

History of England, Vol. VIII.

1635–1639

Samuel Rawson Gardiner

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of

the Eighth Volume



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Note on the Text

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Chapter LXXV. Ireland Under St. John And Falkland.

<1>For seven years, from 1615 to 1622, Sir Oliver St. John ruled Ireland. In the main, he walked in the steps of Chichester. In Wexford, Leitrim, Longford, Westmeath, and in other parts, advantage was taken of some defect in the title by which, according to English law, the owners of the soil held their property, to convert the old loose Irish tenures into heritable freeholds. In one respect these plantations differed for the better from the Ulster settlement. Care was taken that three-fourths of the land to be divided should come into the hands of natives, and that a quarter only should be assigned to British undertakers. Yet even if the Government were animated by the best intentions — and there is every reason to believe that its intentions were good — the system which it adopted was one which must necessarily have entailed considerable hardships on the original inhabitants of the land.

The mode in which the Government acted will be best understood by the single example of the Wexford plantation, which was commenced under Chichester and carried to completion by his successor. In the northern part of Wexford there were several septs which claimed the land as their inheritance by Irish tenure. These septs, after some delay, had claimed the benefit of a <2>proclamation issued early in James's reign, and had surrendered their lands to the King, in the expectation that they would receive them back, to be held by English tenure. Unfortunately for them, this arrangement was never carried out. Someone discovered that the surrender had been made after the time prefixed by the proclamation had elapsed; and before any steps were taken to remedy the mistake, Chichester was informed that the legal title to the whole district was in reality vested in the King. An Irish chief, it was said, had made over the land to Richard II. That sovereign had granted it to Lord Beaumont, whose heir, Lord Lovel, had been attainted in the reign of Henry VII. According to English law, therefore, the land forfeited by Lovel's treason had come back to the Crown.¹

The suggestion that this new discovery might be used to effect a plantation in the county of Wexford was not one which Chichester was likely to neglect. He did not, indeed, intend to thrust the Irish from their lands. He meant that they should live on them as before, safe under English guardianship, and prospering in well-being and civilisation. To the Celtic tribesman the chicanery of the lawyers was the too certain portent of evil to come. He knew that Dublin swarmed with adventurers who had crossed St. George's Channel to repair their broken fortunes, and he was filled with a well-grounded suspicion of the English-speaking speculator, who was able to take every possible advantage of legal forms, and was skilled in all the arts by which a neighbour's landmark might be removed without open illegality.² Even with the best prospect before him the Celt was not likely to be very eager to embrace the advantages <3> offered by a plantation. The old system of tenure, with all its faults, was familiar to him; and the old life, with its wild outbursts of animal spirits, its joyous disregard of the decencies of civilised existence, was hard to shake off.

¹Report of the Commissioners, Nov. 12, 1613, *Irish Cal.* iv. 786.

²“Alii aliis vexantur modis. Si cuius tituli vestigium vel tenuissimum ex reconditis archiviiis, vel publicis scriniis aut tabulariis (de quibus nulla mentio per multas annorum centurias fando audita fuit) jam tandem actuatorum fraude, dolo, vel avaritiâ in lucem producat; si qua proscriptionis plagula (quæ tamen obductâ postmodum cicatrice, et medelâ adhibitâ sanari potuit, et, si regesta accuratè evolvantur, monumentis commendata reperiri queant) illa vel minima vulneris umbra detegitur, enodatur, exprimitur; miserique nepotes premuntur, nudantur, spoliantur, ut ex optimis territoriis abligantur, vel ex dominis, heris, ac heredibus, deveniunt servorum servi et novorum mancipia dominorum.” T. N. (*i.e.* Bishop Roth) *Analecta Sacra*, (ed. 1616), p. 188.

In 1611 Chichester's plan for the settlement of Wexford was drawn up, and Sir Lawrence Esmond and Sir Edward Fisher were sent into the district to survey the lands divided, the extent of which was about 61,000 acres.³ In making their report the Commissioners stated that some 15,000 acres were already held by legal tenure, and that 24,000 acres were to be set apart for natives of English or Irish descent whose lives in some way conformed to the English standard, leaving 22,000 to be bestowed upon strangers, who were expected to build fortified houses or castles for the maintenance of order in the country.⁴

It soon became evident that the proceedings of the Commissioners were not regarded with approbation by the Irish population. Some fifty persons, indeed, who were already large landed proprietors, and who therefore had good reason to expect that their submission would be reckoned to their advantage when the division was made, gave their adhesion to the scheme. The remainder of the population, consisting of about 14,500 men, women, and children, of whom about 3,500 would be grown-up men, was almost without exception opposed to it.

It would indeed have been strange if it had been otherwise. Not only were 22,000 acres, or nearly half the divisible land, set apart for strange colonists, but the claims of those who in some way or other possessed freehold rights, were treated with contempt. Of this class there were, according to native calculation, 667, and even the English acknowledged the existence of 440. Of the whole of this number no more than 57 were to receive lands in freehold, in compensation for those of which they were to be deprived, whilst of these only 21 were to retain the houses which they previously occupied. The remainder, on the plea that the amount of land ^{<4>} which they held was too small to entitle them to consideration, were to be evicted from their possessions, though they were to be compensated by receiving farms on leases for years or lives from the new proprietors. As for the tribal rights of some 3,000 Irishmen, who had no claim to possess land in freehold at all, they were entirely ignored. It is no wonder that the Commissioners found it expedient to terrify the people into acquiescence by asserting that the King, if he pleased, might seize the property of all who had taken part in recent acts of rebellion, and that they fortified their assertion by empannelling a jury, which at once proceeded to the attainder of 185 persons. After this they were able to explain any manifestation of adverse feeling by the misinformation which certain lawyers had spread amongst the natives for their own selfish ends.⁵

The next step to be taken by the Government was to summon a jury at Wexford to find the King's title. The jury, however, proved recalcitrant, and declared against the Crown. The jury was summoned before the Exchequer at Dublin, and it then appeared that, of the sixteen of which it was composed, eleven — some, if not all of them being closely connected by blood with Sir Lawrence Esmond, who was one of the Commissioners and principal undertakers in the plantation⁶ — were ready to do as the Government wished. The other five were sent to prison and, finally, censured — that is to say, in all probability, fined — in the Castle Chamber. The eleven were then reinforced by others, some at least of whom had an interest in the proposed plantation, and by the new jury thus composed a title was found for the Crown.⁷

For some time, however, little or nothing was done to carry this finding into effect. Chichester had probably too much on his hands during the session of the Parliament which met in 1613, and at the time of his recall in 1615 he left the Wexford plantation to his successor.

³The amount is given in another paper (*Irish Cal.* iv. 781) as 66,800, probably including other lands not divisible.

⁴Report, *Irish Cal.* iv. 255.

⁵Petition of R. M'Damore and others, May (?) 1616, *Irish Cal.* v. 248.

⁶Report on the Wexford Plantation, Sept. 1611, *ibid.* iv. 255.

⁷Report of Commissioners, Nov. 12, 1613, *ibid.* iv. 781.

Scarcely had Chichester left Ireland when Sir Edward Fisher and others, of whom William Parsons, the speculator ^{<5>}in Irish lands, was one, preferred a bill in the Exchequer against the inhabitants of a portion of the district, claiming the land as their own in virtue of a patent from the Crown. Before the native proprietors had time to answer, Fisher obtained the service of a body of soldiers and ejected them from their homes.⁸

It was probably in consequence of the representations made by the injured persons to the new Lord Deputy that a fresh survey of the lands was ordered. When it was finally completed, the scandalous arrangement by which nearly half of the divisible land had been reserved for the undertakers was frustrated, and provision was made for restricting the strangers to the fourth part which had been originally intended for them. In this way freeholds were provided for eighty more Irishmen, who naturally expressed their warm satisfaction with their unexpected good fortune.⁹ Nothing, however, was done for the remaining population. Many of the ejected took refuge in the hills, and led the life of outlaws, robbing where they could. From a statement made by St. John in 1619, that three hundred of them had been killed or hanged in the course of three years, it is evident that they must have been exceedingly numerous.¹⁰ Many of them were, no doubt, as St. John alleged, younger sons having no means of life because they were too proud to work; but it is highly probable that the numbers of the outlaws were swollen by dissatisfied peasants, whose old habits of life were compulsorily changed, and who resented, whether they had been small freeholders or not, the offer of the position of tenants in exchange for their original independence.

In the eyes of St. John no harm whatever had been done. A few of the dispossessed natives made their way to London, where some were arrested and transported to Virginia. Those who returned to Ireland were joined in Dublin by 200 of their fellows, where they reiterated their complaints and where they were at once committed to prison.

^{<6>}As far as material prosperity was concerned Wexford was no doubt the better for the change.¹¹ As in Ulster, houses and castles were built, and for those who were excluded from freehold tenure there were farms to be held at long leases, or labourer's work with some certainty of employment. On the other side of the account was the irritation caused by the denial of rights long held sacred, and the sense of insecurity which always follows when the mass of the people believes that its Government is actuated by motives which it is unable to connect with its own ideas of justice.

It was impossible for any Lord Deputy to ignore the estrangement between the governors and the governed which naturally resulted from the attempt of English statesmen to lift a whole race to a higher stage of civilisation by a violent severance of the bonds which united the living generation to its predecessor. No Lord Deputy, however, unless he was capable of throwing off the ideas of his time, could be expected to act otherwise than as St. John had acted, or to content himself with a more gradual process of improvement, based upon a recognition of Irish sentiment, at least as a foundation upon which to work.

To the English official the Irish feeling about religion was as contemptible as the Irish land-system, though it was far more difficult to deal with. It was not only rooted in a sentiment which he regarded as grossly superstitious, but it gave strength to a priesthood the influence of which was politically dangerous, and which could not, by any possibility, be otherwise than disloyal to a Protestant sovereign bent on maintaining the predominance of his own religion. It is true

⁸Petition of M'Damore and others, May (?) 1616, *Irish Cal.* v. 248.

⁹Docwra to ——— (?), March 3, 1618, *ibid.* v. 399.

¹⁰St. John to the English Council, Sept. 29, 1619, *ibid.* v. 582.

¹¹St. John and the Council to the English Council, Dec. 6, 1620, *Irish Cal.* v. 710.

that a ruler in possession of overwhelming military force would have found his wisest course in tolerating what he could not alter, and in endeavouring, by the maintenance of order and by the gradual diffusion of the blessings of an enlightened government, to rally round him the gratitude of those who would owe to him much of their material prosperity, and whose spiritual interests were left to their own care. Unhappily, not only was toleration, in those days, regarded as a bad thing in itself, but the Irish Government had not the command of that force which alone could make it feel safe enough to practise it. The Irish army was a mere skeleton of a military force,¹² and there were no regiments of trained soldiers to be had at short notice from England. A combination of the Irish tribes even from a few neighbourhoods would task all the resources of the Deputy, and it was certain that no organisation was so capable of bringing about a combination of the natives as that of the priesthood of the Church of Rome. The difficulty in the way of the Government was too political to justify any Lord Deputy in refusing to confront it: at the same time, it was too religious to give him any chance of encountering it with success.

Though it was impossible to enforce the payment of a shilling fine for each Sunday's non-attendance at church upon a whole population, great annoyance was caused by the arbitrary selection of individuals to bear the penalty without any corresponding advantage to the State. It seemed more easy to deal with the case of a single locality. Ever since the suppression of the rebellion in the port towns in the first year of James's reign, they had taken every opportunity of showing their hostility to the Government. Of these places Waterford had shown itself the hardest to deal with. It persistently elected magistrates who refused to take the oath of supremacy. In 1612 James ordered Chichester to suppress its municipal liberties, if the citizens refused to abandon the course which they had adopted.¹³ The citizens, however, stood firm, and in the autumn of 1613 the recusant magistrates were still in office.¹⁴ The position which Waterford had taken up was the more obnoxious to the Government, as it was enabled by its charter^{<8>} to refuse admission to the King's judges, and thereby to dispense with the holding of assizes at which penalties might be inflicted for nonconformity in religion.¹⁵

Scarcely had St. John assumed the reins of government when the case of Waterford became ripe for action. A rule was obtained in the Irish Chancery for the seizure of its charter unless the corporation would voluntarily surrender it.¹⁶ Legal difficulties, however, seem to have stood in the way, and it was not till 1617 that a verdict of a jury of the county of Waterford found the liberties of the city to be forfeited.¹⁷ Upon this the corporation promised to surrender its charter, but neglected to fulfil its engagement. Accordingly, in the spring of 1618, the Court of Chancery proceeded to a final judgment, declaring the forfeiture of the municipal liberties of the city.¹⁸

It was easier to declare the charter to be forfeited than to know how to supply its place. The fixed idea of English politicians was that if Irishmen would not come up to the expectations of their rulers, Englishmen must be brought over to supply their places. Early in 1619, therefore, the English Privy Council proposed that, as there was no one in Waterford fit to occupy a place in a new Protestant corporation, English merchants should be induced to settle in the city, and to undertake its government.¹⁹ In the following August St. John recommended that at least thirty

¹²On Feb. 4, 1622, the whole force consisted of 1,712 men. *Irish Cal.* v. 816.

¹³The King to Chichester, Sept. 30, 1612, *ibid.* iv. 529.

¹⁴Moryson to Chichester and the Commissioners, Oct. 13, 1613, *ibid.* iv. 763.

¹⁵Commissioners' Report, Nov. 12, 1613, *Irish Cal.* iv. 781.

¹⁶Davies to Lake, Dec. 20, 1615, *ibid.* v. 195.

¹⁷St. John to Winwood, Oct. 11, 1617, *ibid.* v. 373.

¹⁸Docwra to ——— (?), March 3, 1618, *ibid.* v. 399.

