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Franciscan Reorganisation in Munster during the Early Seventeenth Century.

By W. D. O'CONNELL, B.A.

At the beginning of the seventeenth century religious community life was extinct in Ireland. Following the suppression of the monasteries and abbeys, war, famine and persecution had combined to extinguish Irish monastic life, but the ideal was kept alive by the scattered Mendicants and in particular by the Franciscan Observants who, living in twos and threes near their ruined friaries, maintained the glorious traditions of the past.

When James I. ascended the English throne, Irish hopes were high that the son of Elizabeth's victim would accord some measure of toleration to the co-religionists of his murdered mother. Instead, however, the Penal Code was extended; yet, despite the fact, the State Documents of the Stuart period show that priests and friars were flocking into the country in ever increasing numbers, and the people daily becoming bolder in the practice of the proscribed religion.

In Ireland, the enforcement of the Penal Code depended on local authorities whose zeal and discretion were governed by the dictates of Anglo-French or Anglo-Spanish politics and by existant local circumstances. The Church consistently increased in strength from 1603 onwards, and when forty years later Massari, Dean of Fermo, came to this country, he noted with astonishment that the people were singularly well instructed in religious matters despite the difficulties of the times.

By 1620 Munster, in proportion to its population, was tolerably well served by priests—regular and secular, and community life was established in most areas. In a list dated November, 1613, containing "The names of sundrie priests and friars" it is recorded that Kerry, in addition to "Rich. Conell, a Philosopher and Devine" who was then V.G. of Ardfert, had seven regulars and thirteen seculars. Limerick had four Friars Minors, three Dominicans and seventeen seculars in addition to Richard Arthur, V.G. In Cork were nine Friars Minors, nineteen seculars, Robt. Miagh, V.G., Cork, and Jas. Kearney, V.G., Ross. Co. Waterford had three Jesuits, five Friars Minors, one Augustinian, three monks of St. Bernard, thirteen seculars, and Dr. James White, V.G. In Co. Tipperary were David Kearnie, Archbishop of Cashel, five Jesuits and nineteen seculars. In Co. Clare were Mahon MacCrath, V.G., Killaloe, seven seculars, and "six Franciscan Simple Friars and verie old."¹

The Episcopal Ruler of Cork and Cloyne at this period was William Terry. He was a native of Cork, having been born there about 1573. He

¹ MS. T.C.D., E.3. 15. A Report to Rome, March 1625, giving the state of the four Ecclesiastical Provinces shows that Munster was the best organised, having three Bishops, viz. :—Hurley (Emly), Tirrey (Cork and Cloyne), and Arthur (Limerick). *H.M.C. Franciscan MSS.*, Rept., 79.

studied in Belgium under the Professors Cornelius, a Lapide and Leslius. In 1618 he received the Doctorate in Theology at Douay,² and remained at the Irish College there until 1623, when he was consecrated bishop. Shortly after his consecration he returned to Cork, where he exercised the functions of the episcopate with the utmost zeal and fearlessness.³ His distinguished nephew and namesake, the Augustinian, who was put to death at Clonmel in 1654, acted as secretary to the bishop for a short while.⁴

Terry had to leave Cork in 1644 when the Catholics were ejected—"Sua urbe Corcagiensi cum civibus etiam spoliatis ab Insiquinnio (Inchiquin) ejectus,"⁵ He participated in the deliberations of the Council at Kilkenny, and joined in the denunciation of the Glamorgan Treaty. On February 6th, 1646, he signed with other prelates a condemnation of this—probably his last public act, for in the following month the Nuncio wrote: "Episcopus Corcagiensis plenissimus hic (Kilkennia) fuit sanitate durantibus comitiis generabilis mox autem atque rediit, transmigravit ad alteram vitam in quodam suae diocesis loco ubi versari solitus esset magnam inter miseriam, quod non posset in propria civitate residere possessa a parlamentariis."⁶ He was succeeded by Robert Barry, V.A., Ross, who with Dominic Roche, V.G., administered the affairs of the diocese pending Rome's decision as to a successor. They were present at the meeting of the prelates in Waterford, 1646, and signed the proceedings in their respective capacities.

The Franciscans acquired a residence at Cork in 1609, during the Provincialate of Father Maurice Ultagh.⁷ The first Superior of this poor rented house—far different from their historic house at Shandon—was Father William Fransio. The friars must have exercised a considerable influence in the city if one may judge by the number of Cork Franciscans who subsequent to this date became illustrious in the Order.

