

## CHAPTER SIX

**M**EANWHILE GEORGE CHARLES LORD BINGHAM, the brother-in-law whom Lord Cardigan so cordially disliked, had achieved considerable success. He was intelligent; indeed his intellectual capacities were said to be "of a very high order." The Duke of Wellington, an old family friend, "thought well of him" and predicted that he would have a distinguished military career; while Sir Robert Peel thought well of his performance as Member for Mayo in the House of Commons. Admittedly his character was difficult, but looks and wits went far to cloak irritable obstinacy, and pride seemed pardonable in one who had been endowed by Nature with so much to be proud of; the general verdict agreed with the opinion expressed by Peel to Wellington—"a fine high-spirited young fellow."

After his marriage to Lady Anne Brudenell, the young couple spent much of their time at Court in London and at Windsor. At a review of the 17th Lancers in Windsor Park Lord Bingham was in command, much admired, and "flying about on a charger"; Lady Anne was in brilliant looks, but it was observed that she had the Brudenell lack of discretion and allowed her beauty to be too much

admired, "especially by Lord Falkland." However, for the moment the domestic life of the Bingham was serene; their marriage in 1829 had been followed by the birth of an heir in 1830, and he was succeeded by other handsome, healthy children.

Yet by 1836 Lord Bingham was restless: he found the life of a soldier in peace-time frivolous and dull. True he had brought his regiment, "Bingham's Dandies," to a remarkable pitch of perfection, and was an exception to his contemporaries in going "to very great pains to study his profession," learning tactics and making himself acquainted with military history—but to what end? Battles, danger, hardship he would have welcomed, but his fierce, tearing energy found no outlet in the reviews and banquets, the guest nights and parades, of peace-time soldiering. He despised any man who could conceive that such a life was the pursuit of military glory, and his special scorn was directed at his gorgeous brother-in-law, the Earl of Cardigan—he called him "the feather-bed soldier."

He was, moreover, seriously concerned about the family estates in Ireland. The Bingham had never enjoyed such wealth as the Brudenells, and though their estates round Castlebar in Mayo were vast, they were unremunerative. No industries had been founded, few roads had been built, few buildings erected, the immense acreages of wild land had never been transformed into a smiling countryside of prosperous farms. Mayo remained poverty-stricken, backward, inhospitable, and the Bingham, absentee landlords, turned their backs on Mayo and Castlebar. When Castlebar House was burned down in the troubles of 1798, it was not rebuilt, and in 1803 Richard Bingham, second Earl of Lucan, bought land at Laleham, near Chertsey, on the banks of the Thames. Here, in the civilised and domesticated prettiness of Middlesex, he built himself an immense exquisite stylised villa in the classical taste, with plaques by Thorwaldsen, in the hall a Greek frieze after the Parthenon, marble floors, and magnificent porphyry pillars. This masterpiece of sophistication, set in park land with conservatories, walled gardens, and meadows sloping to the Thames, became the Bingham's home.

George Bingham never visited Castlebar until, at the age of twenty-six, he stood as Member for Mayo; his father, after the purchase of Laleham, was never seen at Castlebar at all. The es-

tates were left to an agent, whose business was to squeeze out the utmost possible amount of cash to satisfy the requirements of the second Earl, since, as that gayest of gay gallants flitted between Paris, Florence, Rome, and Laleham, applications for money came constantly to Castlebar.

It had never been easy to extract large sums from the wild lands of Castlebar, but since 1826 the years had been disastrous. Money was slow in coming, then did not come at all; the estate accounts fell into arrears, first for months and then for years. Disquieting reports trickled across the Irish Channel—the agent was taking extraordinary liberties, had even moved with his family into the family mansion. Someone must go over and take control at Castlebar.

George Bingham had lately become interested in improving the family property. Farm management suited his active, autocratic temperament; he had become converted to the profitable possibilities of new farming methods, and the improvement of cultivation had become an object second only to his desire for an active military career. He made up his mind to go to Ireland to tackle the immense acreages of Bingham property in Mayo. His father declined to leave England, the worries and discomforts of Castlebar would, he declared, be the death of him.

In May, 1837, George Bingham relinquished the command of the 17th Lancers and went on half-pay. The regiment parted from him with every expression of goodwill and regret. He was presented with a piece of "emblematic plate," gave a cup to the mess in return, and entertained the non-commissioned officers and men, at his own expense, to a dinner in the riding-school, which was decorated for the occasion, a large set piece of laurel leaves and gilt with the words "Bingham and Prosperity" being greatly admired.