¹⁹St. John to the English Council, Feb. 26, 1619, *ibid.* v. 526.

should be induced to emigrate. They were to bring their families with them, and at least 500*l.* apiece. What was of even greater importance, they must be of good character and fit to exercise the office of a magistrate. They would have no difficulty in finding accommodation at Waterford, as there was plenty of waste ground to build on, including the sites of two ⁹ruined abbeys. If the owners chose to ask too high a price, the Irish Government would interpose and reduce them to reason.²⁰ The scheme which seemed so hopeful to James and St. John was wrecked on an unexpected obstacle. The English Privy Council wrote to the mayor and aldermen of Bristol, inviting them to select fitting men for the new settlement. The traders of Bristol, however, were not tempted by the offer of a residence in the midst of a hostile population. Not one could be induced to leave his home for such a purpose, and the government of Waterford had, therefore, for the present to be carried on from Dublin.²¹

St. John's career in Ireland was drawing to a close. Early in 1621 he was created Viscount Grandison in the Irish peerage. According to the ideas prevalent in England, his career had not been unsuccessful. He had maintained the King's authority, and had advanced plantations; but complaints were always rife in Ireland, and it was easy to imagine at Whitehall that a change of government was needed rather than a change of system. Before the end of the year it was resolved that Grandison should be recalled, and on May 4, 1622, he delivered up the sword to the Lords Justices who were to exercise authority till the arrival of his successor.

That successor, Henry Cary, Viscount Falkland, in the Scottish peerage, owed his appointment to the favour of Buckingham. A man, naturally kindly and desirous of fulfilling his duties, he was alike wanting in the clear-sightedness which detects the root of an evil, and in the firmness which is needed to eradicate it. His letters are full of querulous complaints of men and things, and of expositions of the intractable nature of the population committed to his charge, mingled with very scanty suggestions of remedies to be adopted.

¹⁰When Falkland arrived in Dublin in September, 1622, he came with the full resolution of putting an end to the activity of the Catholic clergy. Usher urged him to severity in a sermon on the text, "He beareth not the sword in vain," and Falkland imagined it to be possible to accomplish that which so many stronger men than himself had failed to do. In a despatch to the English Privy Council he drew a dismal picture of the state of Ireland. Priests swarmed in every part of the country, and excited the people by telling them that there would soon be a toleration in religion.²² On January 21, 1623, the Lord Deputy issued a proclamation ordering the banishment of the priests.²³

Under no circumstances was such a proclamation likely to be obeyed in Ireland, and least of all at a time when the conclusion of the marriage treaty with Spain was the main object of the English Government. The attitude of the Catholics became more provoking than ever when it was known that the Prince had gone to Madrid to woo in person a Catholic bride. As the summer wore on the wildest rumours were in circulation. Tyrone, it was said, would soon return. At the fair at Kells, one Henry Dowdall announced publicly that the Prince was actually married in Spain, and that Buckingham had carried a cross before him at the ceremony. At Cavan two or three thousand Irishmen gathered to hear mass, and threatened to do the like in the parish church.²⁴ In December the nobility of the Pale thought the time was come when their complaints might be

²⁰St. John and the Council to the English Council, Aug. 4, 1619, *Irish Cal.* v. 564.

²¹Mayor and Aldermen of Bristol to the English Council, Jan. 31, 1620, *ibid.* v. 615.

²²Falkland and the Council to the English Council, Oct. 1, 1622, *Irish Cal.* v. 954.

²³Proclamation, Jan. 21, 1623, *ibid.* v. 980.

²⁴Falkland to Calvert, Oct. 20, *ibid.* v. 1076.

made with effect, and proposed, under the pretext of offering their congratulations to the Prince on his return from Spain, to send agents to England to state their case.²⁵ By this time, however, the breach with Spain was already in ^{<11>}contemplation, and on January 21 Falkland was able to issue a second time his proclamation for the banishment of the priests.²⁶ James, however, was for some time hesitating whether to throw himself into opposition to Spain or not, and on February 17 the English Privy Council checked the ardour of Falkland, directing him to content himself with the suppression of tumultuous assemblies, of the erection of religious houses, and meetings which were likely to be dangerous to the State.²⁷

Before long, however, the breach with Spain actually took place, and Falkland's hands were freed. He was, however, in no position to take violent action against the priests. A fresh crop of rumours sprang up, of warlike preparations in Spain to be directed to the relief of Ireland, and in the midst of the excitement he was compelled to stand on the defensive.

The diminutive army on which alone Falkland could rely was in evil plight. When the last Lord Deputy left Ireland it had been unpaid for two years and a half. "For my part," Grandison had written to the English Council just before his departure from Dublin, "I pray you to receive the intercession I make for them now in the perclose of my government as the last words of a dying man that have long beheld this lamentable spectacle with much compassion; and if I shall be made so unhappy to leave this government with an arrear of half the time I have continued in it, I know I shall be followed with a thousand curses, and leave behind me an opinion that my unworthiness or want of credit has been the cause of leaving the army in worse estate than ever any of my predecessors before me have done."²⁸ Under Falkland the condition of the soldiers was no better. The Irish revenue was insufficient to pay the expenses of governing the country, and there were too many calls on the English exchequer to enable the richer country to supply the deficiency. It was, ^{<12>}therefore, no slight relief to Falkland when the English Parliament of 1624 not only sent fresh reinforcements to Ireland, but accompanied them with six months' pay drawn from the subsidies which it had recently granted. The relief, however, was but temporary. In the following year Falkland complained that the pay of the men had fallen four months in arrear.²⁹ The natural consequences ensued. The appointed guardians of the peace became its worst violators. The peaceable inhabitants were robbed, in order that the soldiers might have wherewith to live. The discipline of the army was ruined, whilst the discontent of Irishmen of all classes was grievously aggravated.³⁰

In the autumn of 1626, when it seemed likely that a war with France would be added to a war with Spain, the defenceless state of Ireland could no longer be left unnoticed by the English Government. One of the Lords of the Pale, the Earl of Westmeath, had been for some time in London, where he obtained a hearing for the grievances of his countrymen. With the advice of the English Privy Council, Charles resolved to increase the army in Ireland. He would have a standing force of 5,000 foot and 500 horse. The support of such an army must not, as hitherto, be left to chance. As it was hopeless to expect to draw the money which was needed for the pay of the soldiers from the English exchequer, some method of imposing the burden upon Ireland must be devised.

²⁵Falkland to Conway, Dec. 14, *ibid.* v. 1100.

²⁶Proclamation, Jan. 21, 1624, *Irish Cal.* v. 1139.

²⁷The English Council to Falkland, Feb. 17, 1624, *ibid.* v. 1151.

²⁸Grandison to the English Council, April 8, 1622, *ibid.* v. 837.

²⁹Falkland and the Council to the English Council, Nov. 28, 1625.

³⁰Falkland and the Council to the King, March 4, 1626, *Add. MSS.* 3827, fol. 56, 74.

If Irishmen were to be induced to find the money, it would be necessary to pay some attention to their complaints. As a preliminary measure the Charter of Waterford was restored, and a recusant mayor installed in office.³¹

<13>On September 22 Falkland was directed to convene an assembly of the nobility, and to invite them to engage for the payment of a regular contribution by each county for the maintenance of the army. In order to influence the decision of this assembly, a statement of the concessions which Charles was ready to make was to be laid before it.

These concessions, in the form which they ultimately assumed, are known in history as the Graces. Those which touched the burning questions of the Church and the land possessed a special importance. It was not likely that anything would be done for that considerable portion of the population which had suffered from the suppression, without compensation, of the Irish tenures. The grievances which were to be redressed were those of the middle and upper classes. It was upon them that the fitful exaction of the shilling fine almost exclusively weighed. It was from them, too, that the complaints against religious disabilities mainly proceeded. No man, they had often urged, could take office or even practise in the law courts without taking the oath of supremacy. In the reign of James a Court of Wards had been established in Ireland, which claimed the right of providing that the heirs which fell under its control should be educated in the Protestant religion, and which tendered the oath of supremacy to the heir arriving at full age before it permitted him to enter upon his inheritance.

For most of these grievances provision was made by the Graces. Charles could not persuade himself to abandon his hold upon heirs under age, but he consented to substitute for the old oath of supremacy a new oath of allegiance which no loyal Catholic would feel any difficulty in taking, and to renounce, except in special cases, the shilling fine for non-attendance at church.

On the land question the Graces were still more liberal. By consenting to the acceptance of sixty years' possession as a bar to all claims of the Crown based upon irregularities of title, Charles put an end to the prevailing fear of fresh plantations, a boon which was more <14>especially welcome in Connaught. The landowners there had received a recognition of their titles from Elizabeth and James,³² but the officials entrusted with the duty of enrolling the patents by which this recognition acquired legal force had neglected their work. Charles now declared that no advantage should be taken of the omission. Finally, he promised to call a Parliament in Ireland to take into consideration the grievances of his subjects.³³

On November 15 an assembly of the Irish nobility was held at Dublin. Its consent was asked to the bargain proposed by the King, but its members professed themselves incompetent to make a

³¹Falkland to Conway, Sept. 11, 1626. On Nov. 3, the new Mayor and Sheriffs sent Conway a present of Irish whiskey, as a token of their gratitude. *S. P. Ireland*.

³²In view of Wentworth's subsequent proceedings in Connaught, the following extract from a letter from London is worth reading, as showing that the landowners of that province had every reason to understand the question as settled in their favour. "My Lord Chi[chester] hath writ to the Duke concerning the business of the Connaught surrenders, and till he heareth from him he forbearth to give answer to your letters. The 22nd of the last month, amongst other Irish business, the Commissioners attending the Lords of the Council, the Connaught surrenders were spoken of, and how they were in fear of a plantation. The Lords so much declared themselves against a plantation that, though they did not absolutely order it at the Board, yet they gave commandment to Mr. Meautys that there waited, to keep a remembrance that they were of opinion and held it fit that his Majesty would be pleased to signify his pleasure to the Deputy, that in case they wanted a due form, either in surrendering, passing, or enrolling their patents in due time, that some should be sent hither out of that province authorised, who should bring one of their patents with him, if all keep but one form, which shall be viewed by the King's learned counsel, from whom they should receive a form of passing all the rest; and that there should be one easy and certain rate set down what every one should pay for passing them anew." J. W. to Falkland, Dec. 4, 1624, *Add. MSS.* 3827, fol. 45.

³³Original draft of the Graces, Sept. 22, 1626, *S. P. Ireland*.

money grant without consulting their neighbours, and the meeting was therefore prorogued until April, when the bishops and peers of which it was composed might be reinforced by a body of commissioners selected by some kind of irregular election in the counties.³⁴

During the interval, Falkland's mind assumed every hue of ^{<15>}querulous despair. Everyone in Ireland was taking his own course without regard for the authority of the Lord Deputy. The example of Waterford had encouraged the other towns of the South to elect recusant mayors. The soldiers were in a state of mutiny for want of money. The counties refused to keep the troops any longer. The English settlers were as recalcitrant as the men of Irish birth. In Fermanagh the new settlers declared that, rather than continue to keep the 50 soldiers who had been cessed upon them, they would throw up their estates and leave the country. "If," wrote the Lord Deputy, "any violence should break out there (and it is not unlikely) and amongst the English, as they seem to menace, what could contain the Irish counties?" From Antrim came the same tale of resistance. The plantation there, according to the report of the principal gentlemen of the county, was only in its infancy. Their tenants were for the most part strangers of British birth, who would rather leave their lands than undergo such heavy burdens.³⁵ In various parts of the country wood-kerne were robbing and committing outrages in scattered bands. The Lord Deputy was unable to disperse them because he had no money with which to pay the officer whom he had selected to command the troops destined for the service against them.³⁶ Falkland, no doubt, had fallen on evil times. It was not he who had made Ireland what it was. Yet it was unfortunate that in such a crisis a man so utterly without resource should have been at the head of the Irish Government.

The day appointed for the meeting of the Assembly in its new shape was April 19. Before the opening of the proceedings the Lord Deputy attended Christ Church in state. The sermon was preached by Downham, the Bishop of Derry. He chose for his text the words out of the prayer of Zacharias: "That we, being delivered out of the ^{<16>}hands of our enemies, might serve Him without fear." It soon appeared who they were whom the bishop regarded as his enemies. He read out a declaration against toleration to which all the bishops had recently set their hands. To grant a toleration was to be accessory to superstition and idolatry, and to the perdition of the seduced people. It was especially impious to set religion to sale. When he had finished reading, Downham cried out, in a loud voice, "Let all the people say Amen!" From the whole of the assemblage the Amens rose loudly. When the sermon was over, Falkland told the Bishop that his words must be sent to the King. Downham, however, stood his ground, and declared that he was not ashamed of anything he had said.³⁷

The declaration of the bishops was certain to dispose an Assembly, in which the Catholics were largely represented, to place itself in opposition to the wishes of the Government. The Assembly, in fact, at once replied by a refusal to contribute to the army, and, though Falkland kept it together for some days, he found it impossible to move it from the position which it had taken up. The reason openly given for this refusal was the poverty of the country; but Falkland gathered from words which had been let fall by some of the Lords of the Pale, that the real object of their desires was to substitute a militia commanded by themselves for a standing army. On May 2 he dismissed the representative members of the Assembly, retaining the nobles for a few days longer in the vain hope that they would be more submissive. Their reply was that they had given all that they could, and that they would indict the sheriffs, on a charge of treason, if they levied cess for

³⁴Diary of the Assembly, *ibid.*

³⁵Falkland to the English Council, Oct. 15, Nov. 10, 1626. The inhabitants of Fermanagh to Falkland, Nov. (?), 1626. The Earl of Antrim and the Justices of the Peace of Antrim to Falkland, Feb. 2, 1627, *S. P. Ireland.*

³⁶Falkland to the English Council, Feb. 17, 1627, *ibid.*

³⁷Judgment of the Archbishops and Bishops, *S. P. Ireland.*

the payment of the soldiers. In future, it was said, householders will 'shut up their doors,' and the soldiers may force them and take what they list, but give to them with their 'own goodwill they will not.' Under these circumstances the attempt to conciliate the nobility was necessarily abandoned. Falkland wrote, as he had often written before, that unless ^{<17>}money were sent from England, it would be impossible to govern Ireland.³⁸

On May 12 a letter arrived from the English Privy Council showing Falkland a way out of the difficulty. He was to inform the Irish that their opinion was not asked on the question whether the new army was to be maintained, or whether the requisite sum was to be levied in Ireland. All that was required of them was advice as to the most convenient way of levying the money. Upon this a few of the Lords of the Pale were summoned before the Council. Under stress they either agreed to the levy of a cess, or at least did not openly reject it; whilst, on the other hand, permission was given for the election by the cities and counties of agents to represent to Charles the grievances felt in Ireland. Even with this prospect of obtaining further concessions the Lords of the Pale refused to take any part in the assessment of the cess.³⁹

It may be that it was easier to raise an opposition to Falkland at Dublin than to contend with the King himself and the Privy Council at Whitehall. At all events, when the agents appeared in London in the spring of 1628 they gave complete satisfaction to the Government. They bound Ireland, as far as they were able to bind her, to provide 4,000*l.* a year for three years, a sum which would be sufficient to support the army. The payment was to commence at once, and was to be deducted from the subsidies which might be granted in the next Parliament.

