothing to restrain population to such an extent as to raise the scale of living. This subject has been so ably treated by Mill in reference to the particular period under review that it is impossible to forbear quoting his opinion on it. "The produce, on the cottier system, being divided into two portions, rent, and the remuneration of the labourer, the one is evidently determined by the other. The labourer has whatever the landlord does not take; the condition of the labourer depends on the amount of rent. But rent, being regulated by competition, depends upon the relation between the demand for land and the supply of it. The demand for land depends on the number of competitors, and the competitors are the whole rural population. The effect, therefore, of this tenure, is to bring the principal of population to act directly on the land, and not, as in England, on capital. Rent, in this state of things, depends on the proportion between population and land, as the land is a fixed quantity, while population has an unlimited power of increase; unless something checks that increase, the competition for land soon forces up rent to the highest point consistent with keeping the population alive. The effects, therefore, of cottier tenure depend on the extent to which the capacity of population to increase is controlled, either by custom, by individual prudence, or by starvation and disease. . . . But it is not where a high standard of comfort has rooted itself in the habits of the labouring classes that we are ever called upon to consider the effects
of a cottier system. That system is found only where the habitual requirements of the rural labourers are the lowest possible; where, as long as they are not actually starving, they will multiply; and population is only checked by the diseases, and the shortness of life, consequent on insufficiency of merely physical necessaries. This was the state of the largest portion of the Irish peasantry. When a people have sunk into this state, and still more, when they have been in it from time immemorial, the cottier system is an almost insuperable obstacle to their emerging from it. When the habits of the people are such that their increase is never checked but by the impossibility of obtaining a bare support, and when this support can only be obtained from land, all stipulations and agreements respecting amount of rent are merely nominal; the competition for land makes the tenants undertake to pay more than it is possible they should pay, and, when they have paid all they can, more almost always remains due."

It was Mill's opinion, then, that, under a cottier system, with a rapidly-growing population, rent would rise in a much greater proportion than wages. The correctness of this opinion is strongly illustrated by the figures which we have of the rises of rent and wages in Ireland. In 1779 the average wage per day for a labourer was 6½d., which, in 1811, had risen to 1s., a rise of 84.6 per cent.; while in the same period rent had risen on an average of from 11s. per acre to £1 7s. 1d. an acre—145 per cent. This rise in rents was, no doubt, accelerated by the war, and by the high price of provisions—the latter circumstance also tending to lower the real wages of the worker. During the same period the wages of linen weavers had only risen from an average of 1s. 2½d. a day to 1s. 3d.—5 per cent.—while the price of provisions had risen at a much more rapid rate. "All articles have risen in price except the wages of the manufacturer."*

The fact that the rent of land and the cost of provisions rose more rapidly than wages was noticed in 1796 by the Committee of the Whig Club, which was appointed to inquire into the conditions of the labouring classes.\footnote{Life of Grattan, IV., 246.}

The causes of Irish misery were very largely inherent in the land system; and nothing less than a radical reform of that system could have succeeded in materially improving the condition of the smaller tenants and the agricultural labouring class. The reform of the Irish land system has been effected in recent years, and anybody conversant with the numerous difficulties, both economic and financial, which had to be overcome before that reform was carried through will readily admit that such a course of legislation would have been quite beyond the resources of Grattan's Parliament. The principles on which the

\begin{center}
\begin{tabular}{|c|c|c|c|c|c|}
\hline
Commodity & Wages of Labourer & Wages of Mason or Carpenter & Rent of Potato Garden & Rent of Land Per Acre & Price of Mutton & Price of Beef & Price of Wool & Price of Wheat \\
\hline
\% & 85 & 71 & 153 & 195 & 145 & 130 & 53 & 91 \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\end{center}

Diagram showing comparative increase of wages and prices of provisions, 1779-1811 (compiled from figures taken from Young and Wakefield).
new land system of Ireland was ultimately settled were totally alien to eighteenth century conceptions; and the evils of Irish land tenures were utterly beyond the power of the Irish Parliament to remedy.

It was said above that the rise of rents and cost of provisions was due in a large measure to the war, and, indeed, it is probable that the war did more to keep back the progress of the Irish labourer than is generally supposed. In 1793, immediately after the outbreak of the war, the Chancellor of the Exchequer said that until early in that year the country was progressing in a most satisfactory manner, and from that period trade had seemed to droop; and the Commons Journals for the following years are full of complaints from manufacturers, who were suffering from restricted markets owing to the war. The same cause, which, as has been seen, raised rent and the cost of provisions inordinately, also operated to undermine the sound financial condition of the country which had been produced by the earlier legislation of Grattan’s Parliament, thus producing a large debt and greatly increased taxation, which did not help to ease the condition of the poorer classes. Great numbers of Irishmen, moreover, took part in the war in one capacity or another—in the British army and navy and in the Irish army. It was said that the appalling condition of the poor in Dublin in 1799 was largely due to the absence of numbers of the wage-earners on naval or military service.