In the autumn he crossed to Ireland and drove to Castlebar by coach, traversing the country from the classic elegance of Dublin and the English-looking fields of Kildare to the bogs, the treeless heaths, the rocks, the mud huts of Mayo.

Castlebar had preserved the appearance of a feudal town. Though the castle had vanished, on its site fortifications still frowned above steep and narrow streets, the houses were beautiful and ancient, built, with enormous solidity, of grey cut stone,

adorned with cornices, stone-wreathed windows, and carved doorways. In the late eighteenth century a Mall had been added to the town, with formal walks under rows of trees, but the streets tailed off abruptly into mud cabins, curlews wheeled and cried in the centre of the town, and the walkers in the Mall had bare feet. After 1798 what remained of the castle and Castlebar House had been turned into a barracks for the English garrison, and an unpretentious square villa in the demesne called sometimes the Lawn, and sometimes the Summer House, became the Irish residence of the Earls of Lucan, and was officially described as Castlebar House.

For more than thirty-five years the agency at Castlebar had been held by an O'Malley, first father and then son. Their reign had been absolute; confidence in them had been complete, and the younger St. Clair O'Malley had been treated by the second Earl "almost as a son." As a result, he had assumed considerable pretensions—he shot over the Castlebar estates, he hunted, he sat on the Bench, by virtue of his position as agent for the Earl of Lucan. In the absence of the family, he lorded it in Castlebar, moving into Castlebar House, because, he said, the house without an occupant was getting damp. His character exhibited a mixture of pretension, evasiveness, inefficiency, and subservience which would have been intolerable even to a less stiff-necked man than George Bingham; the two quarrelled violently, and when in 1839 George's father died and he succeeded as third Earl, he discharged St. Clair O'Malley.

He proved to be amply justified. The estate was heavily in debt. The accounts which had been extracted from the O'Malleys only after the second Earl's death were "of the most irregular and unsatisfactory description," and the new Earl's solicitors in London wrote that "it was the most extraordinary thing that affairs had been allowed to go on in this way for so long." To get rid of the O'Malleys, however, was not easy. When St. Clair O'Malley refused to accept dismissal, a series of scenes took place, and in 1840 Lord Lucan advertised throughout the Irish press that he had discharged the O'Malleys, father and son, from the agency of the Castlebar estates.

The affair proved an unfortunate introduction to Irish life. The new Earl was already unpopular; his proud and irritable man-

ners were resented, and it was said that he was trying to rule his estates with military despotism. He had also quarrelled with the English garrison, and had forced the commanding officer to have the windows of the barracks, which overlooked the demesne of Castlebar House, blocked up because, he said, the officers stared at his beautiful wife as she took her walks.

The O'Malleys were related to half Castlebar, and had served the Binghamms for a lifetime. It was felt that though they might have made mistakes, the Earl was hard. A party against Lord Lucan formed in Castlebar, and St. Clair O'Malley embarked on a war of defiance, continuing to shoot over Lord Lucan's land, and even leasing part of a house from one of Lord Lucan's tenants in order that he might shoot with more convenience. He offered to fight Lord Lucan, and was contemptuously refused; then he armed himself with a thick stick and swaggered about Castlebar announcing his intention of thrashing Lord Lucan should Lord Lucan dare to cross his path.

In 1842, after repeated warnings, Lord Lucan summoned St. Clair O'Malley for poaching. The case was heard at the Petty Sessions Court at Castlebar in October, and was remarkable in that both plaintiff and defendant sat on the Bench of Magistrates. Newspaper reporters from all over Ireland thronged the court, and every possible provocation was offered by the O'Malleys; they invited officers from the garrison to attend, all available seats were occupied by their partisans, and St. Clair O'Malley himself attended, flourishing his big stick.

Under these trying circumstances Lord Lucan's temper failed him, and a violent quarrel took place in court. O'Malley demanded that Lord Lucan should leave the Bench while the case was heard, upon which Lord Lucan declared that he had a right to sit there and no individual could or should compel him to leave his seat. O'Malley then assured Lord Lucan that he held him in the greatest contempt, and everything that came from him he treated with utter contempt. Lord Lucan called on the Bench to "protect him from that Miscreant"; in return O'Malley described Lord Lucan as a cowardly blackguard, and threatened to break every bone in his body. The court broke up "in a state of the utmost Confusion and Excitement, impossible to describe."

PUNCH, OR THE LONDON CHARIVARI.



THE PLUNGER IN TURKEY.