In June, 1629, the Cork Community had the honour of receiving Brother Michael O'Clerigh, who came to make extracts from the "Vellum Book of Donnall O'Duinnin." On the 24th June he copied the Life of St. Finbarr and several other Saints. The then Provincial, Father Francis Mathews, who was at Cork during the scribe's visit, had copied some sixteen "Lives" from this volume two years before.⁸

The friars must have ministered in the vicinity prior to this date because it is recorded that in 1606 Father Cornelius Desmond (professed in Aquitaine)

² He had the Master's Degree in 1615, *H.M.C. Franciscan MSS. Report*, 171.

³ *Comm. Rinuccin.*, edited by Rev. Father Stanislaus, O.M.Cap., for Ir. MSS. Comm.

⁴ See *Father William Terry*, by Fathers O'Leary, O.S.A., and Hughes, O.S.A., Waterford, 1932, also Report of Cause entitled "Beatificationis seu Declarationis Martyrii Servorum Dei Dermotii O'Hurley ... Cornelii O'Devary, O.S.F. ... et Sociorum ..." Rome, 1914. Inform. 136. Disquisitio 288. Responsio 30.

⁵ *Comm. Rinuccin.*, 2, 489.

⁶ *Ibid* See also: *J.C.H.A.S.* II., 1893, 142, where it is erroneously stated that Terry died en route for Kilkenny.

⁷ "De Prov. Hiberniae"—Mooney MS. 3947 (Brussels). Printed in *Analecta Hibernica*, 6, p. 69.

⁸ Jennings: *Bro. Michael O'Clerigh and His Associates*, pp. 80-81.

who was Superior of the monastery of Kilcrea, situated about nine miles from Cork, and Father William Fransio were captured near the city. They were exiled to the continent but soon returned to the Mission.⁹ An anonymous note on Kilcrea Friary states that the monastery was thoroughly repaired in 1604, and the small community there were undisturbed until 1614 when the house was given to Cormac MacCarthy.¹⁰ Father John Gould was Superior at Kilcrea in 1621, and for at least five years prior to this date, a few friars lived in the vicinity ministering to the people upon whose alms they subsisted.

At Timoleague the illustrious Clonmel-born Franciscan, Bonaventure Baron, took the habit and studied philosophy there, for during the Provinciate of Father Mathews "*Studia Philosophica*" were opened at Timoleague, Cashel, Dublin, Galway, Multifarnham, Drogheda and Kilkenny. Baron, later agent for the Irish Confederates abroad, wrote to his uncle, Father Luke Wadding, at St. Isidore's on December 22nd, 1626, that he had sent his younger brother "with advice to Temulagie to go on with his course of philosophy under Father Owen Field, where unknown to any of his friends he has taken the habit on 27th October last."¹¹

Baron subsequently studied at Louvain and visited Augsburg and Salzburg, where he offered to defend theses publicly. He entered St. Isidore's, Rome, in August, 1633. An ardent humanist and philosopher, his writings fill twenty-two large volumes. He was a warm supporter of the Confederates and Rinuccini. He died in 1691. Baron's fellow-student at Timoleague was Father Edmund Bray, who taught philosophy and theology at Salzburg in 1631. He subsequently became Guardian at Clonmel. Bray's pro-Nuncioist sympathies earned him a place in Ormond's *List of seditious friars*.¹²

On June 18th, 1629, Brother Michael O'Clerigh was at Timoleague where he copied the Lives of SS. Mochua of Balla and Baithin from the Book of MacCarthy Reagh (*Book of Lismore*). Two days later he copied from the same source a Life of St. Findchu.¹³ Brother Michael then proceeded to Cork, probably calling at Kilcrea en route. The beautiful Friary of Timoleague was never deserted, as the Cork-born Provincial, Father Francis Mathews triumphantly notes in his "*Brevis Synopsis*" (1630). A few members of the community remained in the district, retiring temporarily when persecution became unduly severe—"usque ad haec tempora in ipso conventu successive continuaverunt nisi cum per intervalla fugere persecutionem cogerentur."¹⁴

The historic foundation at Buttevant was in the hands of John Barry at this period, and, like Cormac MacCarthy of Muskerry, he had agreed

⁹ Jennings: *Op. cit.*, 180.

¹⁰ *Irish Franciscan Tertiary*, 2 (1892), 335.

¹¹ *H.M.C. Francisc. MSS. Report*, 99.