In return Ireland received the Graces somewhat amplified, ^{<18>}but modified by the omission of the engagement to abstain from enforcing the weekly fine for non-attendance at church. The new oath of allegiance, the abandonment of the right to enforce the King's title to land which had been in private hands for more than sixty years, were both conceded, and a special promise was given that the landowners of Connaught should receive in the next Parliament a confirmation of their estates, 'to the end the same may never hereafter be brought into any further question by us, our heirs, and successors.'⁴⁰

November 3 was fixed as the day on which the promised Parliament was to meet, and the writs for the elections were actually issued by Falkland.⁴¹ The English Council, however, reminded him that Poyning's law imposed upon them the task of approving of all Bills to be submitted to the Houses in Dublin, and that he had not left them time to give the necessary attention to the business. Though some at least of the elections had already taken place,⁴² Falkland was obliged to announce that he had acted beyond his powers, and to withdraw the writs which he had issued.⁴³

³⁸Diary of the Assembly. Falkland and Council to the English Council, April 20, May 3, 9, 1627, *S. P. Ireland*. The following extract from a speech made by Usher on April 30 is worth the consideration of those who hold that the Irish were not wronged by the plantations. "We," said the Archbishop, "have brought new planters into the land, but have left the old inhabitants to shift for themselves, who, being strong of body, and daily increasing in number, and seeing themselves deprived of their ancient means of maintenance, which they and their ancestors have formerly enjoyed, will undoubtedly be ready, when any occasion is offered, to disturb our quiet."

³⁹Diary of the Assembly, *S. P. Ireland*.

⁴⁰The King to Falkland with instructions enclosed, May 24, 1628, *S. P. Ireland*.

⁴¹Falkland to the King, July 29, *ibid.*

⁴²At Dublin, the election took place on Oct. 7. The Protestant candidates had about 1,000 votes, the Catholic about 1,400, 'most very poor men, as porters, &c.' Sir J. Ware's Diary, *Crowcombe Court MSS.*

⁴³Falkland and the Council to the English Council, Sept. 8, *S. P. Ireland*.

There is no reason to suppose that anything more than a brief delay was intended.⁴⁴ In the spring of 1629, however, the ^{<19>}English Council was anxiously smoothing away difficulties before the approaching session at Westminster, and it is no matter of surprise that, when that session came to an untimely end, Charles should have been in no mood to encounter another Parliament at Dublin. The very name of a Parliament must have brought before his eyes a vision of riot and confusion, of false charges shouted out against his faithful ministers, and of a Speaker held down by violence in the chair. Unfortunate as the delay may have been, it is surely unnecessary to seek further for the motives of those who caused it.

Not that causes were wanting to make Charles hesitate to follow on the path on which he had entered. The Catholic priests construed the concessions already made as an acknowledgment of weakness. In Monaghan they invaded the churches, drove away the Protestant incumbents, and celebrated mass at the re-established altars. ^{<20>}In Dublin buildings were erected as a monastery for the friars, and there too mass was attended openly by large crowds.

Nor was the internal harmony of the Irish Government itself such as to fit it for the delicate task of meeting Parliament. The Lord Deputy, supported by the majority of the Council, was engaged in bitter strife with a minority, amongst the members of which the Lord Chancellor, Lord Loftus of Ely, and Sir Francis Annesley, afterwards notorious as Lord Mountnorris, were the two most conspicuous. It was believed that this minority to some extent sympathised with the Irish nobility and gentry in their complaints against the Government, and after the dissolution of the Assembly, which met at Dublin in 1627, definite charges were brought against the Chancellor, probably at Falkland's instigation, in which he was accused not only of malversation in his office, but of giving encouragement to the malcontents to refuse supplies to the King. In the summer of 1628 the case against him was heard in London. His answers to some of the charges were considered to be sufficient, and he was allowed to return to Dublin in the full exercise of the authority of his office, pending further inquiry into the remainder. The result was regarded as a triumph by Loftus, who followed it up by asking leave to prosecute in the Star Chamber the persons who had brought unfounded accusations against him.⁴⁵

If Falkland was to hold his own at Dublin, it behoved him to catch the eye of his sovereign by some act of vigour, and there could be little doubt that the blow, if a blow there was to be, would

⁴⁴Most writers charge the King with deliberately breaking his promise to summon a Parliament. The correspondence in the *State Papers* warrants a different conclusion. On Aug. 15 the English Council wrote to Conway that the time allowed them was too short to correspond with the Deputy on difficulties which might arise in the preparation of the Bills. They therefore did not think Parliament could meet in November. "If his Majesty," they went on to say, "do continue his purpose to have it called any time the next winter, we hold it very necessary that we should receive speedy direction to appoint a Committee of some intelligent men of the courses of that kingdom to consider of all such things as will be ^{<19>}necessary to be resolved of for the preparation of a Parliament then, and they to make report unto us of their conclusions; ... and we hold it further requisite that his Majesty would be pleased to direct us to write to the Deputy and Council there concerning his gracious pleasure of holding the Parliament, for that we doubt that they in that kingdom begin to grow into some diffidence of the continuance of his Majesty's intention in that behalf, having heard nothing of it since the going over of the agents." On the 21st, Conway answered that the King was satisfied with their statement, and ordered them to write to the Deputy and Council in Ireland, 'to assure them of his Majesty's constant resolution to have a Parliament called and holden there as soon as the needful forms and preparations for that assembly will admit, which your Lordships may intimate are already in hand and shall be prosecuted with all fitting expedition.' On the 25th the Council wrote accordingly, and their letter was received by Falkland on Sept. 5. The next day the Deputy, with the advice of his Council, resolved that the elections should nevertheless proceed, proposing to adjourn Parliament when it met. Meanwhile, on Sept. 9, a committee of lawyers in London certified the English Council that an Irish Parliament could not even be summoned till the Bills to be laid before it had been approved under the Great Seal of England. This, I suppose, settled the matter, and the summons must have been rescinded on the intimation of this opinion. There is nothing here showing any underhand desire of the King to postpone the meeting of Parliament. Why the postponement lasted so long is merely a matter of conjecture, and the explanation given above seems to be sufficiently reasonable to make it unnecessary to resort to the idea of deceit.

⁴⁵Charges against the Lord Chancellor, with his answers, June 2. The Lord Chancellor to Conway, Aug. 11, 1628, *S. P. Ireland*. Proceedings of the Council, July 7, *ibid*.

fall on the native Irish. From the beginning of his administration, Falkland had been anxious not merely to carry out the plantations which had been handed down to him by his predecessor, but to set on foot new ones of his own. As early as in 1623 he had cast his eye upon a district amongst the Wicklow mountains, inhabited by the sept of the Byrnes. In bypast time this sept had been noted ^{<21>}for its turbulence. In the last years of Elizabeth, when all England was in confusion, Phelim Byrne, who was now the chief of the sept, with others of his relatives and dependents, had been guilty of an act of unusual atrocity. Having tracked Sir Piers Fitzgerald to a house in which he had taken refuge with his wife and daughter, they had set fire to the thatch and had burnt the whole party alive.⁴⁶ Since the accession of James, however, Phelim had settled down to a regular life, and had endeavoured to gain credit in Dublin for keeping some kind of order amongst his wild neighbours.

A district such as that of the Byrnes was certain to attract the notice of Falkland, who had placed himself in the hands of men such as Sir William Parsons, the Master of the new Court of Wards, who combined a theoretical belief in the virtues of the plantation system with a shrewd regard for his own interest. In 1623, therefore, Falkland proposed to set up a plantation in Wicklow. Much to his surprise, he found that his scheme found no countenance in England. The Commissioners for Irish Causes, who had been appointed to give advice to the English Privy Council, reported that, however excellent the plantation system was, it had been much abused by persons who had got large estates into their possession without fulfilling the obligations under which they had come. They therefore recommended that the Lord Deputy should content himself with breaking up the dependency of the people on their chiefs, and should dispose of the lands amongst the natives themselves at profitable rents.⁴⁷

Two years later, Falkland returned to the charge. He now announced that he had discovered a dangerous conspiracy, in which the Byrnes were concerned, together with the Butlers, ^{<22>}the Cavenaghs, and the Toolles. Two of Phelim's sons were accused of participation in it. The Lord Deputy declared that the only way of dealing with such men was to seize their lands and establish a plantation upon them.⁴⁸

Once more the Commissioners for Irish Affairs stood between the impatient Lord Deputy and his prey. They seem to have entirely disbelieved the charges which Falkland had hinted at, and advised 'as the best course to reduce that barbarous country to some good settlement,' that Phelim should receive a grant of all the lands claimed by him, on condition of making a grant to his six younger sons of 200 acres apiece, to be held in freehold. He himself, according to the report, had been 'loyal and of good desert to the state,' and his sons were 'proper men and civilly bred.' The time was not seasonable for a new plantation.⁴⁹

For a long time Falkland kept silence. He and his subordinates were, however, much interested in making out a case against the Byrnes. On August 27, 1628, just after the Lord Chancellor had returned from England with the honours of victory, the Lord Deputy wrote a triumphant letter to the King, announcing that he had now completed his discovery of the great conspiracy of which he had for three years been upon the track. Phelim Byrne and his six sons⁵⁰ had been indicted at

⁴⁶Deposition of W. Eustace. Gilbert's *Hist. of the Irish Confederation*, ii. 205.

⁴⁷Falkland to the English Council, May 3. The Commissioners for Irish affairs to the English Council, July, 1623, *Irish Cal.* v. 1019, 1058. The Commissioners were not, as Mr. Prendergast supposes (*Pref. to Irish Cal.* v.), 'a Committee of the Privy Council,' but a consultative body outside it.

⁴⁸Falkland to Conway, March 25, 1625, *Irish Cal.* v. 1398.

⁴⁹Report of the Commissioners for Irish Affairs. *S. P. Ireland. Undated, Charles I.*

⁵⁰The report of the Commissioners last mentioned speaks of six younger sons. Probably one had died since.

the Wicklow assizes, and a true bill had been found against them. The father and five of the sons were lodged in Dublin Castle, and would be tried the next term. The other son, Hugh, was in London, soliciting favour for his father and his brothers. He was as guilty as the rest, and should either be sent to Dublin or imprisoned in England. Let the King grant no pardon to any of the family before the trial, or give away their estates till the Deputy and the Irish Council had been consulted. “For,” added Falkland, ^{<23>}“it is without all peradventure that the well settlement of these escheats do most importantly concern the settlement of the future peace and tranquillity of this kingdom in security and perpetuity with the assured good and advantage of the Crown.”⁵¹

To Falkland’s intense astonishment, Charles replied that he had received a petition from the Byrnes complaining of ill-treatment, and that he had therefore directed the formation of a committee of the Irish Privy Council to investigate the matter with impartiality.⁵² When the names of the committee were read, those of Falkland’s greatest enemies — the Lord Chancellor, Sir Francis Annesley, and Sir Arthur Savage — appeared amongst them.

By his answer, the Lord Deputy showed that he regarded the King’s orders not only as the result of an unworthy intrigue, but as directed entirely against himself. He objected, he said, to a petition in which his Majesty’s deputy was to be ‘arraigned in’ his ‘proceedings in the discovery and prosecution of traitors by persons’ subordinate to him in his ‘government, to the great blemish of’ his ‘honour and integrity; whilst the persons accused, and by twelve men — of the best consequence in their country — found guilty, shall be so protected from trial, and against a lawful verdict, be supposed and suggested still innocent.’ On this ground Falkland begged that the trials might proceed, and execution be deferred till the King had been fully acquainted with the circumstances of the case. “If in the process,” he ended by saying, “it shall appear that my actions and aims in this service have not been in all circumstances becoming the person I am in the office I exercise, as full of candidness, moderation, clemency, uprightness, and integrity as of circumspection, vigilancy, industry, cost and hazard, my head on the block shall be the price of my folly and iniquity; so, on the contrary part, if I be found upright, that my honour be repaired and an inquisition made what bad brokers of this or that land have been employed, and what means they have used to blind authority and ^{<24>}purchase corrupt friendship, to procure favour for so gross and capital offenders, and to pervert justice; for I that know what attempts have been made upon myself can easily divine what essays may have been made and ways sought elsewhere.”⁵³

Whatever might be the truth about the Byrnes Falkland stands self-condemned. No thought of the possibility of a miscarriage of justice occurred to him; no recollection that, if some members of the committee were his enemies, others were not, and that one of them at least, Archbishop Usher, might be trusted to see that the investigation ordered should be honest and impartial. Falkland’s mind was so filled with the sense of his own offended dignity, that no room was left in it for any other consideration.

The Commissioners set to work amidst unexampled difficulties. Not only did the Lord Deputy refuse to render any assistance, but he threw every possible obstacle in their way. As the greater number of available witnesses were in close prison in the Castle, they could not be brought up for examination without Falkland’s permission. That permission he refused to give, and he turned an equally deaf ear to the requests of Byrne and his sons to be informed of the precise nature of

⁵¹Falkland to the King, Aug. 27, 1628, *S. P. Ireland*.

⁵²The King to Falkland, Oct. 3, 1628, *ibid*.

⁵³Falkland to the King, Oct. 20, 1628, *S. P. Ireland*.

the crime of which they were charged.⁵⁴ It was enough that he had himself made up his mind that they were guilty.