"I SAY, OLD FELLAH!—DO YOU THINK IT PROBABLE THE INFANTRY WILL ACCOMPANY US TO SEBASTOPOL?"

3  
Lord Raglan wishes the Cavalry to  
advance rapidly to the front,  
follow the enemy & try to prevent  
the enemy carrying away the  
guns - Troop Horse Artillery  
may accompany - French Cavalry  
is on your left - R Airey  
Immediate -

THE ORDER WHICH RESULTED IN THE CHARGE

Lord Raglan wishes the cavalry to advance rapidly to the front,  
follow the enemy and try to prevent the enemy carrying away  
the guns. Troop Horse Artillery may accompany. French cavalry  
is on your left. Immediate. R. Airey

Lord Lucan was unquestionably in the right ; nevertheless, the Bench failed to commit O'Malley for disrespect, and worse followed ; by a writ of *supersedeas*, the authorities removed both Lord Lucan and St. Clair O'Malley from the commission of the peace, for contempt of court.

Lord Lucan's fury and disgust were intense. Here was a man who had become a magistrate only because he was agent for Castlebar, who had been ignominiously dismissed from the agency for incompetence, who was, moreover, head over heels in debt and only at liberty by licence from his creditors ; yet he, George Bingham, Earl of Lucan, was to be publicly coupled with and punished with such a man. He wrote angrily to the Lord Chancellor of Ireland, he bombarded authorities in London. Were they aware of what Mr. O'Malley's conduct towards him had been, that at this moment O'Malley was walking the streets of Castlebar, "my own town," declaring that he, George Bingham, Earl of Lucan, dared not show his nose outside Castlebar House, knowing the thrashing which was waiting for him ?

He gained no satisfaction ; his letters received only formal acknowledgment, and he was not restored to the magistracy. Yet he would not submit, and carried his grievance to the House of Lords. On August 10, 1843, he moved for papers to enable him to vindicate his conduct. Three heated debates followed on the action of the Lord Chancellor of Ireland in removing the Earl of Lucan from the commission of the peace for Mayo. On August 21, however, the Duke of Wellington, exerting his enormous prestige and his matchless common sense, settled the question. Lord Lucan, he said, had written to him asking him to speak in the House of Lords as to his military character, but this he had been unable to do, as he had not been present on that day. Then he went on to remind the Lords that facts were in question. The Earl of Lucan, with whom he sympathised, and whose high character in the Army was well known to him, had made use of an expression which amounted to contempt of court, under the provocation of being grossly insulted, certainly, but nevertheless it was contempt of court. This, he understood, the noble Earl himself admitted. It was clearly impossible for a magistrate who was guilty of contempt of court to continue in the commission of the peace, so Lord Lucan had,



rightly, been removed. The Duke was, as usual, unanswerable, and the matter dropped.

But Lord Lucan had not yet come to the end of his resources. Very well, if the laws were such, he would do without the laws. Richard Bingham, his ancestor, had been granted his lands with manorial rights, and, in the sixteenth century had dispensed justice in his own manorial court. He, George Bingham, third Earl of Lucan, would revive that court and establish it at Castlebar—he owned the town and he owned the country for miles around. No more petty sessions should be held on his property; he would do justice himself in his own court. The scheme pleased him immensely, and he wrote to his lawyers to enquire how he should proceed and how far his powers would extend—hardly, he supposed, to matters of life and death. It was with redoubled fury that he read an apologetic letter in which his lawyers informed him that, unquestionable though the rights had been, they were now extinct. Eminent legal authorities, including the Lord Chancellor of England, were called into consultation, but their opinions were unanimous—the Earl of Lucan could no longer set up his own court, he must be amenable to the common law of the land.

The consequences of the O'Malley affair were serious. There was bad blood between Lord Lucan and Castlebar at a most unhappy juncture. The country was approaching a terrible crisis. Reasons far graver than any mismanagement by the O'Malleys lay behind the unsatisfactory condition of the estates at Castlebar, and not only the estates at Castlebar, but throughout Ireland. The economic structure of the country was such that a frightful catastrophe was inevitably approaching.