¹² O'Clery: *Father Luke Wadding and St. Isidore's* (Rome), 177. Moran: *Spicel. Oss.* iii., 48.

¹³ Jennings: *Op. cit.*, 79-80.

¹⁴ Mathews: "*Brevis Synopsis*," in *Analecta Hibernica*, 6, 18.

not to permit the friars to take possession. Barry was not actively hostile to the friars and, according to Mooney, some of them lived in the town. Father John O'Cahan, an alumnus of St. Anthony's, Louvain, was sent as preacher to Buttevant. He was captured and taken to Limerick, where he died in 1622. The friars here seem to have observed the full rigour of the Franciscan observance as far as was humanly possible considering the difficulty, for in 1609 they accepted the Franciscan Reform.¹⁵

The Bantry convent which was sacked in 1580 was not restored, though it is likely that O'Sullivan Beare would have maintained and protected a community there but for the defeat at Dunboy.¹⁶

Sherkin Friary, which had flourished under O'Driscoll patronage was by Mathew's direction visited and plans made for its repair and rehabilitation. According to him a dwelling for the friars was acquired there in 1627.¹⁷

Youghal, the senior house of the Province, was in ruins, but in 1627, Father Mathews rented a house in the town and Father Bernardine Mede, preacher and theologian, was appointed superior. Father Thomas Geraldine, who had been Lector at Louvain and sent to Ireland as Commissary Visitor, was captured at Youghal some years before Mathews established a community there. He was taken prisoner to Dublin and died there in 1617. His name appears in Mooney's list of Commissaries sent by the various Ministers-General to Ireland. Mooney refers to him as a native of Munster. He was Commissary in 1609.¹⁸

Elsewhere throughout the south the friars were equally active in reorganising the Province. On no less than four occasions during the period 1609–1629 were chapters held in Munster—Roscrea, 1609, Waterford, 1615, Cashel, 1621, when the Fathers had to flee before a troop of the Lord President's horse, and Limerick in 1629.

In Kerry the foundation at Irialach or Muckross (Diocese of Ardfert) was formally re-established by Father Provincial Maurice Ultagh in 1612.¹⁹ It had been re-occupied and partly restored in 1602.²⁰ Father Thady O'Holan was Superior at Irialach and he travelled the south, collecting alms for its restoration. He succeeded in raising a large sum of money. He was accused in 1615 of collecting money for the king of Spain and narrowly escaped a trial for treason. The work of restoration commenced by him was finished in 1626.²¹ There is a memorial tablet to him in the left wall of the church near the sacristy. In 1629 the friars had to leave temporarily because of the outburst of persecution, but soon returned and a community remained there until 1652. Ardfert was never abandoned, and in 1629 Father Valentine Browne set up a community at Lioslaecthtine.

¹⁵ Mooney: "Conventus vocatur Buttyfania, et hibernice dicitur Killnamullagh, alias Killnamanagh," *De Prov. Hib.*, in *Analecta Hibernica*, No. 6, 74.

¹⁶ Mathews: "Brevis Synopsis" in *Analecta Hibernica*, 6, 156.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 158.

¹⁸ Mooney: *De Hiberniae Provincia* (Brussels MS. 3947) in *Analecta Hibernica*, 6, 106.

¹⁹ Mathews: "Brevis Synopsis"—in *Analecta Hibernica*, 6, 156.

²⁰ M. R. Moriarty: *Muckross Abbey*.

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 43.

In 1615 a house was obtained at Limerick, and Father James Kent was first Guardian. The Fathers seem to have laboured there with comparative immunity.²² The Askeaton foundation from which the friars were expelled in 1575 was renewed in 1627, when Father Mathews, at the invitation of many in the district, sent a small community to work amongst them.²³ Adare, vacant since 1581, was taken by a community in 1633, and Father Andrew Hickey, a celebrated theologian and preacher, was made Superior by Father Provincial Henry Melan. Mathews, in his "Brevis Synopsis" makes no mention of the Franciscan, Father Dermot Bruodin, who was taken at Limerick when exercising his functions. He was put to death at Ennis, August 9th, 1607.²⁴ O'Clerigh was in Limerick during the latter part of the year 1629, where he copied the *Miracles of Senan*, part of the *Law of Enda*, and some of the shorter pieces, and probably from there he proceeded to Glenn na Chailleach at Killaloe to copy the metrical *Life of St. Caimin of Inis Cealtra*.²⁵