Ireland, moreover, was not the only country where the condition of the poor at the end of the eighteenth century was very low. “The last years of the century,” says Lecky, “were among the worst England had ever known. The distress produced by increasing pressure of population on means of subsistence, and by great displacements and revolutions of industry, was aggravated by a terrible period of commercial crisis and depression, a succession of extremely

1 *I.P.D.*, XIII., p. 84.  
2 See Chap. I., *supra*.  
3 Rossborough, *State of Poor in Metropolis*. 
bad harvests and a great French war. . . . Whatever doubt there may be about the condition of the labourers in the period between the American War and the French Revolution, there can be no doubt that about 1792 it began most seriously to deteriorate. . . . Cries of distress were loud and poignant. There were several Parliamentary inquiries into the causes of the high price of food and the increasing destitution of large sections of the people, and many remedies were suggested. 1 England was the richest country in Europe, and the condition of the poor on the Continent of Europe was deplorable in the extreme. In other countries, the period was one of increased distress; in Ireland, on the other hand, if the state of the poor did not improve, at least, it did not grow worse.

The slow growth of wages in proportion to the growth of rent amongst the agricultural poor we have noticed; we have also to notice amongst the industrial workers a slow growth of capital in comparison with population. Owing to the amount of money sent abroad to absentees of one kind or another, much capital was withdrawn from Ireland, and English capitalists showed no willingness to invest their money there. The country had been reduced to such a low state by eighty years of commercial restraint that it was not to be expected that new industries could spring into existence in a few years. The growth of capital was consequently slow, and, as Mill has pointed out, the effect of a growth of capital at a slower rate than the growth of population tends to lower wages—a tendency, it is true, which might be counteracted by the introduction of improvements in production, but, as we have seen, the introduction of such improvements into Ireland was very slow. 2

It is notable that Arthur Young prophesied at the time that free trade was granted that it would be at least half-a-century before Ireland felt the full benefit of her

2 Mill, Political Economy, bk. iv., c. 3.
new freedom, owing to her shortage of capital, the general backwardness of the country, and the loss of the spirit of industry which the Penal Laws had caused. Strangely enough, Adam Smith, at the same time, made a similar prophecy: "I cannot believe," he wrote to H. Dundas in November, 1779, "that the manufacturers of Great Britain can, for a century to come, suffer much from the rivalship of those of Ireland, even though the Irish should be indulged in a free trade. Ireland has neither the skill nor the stock which would enable her to rival England, and, though both may be acquired in time, to acquire them completely will require the operation of little less than a century." Similar opinions were expressed by Lord Buckingham and Lord Charlemont. It is hardly fair to censure Grattan’s Parliament for failing to accomplish in twenty years a revolution which such well-informed and far-seeing judges calculated would take fifty years for its attainment.

The conclusions arrived at in this chapter may be shortly summarised as follows:

(1) The period of Grattan’s Parliament was marked by all the generally accepted criteria of economic progress—namely, (a) a rapid growth of population, (b) a rise of rents, and (c) a great increase in the volume of industry.

(2) The economic progress so indicated was, at least to a very large extent, caused by the existence in Ireland of a Parliament sufficiently free to legislate on the lines of economic policy which it judged most expedient.

(3) While the condition of the labouring classes did not progress as rapidly as that of other sections of the community, it was by no means stationary. This is proved by (a) the increased taxable capacity of the peasantry, and (b) the increase in

1 Tour, II., 317. 2 English Historical Review, vol. i., p. 309. 3 Sackville MSS., I., 255; Charlemont MSS., I., 79.
the average consumption of imported commodities.

(4) The causes which tended to depress the condition of the labouring classes were not causes which could be immediately removed by the Irish Parliament. The most important of these causes were:—(a) The Irish land system; (b) the European War, and (c) the low condition to which the country had been reduced by the long period of commercial oppression.
CHAPTER XXXIV.

THE UNION.

The history of the passing of the legislative Union has been told in detail so often that there is no necessity to repeat it here, where we are only concerned with the economic aspect of the measure. Although the Union was productive of the most far-reaching economic results, it was not passed with the object of accomplishing such results, but was a purely political measure framed in England, and carried in Ireland simply by bribery and corruption. The economic consequences of this great political change were not considered in detail by those responsible for it, whose one ambition was to secure that Ireland should in future be absolutely controlled by the English Government. No doubt, the great material progress which the country had made under Grattan's Parliament hastened the Union, as English jealousy had always been directed to keep Ireland poor, lest she might grow strong, and, therefore, dangerous. As early as 1748 Montesquieu had pointed out that England, having subdued Ireland, was consumed with jealousy of her natural advantages, and would always impose laws which would render her prosperity precarious and dependent on the will of her master.1 As we have already seen, one of Castle-reagh's correspondents avowed that one of the reasons that the Union must be carried was that Ireland was

1 Montesquieu, *Esprit des Lois*, bk. xix., c. 27.
growing rich, and might ultimately become rich enough to be a menace to England. It is, however, true to say that the Union was primarily a political measure designed to make Ireland dependent on England politically, and that it was framed on no particular economic policy. The Union was forced down the throat of the Irish Parliament, and its commercial and financial provisions were never examined in the assembly which they most concerned. At the time of the Scotch Union, Commissioners were appointed to inquire into all matters relating to trade and taxation, but in the case of the Irish Union the provisions on these important points were settled in England, and forced through the Irish Parliament, without any papers or figures being presented as proof of their justice or expedience. The opposition, moreover, were anxious not to devote too much attention to these aspects of the Union, as they felt that anything in the nature of amendments might be taken to indicate a spirit of compromise and weakness in their opposition to the measure as a whole.

