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CROMWELL IN IRELAND.

Treachery Allowed his Entry into Wexford—His Men Put to Sword all who Came in His Way and Confiscated their Homes.

On October 6, 1649, Cromwell having landed his artillery and stores before Wexford, began to erect a battery that would command the ferry and prevent all communication by it with the town. Ormonde resolved to attempt the relief of the place in person; leaving Gen. Twaiffe with a Connacht regiment to garrison Ross, he advanced with the rest of his army, and on the night of the 9th he crossed the Slaney, and reached the ferry on the north side of the town. Sir Edmund Butler succeeded in entering the town with a large body, and on account of his experience and well-known bravery he was appointed military governor. Early on the morning of the 11th, the batteries of the besieging army began to play; their quarters had been removed to the southeast end of the town, near the castle, which stood outside the walls. They resolved to direct the whole strength of their artillery against the castle, being persuaded that if they captured it, the town would easily follow.

When about a hundred shots were fired, Simmott asked to parley; he wished leave for four persons chosen by him to go out and offer terms of surrender, and sent the following letter to Cromwell: "In performance of my last, I desire you to send me a safe conduct for Major Theobald Dillon, Major James Byrne, Alderman Nicholas Chevers, and Captain James Stafford, who I will send instructed with my desires."

"Which desire I condescending to," says Cromwell in the letter to the speaker of the parliament, "two field officers with an alderman of the town and the captain of the castle, brought out the following propositions, which for their abominableness, manifesting also the impudence of men, I thought fit to present to your view, together with my answer." These propositions were in part as follows:

"That all the inhabitants of the town, at all times hereafter, shall have free liberty publicly to exercise and profess the Catholic religion, without restriction or penalty. That the regular and secular clergy now possessed of the churches shall hold same, and shall teach and preach in them publicly, without any molestation. That the officers and soldiers and such of the inhabitants, shall march with flying colors, and be conveyed safe with their lives, ammunition, arms, goods of all sorts, to the town of Ross."

As soon as the inhabitants of the town of Wexford had sent to the terms of surrender proposed by Simmott, the governor, they prepared themselves for a stern resistance. To the soldiers, quarter and liberty; to the officers quarter but not liberty; and to the inhabitants freedom from pillage; these were the conditions on which the town should be surrendered within an hour. Yet matters were not so desperate within the walls that such terms need be accepted. The town was, according to Cromwell's description, "pleasantly seated and strong, having a rampart of earth fifteen feet thick within the wall."

It was garrisoned by over two thousand men, commanded by an officer who had given many proofs of his bravery and fidelity. In the fort and elsewhere, in and about the town there were near a hundred cannon; in the harbor three vessels, one of them of thirty-four guns, another of about twenty guns, and a frigate of twenty guns on the stocks, built up to the uppermost deck, which for "hand-someness" sake Cromwell afterwards ordered the workmen to finish. Winter was setting in—it was the middle of October—and the "country sickness" would soon begin to tell on the troops encamped under the open sky. Ormonde's army was at Ross—only twenty miles off—watching for a favorable moment to fall on the rear of the besieging lines, whose numbers were too few to keep up a complete investment, and at the same time to repel a sudden attack that might be made on any

point either from within or without. Unhappily, within the town there was that which marred many of these advantages—discord, a want of mutual confidence between Ormonde and the inhabitants—and so far did it go that the townsmen seem to have thought there was little room for choice between those who called themselves their friends and those whom they well knew to be their enemies. With difficulty could they be brought to admit a reinforcement from the royalist army within the walls; it was only at the urgent request of Simmott, whom Ormonde had sent as governor, that they consented to receive a second body of troops though they were much needed for the defence of the town.

Some went so far as to propose that Cromwell be treated with, in the hope that a peaceful surrender might secure to them not only life and liberty but a part of their goods and perhaps their homes. But worse than this—they had in their midst a traitor. Such was the confidence of the council of the Confederate Catholics in Capt. James Stafford that the government of the county of Kilkenny had been entrusted to him jointly with Sir Thomas Esmond; and when it was known that Cromwell was marching on Wexford, he was sent to act as governor of the castle there, a most important post, since the possession of it ensured the possession of the town; and then the townsmen chose him as one of their four agents to confer with the besiegers about the terms of surrender.