The friars seem to have ministered in Clare despite all prohibitions. In 1626, Mathews ordered an attempt to be made at rebuilding Quinn Abbey, and Father Thady O'Gorman was placed there as Superior. Prior to this date the friars had used the abbey for preaching and as far as possible made it a centre for their work in the district. Since the expulsion of the friars from Ennis they had been unable to renew their association with this historic foundation of c. 1260, and even as late as 1629 had no residence in the town.²⁶ Shortly after that date they must have obtained some sort of habitation there, because in June, 1634, Brother Michael copied the *Life of MacLeide* at Ennis. He then went to Quinn, where he made extracts from Murchad O'Cuinlis' *Red Book of Munster*, and also from the *Book of the Coarb of St. Senan of Scattery*.²⁷

In 1618 a residence was set up in Cashel, with the distinguished theologian, Father John Molina in charge.²⁸ Two years before a community was sent to Clonmel where Father Thomas Bray was Superior. Both foundations were made by Father Eugene Field, Provincial. Field was professed at Salamanca. When Superior at Timoleague in 1618, he was elected Provincial. In 1624 he was Commissary Visitor. He was a Munsterman.²⁹ In 1621 the Cashel residence was confiscated and the Chapter dispersed, but the Community soon returned, and in 1627, during a period of quiet, Father John Gould, the Guardian, copied in Latin, the *Lives* of thirty-three Saints from a MS. belonging to Saints Island, Lough Ree.

Brother Michael O'Clerigh copied the *Life of St. Declan* and *St. Ciarin of Saigir* from Eochaid O'Heffernan's Book at Cashel Convent, probably

²² Mathews: "Brevis Synopsis," in *Analecta Hibernica*, 6, 149.

²³ *Ibid.*, 157.

²⁴ Vide Bruodin: *Propugnac. Verit. Cathol.*, 500. cf. *Beatificationis seu Declarationis*, etc. . . . *Informatio* 136, *Disquisitio* 288, *Responsio* 30.

²⁵ Jennings: *Op. cit.*, 86-87.

²⁶ Mathews: "Brevis Synopsis," in *Analecta Hibernica*, 6, 148.

²⁷ Jennings: *Op. cit.*, 138, seqq.

²⁸ Mathews: "Brevis Synopsis," in *Analecta Hibernica*, 6, 145.

²⁹ Mooney: "De Provincia Hiberniae," in *Analecta Hibernica*, 6, 110.

early in 1629.³⁰ It is likely that his copy of the *Life of St. Mochoemag of Liath* which he made at Clonmel was done about this time also.³¹

In Waterford, the home of Father Luke Wadding, who was the most outstanding Irish ecclesiastic of the century, the Franciscan influence was profound and their traditional association with the city was unbroken, despite every danger and disability. The friars, though dispossessed, never abandoned their Mission and as early as 1612 a house was taken in the city with Father Thomas Woodlock, an ex-Visitator, as Guardian. Father Woodlock was a native of Waterford who had studied abroad. An important Provincial Chapter was held here in 1615 when the original venue of the triennial gathering was altered owing to the illness of Father Woodlock, which prevented him from travelling to the place previously chosen for the meeting.

A list of the Irish Friars who distinguished themselves in seventeenth century Europe, an age noteworthy in Franciscan history by reason of the intellectual giants which the Order produced, contains not a few of Munster origin. John Ponce, the brilliant pupil of Colgan and Ward, was born at Cork in 1603 and entered the Order at Louvain. Professor of philosophy and later of the major subject at St. Isidore's, he also won fame at Lyons and Paris. In the revival of Scotism at this period he became an acknowledged authority. Ponce was wholehearted in his support of the Irish Confederates, as his *Richardi Bellingii Vindiciae Eversae*, published at Paris in 1653, clearly shows, and also his *Deplorabilis Populi Hiberniae*, Paris, 1651. He was the author of a large number of philosophical and theological works and was for a time Rector of the Irish College, Rome. He died in 1673.³² His younger brother, Edmund, also entered the Order and professed philosophy at Segovia and theology at Valladolid.³³

Francis Coppinger, of the distinguished Cork Family, was an alumnus of St. Isidore's and professed theology at St. Bonaventure's, Venice. On his return to Ireland he identified himself with the Ormondist Party. In 1659 he became Guardian of the Cork House.