In 1844 Ireland presented the extraordinary spectacle of a country in which wages and employment, practically speaking, did not exist. There were no industries; there were very few towns; there were almost no farms large enough to employ labour. The country was a country of holdings so small as to be mere patches. The people inhabited huts of mud mingled with a few stones, huts four or five feet high, built on the bare earth, roofed with boughs and turf sods, without chimney or window and destitute of furniture, where animals and human beings slept together on the mud floor. In 1843 the German traveller Kohl pronounced the Irish to

be the poorest people in Europe. He had pitied, he wrote, the privations endured by the poor among the Letts, Esthonians, and Finns, but compared to the Irish they lived in comfort. "There never was," said the Duke of Wellington, himself an Irishman, "a country in which poverty existed to so great a degree as it exists in Ireland." And yet, in spite of misery, the population swarmed. "The population of Ireland," said Disraeli in the Commons on February 15, 1847, "is the densest of any country in the world; the population as regards the arable area is denser even than in China."

Until the last half of the eighteenth century the population of Ireland had been inconsiderable; then abruptly, mysteriously, an extraordinary and fatal phenomenon occurred, and the population began to increase at a rate unknown to history. The accepted increase for the years 1779 to 1841 is 172 per cent, and many authorities put the figure higher. This increase was linked with the adoption of the potato as the staple, indeed the sole, food of Ireland. The people, in their desperate poverty, lacked land, implements, barns. Potatoes require only one-third of the acreage of wheat, flourish anywhere, need the minimum of cultivation, can be stored in the ground and shared with fowls and pigs. As Ireland became a potato country, the shadow of starvation lifted slightly and the character of the people made itself felt. The Irish people were religious, their family affections strong, their women proverbially chaste. Early marriages became invariable: girls were usually married before they were sixteen, but religion and ignorance combined to make birth control unthinkable, and by their early thirties women were grandmothers. Thus the population spread with the rapidity of an epidemic. For these people, swarming in the cabins and the fields, there was no employment, no means of earning wages, no possibility of escaping starvation, except the land—and land became like gold in Ireland. Farms were divided and subdivided until families depended entirely for existence on a plot the size of a suburban garden. Potatoes vary in quality, and the Irish came to live on the "lumper" or "horse potato," the largest, coarsest, most prolific variety known. They grew the huge, coarse potatoes by strewing them on the top of beds six feet wide and covering them with earth, this method of cultivation, the "lazy bed," requiring only a spade. They ate this potato boiled, and they

ate nothing else. Over great tracts of Ireland any form of cooking beyond boiling a potato in a pot became unknown—greens were unknown, bread was unknown, ovens were unknown. The butcher, the baker, the grocer did not exist; tea, candles, and coals were unheard of. The miserable cultivation of the horse potato occupied only a few weeks, and through the dark, wet winters the people, wrapped in rags and tatters, crouched over the turf fire. "Not a bit of bread," said a tenant of the Marquis of Conyngham in 1845, "have I eaten since I was born; we never taste meat of any kind or bacon . . . the common drink to our potatoes is pepper and water."

It was human existence on the lowest scale, only to be paralleled in its isolation and privation, said observers, among the aborigines of Australia and South America. As the population increased, the continual subdivision of farms into patches brought the landlord higher and still higher rents, and the potato patches of Ireland first equalled what the rich farmlands of England fetched in rent, and then went higher. Men bid against each other in desperation, and on paper the landlords of Ireland grew rich; but the rents were not paid—could not be paid. Castlebar was only one of hundreds of estates in Ireland which, prosperous on paper, were sliding into hopeless confusion. "If you ask a man," reported the Devon Commission in 1844, "why he bid so much for his farm, and more than he knew he could pay, his answer is, 'What could I do? Where could I go? I know I cannot pay the rent; but what could I do? Would you have me go and beg?'"

By 1845 the population of Ireland had swollen to eight million, and the enormous majority of these people were living exclusively on the potato, were feeding such animals as they possessed on the potato, were consuming fourteen pounds of potatoes per head per day. The structure of the country, crazily rising higher and higher, was balanced on the potato. And the potato was treacherous: over and over again it had proved itself to be the most uncertain, the most dangerous, the most unpredictable of crops.

In 1739 the potato harvest had failed, and again in 1741, when deaths had been so numerous that the year was named the year of slaughter. In 1806 the crop partially failed, and in the west of Ireland it failed in 1822, 1831, 1835, 1836, and 1837. In 1839

failure was general throughout Ireland. In 1838 the Duke of Wellington, speaking on the Poor Law in Ireland, said in the House of Lords, "I held a high position in that country [Ireland] thirty years ago, and I must say, that from that time to this, there has scarcely elapsed a single year in which the Government has not, at certain times of it, entertained the most serious apprehension of famine. I am firmly convinced that from the year 1806 down to the present time, a year has not passed in which the Government has not been called on to give assistance to relieve the poverty and distress which prevail in Ireland."