On October 11th, about noon, some breaches had been made in the walls of the castle, the governor of the town asked for a safe conduct for four persons to treat of surrender on honorable terms. What these terms were we have already seen. One of the four persons chosen on behalf of the townsmen was Stafford. While Cromwell was preparing his answer, and before he delivered it, the commissioners being still ignorant of what his decision might be, the "Captain (Stafford), being fairly treated"—these are Cromwell's words—yielded up the castle. The local tradition says that Cromwell and Stafford had a meeting at midnight by the river side. Carte's words leave no room for doubting of the governor's guilt: "The enemy entered the gates by the treachery of Captain Stafford," and again, "Stafford having privately received Cromwell's forces into the castle which commanded the part of the town that lay next to it, they issued suddenly from thence, attacked the wall and gate adjoining it, and soon became masters of the place."

The castle was outside the walls, yet so close that communication could not be cut off between them. Seeing it in the hands of the enemy and knowing that its guns commanded a part of the town, the Irish abandoned the defence of that portion of the works; the besiegers seized their scaling ladders and crossed the walls without hindrance. The gates were thrown open to admit those who were outside, and the whole army poured in. An attempt was made to prevent the advance of the cavalry by placing ropes and chains across the street. Meantime the garrison were retreating to the market-place; there the townspeople had gathered together. "When they were come into the market-places," writes Cromwell, "the enemy making a stiff resistance, our forces broke them."

Then the same scenes that took place at Drogheda were renewed at Wexford. We have Cromwell's own account of these atrocities in a letter to the speaker of parliament from before Wexford, October, 1649. "Our men," he writes, "put to the sword all that came in their way. I believe in all there was lost of the enemy not less than two thousand. This town is now so in your power that of the former inhabitants I believe scarce one in twenty can challenge any property in their houses."—Irish World.

A State Without God.

We reproduce from The Lamp, of Garrison, N.Y., the following extract from an address by Anglican Bishop Wilkinson, at English Church Congress:

"The religious life of France is a very sad story indeed, and reads us a more terrible lesson than that of any other country in Europe. We have there the spectacle of a nation, openly, ostentatiously, and of set purpose, ignoring God. The French Government of to-day neither by act or deed makes mention of God, of Providence, or a Divine Law; it enforces a strictly secular education in all primary schools, and removes all religious symbols from all public buildings. The very fact of attending the services of the Church, or giving religious education, sets a mark upon public servants, and creates a bar to their advancement. It is the formal, determined purpose of the French Government to organize a State without any reference to God. The religious Orders have been expelled; Christian schools have been abolished, and neither army nor navy chaplains exist. There is a great 'Labor Party,' strong, organized in guilds, that number (a million members, and they are fiercely anti-Christian. While these changes have been going on, every four years there has been a general election, and the people have invariably ratified what the Legislature has enacted—especially was this the case last year, when the majority in favor of the Government was overwhelming; and it is by the will of the people that the Church was repudiated. It follows from all this that France as a state has abandoned Christianity; she is not, and does not profess to be, a Christian nation. In the last thirty years she has been passing through a notable transformation, and in many respects, religiously, morally and officially the France of to-day is not the France of 1870. In that year Heaven sent her the most terrible warning it was possible to send to any nation: she underwent a chastisement and live. She did not learn the lesson God endeavored to teach her, and she has gone since then, and is going still, from bad to worse, for the transformation is far from complete, and what lies in the future no one can say."

"Let the English nation remember this: it was the rejection of Christianity in the schools of France that opened the flood-gates of this worse than heathenism, and through those gates the enemy of unbelief has come in like a flood. You have but to read the testimony of distinguished, responsible Frenchmen to see that this is so. Judges, magistrates, heads of police, all bear their testimony to the results of purely secular education in France. I quote from official documents and reports: 'Our houses of correction are gorged with boys and girls; there is a loss of all notion of respect and duty; the young criminals spring up like weeds between the cracks of the pavements; juvenile crime is increasing at a truly frightful rate; our prisons are crowded and too small; for the alarming increase of young criminals.' It was but the other day that the Libre Parole made this statement: 'Twenty-five years ago the army of crime (in France) was neither so numerous nor so audacious, nor so perfectly organized as it is now. Its appearance coincided with the advent of the new morality, with the putting into practice of those laws of so-called public education all religious ideal, all hope beyond the grave.' One of her own Senators, recently said in the French place of public assembly: 'We are a doomed nation!' And so she is."

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The Church is sadly needed, for at present I am obliged to SAY MASS and give Benediction in a Garret. My average weekly collection is only 3s. 6d., and I have no endowment except HOPE.

What can I do alone? Very little. But with your co-operation and that of the other well-disposed readers of this paper, I can do all that needs to be done. In these days, when the faith of many is becoming weak, when the Church is struggling for its life, and when the Holy Church, the Catholic Faith is renewing its youth in England and bidding fair to obtain possession of the hearts of the English people again. I have a very up-hill struggle here on behalf of that Faith. I must succeed or else this vast district must be abandoned.

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