Father Francis Mathews, or O'Mahoney, has already been mentioned. Educated at Louvain, he became Guardian of the Convent at his native city in 1625 and Vicar Provincial in the same year on the death of Father Nicholas Shee. At the Chapter of Multifarnham in the following year he was elected Provincial, and during his office proved most energetic and successful in continuing the work of his predecessors in reorganising the Province of St. Patrick.³⁴ He was Superior of St. Anthony's, Louvain, from 1629 till 1632, and there wrote the "Brevis Synopsis"—a short history of the Irish Franciscan Province. This history, long believed to be the work of Father Hugh Ward, O.F.M., has been conclusively proved by Father

³⁰ Jennings: *Op. cit.*, 66.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 90.

³² O'Cleary: *Op. cit.*, 83-86.

³³ *Ibid.*, 126, 127.

³⁴ Mooney: "De Provincia Hiberniae," in *Analecta Hibernica*, 6, 110.

Brendan Jennings, O.F.M., to be that of Father Francis Mathews.³⁵ Mathews returned to Cork as Guardian and was put to death in 1644.³⁶

Anthony Hickey was a native of the Killaloe diocese where his brother Cormac was Archdeacon and also Prior of Inniscattery. Anthony entered Louvain in 1607 and studied under Ward and Colgan. He taught at Louvain and Cologne before he was summoned to Rome to aid Wadding in the newly acquired house for the training of Irish Franciscans, and became first Lector at St. Isidore's.³⁷ Hickey was foremost amongst the brilliant band of contemporary Scotists. At the Chapter-General of the Order held at Rome in 1639 he was elected to the honour of Definitor-General and given the titular office of Provincial of Scotland. Father Anthouy was interested in the promotion of the Clare-born Franciscan, Malachy O'Queely, to the Metropolitan See of Tuam. His contemplated Ecclesiastical History of Ireland in conjunction with Wadding, and an Edition of the Lives of the Irish Saints did not materialise as he died in 1641.³⁸

Martin Walsh, O.F.M., a native of Waterford, studied in Spain. He taught philosophy at Naples and was invited to Rome by Wadding. Walsh was at Madrid during the time of the proposed Spanish match in which James I. was so interested and earned some fame by his *Paranensis Poetica in Adventu Caroli Walliae Principis*, (Madrid, 1624). He was elected Guardian of St. Isidore's in 1640—four years before his death.³⁹

Father Francis Harold of Limerick was a nephew of Wadding, but does not appear to have had the intense industry of his distinguished uncle. Educated at St. Isidore's, he taught philosophy in the Archepiscopal Seminary at Vienna. He succeeded his uncle as Annalist of the Order.⁴⁰

Father Maurus Matthews, a native of Waterford, studied at St. Isidore's and taught philosophy at Bologna in 1647. He later succeeded Harold in the chair of theology at his alma mater. He died in 1621. Father Francis Junius of Cashel, another distinguished Isidorean, taught at Naples. He died in 1682.

The Clare-born Father Antony Bruodin is known in history by reason of his *Propugnaculum Catholicae Veritatis* (Prague, 1669). He taught theology at Prague for a period. His kinsmen, Denis O'Nelan and Bonaventura Bruodin, also entered the Order. The latter taught at Prague before returning to Ireland. He became Guardian at Limerick in 1670 and was a notable figure on the Irish Mission in the Post-Restoration period. He was imprisoned at Dublin and died in 1670. Father

³⁵ In *Analecta Hibernica*, 6, 138.

³⁶ "Beatificationis seu Declarationis," etc. Posit. 125. Cf. also Wadding: *Script. Ordinis Minorum*, sect. 2258 and seqq., 751 (1650). Morson: *Threnodia Hibern. Cathol.*, 234, Sect. 570 (1659). Bruodin: *Propugnaculum, Verit. Cathol.*, 706. *Comm. Rinnuc.*, 1, 488, I.M.C. O'Reilly: *Memorials*, 204 et seqq.; Moran: *Spicel Oss.* i., 437.

³⁷ O'Cleary: *Op. cit.* 75.

³⁸ Harold: *Vita Waddingii*, 29–30.

³⁹ O'Cleary: *Op. cit.* 81.

⁴⁰ O'Cleary: *Op. cit.*, 110.