The solution, the only possible solution, was to reduce the number of potato patches, to throw the small holdings together into farms, and give the people work for wages. But how was this to be done, where were the people to go, helpless, penniless, and without resources as they were? The Irish peasant dreaded the "consolidating landlord"—and prominent among consolidating landlords was the third Earl of Lucan.

He was, in fact, far in advance of most of his contemporaries. The Land Commission of 1830 had stated that in their opinion the poverty and distress of Ireland were principally due to the neglect and indifference of landlords. Large tracts were in the possession of individuals whose extensive estates in England made them regardless and neglectful of their properties in Ireland. It was not the practice of Irish landlords to build, repair, or drain; they took no view either of their interest or their duties which caused them to improve the condition of their tenants or their land. "All the landlord looks to is the improvement of his income and the quantity of rent he can abstract." "Regard for present gain, without the least thought for the future seems to be the principal object which the Irish landlord has in view," wrote an English observer.

Lord Lucan was exceptional in being prepared to invest in the land, to forgo and reduce his income, to tie up capital in barns, houses, drainage schemes, and machinery, in order to establish prosperity in the future. But it was impossible for him to succeed. Between the Irish tenant and the Irish landlord not only was there no hereditary attachment, there was hereditary hatred.

Ireland was a country the English had subdued by force, and Irish estates were lands seized from a conquered people by force

or confiscation. But Ireland had refused to acknowledge herself conquered, religion had prevented assimilation, and down the centuries rebellion succeeded rebellion, while underground resistance, assassinations, secret societies, anonymous outrages had never ceased. Moreover, the English, normally kind, behaved in Ireland as they behaved nowhere else; the Irish had earned their undying resentment by persistently taking sides with the enemies of England.

The laws of Ireland were laws imposed by a conqueror on the conquered, and the conditions under which an Irish peasant leased his land were intolerably harsh.

In Ireland alone [wrote John Stuart Mill] the whole agricultural population can be evicted by the mere will of the landlord, either at the expiration of a lease, or, in the far more common case of their having no lease, at six months' notice. In Ireland alone, the bulk of a population wholly dependent on the land cannot look forward to a single year's occupation of it.

The power of the landlord was absolute. Lord Leitrim, for instance, passing by a tenant's holding, noticed a good new cabin had been built, and at once ordered his bailiff to pull it down and partially unroof it. James Tuke was told in 1847 that his Lordship used to evict his tenants "as the fit took him." Only in Ulster had a tenant any rights. In Ulster a tenant could not be evicted if he had paid his rent, and when he left his farm he had a right to compensation for any improvements. Elsewhere in Ireland the tenant had no rights. All improvements became the property of the landlord without compensation. Should a tenant erect buildings, should he improve the fertility of his land by drainage, his only reward was eviction or an immediately increased rent, on account of the improvements he himself had laboured to produce.

Sir Charles Trevelyan, a far from sympathetic observer, wrote of Ireland in 1845 ". . . what was the condition of the peasant? Work as he would, till and rear what he might, he could never hope to benefit. His portion was the potato only, shared, it may be said, with his pig." No ordinary amount of hard work, no thrift or self-denial could bring a better life to the Irish peasant.

And, in all Ireland, the county which, said the Poor Law com-

missioners, stood pre-eminent for wretchedness was Mayo, where Lord Lucan held his estates. Mayo, with Sligo, Roscommon, and Leitrim, made up the province of Connaught, and Connaught had a history which made prosperity and good relations between landlord and tenant impossible.

Connaught had been the scene of great severities under Elizabeth, when the Bingham's acquired their estates, and of greater severities under Cromwell. After the massacres of Drogheda and Wexford, Cromwell, in the words of Lord Clare,

collected together all the native Irish who survived the devastation and transported them into the province of Connaught which had been completely depopulated and laid waste. They were ordered to retire there by a certain day, and forbidden to repass the Shannon on pain of death . . . their ancient possessions were seized and given up to the conquerors.

These unhappy people, turned loose to starve in a ruined country, joined with the few survivors of the depopulation to form a population in Connaught which has never yet been able to forgive or forget.

The people were rebellious, the land poor, the country inaccessible. Roads were few, education non-existent—in 1845 at Castlebar only seven people out of 145 could read—and, in addition to the normal evil of subdivision, two deplorable systems of land tenure flourished: rundale, a primitive survival where the land was rented jointly by a group who farmed it in strips; and conacre, where a patch of land was rented only for the growing of a single crop.

