Journal of the Cork Historical and Archaeological Society

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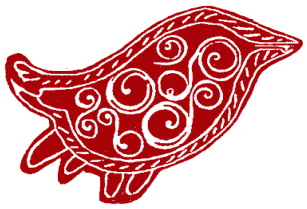

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Author: J. T. C.

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" a sad wise man " was very desirous of becoming the king's subject as an Englishman and offered to hold his lands for the king. He desired to become a baron and to come to parliament and councils. He had shown Surrey a charter granted to his ancestors under the great seal of England and was willing to conform to English order.

In **1533** Thomas Cromwell (name of ill-omen) took an interest in Irish affairs. It was said in a letter to him that those of the English in Munster are so far away from obedience and good order that there was no difference between them and the Irish except in the surname. The Irish lords in Munster were wealthy and of great power. Cormac oge had obtained his grant of English liberty, but his sons were wild and uncivil. (In the reports of the commissioners appointed to report on the lands owned by Irish monasteries after the " Reformation," it is stated over and over again that the country had been ravaged by the sons of Cormac oge McCarthy).

In May **1534** the earl of Ossory (Butler) undertook to consolidate the south of Ireland against the earl of Desmond. News had arrived that the earl had sent messages to France urging that continental aid be sent to Irish Catholics. The counter-Reformation policy had begun a polciy described by Dr. Myles V. Ronan in two fine volumes. There are many well-written reviews and short notices.

J.T.C.

Irish Historical Studies, XIII, no. 49 for March **1962**.

The first article deals with Leland's *Philosophical History of Ireland* written in **1773**. The author, Walter D. Love, relates in great detail the manner in which Leland was induced to write this monumental work and tells of the parts played by Charles O'Connor, Edmund Burke, Charles Vallancy, John Curry in its preparation. But when it was published, it pleased nobody and Leland never again wrote a serious work.

P. M. Austen Bourke deals with the scientific investigation of the potato blight of **1845-6**. A certain Garrett Hugh Fitzgerald wrote to a local paper in March **1846** suggesting that seed potatoes be steeped in a blue-stone solution before planting. The letter was forwarded to (Sir) Robert Kane who was then the scientific member of the relief commission and it has been suggested that he was at fault in not taking serious notice of the suggestion. Mr. Bourke goes into all the circumstances and proves that no blame attaches to the scientific investigation of the period. Even as late as **1880**, a distinguished F.R.S. giving expert evidence before a parliamentary inquiry, stated that he knew of nothing which would tend to kill the spore when deposited on the potato leaf.

Mr. C. H. D. Howard uncovers some documentary evidence which throws light on the relations between Captain W. O'Shea, Mr. Parnell and Joseph Chamberlain. In **1884** Chamberlain was interested in the passing of a merchant shippping bill and asked his friend O'Shea to sound Mr. Parnell as to what view the Irish party took of its proposals. Parnell wrote to Chamberlain that the great majority would support the second reading of the bill. The second series of letters were written after the " split." O'Shea was a cynical scoundrel. In his letter to Chamberlain dated **23** February **1891**, he refers to the Irish Hierarchy as " the holy gentlemen who like the rest of the Gladstoneans hate me much more than Parnell because it was I who upset the thimblerig at which they were winning, they little cared how." He was in a bad state for ready money and desired the loan of £800 from Chamberlain. The latter replied that he would lend £400, but it was not desirable that a cheque should pass. He asked O'Shea to call personally to receive the money in bank notes. O'Shea agreed. The letters in reality prove nothing, but "he who runs may read."

Another " Select Document " contributed by Mr. J. C. Becket gives Gladstone's approach to Queen Victoria in January **1869** on the proposed disestablishment of the Church of Ireland. Mr. Becket states that the Queen was reconciled to having the Church deprived of its privileges and property, but she could not understand why she could not continue to appoint its bishops and when obliged to give way, she refused to open parliament in person.

There are **45** pages of reviews written by notable scholars and they add materially to the value of the issue.

J.T.C.

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