

A. They advised him to expel the Catholic inhabitants from every walled town in Ireland, and to arrest every peer and gentleman of Irish lineage.

Q. What was their object in giving this advice?

A. To goad the Irish into a rebellion, in order to afford an opportunity for fresh confiscations.

Q. Did Ormond act on their advice?

A. He did not; and thus Ireland was preserved in quiet, and the hopes of those persons who desired new forfeitures were disappointed.

Q. Who was Oliver Plunket?

A. The Catholic Archbishop of Armagh.

Q. What was his character as a politician?

A. He had ever been thoroughly loyal to the Stuart dynasty.

Q. What was his fate?

A. The English zealots dragged him to London to answer for his alleged participation in a rebellious conspiracy. He offered to bring witnesses from Ireland to establish his innocence, but was refused the time necessary for that purpose. He was of course found guilty and hanged, although not a title of credible evidence was produced against him.

Q. In what year did Charles die?

A. In 1685; not without the suspicion of being poisoned.

CHAPTER XXII.

The Reign of James the Second.

Q. Did James the Second remove Ormond from the government of Ireland?

A. Yes; and replaced him by his kinsman, the Earl of Clarendon.

Q. What was Clarendon's policy with regard to the Catholics?

A. He admitted them into the privy council, and advanced them to the bench.

Q. What was James's policy with reference to the religious differences of his subjects?

A. He published a declaration, giving equal civil privileges to all classes of religionists.

Q. What was the great principle of the English revolution of 1688?

A. Representative government, as opposed to the arbitrary power of despotic monarchy.

Q. What steps did James take when he heard that William of Orange had landed in England to contest the throne with him?

A. He fled to France.

Q. Who was at that time lord lieutenant of Ireland?

A. The Earl of Tyrconnell.

Q. What was Tyrconnell's conduct?

A. He pretended to the Protestants that he was desirous to negotiate with William, whilst he augmented and strengthened by all the means in his power the Catholic army.

Q. How did the enemies of the Irish Catholics act at this juncture?

A. They repeated the old trick, so frequently used, of accusing the Catholics of a purpose to massacre the Protestants; and anonymous letters, professing to give the most accurate details of the plot, were extensively circulated amongst the Protestant party by designing persons.

Q. What terms did William of Orange offer to the Irish Catholics?

A. He offered them the possession of a third part of the churches in the kingdom; equality of civil and religious privileges with all other religious persuasions; and as full security of person and property as any other class of the subjects of the crown enjoyed.

Q. Did the Irish Catholics accept these offers?

A. They did not. They believed themselves bound in conscience to preserve their loyalty to James, and they looked upon William as a usurper.

Q. What were James's movements?

A. He resolved to strike a blow for his crown in Ireland; and accordingly sailed from France to Kinsale, where he landed on the 12th of March, 1689.

Q. What reception did he meet?

A. A most loyal one, from the corporations, gentry, and clergy; even the clergy of the Protestant church vied with the Catholic priesthood in their ardent professions of allegiance.

Q. When did the Irish parliament meet?

A. In May, 1689. The king opened the session in person.

Q. Was that parliament a fair representation of the Irish people?

A. Yes; it included Catholics and Protestants; the former predominated in the House of Commons; there were Protestant bishops in the House of Lords, but no Catholic prelates.

Q. What were the topics of the king's speech?

A. His majesty denounced all violations of the rights of conscience as abhorrent to his principles; he promised security of property; he upheld the perfect equality of Protestants and Catholics; he called the attention of parliament to the trading and manufacturing interests of the nation; and recommended to their care those persons whom the Act of Settlement had unjustly deprived of their property.

Q. What acts did this parliament pass?

A. An act for the full establishment of liberty of conscience. This act had the warm assent of every Catholic member of this parliament, in which the great majority of members were Catholics.

Q. Was it accordant with the spirit of the Irish Catholics at large?

A. Pre-eminently so; neither, then, nor at any other time, did the Irish Catholics desire the exclusion of any class of their countrymen from any political privilege which they themselves enjoyed.