The Commissioners had therefore recourse to such evidence as they could derive from persons still at liberty, and this they forwarded to England without comment of their own.⁵⁵

The tale which is to be unravelled from the statements made before the Commissioners is no doubt one which might be to some extent modified, if we could hear the other side. Yet it is hardly possible that any modification could make it otherwise than revolting. The witnesses upon whose ^{<25>}testimony the Byrnes had been indicted were for the most part condemned felons, who had saved their lives by offering to give such evidence as was sought for by persons in authority, or who were driven to offer their testimony by threats or even by torture. One witness against the Byrnes had been placed on the rack, another had been put naked on a burning gridiron. Those who had got up the case by such means as these were Lord Esmond, Sir Henry Bellings, Sir William Parsons, William Graham, and others who were hungering for a share in the new plantation. One witness, Hugh Macgarrald, deposed 'that he was apprehended by William Graham, the Provost Marshal, who kept him seven days in his custody, tied with a hand-lock, and two several times the said Graham threatened to hang the examinee if he would not do service against Phelim MacPheagh;⁵⁶ one time sending for a ladder, and another time showing him a tree whereon he would hang him, and the ropes or withs; but the examinee, making protestation of having no matter to lay to the said Phelim's charge, did choose rather to suffer than to impeach him without a cause.' Another witness, Dermot O'Toole, deposed that since his committal 'he hath been solicited by Sir Henry Bellings to do service against Phelim MacPheagh and his sons in accusing them, ... with promises that in recompense thereof he should be enlarged and have his own pardon, and if the examinee did not yield to do such service, that he, the examinee, should be hanged.' He deposed also that 'the said Sir Henry dealt with him in like manner, with the like promises, for accusing Phelim MacPheagh with the death of Mr. Pont. All which the examinee denied, being unable to accuse them thereof.' O'Toole proceeded to tell how Falkland himself interfered, and 'willed the examinee to choose whether of the three Provost Marshals he would be hanged by.'

Similar depositions were forthcoming in plenty. The mode of finding the indictment at the Wicklow assizes was as iniquitous as the mode in which the evidence had been collected. The foreman of the grand jury was Sir James Fitzgerald, whose father had been burnt alive in the murderous attack in which ^{<26>}Phelim Byrne had been concerned. Another juryman was Sir Henry Bellings, who had been one of his chief accusers, and the remainder were in some way or another connected with the men who coveted the lands occupied by the Byrnes, whilst the greater part of them were legally disqualified from serving on a grand jury at all.⁵⁷

The one man who could see nothing in all this calling for inquiry was Falkland. It is most unlikely that he had deliberately given his authority to the execution of an unjust sentence. He had rather been a tool in the hands of men who had made use of him for their own purposes. In the mind of a Lord Deputy there must always have been a latent presumption that any given Irishman was likely to have been guilty of conspiracy against the Government, as well as a strong suspicion that his followers and kinsmen were disinclined to tell tales against him unless they were driven by threats and tortures to tell the truth. Even with men like Sir Henry Bellings the wish to prove

⁵⁴Falkland's answer to Brian Byrne's petition, Nov. 8. Falkland's answer to Phelim Byrne's petition, Nov. 12, 1628, *ibid.*

⁵⁵The Committee to the English Privy Council, Jan. 20, 1629, *ibid.*

⁵⁶*i.e.* Phelim Byrne.

⁵⁷The case of the O'Byrnes of Wicklow, Gilbert's *Hist. of the Irish Confederation*, ii. 167.

the Byrnes traitors, for the sake of their lands, was probably father of a decided conviction that they actually were so. What was specially reprehensible in Falkland was his utter inability to perceive that the evil system which surrounded him fell in any way short of ideal justice. It was a high indignity, he had lately written to the King, that his conduct should be examined by a commission, whilst the trial of traitors was suspended after they had been found to be malefactors by the testimony of sixteen loyal men impanelled legally.⁵⁸

In consequence of the inquiry held at Dublin the Byrnes were set at liberty.⁵⁹ After this it was impossible to allow Falkland to remain longer in Ireland.⁶⁰ In January, the Earl of ^{<27>}Danby was named as his successor. Danby, however, was not very willing to engage again in the service of the State, and on August 10, 1629, the Lord Deputy was ordered to hand over his authority to the Lords Justices, on the decent pretext that the King needed his advice at home.⁶¹

The Lords Justices were the Lord Chancellor and Richard Boyle, Earl of Cork, who respectively represented the two factions into which the Irish Council had been divided during the last years of Falkland's office. So bitterly hostile were they to one another, that Charles thought it well to accompany their appointment with a message charging them to lay aside all personal rivalry in regard for the public service.⁶²

Such a combination did not promise much amendment in the conduct of the Irish government. The Lords Justices indeed were not entirely idle. They reduced the army, and were thus able to spread over four years the contribution which had been granted for three. They also proceeded vigorously against the convents and the open celebration of the mass in Dublin. The friars and nuns were driven out, and their houses seized for the King's use.

On May 11, 1630, about 200 lords and gentlemen were ^{<28>}summoned to the council-table, and were asked whether they wished to have a Parliament or not. All, with the single exception of Lord Gormanston, answered in the affirmative. It was then settled that it should meet in November.⁶³ When, however, November arrived, no attempt was made to carry out this agreement.

The day, however, at last arrived when a Parliament must be faced. At Christmas, 1632, the contribution would come to an end. In the preceding January⁶⁴ Charles announced that he had chosen a new Lord Deputy. Wentworth was entrusted with the task of bringing Ireland to order, though more than a year was to pass before he arrived at Dublin to take up the duties of his office.

⁵⁸Falkland to the King, Dec. 8, 1628, *Gilbert*, ii. 210.

⁵⁹Part of their lands is said to have remained in the hands of Sir W. Parsons. Carte's *Ormond*, i. 27.

⁶⁰The strongest point in Falkland's favour is that a letter taking his part, and written by the majority of the Irish Council, bears the signature of Usher, who was one of the Commissioners. The writers refer the King ^{<27>}to the information which he had received at the beginning of Falkland's government concerning the turbulence of the district of the Byrnes. "This," they proceed to say, "being at that time the declaration of the State, moved your Deputy — being a stranger — to have a wary aspect upon those people for the common peace, which he hath carefully performed." When a Spanish invasion was threatened, several persons were examined, and it was discovered that Phelim had entered into a combination for raising a commotion, and that a justice of the peace had been murdered in consequence, before which they had never heard of any displeasure of the Deputy's against Phelim. They then expressed their belief that he had no aim except 'the reducement' of Phelim's country 'to the conformity of other civil parts.' The Irish Council to the King, April 28, 1629, *S. P. Ireland*. The last quoted clause probably hits the mark. The sense of justice is often overpowered in well-intentioned persons by an ill-regulated sense of public duty. There was afterwards an inquiry in England, of which few particulars have reached us.

⁶¹The King to Falkland, Aug. 10, 1629, *S. P. Ireland*.

⁶²The King to Wilmot, Aug. 5, *ibid*.

⁶³Sir J. Ware's Diary, *Crowcombe Court MSS*.

⁶⁴The King to the Lords Justices, Jan. 12, 1632, *Straff. Letters*, i. 63.

Chapter LXXVI. Wentworth In Ireland.

<29>The new Lord Deputy had already shown himself to be possessed of some of the highest qualifications of a ruler. He had a rapid intelligence, a firm will, and a fixed resolution to allow no private interests to stand in the way of the interests of the State. In his correspondence with Laud this resolution was expressed by the word ‘thorough.’ There was to be thorough earnestness, thorough self-abnegation in the service of the State, thorough activity, too, of proceeding against those who opposed their own inactivity or greed to the just requirements of the Government. Such a man could hardly seek less than absolute power. Every evil which he connected with Parliamentary or official independence in England would return upon him with redoubled force in Ireland. Privy councillors and officers of various kinds had been long accustomed to range themselves in opposing factions, and too many of them regarded their posts as property to be used for the best advantage, and would turn sharply upon the man who required from them the zealous activity which he himself displayed. Nor was it possible in Ireland to fall back upon Parliament as a controlling force. In England the voice of Parliament was coming to be more than ever the voice of an united nation. In Ireland there was no nation to represent. There might be members elected by the English colonists, and members elected by the Irish population; but there was no common feeling, no possibility of combining <30>dissimilar elements so as to form a basis of authority. What Ireland needed was a government like that of India in the present day, supporting itself on an irresistible army and guided by statesmanlike intelligence. It was unfortunate that in their honourable anxiety to raise Ireland to the level of England, English statesmen had thrust upon the country institutions for which it was manifestly unfit. Parliaments divided into two nearly equal factions, with scarcely a point in common, juries delivering verdicts from fear or favour, could never give real strength to a Government. Wentworth did not respect these institutions. He believed himself capable of doing more for Ireland than Irishmen themselves could do. Unhappily, his very intellectual superiority led him to think very much of doing the thing that was right and profitable, and very little of the morality of the means which he took to accomplish his ends.¹ If Parliaments or juries objected to give effect to his schemes, their resistance was to be overcome by threats, persuasion, or cajolery. He had come to regard all constitutional restraints as mere impediments to honest action. “I know no reason then,” he subsequently wrote to Laud, after he had been a few months in Ireland, “but you may as well rule the common lawyers in England as I, poor beagle, do here; and yet that I do, and will do, in all that concerns my master’s service, at the peril of my head. I am confident that the King, being pleased to set himself in the business, is <31>able by his wisdom and ministers to carry any just and honourable action through all imaginary opposition, for real there can be none; that to start aside for such panic fears as a Prynne or an Eliot shall set up, were the meanest folly in the whole world; that, the debts of the Crown taken off, you may govern as you please.”² Nor was it only with lawyers and Parliaments that he was ready to deal in this high-handed fashion. In his impatience of ignorant obstructiveness, he shut his eyes to the necessity of respecting the ideas and habits of a population,

¹I do not know whether Wentworth was a student of Machiavelli. But there is much in his conduct in Ireland which reminds us of *The Prince*, not only in his recognition that good government is the firmest support of authority, but in particular acts. The settlement of Connaught, for instance, is the translation into action of Machiavelli’s words, cap. iii. “L’ altro miglior remedio è mandare colonie in uno o in duoi luoghi, che siano quasi le chiavi di quello Stato; perchè è necessario o far questo, o tenervi assai gente d’ arme e fanterie. Nelle colonie non spende molto il Principe, e senza sua spesa, o poca, ve le manda e tiene; e solamente offende coloro a chi toglie il campi e le case per darle a nuovi abitatori, che sono una minima parte di quello Stato.” Another of Machiavelli’s maxims was turned against him by Charles (cap. xix.): “Di che si può trarre un altro notabile, che li principi debbono le cose di carico metter sopra d’ altri, e le cose di grazia a sè medesimi.”

²Wentworth to Laud, Dec. 1633, *Strafford Letters*, i. 171. The last phrase should be interpreted by the ‘any just and honourable action’ which precedes.

and he forgot that multitudes who had no means of enforcing his attention to their wishes might nevertheless cling with tenacious pertinacity to their old ways in spite of all that he could do to lead them in another direction.

In carrying out the enterprise upon which he had embarked, the King's name was to Wentworth a tower of strength. In England he had never scrupled to use it freely, as if the establishment of the royal authority was identical with the interests of the State. In Ireland it was far more identical with them than in England. Only in the King's name could Wentworth rebuke the elements of disorder and corruption, could teach idle and selfish officials to labour for the public good, could snatch public property out of the hand of the robber, and could contend against the abuses of ages from which the poor suffered oppression, and the rich and powerful reaped advantage.

The first necessity of a Government thus situated was to possess an army upon which it could thoroughly depend. Yet so decided was the feeling in Ireland against a continuance of the contributions, that it seemed hopeless to obtain the money needed for the support of the soldiers without a more open breach of legality than Wentworth deemed expedient. In the opinion of the Lords Justices indeed the only course to be pursued was the enforcement of the shilling fines for recusancy.

³²Wentworth's course was swiftly taken. Having received from the King the assurance that all business should pass through his hands, and that all offices should be conferred by himself,³ as well as that no fresh expenditure should be incurred without his consent, he obtained a letter from Charles ordering presentments of recusancy to be generally made, so that, although no fines were for the present to be levied, a general impression might be created that payment would be enforced at the end of the year, when the contribution would cease to be available.⁴ At the same time he despatched a secret agent to the principal Catholics with instructions to lay the blame of the measure on the Earl of Cork. The new Lord Deputy, he was to tell them, was their best friend, and it would be well for them to avert the immediate danger by offering to continue the contribution for another year. With this alternative before them the Catholics readily consented to do as Wentworth wished. The Protestants were too dependent on the Government to venture to resist.

It was not that Wentworth differed from Cork in his aims. If he wished to see Ireland as prosperous as England, he had no doubt that it was only by the supremacy of English law and English religion that so desirable a result was to be attained. "I am not ignorant," he wrote to Cottington, "that what hath been may happen out again, and how much every good Englishman ought, as well in reason of state as conscience, to desire that kingdom were well reduced to conformity of religion with us here, as indeed shutting up the postern gate, hitherto open to many a dangerous inconvenience and mischief."⁵ He had, however, a clear insight into at least some of the difficulties in his way. He knew that English supremacy could not root itself in Ireland by means of an irritating persecution conducted by men who had enriched themselves by expropriating native landowners. Of that ³³evil class which, under a display of Protestant zeal, cloaked its eagerness to use the forms of the law to add field to field at the expense of the Celtic population, Richard Boyle, the Great Earl of Cork, as he was frequently styled, was the most conspicuous. He had come over to Ireland as an adventurer in 1588, with twenty-seven pounds in his pocket. He began his operations by buying up for a trifle valuable claims, which those

³Wentworth's Propositions, Feb. 17, 1632, *Strafford Letters*, i. 65.

⁴The King to the Lords Justices, April 14, 1632, *ibid.* i. 71.

⁵Wentworth to Cottington, Oct. 4, 1632, *ibid.* i. 74.

who held them did not know how to turn to account. He contrived to gain the favour of men in authority, and, unless he is much maligned, he used his opportunities unscrupulously. Before the end of the sixteenth century he held more land than anyone else in Ireland. Yet he knew how to use to the best advantage the wealth which he had unscrupulously acquired. His estates were well cultivated. Buildings of all kinds — houses, churches, and schools — rose upon them.⁶ In the recent distractions he had taken the side of Falkland against the Lord Chancellor and Annesley. He could see no harm in the treatment to which the Byrnes had been subjected, and no danger in the exasperation which would ensue if a whole population were fined for refusing to abandon its religion.