It has been said by those who favour the Union that anxiety for such a measure had been expressed in Ireland at various times during the eighteenth century, but it seems to be forgotten that the circumstances which existed when those demands were made had changed in the most vital respects before 1799. It is quite obvious that, during the years when Ireland was fettered by commercial restrictions in every direction, a Union on equal terms with England would have been of great advantage to Irish trade, and it was with a view to securing this advantage that various demands had been made for a Union from time to time. Petty thought a union would be desirable because it would get rid of the cattle restrictions; Molyneux because he saw no other way to remove the prohibition on the export of Irish wool; and the petitions in the Commons Journals in 1703 and 1707 distinctly

1 Castlereagh Correspondence. Ill., p. 55: see also A State Paper in the Fortescue MSS., Ill., 511, written probably in 1792.
2 Cornwallis Correspondence, vol. ii., p. 200.
state that the request is made on account of the increase of emigration and the restraints on trade.\textsuperscript{1} Dobbs, in 1729, and Madden, in 1738, were in favour of a Union for the same reasons, and Adam Smith was of opinion that, whereas a Union would in general be disadvantageous to Ireland, it might be worth her while to accept it in the existing circumstances (in 1775) in consideration of the freedom of trade which she would gain thereby. "The great object of a Union is a free trade," said Arthur Young in 1776.\textsuperscript{2}

With the attainment of free trade and legislative independence, all these arguments vanished. In the year 1799 Ireland had absolute free trade with the whole world; Great Britain could trade with no country that Ireland could not trade with also; nor could any manufacture be carried on in Great Britain that could not also be carried on in Ireland; the only restraints on Ireland's foreign and colonial trade were those imposed by her own Parliament, and which, therefore, could be relaxed at any time. It is true that a great many Irish commodities were virtually excluded from England by very high tariffs, but this did not make Ireland's trade with England less free, as every country was, of course, entitled to raise any Customs barrier it pleased against Irish goods if it was prepared to risk retaliation. Flood defined free trade as "a liberty of trading with all the world, subject only to our own restrictions and those of the country with whom the trade is carried on," and, if this definition is a correct one, as it certainly seems to be, Ireland undoubtedly was in full possession of all the benefits of free trade in the years preceding the Union, so that there was nothing in this direction to be gained by the Union, and all the earlier arguments, which were based on a state of affairs which no longer existed, were no longer of any value.

The Irish Parliament had no voice in framing the Act of Union; this Act was as much a conquest

\textsuperscript{1} I.C.J., vol. ii., pp. 342, 392.
\textsuperscript{2} Tour, vol. ii., p. 251: and see Sackville MSS., i., p. 263.
by a foreign country as the campaign of Cromwell. There is, therefore, little to be said about the debates in the Irish Parliament, where every suggestion and amendment was automatically defeated by a paid majority. All that can be done is to examine the economic provisions of the measure which English statesmen devised for the extinction of Irish independence.

The following is the article of Union dealing with Irish trade and commerce:

"That it be the sixth article of Union, that His Majesty's subjects of Great Britain and Ireland shall, from and after the 1st day of January, 1801, be entitled to the same privileges, and be on the same footing, as to encouragements and bounties, on the like articles being the growth, produce, or manufacture of either country, respectively, and generally in respect of trade and navigation in all ports and places in the United Kingdom and its dependencies; and that in all treaties made by His Majesty, his heirs and successors, with any foreign power, His Majesty's subjects of Ireland shall have the same privileges, and be on the same footing, as His Majesty's subjects of Great Britain:

"That, from the 1st day of January, 1801, all prohibitions and bounties on the export of articles, the growth, produce, or manufacture of either country, to the other, shall cease and determine; and that the said article shall thenceforth be exported from one country to the other, without duty or bounty on such export:

"That all articles, the growth, produce, or manufacture of either country (not hereinafter enumerated as subject to specific duties), shall from thenceforth be imported into each country from the other, free from duty, other than such countervailing duties on the several articles enumerated in the schedule No. I. A and B, hereunto annexed, as are therein specified, or to such other countervailing duties as shall hereafter be imposed by the Parliament of the United Kingdom, in the manner hereinafter provided; and that, for the period of twenty
years from the Union, the articles enumerated in the schedule No. II. hereunto annexed, shall be subject, on importation into each country from the other, to the duties specified in the said schedule No. II., and the woollen manufactures, known by the names of Old and New Drapery, shall pay, on importation into each country from the other, the duties now payable on importation into Ireland; salt and hops, on importation into Ireland from Great Britain, duties not exceeding those which are now paid on importation into Ireland; and coals, on importation into Ireland from Great Britain, shall be subject to burthens not exceeding those to which they are now subject:

"That calicoes and muslins shall, on their importation into either country from the other, be subject and liable to the duties now payable on the same on the importation thereof from Great Britain into Ireland, until the 5th day of January, 1808; and from and after the said day, the said duties shall be annually reduced, by equal proportions as near as may be in each year, so as that the said duties shall stand at ten per centum from and after the 5th day of January, 1816, until the 5th day of January, 1821; and that cotton yarn and cotton twist shall, on their importation into either country from the other, be subject and liable to the duties now payable upon the same on the importation thereof from Great Britain into Ireland, until the 5th day of January, 1808, and from and after the said day the said duties shall be annually reduced by equal proportions as near as may be in each year, so that all duties shall cease on the said articles from and after the 5th day of January, 1816:

