

CATECHISM OF THE HISTORY OF
IRELAND.—CONTINUED.

CHAPTER XIII.—(Continued.)

Q. How did the Irish Catholics act when their old religion was restored to its ancient power and possessions in this reign?

A. They acted with the utmost forbearance. They did not injure a single person in the slightest particular for professing a creed that differed from their own; and when the bloodthirsty queen was persecuting the Protestants in England, the Catholic Corporation of Dublin opened seventy-four houses in Dublin, at their own expense, to receive and shelter the Protestants who sought refuge in Ireland from the fury of the English government.

Q. What do you think of such conduct?

A. That was a glorious proof of Irish tolerance and charity; and fully demonstrated the fitness of the Irish Catholics for religious freedom.

Q. Did the clans of Leix and Ossaly, who had been deprived of their lands in the reign of Edward, appeal to Mary to restore them?

A. Yes.

Q. What was the answer of the government?

A. They sent a strong military force to extirpate the inhabitants from the soil of their forefathers; and the troops committed the most horrible barbarities which ended in a general massacre of the people.

Q. Were any saved?

A. Yes; a remnant, whom the earls of Ossory and Kildare exerted themselves to protect.

Q. What were the districts thenceforth called?

A. "King's County" and "Queen's County;" and their principal towns were named "Philipstown" and "Maryborough," in honour of the sovereign and her husband.

Q. In what year did Queen Mary die?

A. In 1558.

CHAPTER XIV.

The Reign of Queen Elizabeth.

Q. In what state was Ireland at the time of Queen Elizabeth's accession?

A. In a state of universal disturbance.

Q. What cause disturbed Connaught?

A. The two great branches of the house of De Burgo were struggling with each other for the mastery.

Q. What circumstances agitated Leinster?

A. The remnant that had escaped from the massacre in Leix and Ossaly, roamed over that entire province in small parties, marauding wherever they could, to indemnify themselves for their losses and sufferings.

Q. What contentions existed in Munster?

A. The chieftaincy of the northern division of the province was warmly contested between the earl of Thomond and Daniel O'Bryan. The Butlers and Geraldines were also at war with each other.

Q. In what condition was Ulster?

A. John O'Neill was speedily acquiring the dominion of the whole of Ulster.

Q. Whom did Elizabeth appoint as Lord Lieutenant?

A. The earl of Sussex; who, on departing for England, entrusted his government to the hands of Sir Henry Sidney.

Q. Did Sidney call upon O'Neill to account for his proceedings?

A. Yes; he invited him to the English camp for the purpose of a conference.

Q. Did O'Neill accept the invitation?

A. No; he remembered how Moore and O'Connor had been entrapped, and he wisely declined.

Q. What, then, was his answer to Sidney?

A. He excused himself by saying he was engaged in having his child christened with due pomp; and he invited Sidney to attend the ceremony as the infant's godfather.

Q. Did Sidney comply?

A. He did; and he was much surprised at the courtly magnificence with which the Irish chieftain entertained him.

Q. How did they arrange the dispute between O'Neill and the government?

A. O'Neill, by the statement of his wrongs, made a very favourable impression upon Sidney, who advised him to rely for full justice on Elizabeth's sense of honour and of right.

Q. Did O'Neill agree to leave matters to the queen's decision?

A. He did; and he and Sidney parted from each other on terms of friendship.

Q. Did Sussex soon return from England?

A. Yes; and according to Elizabeth's instructions, he immediately set about procuring laws to be passed for the establishment of the new English religion; which, during the reign of Mary, had been deprived of the tithes and other state endowments.

Q. What acts were passed for this purpose?

A. The appointment of bishops was vested in the sovereign; and heavy penalties were inflicted upon all who would not attend the new worship.

Q. How were the priesthood treated?

A. They were expelled from their cures by the civil power; and Protestant clergymen, who had come in large numbers from England, were put in their places.

Q. What were O'Neill's measures all this while?

A. He set out to London, attended by a band of gallowglasses, whose appearance at the court of Elizabeth excited great curiosity.

Q. How did Elizabeth receive him?