A prosperous man of the world, imagining that a nation can be governed in accordance with the rules on which a pettifogging lawyer conducted business, was just the personage with whom Wentworth was certain to come into collision. The new Deputy was unwilling to come to a final decision on the best mode of reducing Ireland to order till he had had an opportunity of seeing the country with his own eyes. He knew at least that Cork's empiric remedies were no remedies at all. "My lord," he wrote of the reduction of Ireland to conformity with England, in continuing his letter to Cottington; "it is a great business, hath many a root lying deep, and far within the ground, which would be first thoroughly opened before we judge what height it may shoot up into, when it shall feel itself once struck at, to be loosened and pulled up. Nor, at this distance can I advise it should be ^{<34>}at all attempted, until the payment for the King's army be elsewhere and surelier settled, than either upon the voluntary gift of the subjects or upon the casual income of the twelve pence a Sunday. Before this fruit grows ripe for gathering, the army must not live *precario*, fetching in every morsel of bread upon their swords' points. Nor will I so far ground myself with an implicit faith upon the all-foreseeing providences of the Earl of Cork, as to receive the contrary opinion from him *in verbo magistri*, when I am sure that if such a rush as this should set that kingdom in pieces again, I must be the man that am like to bear the heat of the day, and to be also accountable for the success, not he. Blame me not then, when it concerns me so nearly, both in honour and safety, if I had much rather desire to hold it in suspense, and to be at liberty upon the place to make my own election, than thus be closed up by the choice and admission of strangers, whom I know not how they stand affected either to me or the King's service."⁷

Wentworth took good care to let the Irish officials know that he intended to be their master, not, as Falkland had been, their servant. On October 15 he reminded the Lords Justices, in a sharp letter, that they had been ordered by the King six months before to abstain from the bestowal of offices, and that they had not only neglected the orders given, but had kept secret the letter in which they were contained. "Pardon me, my lords," he wrote, "if in the discharge of my own duty I be transported beyond my natural modesty and moderation, and the respects I personally bear your lordships, plainly to let you know I shall not connive at such a presumption in you, thus to evacuate my master's directions, nor contain myself in silence, seeing them before my face so slighted, or at least laid aside, it seems, very little regarded."⁸

Wentworth had thus a full year in which to take his measures. For some unexplained reason he did not arrive in Ireland till the summer of 1633. On July 23 he entered Dublin. He soon found that he would ^{<35>}have to create his instruments of government himself. "I find them in this place," he wrote, "a company of men the most intent upon their own ends that ever I met with, and so as those speed, they consider other things at a very great distance." The army was one 'rather

⁶The character of the Earl is dissected, with quotations from original documents, in Wright's *History of Ireland*, i. 618.

⁷Wentworth to Cottington, Oct. 1, 1632, *Strafford Letters*, i. 74.

⁸Wentworth to the Lords Justices, Oct. 15, 1632, *S. P. Ireland*.

in name than in deed, whether it was considered in numbers, in weapons, or in discipline.’ He was almost frightened to see the work before him. “Yet,” he encouraged himself by saying at the end, “you shall see I will not meanly desert the duties I owe to my master and myself. Howbeit, without the arm of his Majesty’s counsel and support, it is impossible for me to go through with this work.” Whatever support the King’s name might give him he might freely enjoy. For counsel he must look to himself alone.⁹

The Deputy’s first work was to obtain a prolongation of the Contribution for yet another year. By dexterously mingling hopes of an approaching Parliament with a declaration of his resolution to take the money by force if he could not have it in any other way, he obtained the assent first of the Council and then of the Catholic landowners.¹⁰

The ends which Wentworth proposed to himself were in the highest degree honourable to his character. He saw that the mass of the Irish population were ignorant and poverty-stricken, liable to be led astray by their priests, and imposed upon by their lords. He wished to raise them to material prosperity, to make them laborious and contented. He wished, too, to give them knowledge and education, that they might be, as Englishmen were, loyal Protestant subjects of the King. Force and policy must combine to the ^{<36>}desired end. The natives must be taught to feel their own weakness, and to acknowledge that the stern discipline imposed upon them was for their advantage. Trade and agriculture would flourish, and those who were benefited by the prosperity which followed would hardly look back with longing eyes to the days of wretchedness which had for ever passed away.

The sixteenth century had bequeathed to the seventeenth an overweening confidence in the power of government. In England especially the sovereigns had done much to effect a change in the religion and in the social condition of the country, and they seemed to have done much more than they really did. It is easy for us, standing at a distance, to take account of the national craving for independence of foreign dictation which drove unwilling Catholics to support a Protestant Government. It was not then easy to trace out the influence of other causes for the success of Elizabeth than those which she drew from her own high spirit and enlightened judgment. So much had been done by governmental energy and by governmental adroitness that everything seemed possible to energy and adroitness. Just as Bacon under-estimated the mystery of material nature when he joyously declared himself to have taken all knowledge for his province, so did Wentworth under-estimate the mystery of human nature when he thought that a few years would enable him to transform ignorance into knowledge and distrust into fidelity. It was true that he was about to accomplish marvels; but he could not accomplish miracles. Nothing short of a miracle would suddenly transform the Irish Protestant Church into a true nursing-mother of the Celtic population in the midst of which it was encamped, or would suddenly transform the English colonists into beneficent diffusers of light and civilisation. The Irish only knew the foreign clergy as greedy collectors of tithes, and the foreign settlers as greedy encroachers upon land. Nor had Wentworth himself the qualities which enable men to conciliate opposition. Careless of popularity and disdainful of the arts by which it is acquired, he would not condescend to explain his intentions even to those whom he most wished to benefit. He could not understand ^{<37>}why it was that he was not loved. He left his actions to speak for themselves, and wondered that they were so often misinterpreted.

⁹Wentworth to Portland, Aug. 3, 1633, *S. P. Ireland*, i. 96.

¹⁰Wentworth to Coke, Aug. 3, 1633, *Strafford Letters*, i. 97. From the account given here of the Council meeting, it is evident that the Deputy had the support of the party which had hitherto been opposed to Falkland. Sir Adam Loftus, the Chancellor’s son, first proposed the continuance of the contribution. “The Lord Chancellor and the Lord Mountnorris showed themselves throughout very ready to give it all furtherance.” On the other hand, Cork and Parsons are noted as behaving in an unsatisfactory way.

The Deputy lost no time in bringing his little army to a complete state of efficiency. He knew that punctual pay was the first requisite for the restoration of discipline, and by establishing a strict system of payment he soon put an end to the loose system by which the soldier had been a terror to the civil population and a broken reed in the hands of authority. The officers were startled to find that the new Lord Deputy, who, unlike his predecessors, was General of the army as well as Governor of the State, actually expected them to attend to their duties.¹¹ His own troop of horse soon became a model for the rest of the army.

Wentworth's devouring zeal for the public service found little echo in the Council. The Chancellor, and Annesley, now Lord Mountnorris, gave him some support; but their support was at best lukewarm, and others looked askance upon the obtrusive Englishman who could not let matters alone which had been let alone so long. By degrees he gathered round him a few friends upon whom he could depend. He brought Wandesford from Yorkshire to be Master of the Rolls. He introduced Radcliffe, another Yorkshireman, into the Council. Loyal and devoted as they were, such men would serve as instruments for his policy; but they could not warn him against his errors.

Wistfully he looked across the sea for support. Although the King was ready to stand by him, and to trust him with such powers as had never been entrusted to any former Deputy, he found it hard to keep the promise which he had given to leave all appointments in the Deputy's hands. Holland and the Queen were always pestering him with applications for unsuitable grants in favour of unsuitable persons, and he shrank from saying No. It cost Wentworth a hard struggle to defend from the greed of the English courtiers the revenue present and prospective upon which he counted.^{<38>} The very army was tampered with to gratify suitors at Whitehall, and even when Charles had no intention of unsettling Wentworth's arrangements in Ireland, he made no difficulty in leaving him to bear the odium of the refusal. In one of his letters he mentioned the names of some of the principal men in his Court who had asked for favour to be shown to them in Ireland. "I recommend them all to you," he added, "heartily and earnestly, but so as may agree with the good of my service and no otherwise; yet so too as that I may have thanks; howsoever that, if there be anything to be denied, you may do it, and not I."¹² One case cost Wentworth a severe struggle. Falkland had died¹³ before his successor crossed the sea, and had made it his dying request to the King to provide for his second son, Lorenzo Cary, in the Irish army. As long as Wentworth was by his side Charles properly refused to entrust a company of soldiers to so young a lad. Soon after Wentworth reached Dublin he discovered that the appointment had been made without consulting him. He explained to Charles that the company had been under the command of the late Lord Deputy, and had been left by him in the utmost disorder, and that young Cary was not likely to remedy the mischief. Besides, he had already appointed a real soldier to the post, and to force him to cancel the nomination would be evidence to the world that he was not trusted in England. His remonstrances were of no avail. Charles insisted that he had passed his word to Cary, though he assured Wentworth that nothing of the kind should occur again.¹⁴

Till Wentworth arrived in Ireland little or nothing had been done to free the seas from pirates, and from privateers who were pirates in all but name. On his passage across St. George's Channel, he had himself lost property worth 500*l*. He found trade at a standstill. A Dutch vessel had been rifled and set on fire within sight of Dublin^{<39>} Castle. His anger was especially roused by such

¹¹Wentworth to Cottington, Nov. 4, *Strafford Letters*, i. 144.

¹²The King to Wentworth, Oct. 26, 1633, *Strafford Letters*, i. 140.

¹³He fell from a ladder in the park at Theobald's and broke his leg. He died after the limb had been amputated. His eldest son Lucius had been dismissed from the command of a company by the Lords Justices.

¹⁴*Strafford Letters*, i. 128, 138, 142, 207, 228.

a defiance of his authority. "The loss and misery of this," he wrote, "is not so great as the scorn that such a picking villain as this should dare to do these insolences in the face of that State, and to pass away without control."¹⁵

The pirates were for the most part subjects of the King of Spain; but though Wentworth was anxious to be on good terms with Spain, he did not, for that reason, deal leniently with Spanish pirates. In a short time he had two ships of his own to guard the coast. To their command he appointed Sir Richard Plumleigh, a man after his own heart. Before long, piracy in the Irish seas was the exception and not the rule.

Hand in hand with the suppression of piracy went the encouragement of trade. Wentworth's letters are full of evidence of the care with which he descended into the minutest details. The humble beginnings of the great flax culture of the North of Ireland owed their origin to him. He advanced money from his own pocket towards the carrying out of a project for manufacturing iron ordnance in the country. He spent long hours over an attempt to open commercial intercourse with Spain, and was never in better spirits than when he fancied that his efforts were likely to be crowned with success. He was deeply annoyed at the short-sighted eagerness of the English Government to place restrictions on Irish exportation for the protection of English manufactures. His notions on the evil of customs duties were in advance of his generation. On one occasion he advocated the imposition of a payment upon brewers on the ground that it might be 'a step towards an excise, which although it be heathen Greek in England, yet certainly would be more beneficial to the Crown and less felt by the subject than where the impositions are laid upon the foreign vent of commodities inward and outward.'

Wentworth's recommendations that the rise of a cloth manufacture in Ireland should be discouraged, and that the sole right of importing salt should remain in the hands of the Government, stand in startling ^{<40>}contrast with his other enlightened suggestions, and he intended them to stand in contrast. It was the indispensable condition of the reforms which he was meditating, that Ireland should be perfectly submissive to the English Government. There are those doubtless who, knowing how ill the English Government subsequently acquitted itself of its task, would argue that it would have been far better if Ireland had been left to independence, and had worked out her own destinies in the midst of the strife and confusion which would have been the inevitable result. Those, however, who approve of Wentworth's end can hardly fairly cavil at the means. Till his healing measures had found acceptance, and as long as the Irish feeling was still one of distrust if not of exasperation, some way must be found of sustaining the English dominion by other means than by the loyal assent of the governed. If Ireland was to be held in subjection, it was better that she should submit because Irishmen could not keep meat for winter use without English salt, or could not cover their nakedness without English cloth, than because they were subjected to slaughter and rapine by an English army. Nor was the injury to any class of the population very great. There were no flourishing cloth manufactures in existence in Ireland to be ruined.¹⁶ Their only chance of existence in the future would be owing to the peace and order which Wentworth was doing his best to establish. If here and there some few Irishmen, who for some local reason might be profitably employed in making cloth, were forced to seek some other mode of livelihood, the grievance was not a great one in comparison with the sources

¹⁵Wentworth to Portland, June 9, 1633, *Strafford Letters*, i. 89.

¹⁶Wentworth argued that one reason for allowing wool to be exported was 'because they have no means here to manufacture it themselves, so as the commodity would be utterly lost to the growers unless this expedient be granted.' Wentworth to Coke, Jan. 31, 1634, *Strafford Letters*, i. 194. No doubt Wentworth also argued that the King's customs would benefit, but this is plainly not his primary reason.

of profit which Wentworth was opening up in every direction.¹⁷ At all events, there is nothing in common between Wentworth's measures and the selfish legislation of the later ^{<41>}English Parliaments. The wool manufacture was to be repressed, not that England might grow rich, but that Ireland might have peace.