"That any articles of the growth, produce, or manufacture of either country, which are or may be subject to internal duty, or to duty on the materials of which they are composed, may be made subject, on their importation into each country respectively from the other, to such countervailing duty as shall appear to be just and reasonable in respect of such internal duty or duties on the
materials; and that for the said purposes the articles specified in the said schedule No. I. A and B shall be subject to the duties set forth therein, liable to be taken off, diminished, or increased, in the manner herein specified; and that, upon the export of the said articles from each country to the other respectively, a drawback shall be given equal in amount to the countervailing duty payable on such articles on the import thereof into the same country from the other; and that in like manner in future it shall be competent to the united Parliament to impose any new or additional countervailing duties, or to take off, or diminish such existing countervailing duties as may appear, on like principles, to be just and reasonable in respect of any future or additional internal duty on any article of the growth, produce, or manufacture of either country, or of any new or additional duty on any materials of which such articles may be composed, or of any abatement of duty on the same; and that when any such new or additional countervailing duty shall be so imposed on the import of any article into either country from the other, a drawback, equal in amount to such countervailing duty, shall be given in like manner on the export of every such article respectively from the same country to the other:

"That all articles, the growth, produce, or manufacture of either country, when exported through the other, shall in all cases be exported subject to the same charges as if they had been exported directly from the country of which they were the growth, produce, or manufacture:

"That all duties charged on the import of foreign or colonial goods into either country, shall, on their export to the other, be either drawn back, or the amount, if any be retained, shall be placed to the credit of the country to which they shall be so exported, so long as the expenditure of the United Kingdom shall be defrayed by proportional contribution: Provided always, that nothing herein shall extend to take away any duty, bounty, or prohibition, which exists with respect to corn, meal, malt,
flour, or biscuit; but that all duties, bounties, or prohibitions, on the said articles may be regulated, varied, or repealed, from time to time, as the united Parliament shall deem expedient.

Schedule I.

"This Schedule contains the articles to be charged with countervailing duties.

Schedule II.

"Of the articles charged with the duties specified upon importation into Great Britain and Ireland, respectively, according to the sixth article of Union:—

Apparel.
Brass, wrought.
Cabinet ware.
Coaches and other carriages.
Copper, wrought.
Cottons, other than calicoes and muslins.
Glass.
Haberdashery.
Hats.
Tin plates, wrought iron and hardware.
Gold and silver lace, gold and silver thread, bullion for lace, pearl, and spangles.
Paper, stained.
Pottery.
Saddlery and other manufactured leather.
Silk manufacture.
Stockings.

[Table with duties and values, not transcribed here.]

The result of these commercial clauses was to create a nominal equality where no real equality could exist. The industries of Ireland, though progressing, were still in an undeveloped state, and urgently required the assistance of protective duties to ensure their fuller development; whereas the manufactures of England were developed on
a much larger scale, and were consequently able to compete successfully with the Irish industries in a free market. The result of equalising the duties in England and Ireland was simply to ensure that the English products should undersell the Irish not only in England, but in Ireland also, and that the smaller and less developed industries should be driven out of existence by their more powerful rivals. That such a result was foreseen may be gathered from the exception made in favour of calicoes and muslins, but the principle of this exception should have been applied to all the Irish manufactures. From this point of view, Ireland stood to gain nothing from the Act of Union and stood to lose much; the principle articles of her manufacture, namely, linen and provisions were already admitted freely into England, and, therefore, the only articles to which a free entry was granted were articles which could not in any way hope to derive any benefit from it. That England felt secure in her monopoly may be gathered from much of the correspondence of the time:—"The articles which I understand require a protective duty are beer, cotton, earthen and glass ware and woollens. Great Britain will, of course, expect a reciprocal protection on these articles, although in truth she has little cause to dread a rivalship from Ireland."

No trade benefits except that of opening the English markets were granted by the Act of Union, as Ireland had secured liberty for her colonial and foreign trade twenty years earlier by her own exertions. Possibly the most significant feature of the passing of the Act of Union was that, with the exception of certain wool and cotton manufacturers, no English industrial interest presented any petition against it. We have seen that, whenever any suggestion was made in England to benefit Irish trade, Parliament was inundated with petitions from various towns in England protesting against it, and their absence

2 Castlereagh Corr., III., p. 249.
on this occasion is suggestive. The Irish manufacturers, on the other hand, were opposed to the Union, but, of course, their opposition was of no avail, as neither the Irish public nor the Irish Parliament was in any way consulted about the measure.

But the greatest argument of all against the commercial provisions of the Act of Union was the constitutional one, that Ireland was putting her trade and industry at the mercy of the country which had always been hostile. We have seen the attitude which prevailed in England at the time of the free trade agitation and at the time of the Commercial Propositions, and, indeed, throughout the whole century; we have also seen how Ireland could not progress until she had a Parliament strong enough to pass its own measures without considering English opposition, and that as soon as she obtained such a Parliament she made rapid progress; and it must be obvious that, in parting with this Parliament, she was parting with the instrument which made her wealth and material prosperity possible.

