

Wars and rebellions, the Cromwellian and Williamite, invasions with the determination of the English governors to permit no important gathering wherein the "mere Irish" could express their opinions, prevented the regular assemblage of the Parliament; and it is therefore with the expulsion of James II. and the establishment of the rule of William III. that the story begins which ends so gloriously with the episodes of 1782.

In 1692 the first Irish Parliament of King William's reign was convened and assembled in Dublin. Thither came some Irish Catholics who foolishly believed that the rights won for them at Limerick by the valor of Sarsfield and the strategy of D'Usson would be held sacred and confirmed in the united council of the nation; but they were driven from the portals of the senate-house by the diabolically designed oath which designated the king of England head of the church, and that Holy Sacrifice, which was to be their only consolation and strength during many a dark and wearying year of oppression, "damnable." The Parliament of 1692 was, therefore, the Parliament only of a section, a miserably small section, of the people of Ireland; but it contained much educated intelligence, though that intelligence was warped by bitter religious bigotry, and the wealth of the nation was represented therein. A parliament composed of such men, most of whom knew that what they possessed of the world's goods, having been got by the sword, should be kept by it also—who, minority though they were, dared to say to the majority of the nation, "You shall have no rights but what we choose to give you, and we will give you none"—was not one likely to submit tamely to the claim made by the Parliament of England to dictate to them, or to content themselves with merely ratifying the behests of the ministers of the asthmatic monarch of England. Therefore this Parliament affirmed the independence of the Peers and Commons of Ireland, and, to prove it, rejected one of two money bills sent from England. A Parliament was again convened in 1695, and this, with many another that came after, gave their best efforts to the consolidation of Protestant ascendancy, to the perfecting of those terrible instruments of persecution, the penal laws. Condemned to poverty and ignorance—for any riches or learning attained

by Irish Catholics were gained not by favor of, but rather despite of, the Irish Parliament—the Catholic portion of the people saw themselves deprived of arms, land, and political rights, their faith prohibited as a thing accursed, their priests banned and hunted; yet somehow the fetters seemed to hang lighter on their limbs, and the night shades of persecution seemed to grow less dark, as with bated breath they whispered one to another the strange tale, which their masters had heard too, with mingled wonder and dread, how across the seas, Irish soldiers had met their oppressors; how at Steenkerke and Landen, and later at Fontenoy, Irish bayonets had revenged the Limerick fraud, and Irish soldiers died for France for the sake of faith and the dear old motherland.

It must be remembered that it was the Protestant portion of the nation which, possessing the wealth, felt taxation most; which, possessing flocks, felt most the prohibition of the woollen manufactures; and which, possessing manufactories, felt most heavily the commercial disabilities which England imposed upon Ireland. They were, therefore, continually protesting against English interference and affirming their own right to self-government. Molyneux and Swift, Lucas and Boyle, with learned pens and eloquent tongues, proclaimed the right of the Irish Parliament to govern Ireland as it chose, untrammelled by the commands of foreign minister, peer, or parliament. Often by corruption, the favorite weapon of English ministers, the objects of the government were attained; but from the first quarter of the eighteenth century few parliaments met in which the power of the "Patriots," as they were styled, was not felt, in which the corrupters and the corrupted were not lashed by the scathing words of some of the advocates of independence.

In 1773 the men of Boston cast the cargo of the *Dartmouth* into the waters of their harbor, and in 1774 the Congress of Philadelphia sent words of greeting to the Irish people. Thenceforward men's eyes were directed to the desperate struggle waged between liberty and tyranny across the Atlantic, and the down-trodden of every land learned the lesson of the mighty power that dwells in the will of a united people. Irish Protestants saw that Eng-