To the people of Mayo an Earl of Lucan, a Bingham, was an oppressor, responsible for the cruelties of the past and the misery of the present, automatically to be hated. Between any Earl of Lucan and his tenants history had erected a barrier almost impossible to surmount. The third Earl of Lucan, however, had no smallest inclination to try to surmount it. Though his Irish tenants might cherish an hereditary hatred for him, he cherished an equally powerful contempt for them. From the bottom of his heart he despised them, swarming, half starving, ignorant, shiftless, and Roman Catholics into the bargain. It is doubtful if he considered the Irish as human beings at all.

And yet it was not an ignoble vision which the third Earl of Lucan cherished; and for it he was prepared to forgo his immediate comfort. The Irish countryside was to be remade, sound cottages were to replace mud cabins, machinery succeed the spade, trim furrowed fields were to appear in place of "lazy beds," herds of dairy cattle and fat pigs supplant the lean and miserable animals who shared their owners' bed and board. But to make that vision real it was necessary to be relentless—the miserable hordes of the half-starved must disappear. Evictions became numerous, and it began to be said in Mayo that he possessed "all the inherited ferocity of the Bingham's."

Fear of the third Earl bit deep into the consciousness of the people, and he still survives as a bogey in Castlebar. Tales are told of the fierce Earl galloping through the town, the hoofs of his great black horse striking sparks from the cobble-stones, bringing terror to his tenants' hearts. When least expected he suddenly appeared, for though he gained the credit of being a resident landlord, he seldom stayed in Castlebar more than a few days—it was his custom to swoop down a dozen times a year. On one occasion, believing him to be safely in England, the inhabitants of Castlebar were burning him in effigy on the Mall when suddenly the sound of the great black horse was heard and the Earl galloped into the midst of the crowd, shouting as they scattered in terror, "I'll evict the lot of you."

Honours might come to him from England—he was elected a Representative Peer of Ireland in 1840, in 1843 he had the satisfaction of refusing to be restored to the Bench, in 1845 he was made Lord Lieutenant of Mayo. But on his estates the antagonism between Lord Lucan and his tenants became acute. He brought in Scottish farmers, particularly detested in Mayo, to manage his farms. Irish bailiffs could not be trusted, he said: turn your back for a moment, and hovels were allowed to spring up again on the newly cleared land. Asked for mercy, he declared that he "did not intend to breed paupers to pay priests"; for his part he would be only too glad if he did not have a single tenant on his estates in Mayo. On June 21, 1845, a meeting of protest was held at Castlebar and a resolution unanimously passed and forwarded to the Earl of Lucan. It condemned the inhumanity of his declaration, "worthy

only of the days of persecution and oppression of which it so forcibly reminds us." During the next few years men were to look back and say with a shudder that the Earl's angry words had drawn down a curse on Mayo.

In 1844 it was reported that the potato crop had failed in North America, but no apprehension was created in Ireland, for the country was occupied with her own concerns. That year was a restless one: rents were at their highest, evictions numerous, secret societies active, and more than one thousand agrarian outrages occurred.

In September, 1845, the early potato crop was dug, and proved to be exceptionally abundant. The main crop, on which the food of the people depended, was not dug until December, and there was every sign that this, too, would be remarkably good. Potatoes lifted at the end of November were matured in good condition and the plants were prolific. A few weeks later the crop was dug, and found to be tainted with disease. The news came like a thunder-clap: failure was totally unexpected throughout the three kingdoms. Once the disease had appeared, it advanced with fatal speed, part of the crop rotting at once, and what was stored swiftly rotting in the pits. Within a month the whole was lost.

Dire distress followed. In January Parliament in London repealed the duties on the importation of foreign corn, the "corn laws," and an attempt was made to replace the potato by supplies of Indian corn, unknown as a food in the United Kingdom. A start was made, too, towards establishing a system of public works to provide the people with money with which food might be purchased, since wages in Ireland were almost unknown. It was at this juncture that the Duke of Norfolk suggested that the Irish should substitute curry powder for the potato and nourish themselves on curry powder mixed with water.

Nevertheless, hope ran high in 1846: the Irish had a tradition that when the potato crop failed next year's crop was exceptionally abundant. The growing of crops other than potatoes was not attempted, because the people had no implements, no seeds, and no



knowledge of how to cultivate anything else. Once again almost all Ireland became a potato field.

The plants came up strong and sturdy. May and June gave every promise of a bountiful harvest, and through the first weeks of July the plants bloomed richly, and the weather was good. Then disaster struck.