Thaddeus Caraghy, another Thomond Friar, was Guardian of the Ennis community during the Cromwellian war and was hanged in 1651.⁴¹

Father Bernardine Meagh of Cork achieved fame as a theologian at St. Isidore's. He was a kinsman of Father James Meagh, Vicar Apostolic of Cloyne and Cork in 1616.⁴² Bishop Boetius Egan of Duhallow was a leading friar of the period. He studied in Spain and became a Definitor General of the Order. The Nuncio recommended him for the vacant See of Ross in 1646 and he entered into his episcopal functions in the following year. He ministered for a period during the Cromwellian campaign as chaplain to Roche's troops in Kerry. He was captured and hanged by Broghill in 1650.⁴³ Father Francis O'Sullivan who was Guardian at Clonmel in 1648 and Provincial two years later was successful in getting aid from Spain for the Confederates. He was a native of Kerry, and a descendant of the Princes of Beara.⁴⁴ Father Joseph Everard who had taught theology at Naples with distinction was elected Definitor and Guardian of Kilkenny on his return to Ireland. In August, 1635, he was elected Provincial. Mooney refers to him as "Father Josephus Everardus Momoniensis," but does not state his native county.⁴⁵ In the list of Irish clerics exiled to Bordeaux in 1602 there is mention of a "Père Joseph Everard, Religieux, Cashel," who was probably the same Father Everard whom we notice here.⁴⁶

The Waterford Franciscan, Father Thomas Strange, who obtained a considerable amount of historical data for Father Luke Wadding's *Historia Sacra*, worked under happier circumstances. He was singularly fortunate in his friendship with the leading personalities of the time, viz.:—Usher, the Protestant Primate; Baron Aungier of Longford, the Master of the Rolls; and Sir James Ware. These had a profound admiration for Wadding's genius and scholarship, and were generous in putting at the disposal of Strange any MS. records which he wished to consult on Wadding's behalf. Strange found the Master of the Rolls to be "a most worthy gentleman" and hoped "he would die well." Writing to Wadding from Dublin in March, 1629, Strange says in reference to Ussher: "My friend here has made a great collection of ancient records that he got up and downe." Ussher was "a great antiquary and desires to help your Paternity in your work."⁴⁷ The collection of the Protestant Primate was always available to the Waterford friar for the purpose of making whatever extracts Father Luke desired. "I appraised you a while ago," writes Strange to Wadding, November, 1629, "of the esteem in which you and your work are held by the Primate, Ussher, and sent you a note of his."⁴⁸ In August of the same

⁴¹ Bruodin: *Propugn.*, 709; O'Cleary: *Op. cit.*, 151.

⁴² *H.M.C.*, 71.

⁴³ "Beatificationis," etc., Posit. 155, Disquis. 239. O'Reilly: *Op. cit.*, 228-9. De Burgo: *Hibernia Dominicana*, 490.

⁴⁴ O'Cleary; *Op. cit.*, 147. Bruodin: *Propugnaculum*, 724.

⁴⁵ In *Analecta Hibernica*, No. 6, 111.

⁴⁶ Vide O'Boyle: *Irish Colleges on the Continent*, p. 253.

⁴⁷ *H.M.C.*: Franciscan MSS. Report, 9.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 16.

year Strange informed Wadding that he was working on the *Register of Armagh*, which Ussher had let him have on loan in connection with the *Historia Sacra*.

Ware was also willing to aid Father Strange out of regard for Wadding's scholarship and afforded him every assistance in his power. Strange writes to Father Wadding: "I was in Dublin a fortnight ago and Sir James Ware bade me remember him to your Paternity, and will aid me with what he has. He is compiling a Chronicle of Ireland which . . . will shed light on what your Paternity has in mind," Waterford, same time,⁴⁹ and again: "Sir James Ware kisses your Paternity's hand and hopes for an answer to the points included in my letter of May, 30th," Waterford, September, 1631.⁵⁰ This intellectual kinship was one of the few bright features of the troubled age when Mooney, Mathews and Wadding wrote.

Father Strange was sent to London on the eve of the conclusion of the Peace with Spain in an effort to obtain a mitigation of the fierce persecution which in 1629-30 signalised the Government's intention to stop the reorganisation of the Religious Orders by confiscating their property and closing their oratories. His mission was a failure.⁵¹ It is unfortunate that no adequate records remain to furnish an account of the work of Father Thomas as a negotiator on behalf of his Order and religious colleagues. Indeed, from 1630 to the outbreak of the Confederate War a most tantalising lacuna exists in the Franciscan archives, but the vigorous persecution of 1630 is the best evidence of the remarkable success which attended the efforts at reorganisation on the part of the Orders in general and the Franciscans in particular.

⁴⁹ *Ibid*, 42.

⁵⁰ *Ibid*, 49.

⁵¹ *Ibid* 22-24-33.