The financial propositions of the Act of Union, which were not more favourable than the commercial ones, were as follows:—

"That it be the seventh article of Union, that the charge arising from the payment of the interest, and the sinking fund for the reduction of the principal, of the debt incurred in either kingdom before the Union, shall continue to be separately defrayed by Great Britain and Ireland, respectively, except as hereinafter provided:

"That for the space of twenty years after the Union shall take place, the contribution of Great Britain and Ireland, respectively, towards the expenditure of the United Kingdom in each year, shall be defrayed in the proportion of fifteen parts for Great Britain and two parts for Ireland; and that, at the expiration of the said twenty years, the future expenditure of the United Kingdom (other than the interest and charges of the debt to which either country shall be separately liable) shall be defrayed
in such proportion as the Parliament of the United Kingdom shall deem just and reasonable upon a comparison of the real value of the exports and imports of the respective countries, upon an average of the three years next preceding the period of revision; or on a comparison of the value of the quantities of the following articles consumed within the respective countries, on a similar average, viz., beer, spirits, sugar, wine, tea, tobacco, and malt; or according to the aggregate proportion resulting from both these considerations combined; or on a comparison of the amount of income in each country, estimated from the produce for the same period of a general tax, if such shall have been imposed on the same descriptions of income in both countries; and that the Parliament of the United Kingdom shall afterwards proceed in like manner to revise and fix the said proportions according to the same rules, or any of them, at periods not more distant than twenty years nor less than seven years from each other; unless, previous to any such period, the Parliament of the United Kingdom shall have declared, as hereinafter provided, that the expenditure of the United Kingdom shall be defrayed indiscriminately, by equal taxes imposed on the like articles in both countries; that, for the defraying the said expenditure according to the rules above laid down, the Revenues of Ireland shall hereafter constitute a consolidated fund, which shall be charged, in the first instance, with the interest of the debt in Ireland, and with the sinking fund applicable to the reduction of the said debt, and the remainder shall be applied towards defraying the proportion of the expenditure of the United Kingdom, to which Ireland may be liable in each year; that the proportion of contribution to which Great Britain and Ireland will be liable shall be raised by such taxes in each country, respectively, as the Parliament of the United Kingdom shall from time to time deem fit:

"Provided always, that in regulating the taxes in each country, by which their respective proportions shall be
levied, no article in Ireland shall be made liable to any new or additional duty, by which the whole amount of duty payable thereon would exceed the amount which will be thereafter payable in England on the like article:

"That, if at the end of any year any surplus shall accrue from the revenues of Ireland, after defraying the interest, sinking fund, and proportional contribution and separate charges to which the said country shall then be liable, taxes shall be taken off to the amount of such surplus, or the surplus shall be applied by the Parliament of the United Kingdom to local purposes in Ireland, or to make good any deficiency which may arise in the Revenues of Ireland in time of peace, or be invested, by the commissioners of the national debt of Ireland, in the funds, to accumulate for the benefit of Ireland, at compound interest, in ease of the contribution of Ireland in time of war; provided that the surplus so to accumulate shall at no future period be suffered to exceed the sum of five millions:

"That all monies to be raised after the Union, by loan, in peace or war, for the service of the United Kingdom by the Parliament thereof, shall be considered to be a joint debt, and the charges thereof shall be borne by the respective countries in the proportion of their respective contributions; provided that, if at any time, in raising their respective contributions hereby fixed for each country, the Parliament of the United Kingdom shall judge if fit to raise a greater proportion of such respective contributions in one country within the year than in the other, or to set apart a greater proportion of sinking fund for the liquidation of the whole or any part of the loan raised on account of the one country than that raised on account of the other country, then such part of the said loan for the liquidation of which different provisions shall have been made for the respective countries, shall be kept distinct, and shall be borne by each separately, and only that part of the said loan be deemed joint and common, for the reduction of which the
respective countries shall have made provision in the proportion of their respective contributions:

"That, if at any future day, the separate debt of each country respectively shall have been liquidated, or, if the values of their respective debts (estimated according to the amount of the interest and annuities attending the same, and of the sinking fund applicable to the reduction thereof, and to the period within which the whole capital of such debt shall appear to be redeemable by such sinking fund) shall be to each other in the same proportion with the respective contributions of each country respectively; or if the amount by which the value of the larger of such debts shall vary from such proportion, shall not exceed one hundredth part of the said value; and if it shall appear to the Parliament of the United Kingdom that the respective circumstances of the two countries will thenceforth admit of their contributing indiscriminately, by equal taxes imposed on the same articles in each, to the future expenditure of the United Kingdom, it shall be competent to the Parliament of the United Kingdom to declare that all future expense thenceforth to be incurred, together with the interest and charges of all joint debts contracted previous to such declaration, shall be so defrayed indiscriminately by equal taxes imposed on the same articles in each country, and thenceforth from time to time, as circumstances may require, to impose and apply such taxes accordingly, subject only to such particular exemptions or abatements in Ireland, and in that part of Great Britain called Scotland, as circumstances may appear from time to time to demand; that, from the period of such declaration, it shall no longer be necessary to regulate the contribution of the two countries towards the future expenditure of the United Kingdom, according to any specific proportion, or according to any of the rules hereinbefore prescribed:

"Provided nevertheless, that the interest or charges which may remain on account of any part of the separate debt with which either country shall be chargeable, and which
shall not be liquidated or consolidated proportionately as above, shall, until extinguished, continue to be defrayed by separate taxes in each country: that a sum, not less than the sum which has been granted by the Parliament of Ireland on the average of six years immediately preceding the first day of January, in the year one thousand eight hundred, in premiums for the internal encouragement of agriculture or manufactures, or for the maintaining institutions for pious and charitable purposes, shall be applied, for the period of twenty years after the Union, to such local purposes in Ireland, in such manner as the Parliament of the United Kingdom shall direct: that, from and after the first day of January, one thousand eight hundred and one, all public revenue arising to the United Kingdom from the territorial dependencies thereof, and applied to the general expenditure of the United Kingdom, shall be so applied in the proportions of the respective contributions of the two countries."