Father Mathew, the famous Temperance reformer, travelling from Cork to Dublin on July 27, saw the "plant blooming in all the luxuriance of an abundant harvest." Five days later he travelled back to find "one wide waste of putrefying vegetation." At the edge of their decaying patches the people sat weeping and wringing their hands.

In Clare, Captain Mann, R.N., senior Coastguard officer "passed over thirty-two miles, thickly studded with potato fields in full bloom." A day later "the whole face of the country was changed; the stalk remained bright green, but the leaves were all scorched black. It was the work of a night."

The disease appeared first in the form of a small brown spot on the leaf, the spots spread, the foliage withered, and the stem snapped off. In two or three days all was over, and the fields were covered with blackened plants, giving off a sickening smell of decay. The potato tubers, if lifted, were hard, withered, and the size of walnuts.

In England, too, the potato crop failed partially, and potatoes became a luxury. In France, Belgium, Holland, and Italy both potato and rye crops entirely failed. Prices rose steeply, freight charges more than doubled, and such supplies of grain and other foods as were available, instead of being sent to relieve Ireland, were diverted to the Continent.

Famine began in earnest. The magnitude of the disaster was almost inconceivable. The people of Ireland had no food, no money, were in any case entirely unaccustomed to buying food; in the west of Ireland no organisation existed, no corn factor, miller, baker, or provision dealer, through which to bring food to them. The evils of subletting and subdividing now disclosed themselves with frightful effect. Captain Mann quotes a typical case of a landlord, occasionally resident, who let his land to a middleman

at 10 shillings an acre. The middleman also re-let it. It was again and again re-let, until the price received for a quarter of an acre was £1 10s. In 1846 the landlord, by no means a hard-hearted man, applied to the Society of Friends for food for his starving tenants. He calculated that he had about sixty to provide for, and was "terrified" to receive over six hundred applications. He had never inspected his farms.

All over Ireland famished multitudes, whose existence was utterly unsuspected and unknown, rose like spectres from the ground, demanding food.

The Government of Great Britain regarded the starving multitudes with the utmost apprehension. Distress and starvation in Ireland—the very words, woefully familiar, evoked hopelessness. Was the Government to tie the frightful burden of responsibility for the support of eight million people round the neck of the British tax-payer? It was decided to proceed with great caution. Extravagant action, large Government purchases of food from abroad, for instance, would inevitably upset the normal course of English trade. To preserve the normal course of English trade became the first object. No orders for supplies of food would be sent by the Government to foreign countries; they would rely on private enterprise to find food for the starving multitudes. No Government depots for the sale of food were to be established, except in the west of Ireland, where dealers were unknown. Wages were to be earned through the relief works, and new roads were to be made; but works for the improvement of the land were not to be undertaken, through a fear of favouritism and corruption.

The winter of 1846 was exceptionally severe. Wages paid by the relief works, eightpence to tenpence a day, were insufficient, and women wept as their men brought home insufficient money to buy food. The Irish peasant was accustomed to spend the cold, wet winter crouching over his turf fire, and the half-starved multitudes caught cold and died. An officer of the Board of Trade said he was ashamed to require men in such an emaciated condition to work. In any case works were slow in starting, and many districts had no relief. By December, 1846, cholera had appeared. On December 17 a Mr. Nicholas Marshal Cummins, J.P. wrote a letter

to the Duke of Wellington describing a visit to Skibbereen. He found the village apparently deserted, but on entering one of the cabins he discovered

. . . six famished and ghastly skeletons, to all appearance dead, huddled in a corner, their sole covering what seemed to be a ragged horse cloth, and their wretched legs hanging about, naked above the knees. I approached in horror and found by a low moaning that they were alive, they were in fever—four children, a woman and what had once been a man. . . . In a few minutes I was surrounded by at least 200 of such phantoms, such frightful spectres as no words can describe. By far the greater number were delirious either from famine or fever. . . . Within 500 yards of the Cavalry Station at Skibbereen, the dispensary doctor found seven wretches lying, unable to move, under the same cloak—one had been dead many hours, but the others were unable to move, either themselves or the corpse.

Josephine Butler, as a young girl, was in Ireland during the famine years.

I can recollect [she writes] being awakened in the early morning by a strange noise, like the croaking or chattering of many birds. Some of the voices were hoarse and almost extinguished by the faintness of famine; and on looking out of the window I recollect seeing the garden and the field in front of the house completely darkened by a population of men, women and children, squatting in rags; uncovered skeleton limbs protruding everywhere from their wretched clothing, and clamorous though faint voices uplifted for food and in pathetic remonstrance against the inevitable delay in providing what was given them from the house every morning. I recollect too, when walking through the lanes and villages, the strange morbid famine smell in the air, the sign of approaching death, even in those who were still dragging out a wretched existence.

