

themselves and others the Parliament of England. It was a dismal day for poor bleeding, prostrate Ireland, when this pair of associates were sworn in as Lords Justices, the actual Lord Lieutenant, the Earl of Leicester, being then and long after resident in England.

Amongst other atrocities of those penal days in Ireland was the famous Court of Wards, established some years before with the avowed object of protecting all heirs and heiresses, but in reality for the double purpose of depriving them not only of their patrimony, but of what was far more important, their faith, for, be it known to the reader, that *Catholic* wards were the special care of this precious *Court*. That such was the case Ireland knew to her cost, for the working of this institution was more fatal to her cherished faith than all the open persecution of the times. Many of the descendants of her noblest and most ancient families were in this way snatched from the fold of truth, and brought up in rancorous hatred of that religion for which their fathers suffered and died. Of this number was the famous James Butler, Earl of Ormond, the representative of one of the oldest Anglo-Irish houses of the Pale, who, being an orphan from his childhood, was of course laid hold of by the Court of Wards, taken at nine years old from a Catholic school near London, transferred to the *care* of the Protestant Archbishop of Canterbury, and "trained up in the way" the English government "would have him go," till he became the able and unscrupulous minister of the crown, and one of the most dangerous—because insidious—enemies the Catholics of Ireland ever had. But worse than Ormond—worse than the fiercest blood-hounds of the Parliament, was another of these royal wards, viz., Murrough O'Brien, Earl of Inchiquin, a man who outdid all his colleagues—the fanatical persecutors of the Catholics—with the single exception of the monster Sir Charles Coote—in implacable enmity towards the religion of his fathers. Even Coote himself did not exceed this degenerate descendant of the great O'Briens in savage cruelty towards the unhappy professors of the proscribed faith, when they fell into his hands.

Truly was Catholic Ireland then passing through the sea of affliction, enveloped in the darkest gloom of the penal days.