The relative proportions of the English and Irish contributions were fixed by Castlereagh as follows:—He first took as a basis for comparison the average annual values and the total values of the exports and imports in Great Britain and Ireland respectively for the years 1796-7-8, and these he found to bear the proportion of 7 to 1: he then took as another basis for comparison the values of the principal dutiable commodities—malt, beer, spirits, wine, tobacco, tea and sugar—consumed in the two countries during those years, and these he found to be in the proportion of $7\frac{2}{3}$ to 1: the mean of these proportions was $7\frac{1}{3}$ to 1, and Castlereagh consequently proposed that Ireland should bear $2/17$ths and Great Britain $15/17$ths of the annual expenditure of the United Kingdom in future years.¹

This proportion, though possibly honestly arrived at, was quite fallacious, and unjust to Ireland. In the first place, the result obtained from the imports and exports was of very little value, because no account had

¹ Murray, Commercial Relations, p. 321.
been taken of the tonnage of the shipping belonging to the two kingdoms, and, therefore, no allowance made for the profits arising from transport; the figures, moreover, on which he based his calculation were wrong, as the value of the British exports and imports was understated by about six millions, while that of the Irish was overstated by about two millions. The result obtained from the consumption of dutiable commodities was equally incorrect, as no account was taken of salt or stamps, two very important items; in this case, too, the figures used were quite wrong, as in the case of tea, tobacco, sugar and wine they did not correspond even approximately with the quantities imported; the years taken, moreover, were not average years, as the presence of a large military force, owing to the French war and internal disturbance, increased the consumption of dutiable commodities above the normal. Very valuable criteria for arriving at the correct proportion which the two countries could bear were left out of account altogether, such as the amount of current cash in each kingdom, and the rate of interest at which money could be raised. The amount of nondutiable articles produced for home consumption was also left completely out of account, and this was a most important item. The objections to Castlereagh’s estimate were ably set forth in an address moved in the Irish House of Commons, and in the protests of the Irish peers against the Union.

The result of the financial provisions of the Union was an inevitable increase in Irish taxation, as the expenditure of Ireland had during the previous years increased at a much slower rate than that of Great Britain, in spite of the extraordinary expenses caused by the Rebellion. In the six years 1793-99, Great Britain had increased her debt by 186 millions, while Ireland had only increased hers by 14 millions. The liabilities of the two kingdoms had, therefore, been augmented by 200 millions. If the Union

2 Both these Documents are set out at full in Plowden, vol. ii., Appendix pp. 333-359; and see a Letter from Lord Farnham to Lord Grenville, Fortescue MSS., VI., 251.
arrangement had been in force during these six years, Ireland's share would have been 2/17ths, that is, 23 millions; in other words, if the Union had taken place in 1793, the Irish debt in 1799 would have been nine millions more than it was. Of course, the objection to the financial provisions which weighed most heavily was the constitutional one, as there was no guarantee that the conditions of the Union in this respect would not be abrogated by the Imperial Parliament at any time, and Ireland was submitting her revenue and expenditure to the Parliament of a country which had shown little regard for her interests. As a matter of fact, the history of Ireland during the nineteenth century has been one of continuous over-taxation and unwise expenditure. The unsoundness of the Union finance is best shown by the rapidity with which it broke down.

It is clear then, that, in its commercial and financial aspects, the Union was a measure calculated to be detrimental to Irish interests. It is only right, however, before dismissing the subject to take notice of the economic arguments which at the time were advanced in its favour.

The first of these arguments was derived from the progress which Scotland had undoubtedly made since its Union with England. The answer to this argument is that conditions in Ireland and Scotland before their respective Unions were vastly different: Scotland, in 1707, was very poor and undeveloped, hampered by trade restrictions in every direction, and its whole economic condition could scarcely have been worse: Ireland, in 1799, on the other hand, was in a state of rapid progress, had never been so prosperous before, and enjoyed all the benefits, as we have seen, of a perfectly free trade. Again it may be said that Scotland only advanced in prosperity, together with every other country in Europe during the same period, and, as a matter of fact, did not progress so rapidly, with a Union, as Ireland without it. The progress which Scotland made was secured by means of bounties and
premiums, which, in 1800, were no longer in fashion, although vitally necessary to Ireland’s progress; and, indeed, in spite of much encouragement of this nature, progress in Scotland had not begun to show itself until many years after the date of the Union. There was also a constitutional argument which rendered the Union with Scotland a dangerous precedent to rely upon. It had been one of the terms of that Union that no tax should be imposed on malt in Scotland at any future time, but, in spite of this provision, and against the wishes of every Scotch representative in the British Parliament, such a tax had been imposed a few years later. The Irish opponents to the Union felt that there was no guarantee that a similar breach of the Irish compact might not be committed at some future date.