Wentworth knew better than to trust to material prosperity alone. He looked to the Church to supply the moral and intellectual force which was to wean the Irish from the creed which divided them from most of their fellow-subjects of English race. The condition of the Irish Church, when Wentworth landed, was indeed deplorable. Over a great part of the country the fabrics of the churches were in ruins, and the revenues by which the clergy should have been supported had either disappeared in the tumults of the sixteenth century, or had been filched by the neighbouring landowners. There were parts of Ireland in which half a dozen benefices did not produce enough to furnish a suit of clothes to the pluralist incumbent. In such a state of things large numbers of benefices were of necessity heaped upon the head of a single person, who was often a needy adventurer without a thought of fulfilling the duties of a position which furnished him with a miserable pittance, and it was seldom that suitors of this kind thought of asking for less than three vicarages at a time.¹⁸ The Bishops' courts were in the hands of rapacious lawyers who exasperated the Irish by their exactions. The peasant who counted it a sacrilege to bring his children for baptism to a heretic font, or to hear words of consolation pronounced by heretic lips over the grave of those whom he loved, was heavily fined if he ventured to seek the services of a priest of his own communion, till Wentworth interfered to stop the abuse. The excellent Bedell was no sooner appointed to the bishoprics of Kilmore and Ardagh than he protested against the folly of such tyranny. "I do thus account," he wrote to Laud, "that among all the impediments to the work of God amongst us, there is not any greater than the abuse of ecclesiastical jurisdiction. The demonstration thereof is plain. The people pierce not into the inward and true reasons of things: they are sensible in the purse. Wherefore let us preach never so piously ourselves, so ^{<42>}long as the officers in our courts do prey upon the people, they account us no better than publicans, and so much the more deservedly, because we are called spiritual men and reformed Christians." Bedell's own chancellor, one Alan Cook, appointed by his predecessor, and irremovable by himself, was one of the worst of these harpies. "Among the Irish," he said, "he had gotten the name of Pouke" — the rude original of Shakespeare's gamesome Puck — "and indeed they fear him like the fiend of hell. To his austerity the abandoning of the country by above a thousand of the inhabitants the last year was more imputed than to the hardness of the times."¹⁹

No less pertinent was Bedell's complaint of the ignorance of the Irish language which was almost universal amongst the clergy. How, he asked, could a minister discharge his duty who could not speak to his flock in their own tongue. It was no wonder that the Catholic priests, who were at no such disadvantage, gained the hearts of the people and were superior even in numbers to the Protestant clergy.²⁰

If any man could have gained the confidence of Irishmen, it would have been Bedell. To the pluralists he spoke by example. He resigned the See of Ardagh that he might not hold a second bishopric. At great expense of time and money he carried on a suit to get rid of his oppressive chancellor, and when he was unsuccessful in this he never failed to appear in person in his court,

¹⁷Wentworth to Portland, Jan. 31, 1634, *Strafford Letters*, i. 190.

¹⁸Bramhall to Laud, Aug. 10, 1633, *S. P. Ireland*.

¹⁹Bedell to Laud, Aug. 7, 1630, *Laud's Works*, vi. 280.

²⁰Bedell to Usher, Sept. 18, 1630, Burnet's *Life of Bedell*, 52.

in the hope that he might shame him into better behaviour by his presence. He worked hard to acquire the Irish language, and as livings in his gift fell vacant, he refused to appoint any who had not followed his example. Prayers were read in Irish in his cathedral, and he superintended the translation of the Old Testament, that of the New Testament alone having been hitherto completed.

Bedell's zeal was not without its results. Irish converts gathered round him, and even Irishmen whom he was unable to convert loved and revered the English stranger who had given them his heart. But it was not in the nature of ⁴³ things that there should be many Bedells, and there was no hope of gaining the Irish people on any other condition.

What Wentworth could do, he did. He sternly repressed the persecuting zeal of the officials. It was useless, he said, to fine the Catholics for not attending church as long as there were no churches to go to.²¹ He had no difficulty in tracing the causes of the evil to 'an unlearned clergy, which have not so much as the outward form of churchmen to cover themselves with, nor their persons any way revered or protected; the churches unbuilt; the parsonage and vicarage houses utterly ruined; the people untaught, through the non-residency of the clergy, occasioned by the unlimited shameful numbers of spiritual promotions with cure of souls, which they hold by commendams; the rites and ceremonies of the Church run over without all decency of habit, order, or gravity, in the course of their service; the possessions of the Church to a great proportion in lay hands; the bishops aliening their very principal houses and demesnes to their children, to strangers,²² farming out their jurisdiction to mean and unworthy persons; the Popish titulars exercising the whilst a foreign jurisdiction much greater than theirs; the schools which might be a means to season the youth in virtue and religion either ill-provided, ill-governed for the most part, or, which is worse, applied sometimes underhand to the maintenance of Popish schoolmasters; lands given to these charitable uses, and that in a bountiful proportion, especially by King James of ever-blessed memory, dissipated, leased forth for little or nothing, concealed, contrary to all conscience and the excellent purposes of the founder; the College here, which should be the seminary of arts and civility in the elder sort, extremely out of order, partly by means of their statutes, which must be amended, and partly under the government of a weak provost; all the monies raised for charitable uses converted to private benefices; many patronages unjustly and by practice gotten from the Crown.'²³

⁴⁴ One of the chief offenders amongst the laity was the Earl of Cork. Wentworth had long had his eye upon him, and he was now able to charge him with appropriating to himself, for a paltry rent of 20*l.*, the whole of the revenues of the bishopric of Lismore — which brought him in 1,000*l.* a year. Another sum of 100*l.* a year, which should have been applied to the repairs of the cathedral, went to swell the Earl's income, and the cathedral was in consequence falling into ruins. A suit was at once commenced against him in the Castle Chamber, a court answering to the English Star Chamber, and in the end he was compelled to disgorge thus much of his ill-gotten wealth, and to submit to a heavy fine.²⁴

Another dispute between the Deputy and the Earl was of a more personal character. Lady Cork had lately died, and the widower had erected a gorgeous tomb to her memory in St. Patrick's. The monument was placed under the chancel arch, and part of it occupied the space on which the high altar had formerly stood. As soon as Laud heard of it, he protested that this was no place

²¹Wentworth to Laud, Dec. 1633, *Strafford Letters*, i. 171.

²²The hurried omission of the conjunction is quite in Wentworth's manner. It frequently occurs in his speech at York.

²³Wentworth to Laud, Jan. 31, 1634, *Strafford Letters*, i. 187.

²⁴State of the Bishopric, May 3, 1634, *S. P. Ireland*.

for a tomb. Charles was at first inclined to pass the matter over, but he finally decided as Laud wished him. The Lord Deputy, nothing loth, ordered the tomb to be pulled down, and to be re-erected in another part of the church.

Wentworth's ceremonialism did not go very deep. He was not likely to agitate the Irish Church as the English Church was being agitated by Laud. But he was himself fond of outward decency and order, and he believed that the neglect of formalities would stand in the way of the conversion of the Catholic population. When he arrived in Ireland he found that one of the Dublin churches had served his predecessor for a stable, that a second had been converted into a dwelling-house, and that the choir of a third was used as a tennis court. The vaults underneath Christ Church were let out as alehouses and tobacco-shops. In the choir above, the communion-table, standing in the midst of the congregation, had become an ordinary seat for maids and apprentices.^{<45>}Wentworth ordered the communion-table to be placed at the east end, as in English cathedrals.²⁵ He put a stop to the practice of walking about in the aisles and chattering during service, and shut up the tobacco-shops below. Further than this he did not go. He was not so ignorant of the relative importance of things as to impose the duty of changing the position of the communion-table upon the country clergy, at least till the Irish clergy were in a different state from that in which he found them. The first thing to be done was to regain the lost property of the Church, so that a single Irish benefice might once more be worth accepting. The next thing would be to induce able and zealous ministers to transfer themselves to Ireland. When that was accomplished, everything else which Wentworth desired might be expected to follow. Wentworth did all that lay in his power to improve the condition of the benefices. From the King he obtained a grant to the clergy of all impropriations in possession of the Crown, and efforts, which were successful in some instances, were made to induce the laity in like case to follow the Royal example.

For Wentworth the difficulties of the Irish Church were only part of the difficulties of bringing the Irish nation under discipline and order. For some time he had been in correspondence with the King on the subject of the coming Parliament. That Parliament was in no sense representative of the Irish population. In the House of Lords the bishops, reinforced by Englishmen who had received Irish peerages, could give a majority to the Government; and the House of Commons had been so arranged in the preceding reign as deliberately to falsify the expression of Irish opinion. Seats had been given to the merest hamlets, provided that they were likely to return Englishmen and Protestants. The session of 1613 had been disgraced by an open fight between the two factions. Such a body could never serve any of the^{<46>} purposes for which Parliaments are designed. Wentworth liked it the better for that. He knew that the two parties were nearly equal, and that there was a slight majority on the side of the Protestants, and he believed that by a skilful mixture of firmness and blandishment he might play the two parties off against one another, until he had gained from them the semblance of a national sanction to the decrees which emanated from his own will.

It was an immense advantage to Wentworth that the Irish Parliament was debarred by Poyning's law from taking any Bill into consideration which had not previously been submitted to the English Privy Council. He was thus freed from such claims as had been put forward by the English House of Commons 'to a liberty to offer anything in their own time and order.' His immediate object was to gain a grant of subsidies sufficient to support the army for a few years without the Contributions. That breathing time was all he needed. He never doubted that, when it

²⁵Sir James Ware in his *Diary* speaks of this as having been done on June 21, before Wentworth's arrival. Bramhall, however, in his letter of Aug. 10 (*Works*, i. lxxix.), speaks of the abuse as still existing. Perhaps the order was given but not carried out till Wentworth came.

was over, the King's revenue would, through his efforts, have become equal to the expenditure. He now proposed that there should be two sessions. In the first, supply was to be granted unconditionally. In the second, such Bills for the benefit of the subject as he thought it advisable to pass should be converted into law.

The Bills which Wentworth thought it advisable to pass did not include the whole of the Graces. More especially he intended to omit the confirmation of all estates with sixty years' title, and the concession to the landowners of Connaught of those patents which, through no fault of their own, they had neglected to enrol. As far as Connaught was concerned, he had a plan of settlement very different from the confirmation of the rights of the existing landowners. In the rest of Ireland he had no wish to deal hardly with those whose titles were defective. But he would give them security, not by a sweeping measure applicable to the whole country, but by separate bargains in which each individual proprietor would have to compound for an indefeasible title by the payment of a moderate rent to the Crown. Before he left England he had obtained from the King the appointment of a ^{<47>}body of Commissioners authorised to conclude bargains of this kind,²⁶ and he now proposed that, together with the Subsidy Act, a Bill should be brought in and passed, even in the first session, giving a Parliamentary confirmation to such arrangements as these Commissioners might see fit to conclude.

In rejecting these two Graces Wentworth undoubtedly believed that he was doing the best for Ireland as well as for the King. It was in his eyes the main condition of good government in the future that the Irish should be held in subjection till the time came when they could be raised to a higher stage of civilisation by the educative influence of a reformed clergy and by the enticements of material comfort. The scheme itself was hopeless from the beginning. Its very conception could only have proceeded from one who was ignorant — as most, if not all of his contemporaries of English blood were ignorant — of the persistency with which a race clings to its ancestral habits and modes of thought. In fact, the very reason which made Wentworth most desirous of effecting the change would be accepted by a modern statesman as a sufficient motive for rejecting it without a moment's hesitation. It was because the condition of the Irish stood in need of so much improvement that it was cruel as well as unwise to attempt to destroy their self-respect by hurrying them forcibly over the stages of progress which separated them from their English conquerors. Even if Wentworth's policy had been wiser than it was, it would have been heavily weighted from the beginning with the broken word of the King. Charles had expressly promised that the next Parliament should be used to confirm the landowners' titles in Connaught as well as in the rest of Ireland. The course taken for the confirmation in individual cases might perhaps be regarded as a performance of that promise with a modification imposed by political necessity. The course taken with regard to Connaught was a direct breach of the engagement which had been given.

On July 14, 1634, Parliament met. As Wentworth had hoped, the Protestants, many of whom were official dependents ^{<48>}on the Government, were in a small majority. He had instructions to dissolve Parliament at once in case of an unexpected refusal of supplies, and to levy the revenue he needed by his own authority. Nothing was further from his intentions than to allow any freedom of action to any one but himself. He heard with indignation that the Catholic priests had been threatening their flocks with excommunication if they gave their votes to a Protestant. Such a course, he declared, would lead to the division of the country into a Papist faction and a Protestant faction, a result which, as he naïvely added, 'is to be avoided as much as may be, unless our numbers were the greater.' A sheriff, who 'carried himself mutinously,' as Wentworth

²⁶Commission, Feb. 11, 1632. Lascelles, *Liber Munerum Hiberniæ*, i. 135.

expressed it, at the Dublin election, was fined in the Castle Chamber, and deprived of his office. A successor was appointed, and two Protestant members were returned.²⁷

In the speech with which the Deputy opened the session, he took care to address his hearers as he wished them to be, not as they really were. The King, he explained, had done, and was doing all that could be done for the benefit of Ireland. In order that his beneficial rule might continue, the army must be maintained to give ‘comfort and encouragement to quiet minds in their honest occasions, containing the licentious spirits within the modest bounds of sobriety.’ For this purpose the debts of the Crown, amounting to 75,000*l.*, must be paid off, and the yearly deficit of 20,000*l.* filled up. The remedy must be permanent. It was beneath the dignity of his master to ‘come at every year’s end, with his hat in his hand, to entreat’ them to be pleased to preserve themselves. Then followed words of warning. “Let me advise you,” said Wentworth, with keen recollections of the events of 1629, “suffer no poor suspicions or jealousies to vitiate your judgments, much rather become you wise by others’ harms. You cannot be ignorant of the misfortunes these meetings have run of late years in England; strike not therefore upon the same rock of distrust which hath so often shivered them. For whatever other accident this mischief may be assigned unto, there ^{<49>}was nothing else that brought it upon us but the King’s just standing to have the honour of our trust, and our ill-grounded obstinate fears that would not be secured. This was that spirit of the air that walked in darkness, abusing both, whereon if once one beam of light and truth had happily reflected, it had passed over as clouds without rain, and left the King far better contented with his people and them much more happy; albeit as they are — thanks to God and his Majesty — the happiest of the whole world.” Finally, there must be no divisions among them, between Catholic and Protestant, English and Irish. “Above all, divide not between the interests of the King and his people, as if there were one being of the King and another being of his people. This is the most mischievous principle that can be laid in reason of State, and that which, if you watch not very well, may the easiliest mislead you. For you might as well tell me a head might live without a body, or a body without a head, as that it is possible for a king to be rich and happy without his people be so likewise, or that a people can be rich and happy without the king be so also. Most certain it is that their well-being is individually one and the same, their interests woven up together with so tender and close threads as cannot be pulled asunder without a rent in the commonwealth.”²⁸

Some of those who listened to these words would doubtless look back over 1629 to 1628, and would ask whether the speaker was the same man as he who had stood up in the English Parliament to declare that unless they were secured in their liberties they could not give. Though it was not Wentworth’s habit to defend himself, there can be little doubt that he would have declared his conduct to be perfectly consistent. There was in his eyes all the difference in the world between England under Buckingham and Ireland under Wentworth. In the one case the head was at fault. In the ^{<50>}other case the body was incapable of appreciating the wisdom which flowed from the head.

