

English Cabinet. It is to those years then that we shall look for the causes of the rebellion.

Thanks to the indefatigable efforts of Grattan and Flood, a bill establishing the legislative and judicial independence of Ireland passed the English Parliament on April 16, 1782. However, with that accomplished, the fight for an amelioration of the state of affairs that preceded that year only began.

The first three years of the era of quasi-independence were a struggle for a reform in the Parliamentary representation. They are memorable also as witnessing the break between Grattan and Flood, at that time the two leading lights in the Irish political field. Scarce had these two patriots attained the object for which they strove so earnestly, when causes that have too often estranged men of eminent parts wrought a separation that knew no reconciliation. Grattan took exception to some of the minor points in the policy of Flood; the former deemed as sufficient a simple repeal of the measures that, previous to 1782, hampered Ireland; the latter was satisfied with nothing short of an "express renunciation" of England's claim to legislative and judicial supremacy, a course which Grattan thought too humiliating for that country; further Grattan advocated the complete emancipation of Catholics, whilst Flood, bigoted as he was, was totally averse to any legislation favorable to them. An open quarrel, in which each indulged in the coarsest vituperation towards the other, did not better their relations. Nevertheless, Grattan upheld Flood in the bill he introduced into Parliament for a more equitable representation of the people; but even their

combined efforts were powerless before the dogged majority that held sway in the Irish Commons. Flood, despairing of success, withdrew from the House, as his colleague and rival did some ten years later. These years ended as they began. Out of a Parliament composed of 300 members, not more than 70 were returned by the people; 53 Peers had the power to nominate 123 members, and to secure the election of ten others; whilst the remaining seats were as corruptly filled by various means.

The story of the later years of this period forms perhaps one of the darkest chapters in the history of the world. They were years of oppression for all classes and creeds of Ireland's population.

The Protestant Irish, whose ancestors had centuries before been planted on Irish soil by the English rulers, as well as the Catholic population, who were displaced to make room for them, were alike, not always to the same degree, however, the victims of the robbing policy practiced by the English Government. From the time when the property of the Irish was confiscated, when it was considered treason to be a "papist," and when Catholicism was suffered to breathe only "through the connivance of the magistrates," the Irish Catholics were considered as strangers in their own country. They were forced to pay rent for the lands left them by their fathers, and to contribute to the support of a church for which they had the extremest repugnance. Still more they labored under the disabilities imposed on them by the most barbarous Penal Code that ever disgraced the statute books of a country. The whole population became alienated from England.