The second argument advanced in favour of the Union was the opening of the Channel trade. The answer to this was that, with regard to the most important Irish commodities, the Channel trade was already open; linen, many provisions, cable, cordage, sail-cloth and wool were admitted into England free of duty; and corn at an inconsiderable duty. There was no other Irish manufacture which, in its existing condition of development, could possibly hope to secure a market in Great Britain, even if allowed free importation, whereas the Irish market was certain to be flooded with British goods of all descriptions. It was said, in answer to this, that the Union would at least secure Irish linen and provisions in their privileges, but it was replied that the British would never do anything so hostile to their own interests, as they only admitted linen because they could not get it cheaper elsewhere, and Irish corn and provisions were becoming more and more vital to Great Britain every year in view of the continued war, and of the fact that Great Britain herself was ceasing to be a food-producing country. Besides, there was no guarantee that a united Parliament might not take away these privileges just as much as a British Parliament, and the example of the British
Parliament and the Scotch malt tax was cited as a precedent. Of course, the best answer to the argument that Ireland would gain the Channel trade by the Union was that the Channel trade could be thrown open, as had been suggested at the time of the Commercial Propositions, without any Union; and that the surrender of legislative independence was much too high a price to pay for such a doubtful benefit.

The third argument in favour of the Union was that British capital would come to be invested in Ireland owing to the increased security which the Union would create. It is interesting to notice that one of the members of the British Parliament, in advocating the advisability of the Union from the British point of view, expressly pointed out that any such transfer of capital was out of the question,¹ and the improbability of such a transfer had been Pitt's strongest argument in urging the Commercial Propositions in the British Parliament. This argument was dealt with very ably by Foster in his speech against the Union, where he pointed out that the chief channels into which British capital flowed at the time were the woollen, cotton, iron, and pottery manufactures. With regard to the iron and pottery, he said that the English manufacturers, unless they were mad, would not move away from the coalfields; that the presence of coal was also considered desirable in the woollen manufacture, as no woollen factory had ever been established in England more than ten miles distant from the Yorkshire coal-fields; and, with regard to the cotton manufacture, that no English capitalist had shown any disposition to open a factory in Ireland some years previously, when a substantial advantage could have been obtained by doing so owing to the fact that no patent rights were payable in Ireland in respect of the Arkwright inventions. Besides, as Arthur Young pointed out in 1785, no manufacturer ever moved from a rich to a poor country; the wages in Ireland either were or were not lower than in

England; if they were lower, English workmen would not emigrate; while if they were not lower, the argument from cheapness of production fell to the ground.  

The fourth argument in favour of the Union was that Ireland was unable to support herself financially, and was approaching national bankruptcy. In answer to this, it may be said that the time chosen for the Union was the one period during Grattan's Parliament at which Irish finance was in a shaky condition, and that, as we have seen, the financial crisis of 1799 was owing to the exceptional causes of the French war and the Rebellion. There was no reason why Ireland should not put her finances in a sound condition if given time to do so, as the country was progressing every year in prosperity. As a matter of fact we now know that the result of the Union was to saddle Ireland with financial burdens which would have been quite impossible under a free parliament, and that she showed no inability to meet them in spite of the fact that her commercial and industrial prosperity declined.

Other arguments used were that the Union would secure the permanent prosperity of the linen manufacture and the continuance of the British preference for Irish corn, but this we have already answered in dealing with the question of Channel trade; that Ireland would become, on account of her favourable situation, the emporium for the commerce of the whole British Empire; but this may be dismissed with the remark that any such possibility was indignantly denied by Pitt in the British Parliament at the time of the Commercial Propositions. The standard of controversy of those engaged in trying to induce the Irish people to swallow this bitter pill may be judged from the fact that it was also argued that a result of the Union would be to decrease the evil of absenteeism. The absurdity of this suggestion is so obvious that it does not call for reply. We have seen that the number of absentees decreased with the establishment of Grattan's

1 *Annals of Agriculture*, vol. iii., p. 257.
Parliament, and it must have been perfectly clear that it would increase to an extent previously undreamt of on the removal of the seat of government to London. As a matter of fact, we know that the years immediately following the Union were marked by a notable movement in this direction.\(^1\)

\(^1\) All the arguments against the Union are ably presented in Battersby's "Repealer's Handbook," published in 1833. A full list of the contemporary pamphlets which appeared for and against the Union is given in Plowden, III., 819.
CHAPTER XXXV.

CONCLUSION.

THE economic results of the Union belong to the History of the Nineteenth Century, and are not relevant to the subject of this book. It is sufficient to say that as early as 1810 it was beginning to become apparent that Irish prosperity would suffer on account of that measure. During the period 1785-92 the value of Irish exports had increased from £3,779,570 to £5,387,760, or 43 per cent.; but during the period 1803-9 it only rose from £5,090,393 to £5,922,591, or 16 per cent. As early as 1809, Newenham had come to the conclusion that "in reference to commerce, the Irish people had no reason whatsoever to congratulate themselves on the Union. The commercial prosperity of Ireland has very visibly declined since that measure was passed." In September, 1810, the Grand Jury of the City of Dublin passed the following resolution:—"The Act of Union, after ten years' operation, instead of augmenting the comforts, prosperity, and happiness of the people, has produced an accumulation of distress."