Wentworth’s government had all the short-lived merits and the grave defects of despotism. The slightest attempt to convert constitutional fiction into a reality met with his most strenuous resistance. The first sitting of the Commons revealed the strength of parties. The Catholics moved to purge the House — in plain words, to exclude many of the Protestants on the ground of non-

²⁷Wentworth to Coke, June 24, *Strafford Letters*, i. 269.

²⁸Speech, July 15, *Strafford Letters*, 286. As this speech was an extempore one, it is more likely to reveal Wentworth’s real nature. How permanent his ideas were will be seen by comparing it with the speech at York, in 1628. Even the quotation, ‘*Qui majore ubertate gratiam quietis referre solent*’ reappears.

residence in the constituencies which had elected them. The question was referred to a committee. The members of the committee were, however, nominated from the Protestant side by a majority of eight.

Wentworth struck the iron whilst it was hot. The next morning, his friend Wandesford moved for six subsidies, a grant far larger than the Deputy had, a short while before, thought it possible to obtain. Before the sitting was at an end they were voted without any difficulty whatever.

Then, when it was too late, both parties combined to ask that the Graces might be confirmed. They were told that so many as were good for them should be passed into law in the next session. For the present they must content themselves with passing a Bill for giving a Parliamentary title to the awards of the Commissioners for defective titles. They at once submitted, and the session came to an end.

Wentworth ordered the judges at the summer assizes to magnify the King's gracious favour in giving his assent to this Bill, as well as to assure the people of the intention of the Government to proceed to great reforms in the next session.²⁹

Isolated as he knew himself to be in Ireland, Wentworth turned to the King for some token of his satisfaction which might give assurance to all men that in resisting the Deputy they would have to reckon with the King. In all humility he asked for an earldom. Charles, who liked ^{<51>}to be the originator of his own favours, refused to grant the request.³⁰ Wentworth had to meet Parliament again without any mark of his sovereign's approbation.

The new session was opened on November 4. On the 27th Wentworth announced that the whole of the Graces would not be the subject of legislation. In a moment the Catholic members of the Lower House burst into insurrection. Through the accidental absence of a few of their opponents, they found themselves in command of a majority. They declared that if the King's promise was to be thus scandalously broken, they would pass no Bills. One vote after another went against the Government. Sir Piers Crosby, a member of the Privy Council, who had commanded an Irish regiment at Rhé, put himself at the head of the movement, and urged the rejection of a Bill for the punishment of accessaries to murder.

Wentworth was not to be thus overborne. He summoned a meeting of the Privy Council, and obtained their assent to the sequestration of Crosby from the board till the King's pleasure could be known. At the same time he made urgent instances to the absent Protestant members to return to their duty. In his eyes, whatever he might have said in his opening speech about the maintenance of harmony between Catholic and Protestant, it was still a question of the gradual and irresistible supersession of the religion of the Irish by the religion of the English. "It may seem strange," he wrote, in the account of the affair which he sent home, "that this people should be so obstinately set against their own good, and yet the reason is plain; for the friars and Jesuits, fearing that these laws would conform them here to the manners of England, and in time be a means to lead them on to a conformity in religion and faith also, they catholicly oppose and fence up every path leading to so good a purpose; and, indeed, I see plainly that, so long as this kingdom continues Popish, they are not a people for the Crown of England to be confident of; whereas, if they were not still distempered by ^{<52>}the infusion of these friars and Jesuits, I am of belief they would be as good and loyal to their King as any other subjects."

²⁹Wentworth to Coke, Aug. 18; Wentworth to the Judges, Aug. 21, 1634, *Strafford Letters*, i. 276, 292.

³⁰Wentworth to the King, Sept. 20, 1634. The King to Wentworth, Oct. 23, *Strafford Letters*, i. 301, 331.

The Protestant members responded to Wentworth's appeal. They returned to their posts, and Bill after Bill was carried through the House. On December 14 the second session came to an end, to Wentworth's complete satisfaction.³¹

Two more short sessions were needed in the course of the following year to complete the work of legislation. No such series of wise and beneficent laws had ever been enacted in Ireland. Wentworth would have been willing to retain so useful a Parliament for future work. Charles, however, who held that Parliaments, being 'of the nature of cats, grew curst by age,' commanded a dissolution.

With the aid of a Protestant majority which represented but a small minority of the population of Ireland, Wentworth had obtained the semblance of a national approval to those changes in the law, which, as he hoped, would lead to changes greater still. At the same time his care was unceasing for the improvement of the material position of the clergy, in the expectation that they would thereby be the better fitted for the work which he expected from them; but he was not content with improving their material position. He thought that it would be necessary, if they were ever to make converts of the Irish, to modify their teaching so as to render it more acceptable to those to whom they were sent. As the very fact that in Ireland a Protestant minority had been thrown in the midst of a Roman Catholic population, had made that minority, wherever it had retained any consciousness of religion at all, more defiantly and obtrusively Protestant than in countries where Protestantism had no danger to apprehend, the Irish articles which, under Usher's guidance, had been drawn up in 1615, had adopted the Calvinistic doctrine in its most distinctive form. Wentworth determined that Convocation, without formally repealing these articles, should now adopt the articles of the Church of England, so as practically to supersede those which he found in existence.

<53>To this high-handed attempt to deal with their belief, the clergy in the Lower House of Convocation naturally objected. They appointed a committee which proceeded to revise the canons of the Church of England, and which directed that the Irish articles should be received under pain of excommunication. The Deputy at once interfered. Sending for Dean Andrews, the chairman of the committee, he told him that he was possessed by the spirit of Ananias, and that 'it was not for a few petty clerks to presume to make articles of faith.' With his own hand he drew up a canon prescribing the acceptance of the English articles, and ordered that it should be put to the vote. Wentworth's canon was adopted with only two dissentient voices.³² The other canons of the Church of England were amended by Bramhall, perhaps under Usher's direction, and were finally adopted.³³ As far as Dean Andrews was concerned, Wentworth's contempt was amply justified. In order to punish him, he obtained from the King his promotion to the bishopric of Ferns, a see so poor as to afford to its new bishop a smaller income than that which he had received as Dean of Limerick. So delighted was Andrews with the promotion that he boasted of it openly in the pulpit before he learned the cost of it. "How long," he said, in a sermon at which Wentworth was present, "how long have we heretofore expected preferment. But now, God be praised, we have it." Wentworth had much difficulty in keeping his countenance. "He is a good child," he wrote, in giving an account of the scene, "and kisseth the rod."³⁴

³¹Wentworth to Coke, Dec. 16, 1634, *Strafford Letters*, i. 345.

³²Wentworth to Laud, Dec. 16, *Strafford Letters*. Bramhall to Laud, Dec. 20, 1634, *S. P. Ireland*. The latter shows that the point was mooted in the Upper House, which Dr. Elrington doubted. *Usher's Works*, ii. 74.

³³Elrington's Life of Usher, *Usher's Works*, i. 178.

³⁴Wentworth to Laud, March 10, 1635, *Strafford Letters*, i. 378.

The condition of the Irish Church, in fact, was such as to invite the interference of the Deputy. It was the creature of the State as no other Church in the world was. If the protecting hand of the English Government were removed, it would fall of itself before the combined ^{<54>} assaults of the native Catholics and of the rapacious landowners who extended to it a nominal deference. The habit of subservience to the Government was a necessity of the situation. It showed itself not merely in time-servers like Andrews, but in men as pious and honourable as Archbishop Usher. Wentworth professed a good-humoured but somewhat contemptuous toleration for an Archbishop who had done so little to help him in the emergency, mingled with a sincere respect for his learning and character. In fact Usher could hardly have acted otherwise than he did. Though he, as a believer in the Calvinistic doctrine of predestination, must have regarded the setting aside of the Irish articles with dissatisfaction, he had a keen sense of the evils which affected the clergy, and he justly regarded those evils as more destructive than slackness to advocate even a doctrine which he believed to be true. He therefore warmly supported Wentworth and Laud in their efforts for the moral improvement of the Irish clergy without approving of their doctrinal tendencies.

The rejection of the Irish articles was followed by a fierce attempt to repress the Calvinistic Presbyterianism of the Scottish colonists in Ulster. Bramhall, the new Bishop of Derry, was a man after Laud's own heart. He announced that he would soon put an end to such practices in his diocese. "It would trouble a man," he wrote, contemptuously, "to find twelve Common Prayer-books in all their churches, and those only not cast behind the altar because they have none; but in place of it a table twelve yards long, where they sit and receive the sacrament like good fellows."³⁵

Zeal, unless it worked in his own grooves, was never intelligible to Wentworth. No dream of the wildest enthusiast was ever more shadowy than the vision entertained by him of a religion sober and energetic, alike without doctrinal exaggerations and without the bitterness of party spirit by which they are attended. He might as well have attempted to yoke the zebra to his chariot as to bring the Scottish and English settlers of the North and the impulsive ^{<55>} Celts of the rest of Ireland under the same decorous discipline of the English Church. Yet even here it was Wentworth's perception of facts rather than his judgment which was at fault. Calvinistic Presbyterianism with him was simply the work of a few factious agitators. Irish Catholicism was simply the work of friars and Jesuits. He had no conception that these forms of belief were but the natural outcome of the life of those by whom they were held, and that in seeking to eradicate those beliefs from the hearts of men he was embarked on an enterprise to which even his powers were ludicrously inadequate. He might browbeat Parliaments and Convocations, because those Parliaments and Convocations were but shadowy emanations from an alien Government. He could neither create nor destroy the religion of a people. The Calvinistic preacher and the Jesuit missionary alike had a hold on the spiritual side of man's complex being. They appealed to his hopes of heaven, his craving for a guidance upon earth which he could follow without abandoning his own habits of belief. What had Wentworth to set in opposition to that?

Closely connected with Wentworth's eagerness to convert the Irish to Protestantism was his eagerness to introduce fresh English colonists in order to tighten his grasp upon the native population. In neither case was he without a desire for improving the condition of the Irish themselves. He believed in his heart that they would be the better for the influence of the English settlers, just as he believed in his heart that they would be the better for the influence of the

³⁵Bramhall to Laud, Dec. 20, 1634, *S. P. Ireland*.

English form of religion. The desire of strengthening the King's authority and the desire of elevating the condition of his subjects were inseparably connected in his mind.

How this matter of colonisation looked in the eyes of Englishmen may be learned from a paper of advice relating to a projected plantation of Ormond and the neighbouring districts. "If the natives of those counties," we are told, "may be estated in convenient quantities for their livelihood by good grants from the King, they will be more ready and assured servants to the Crown and will build and plant; whereas now, having no title and much of land divided ^{<56>} into very petty tenancies, the people have no comfort to build or settle, neither are able to serve as becometh, nor to suppress the insolent idlers. If these countries were so governed by English, there would be an absolute interposition between the Irish of Connaught and the Irish of Leinster, both which are most wavering and doubtful of all other parts of the kingdom, whereas now, by the opportunity of the freedom they there enjoy to intercourse, the peace is daily disturbed. These were the countries that gave Tyrone passage and most relief when he brought his army into Munster to join the invading Spaniards; so as the putting of these into right hands and governance is an act of greater consequence than is easily foreseen. Because there is no English in that country, there is not so much as the face of a church or any resident ministers. By this plantation the churches will be endowed, congregations settled, the religion in some measure professed, and the service of God induced."

Three towns, the writer added, should be built and settled with English burgesses, whilst the petty Irish might be established as copyholders or tenants for life of small proportions, to dwell about the towns, so that their children might be brought up in trade. Such of the natives as were 'possessed of any lands by virtue or pretence of any late patents' were 'to be favourably used.'³⁶

Another writer treated of the counties of Roscommon, Sligo, and Mayo in a more trenchant style. "The remote parts of these counties which border upon the sea," he says, "and most of the inland counties, are inhabited with a poor indigent people so barbarous in all respects as the Indians or Moors. This plantation will bring in amongst them some undertakers of the British nation which sometime will beget the natives to more civility and conformity, as in other places they have done where the plantations have run. The inferior natives do all of them make their dependency upon the Irish lords, and do now pay unto them either public or private chiefries. There is not any one thing permitted by ^{<57>} the State which draws with it a more pernicious inconvenience to the crown and commonwealth than this very particular, for it is the condition of the Irish lords and gentry to esteem all those who pay them rent and chiefries to be their people, their followers, their very slaves; and the nature of the inferior Irish natives is to conceive and account his lord to whom he pays rent or chiefry to be his only patron and protector, as good and loyal subjects conceive of their king, to whom they are so devoted as they will at any time go into open action of rebellion at the will and pleasure of their lords."

