

A LITTLE BIT OF ENGLISH (MIS) RULE
IN IRELAND.

(Concluded)

Of course there was something to be gained by all this murdering of Irishmen—remuneration to be had for this “putting man and woman and child to death” so loyally boasted of by Sir Humphrey Gilbert (Raleighs half brother); and it gives us a rare insight into the titles of some of the Irish landlords of the present day. Raleigh had long wished to seize on the Castle of Barry’s Court, and the adjoining island, ostensibly because it “was a great strength and a safety for all passengers between Cork and Youghall,” but in reality because he hoped to get it as a reward for his services. This estate which extended from Rostellan Castle to Pota included one side of Cork harbor. Raleigh thus modestly asks it of Sir Francis Walsingham in 1581:

“I beseech your Honor that I may by your means “enjoy the keeping of this Barre Court and the Island; “or that it will please your Honor to writ to my Lord “Deputy, that he will confirm it unto me. Thus humbly “I take my leve, reposing myselfe and my estat upon “your Honor’s favor.

“From Cork the 25th of February.”

Raleighs petition was not granted. His want of success did not damp his ardor—in asking. Four years later, and one year after his first expedition to America, he asked, and this time obtained from Elisabeth a grant of 12,000 acres in the province of Munster. A marginal note in her own handwriting, on the warrant, attests the Queen’s anxiety to hasten the completion of the grant. “*Bis dat qui cito dat.*” Amidst the foreign undertakers who were devouring the lands of the Earl of Desmond, and the plunder of the Church, our Knight of the Velvet-Cloak was evidently the favourite, and was allowed to pick and choose. He began at the “havan roiall” of Youghall and at both sides of the river took the best. “Raleighs broad lands” says Mr. Edwards “were thickly wooded.” Molana Abbey, where Raymond le Gros is buried, was granted to Raleigh the year after the monastery was dissolved. The Preceptory of the Knights Templar at Renew and the confiscated lands of the order were granted to Raleigh by letters patent that are still preserved in the Duke of Devonshires archives at Lis-more. With such remuneration before their eyes is it to be wondered at, that the sordid sons of English gentlemen shewed themselves such zealous butchers of the Irishry. With such a title to their lands before them, can Irish landlords of the present day be said to have any?

Some recent writers have sought to prove that neither religious animosity nor nationality played any great part in these Elizabethian excesses in Ireland. The land question (land grab) they argue was the question of the day. This only lowers these excesses to

a lower notch of infamy. The more sordid the motive, other things being equal, the more degrading the crime. That “shop” is essentially an English idea, we allow; and is certainly a more degrading one than “Church.” Granting their contention we must look upon the Elizabethian outrages as far less excusable than the Crownwelliam. Meanwhile poor Ireland as far as she was concerned found no great difference. Whether down from motives of “shop” or of “Church” they were the same atrocities.

It may be interesting to some of our readers, whilst it will illustrate another phase of English mis-rule, to know what has become of all those wooded lands, which won for Ireland from the ancient chroniclers the name of “Fiodha Inis,” the island of the trees. In a letter addressed to Lord Burghly in 1588, Mr. George Longe in the true spirit of an English (mis) ruler urges my Lord Treasurer to transfer to Ireland thirteen out of the fifteen glass manufactories then existing in England, for the reason that “the woods of England will be thereby preserved, and the woods of Ireland wasted, than which in time of rebellion her Majesty hath no greater enemy there.” Gauging this idea with the suppression in after years of the woolen and other trades in Ireland, we shall find it a principle of English mis-rule to introduce manufactories in Ireland when they will be prejudicial, and to suppress them when they will be beneficial to her—an admirable principle of mis-rule, and one which throws considerable light upon England’s modern fear that Galway may become a port of departure.

Raleigh, still in the interests of money making, brought over gangs of English wood-cutters and soon made short work of venerable groves of oak and yew, wherever the waters of Avonduo and its tributaries could convey timber to his ships at Youghall. As it was the age of monopolies (the good Queen Bess granted a monopoly of all the old shoes in her dominion) Raleigh obtained one for exporting pipe-staves to the continent, and for years the wines of France, Spain and even Italy came to England in Raleigh’s hogs-heads of Irish wood. When Spencer first welcomed Raleigh to Kileolman Castle it was

Bordered with a wood

Of matchless hight, that seem’d the earth to disdain
In which all trees of honor stately stood.

In a few years not a tree was left, and “the woody Kileolman” stood before the world a few naked fields surrounding the bare and burnt walls of the castle. Meet emblem of English mis-rule in Ireland. Let the American traveler in Ireland, as his eye wonders over these bleak hills and woodless valleys, keeps well in mind the fact, that e’er the Saxon invader trod the land those hills and valleys were clothed with stately oak and sombre yew; but that when English land hunger had settled in her plains, those noble oaks and sombre yews were ruthlessly cut down, lest their merciful branches should stay the English sabre as it