During the fifty years following the Union the condition of the cottiers went from bad to worse. The quotations which we have given above, describing the condition of the labouring poor and peasantry during the eighteenth century, show an appalling state of affairs, but they are comparatively pleasant reading by the side of the

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1 Life of Grattan, V., 401.  
2 Newenham, p. 291.  
3 Life of Grattan, V., 419.
reports of the Poor Law Commission of 1835 and the Devon Commission of 1845. The tendency to subdivide holdings which we noticed as a feature of the last years of the eighteenth century was carried to excess in the early years of the nineteenth, with the result that the population tended to press unduly on the means of subsistence. At the end of the French War the price of cereals fell considerably, with disastrous results for the Irish farmers, who had engaged extensively in tillage. The Repeal of the Corn Laws in 1846 dealt another heavy blow at the farming interests. The drastic solution of the over-population question provided by the Famine and by the subsequent emigrations is too well known to demand more than a passing reference.

The introduction of economic policy known as *laissez-faire* affected the two countries differently. The industries of England had been encouraged during the eighteenth century by a system of large and wisely-applied bounties and premiums, and had reached a point at the beginning of the nineteenth century when they needed no further artificial encouragement. The industries, on the other hand, were, as we have seen, at the time of the Union, still in an immature and comparatively undeveloped state, and had by no means reached the point at which they could hope to rival their well-established English competitors, without State support. The new policy of *laissez-faire* was applied to both countries equally, with diametrically opposite results in each. In 1824 the few small duties which still to some extent protected Irish industries against English competition in the Irish market ceased, and from that time onwards Irish industry as a whole declined.

"The industrial history of Ireland during the nineteenth century," says Miss Murray,¹ "shows how impossible it was for Irish manufacturers to compete with British once the two countries were commercially united, and all custom duties on articles going from one country to

¹ *Commercial Relations*, p. 351.
the other gradually abolished. It also shows the advisability of a country possessed of little industrial development fostering and protecting its infant manufactures until they are firmly established in order to prevent them being crushed out of existence by the competition of other countries. But union with Great Britain necessitated the application of the new free trade principles to Ireland just at the time when Irish industries should have met with encouragement and protection."

The financial arrangements of the Union were most disastrous and most unsuccessful. It is now admitted by all that the proportion of 2/17 settled by Castlereagh for Ireland's contribution to the expenditure of the United Kingdom was mased on a gross over-estimate of Irish Kingdom capacity. The prolongation of the French War had the effect of greatly increasing expenditure during the years following the Union, and Ireland was quite unable to pay her share of the joint expenditure without incurring a colossal increase of her national debt. In the years 1800-1815, Great Britain doubled her debt, and paid 71 per cent. of her expenditure out of current taxation; during the same period Ireland quadrupled her debt, and only succeeded in paying 49 per cent. of her expenditure out of current taxation. In fifteen years the financial arrangements of the Union had completely broken down, and a new system was inaugurated in 1817 by the union of the English and Irish exchequers, debts, revenues and expenditures. The levelling up of Irish taxes to the English scale was steadily accomplished some years later; and to-day, with the exception of some trifling items, Ireland is taxed at the same rate as the rest of the United Kingdom.

The taxable capacities of the two countries did not progress equally. We have seen that Castlereagh fixed the taxable capacity of Ireland in 1799 at 2/17 of that of the United Kingdom, but that this was an over-estimate. The proportion suggested by the oppression in the Irish

Parliament was 1/10th, and this has been shown by subsequent events to have been nearer the truth. Let us say then that the taxable capacity of Ireland in 1799 was one-tenth of that of the United Kingdom. In 1896 it was estimated at one-twentieth;¹ in 1911, at one-twenty-fourth;² and in 1918 at one-thirty-second.³ Possibly no more striking figures than these could be given to illustrate the relative economic effects of the Act of Union in Great Britain and Ireland, respectively.

The present writer has endeavoured to treat the subject of this book in an impartial and detached manner, and has striven to describe the economic condition of Ireland without obtruding his own opinions or prejudices; above all, he has sought to avoid making use of an economic study to mask a political diatribe. In spite of this, it has been quite impossible to exclude frequent references to political affairs; the relation between political and economic influences is too intimate to allow them to be segregated in watertight compartments. In Ireland, in the eighteenth century, economic conditions were specially influenced by political events. As has been seen, the primary cause of the greater part of the dreadful misery of the Irish people throughout the first eighty years of that century was not so much the use by England of the weapons of the Mercantile System as the inability of Ireland to use them in retaliation—an inability directly flowing from the dependence of the Irish Parliament. During the closing twenty years of the century, on the other hand, the Irish Parliament was free to direct its own fiscal policy, with the most beneficial results to agricultural and industrial prosperity. Indeed, that progress was so rapid and so great as seriously to alarm English statesmen; it "produced great activity and energy," and, therefore, caused Ireland to be "dangerous." This "dangerous" tendency was effectively checked by the Act of Union, the result of which has been, as we have seen, to reduce Ireland

from the possession of one-tenth of the wealth of the British Isles to the possession of less than one-thirtieth. It is surely impossible to resist the conclusion that there is some connection between the legislative independence and economic prosperity of Ireland; and that Ireland can never be a rich and prosperous country until that independence is re-established.

THE END.
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