This evil, the writer proceeded to argue, would be remedied by the proposed plantation. "This plantation will bring in freeholders of the British nation into all the counties, who will be able to serve his Majesty and the commonwealth at all public services faithfully, equally, and indifferently, agreeable to the truth of their evidence, whereas at this present all business and matters are swayed and carried agreeable to the will and disposition of one or two men in a county, so that neither his Majesty nor any other subject can have any indifferency upon any inquiry or trial, to the great detriment and disservice of his Majesty, and the unspeakable loss and prejudice of the subject. This plantation will double his Majesty's certain revenue in what

³⁶Advice to plant a portion on the Shannon, *S. P. Ireland*, Bundle 282.

now is paid and whatsoever it will do more. This plantation will intermix the British nation with the natives, which will bring in civility by divers ways and means; it will procure the natives to become laborious, who are apt to labour by the good example of others, when they may have hire and reward for the same; but the Irish lords and gentry do never give the poor people anything for their labour, which doth so dispose them to idleness. It will bring in trade and commerce, the English language, apparel, customs, and manners. It will beget inclosures, and laying their land into severals which now lies as in common. This will be a great means to banish and suppress night thieves and stealers of cattle. It will beget good, perfect, and plenty of guides in the Irish countries of the British nation, the want whereof, in the late rebellions, were a great means of the long continuance of the wars. ... It will so intermix the British nation with the natives as the natives ^{<58>}shall not be able hereafter to contrive any rebellions as heretofore they have done, but that the State will have timely advertisement of the same to prevent or meet with the inconveniency. ... It will improve generally the lands of the whole province, and by the well and orderly laying out of the natives' lands round and entire together, the loss of the fourth part will be equally recompensed, and will not be unwelcome to most of the natives who are men of any judgment and sensible of reason, and have taken special notice of the convenient and orderly living of the freeholders in those countries where the plantations have run already."³⁷

The view taken in these papers was the same as that taken by every Englishman who had visited Ireland. Accustomed to a life passed in busy activity, and thrown upon his own resources to provide for himself and his family under the discipline of enforced submission to the authority of a Government in the lower functions of which he himself shared, and against the encroachment of which he was to a great extent protected by the law, the Englishman was unable to understand that even this rude poverty-stricken Irish life might have its charms for men whose training had been different from his own. He could not comprehend how what seemed to him to be a slavish submission to the caprices of the chief might find its compensation in the kindly intercourse of good-fellowship which sprang up from the acknowledgment of a common kinship between the chief and his tribe; or how the lack of the sentiment of individual ownership of land might be made up by the sense of joint ownership in the whole of the territory of the tribe. For even the most learned Englishman in those days had never thought of studying the ways and habits of less civilised nations, except as objects of amusement or derision. The lesson that it is only with tottering steps and slow progress that a people can walk forward on the path of civilisation had yet to be revealed.

In the mistake of under-estimating the amount of resistance which the Irish were likely to offer to his well-meant efforts to ^{<59>}drag them forward for their good, as a foolish nurse drags forward the child committed to her care, Wentworth was no wiser than the mass of his countrymen. Nor did he take into his calculation the repellent effect of the sudden introduction amongst the native population of a number of rough Englishmen, greedy of gain and contemptuously disregarding of the feelings of a people whom they looked upon as barbarous, and whose very language they were unable to comprehend.

Even in Ulster, after a settlement of more than twenty years, colonisation had not smoothed away all difficulties. In January and February the municipal authorities of the City of London, to the principal companies of which the county of Londonderry had been granted, appeared before the Star Chamber to answer to a charge of having broken their charter. That charter had imposed conditions upon them which they had undoubtedly failed to fulfil. They had been expected to build more houses than they had built, to send over more English settlers than they had sent, and,

³⁷The benefits which will arise from the plantation, *S. P. Ireland*, Bundle 281.

above all, to exclude the Irish natives from holding land except in certain specified districts. It appeared that in many parts of the county the natives outnumbered the colonists in a very large proportion; that, instead of being converted to Protestantism, these natives remained constant to their own religion, and supported a large number of priests who confirmed them in their resolution to set the English clergy at defiance. The Star Chamber held that the charge was fully proved, and condemned the City to a fine of 70,000*l.*, and to the forfeiture of the land. It is not unlikely that a body of London citizens may have been somewhat remiss in directing the arrangements of a settlement in the north of Ireland; but it was hard measure to hold them responsible for the failure. It was not their fault if English colonists would not emigrate in such numbers as was desirable; and if the new proprietors could not find Englishmen to rent their farms, it was more than was to be expected from human nature to ask them to keep their lands out of cultivation, rather than let them to the Irish. Nor was the temptation to ^{<60>}admit Irish tenants, even when an English applicant presented himself, easy to withstand. An Irishman, as it was stated upon evidence at the trial, was always ready to offer a larger sum than an Englishman would consent to pay. It is possible that this unexpected result may have been owing in part to the strong desire of the natives to remain attached to the soil which they regarded as their own. Another reason, however, suggests itself, which goes far to explain the difficulties of the task which the Deputy had undertaken. The Irish of Ulster fully believed that the day was at hand when the O'Neill and the O'Donnell would return, and when their dispossessed tribesmen would enter into the possession of the well-tilled lands and the newly erected habitations of the English intruders. If this belief were shared by the settlers, it is easy to understand that few would be ready to pay a large rent for a farm in a new and unknown land in which he ran a good chance of having his throat cut one morning by his Celtic neighbours. On the other hand, an Irishman would be inclined to offer something more than the fair market price in order that he might be in actual possession of a portion of the soil when the day of liberation came.³⁸

It would be some time before the citizens of London learned whether the fine imposed upon them was to be exacted. In the end, after the expiration of four years, they received a pardon on surrendering their Irish estates and the payment of 12,000*l.*, which Charles wanted to give as a present to the Queen. Wentworth, who seems to have taken no very great interest in the investigation conducted in England, was nevertheless ready, after sentence had been given, to turn the occasion to the best profit for the King. The lesson of the Ulster difficulties, however, had no effect in causing him any hesitation in his resolution to treat Connaught as Ulster had been treated by James. In July he proceeded westward with the intention of finding a title for the King — in other words, of persuading or compelling the Connaught juries to acknowledge that the soil of the province belonged to ^{<61>}the Crown for some reason intelligible only to the English lawyers, in spite of the solemn promise of the King that he would take no advantage of any such technicality.

Wentworth had no conception that it was possible for the Irish to resist excepting from interest or spite. He took his measures accordingly. He did not, indeed, as he might have done if his conscience had convicted him of wrongdoing, order the selection of juries composed of dependents of the Government. He ordered, on the contrary, that 'gentlemen of the best estates and understanding should be returned.' If the verdict of such persons was as he wished it to be, it would carry weight with it amongst their neighbours. If it was otherwise, they would be wealthy enough to 'answer the King a good round sum in the Castle Chamber.'

³⁸Notes of the proceedings in the Star Chamber, Jan. and Feb. 1635, *S. P. Ireland*.

The Deputy's first attempt was made in Roscommon. He sent for half a dozen of the principal gentry, spoke them fairly, and assured them that, though the King had a clear undoubted title to the whole of Connaught, he was ready to hear any argument which might be urged to bar his rights. The next day, after the case had been argued by the lawyers, Wentworth addressed the jury. He told them that his Majesty had been moved in the first place by his desire to make them 'a civil and rich people, which' could 'not by any so sure and ready means be attained as by a plantation. . . . Yet that should be so done as not to take anything from them that was justly theirs, but in truth to bestow amongst them a good part of that which was his own.' He had no need to ask them for a verdict at all. The King's right was so plain that a simple order of the Court of Exchequer would have been sufficient to give him all he claimed. His Majesty was, however, graciously pleased to take his people along with him, and to give them a part of the honour and profit of so glorious a work. Wentworth concluded with the strongest possible hint, that if they ventured to refuse to acknowledge the King's title, they would do so at their peril.

This mixture of cajolery and firmness bore down opposition in Roscommon. The jury returned a verdict for the King, and in Sligo and Mayo the same result was obtained. The ^{<62>}Galway jury at Portumna gave the Deputy more difficulty. Wentworth was there in the territory of the De Burghs. The head of the family, the Earl of St. Albans and Clanrickard, had stood by Elizabeth when all Ireland was seething with rebellion. Ever since he had loyally kept his country in obedience to the Crown, but it was with the loyalty of a tributary king to his suzerain rather than with the fidelity of a subject. He had himself lived of late years in England, but his chief kinsmen exercised authority and dispensed justice in his name in Galway. Though sprung from the Norman invaders, the De Burghs had long been Irish in habits and religion, and they naturally looked askance on Wentworth's desire to establish the domination of Protestantism and of the English law on a soil so peculiarly their own. To the Deputy's surprise the jury boldly found against the King. His anger knew no bounds. He fined the sheriff 1,000*l.* for returning a packed jury, and directed that the jurymen themselves should appear in the Castle Chamber to answer for their fault. He further directed that steps should be taken to procure an order from the Court of Exchequer which would set the verdict aside, and that troops should be sent to Galway to make resistance impossible.³⁹

Wentworth's own explanation of these proceedings was that the verdict given did not express the real sentiments of the jurors. It had been dictated to them by the Earl's nephew and steward. It was no mere question of truth or falsehood. It was simply a question of loyalty to the Earl or loyalty to the King. Now therefore was the time to break the authority of this powerful chieftain. A fair opportunity was offered of securing the county 'by fully lining and planting it with English.' To do this it would be necessary to take from the pretended owners of land more than the fourth part, of which, by the rules of a plantation, those of the other three counties were to be deprived. His Majesty was 'justly provoked so to do, and likely to put a difference between them who force him to ^{<63>}undertake a suit at law for his own, and his other subjects who readily acknowledge his right.'⁴⁰

The chief lesson of Wentworth's history is missed by those who regard him as an oppressor and a tyrant beating resistance down before him in order to give free scope to his own arbitrary will. In truth the type of his mind was that of the revolutionary idealist who sweeps aside all institutions which lie in his path, and who defies the sluggishness of men and the very forces of human nature, in order that he may realise those conceptions which he believes to be for the benefit of all. The real objection to Wentworth's dealing with the Galway jury was, not that

³⁹Wentworth to Coke, July 14, 1635, *Strafford Letters*, i. 442.

⁴⁰Wentworth and the Commissioners to Coke, Aug. 25, 1635, *Strafford Letters*, i. 450.

he respected it too little, but that he made use of it at all to attain an object which those who composed it regarded as unjust. He tried at one and the same time to reap the advantages of autocratic despotism and of legal government. The result was far worse than if he had interfered authoritatively with the strong hand of power. By consulting the jury and refusing to be bound by its verdict, he sowed broadcast the seeds of distrust and disaffection. He had bowed in semblance before the majesty of the law, only to turn upon it in anger when it ceased to do his pleasure. The King's authority would be associated more than ever in the eyes of Irishmen with unintelligible, incalculable violence. It was a force to be bound by no engagements, and acting by no rules which they were able to understand.

In the end, however, Wentworth's policy would stand or fall by the measure which he dealt out, not to the kinsmen and followers of Clanrickard, but to the mass of the population of the county. It is useless to deny that his intention was to benefit them. But here too there was a mixture of force and fraud which ruined what might have been the success of either. He wanted the Irish to be more orderly and industrious, more rational in religion and politics, higher in the scale of civilised beings in every way. Yet his own conduct was not such as he could fairly ask them to imitate. They knew that he proposed to deluge their land with English colonists, who would regard them ^{<64>}with contempt, and who were only to be brought so far from home in order that they might keep them in awe, as the gaoler keeps his prisoners. They knew that he treated with contempt the religion to which they clung and the old ancestral reverence with which their chiefs inspired them. To Wentworth the relation which bound them to their chiefs was one of mere tyranny on one side and servitude on the other. He did not see, what the poorest Irish cottier saw, that that system which seemed to favour none but idle swordsmen and profligate cosherers, kept up in the hearts of the Celtic people the belief in the old principle which still survived as part of the old inheritance of the race — that the soil belonged not to this man or to that, but to the tribe which dwelt upon it. What did they know of the arguments of the Dublin lawyers, based upon technicalities which were but the froth and scum of an alien system of law. What were the flaws to be found in the grants of Plantagenet kings, or contrived by the roguery of Dublin officials, to them? They held that the land was theirs, and that it was not to be portioned out to any intruder who might come in by the good favour of a foreign ruler.

It does not follow that Wentworth was not right in proclaiming that the time had come when the system of tribal ownership must give way to the system of individual ownership. His mistake was that he did not even try to take along with him those who were most interested in the change. "If," said the inhabitants of Galway in a petition to the King, "pretension of manuring and bettering the country be the ground of plantation, if his Majesty be so pleased, they will undertake to effect such performances as any other planters would have done, the rather that they will make it appear how the country, though now in a good state, would be shortly much improved if the fear of plantations and other threatenings had not hindered them." Doubtless there were risks on this side, too, and it would require some pressure to obtain the fulfilment of these promises when the fear of danger was withdrawn. It would need the maintenance of a powerful army and the exertion of active diligence to see that the change was really effected; but there would have been the immense advantage of ^{<65>}making it clear in the eyes of the Irish population that the English Government was on their side, and that it was in favour of the poor and oppressed Irishman, not in favour of the English adventurer, that its strong arm was ready to intervene. Above all, Wentworth would at last have had a case which would enable him to appeal to the sense of justice of those whom he governed. To say that the King's promises to the Connaught landowners were conditional upon the performance by those landowners of the duties which they owed to their own followers would have offended no man but those landowners themselves. To seize the lands

of rich and poor, upon what every man knew to be a mere pretext, in order to build up upon the ruins a new society, the very foundations of which had yet to be laid, was to offend against the universal sense of right. There are times when institutions become worthless, when Parliaments and juries are mere cloaks for misgovernment and oppression. But behind Parliaments and juries lies the indestructible tenacity with which every population clings to the habits of life which it has inherited. Wentworth, for a time at least, might have set aside the institutions which were intended to be the organs of the population if he had revered the population itself. In hurrying on social changes which approved themselves to few excepting to himself, he courted disaster. He was building a house upon the sand. The flood would soon rise which was to sweep it away.

Wentworth failed where he believed himself to be strongest. At the bottom his life's work was contention, not so much for the Royal authority as for the supremacy of intellect. Yet it was his own intellectual conception of the Irish problem which had proved defective. "The voice of the people," as the first Parliament of James had declared, "is, in things of their knowledge, as the voice of God." If Wentworth saw things to which the Irish people were blind, they too, in their turn, saw things to which he was blind, with all his wisdom. There is no security that the wisest statesmen will not pursue a phantom of his own imagination. There is no security that popular feeling will not rush headlong into impatient and ignorant action. But the statesman guards himself best against the errors incident to his ^{<66>}calling who keeps his ear open to the indications of popular feeling which it is his duty to guide, as the people guard themselves best against the errors incident to their position when they keep their ear open to the words of experience and intelligence which it is their safety to follow. It was Wentworth's fault that he attempted to drive and not to lead, that he offended deeply that moral sense of the Irish community in cherishing which — far more than in the importation of hundreds of English soldiers or thousands of English colonists — lay the truest hope of the progress of Ireland in civilisation and in all things else.