In poverty-stricken and backward Mayo the famine was at its most severe. Starving and dying, the people came into Castlebar and roamed the streets, begging for food. William Forster, the Quaker, who made his headquarters at Castlebar, particularly remembered the children, with "their death-like faces and drumstick arms that seemed ready to snap." It was a common occurrence, when the front door of a house was opened in the morning, to find leaning against it the corpse of some victim who had sunk

to rest on the doorstep and died during the night. Dead bodies lay by the side of the roads leading into Castlebar, men and women who had fallen by the wayside were seen struggling in vain to rise until, with a low moan, they collapsed in death, while in remote hamlets, unknown to the outside world, every soul was found to have perished—the people had become too weak to fly from death.

To the Earl of Lucan famine horrors were so many convincing demonstrations of the urgent necessity of clearing the land. The land could not support the people, could never support the people; so the people must go. He did not consider it was his responsibility, any more than the British Government considered it was their responsibility, to arrange how the people should go and where. He was getting nothing from his estates, all his rents and a great deal more were being put back into the land, and on one farm alone he spent £8,000; he was doing his share, and more than his share. To bolster up a hopelessly false economy, to pour out money, badly needed to improve the land, on paupers who could never be anything but paupers, was criminal sentimentality. A large part of the population of Ireland must disappear.

Evictions became wholesale on the Earl of Lucan's estates. Ten thousand people were ejected from the neighbourhood of Ballinrobe, and fifteen thousand acres cleared and put in charge of Scotsmen. A relieving officer told Sir Francis Head, an English observer, that the destitution caused by Lord Lucan was "immense." Pointing to an eminence enclosed by a capital wall and in a good state of cultivation, he said, "That was a densely populated hill called Staball. All the houses were thrown down." Several populous villages in the neighbourhood of Castlebar completely disappeared, farms being established on the sites. Behind Castlebar House the Earl of Lucan established a large dairy farm; the yard and buildings of this farm, which covered three acres, were cleared in the town of Castlebar itself—whole streets were demolished, and the stones from the walls used to build barns and boundary walls.

Terror seized Mayo. The people, ignorant, starving, and terrified, clung desperately to the land. They could not be got rid of—turned out of their cabins, they took refuge with neighbours, or crept back in the night and hid in ditches. It was necessary to forbid any tenant to receive the evicted, on pain of being evicted himself; it was necessary to drive them out of the ditches; finally it

was necessary to organise gangs, known as "crow-bar brigades," to pull down cabins over the heads of people who refused to leave them. The Bishop of Meath saw a cabin being pulled down over the heads of people dying of cholera; a winnowing sheet was placed over their bodies as they lay on the ground, and the cabin was demolished over their heads. He administered the sacrament for the dying in the open air, and since it was during the equinoctial gales, in torrents of rain.

Sick and aged, little children, and women with child were alike thrust forth into the cold snows of winter, [writes Josephine Butler], for the winters of 1846 and 1847 were exceptionally severe and to prevent their return their cabins were levelled to the ground . . . the few remaining tenants were forbidden to receive the outcasts. . . . The majority rendered penniless by the years of famine, wandered aimlessly about the roads and bogs till they found refuge in the work-house or the grave.

In addition to the crow-bar brigade, a "machine of ropes and pulleys" was devised for the destruction of more solid houses. It consisted of massive iron levers, hooks, and a chain to which horses were yoked.

By fixing the hooks and levers at proper points, at one crack of the whip and pull of the horses the roof was brought in. By similar gripping of the coign stone the house walls were torn to pieces. It was found that two of these machines enabled a sheriff to evict as many families in a day as could be got through by a crow-bar brigade of fifty men. It was not an unusual occurrence to see forty or fifty houses levelled in one day, and orders given that no tenant or occupier should give them even a night's shelter.

Imprecations and curses were hurled at the Earl of Lucan as village after village was blotted out. He was called the "Exterminator." It was said that he regarded his tenants as vermin to be cleared off his land. But he held relentlessly to his view. There was only one solution for Ireland—a large part of the population must disappear.

Meanwhile, in London the Government became seriously disturbed. The number of persons on relief was increasing with terrifying speed: by January, 1847, half a million men were employed on relief work on the roads, and more than two million were receiv-

ing food; and each day added fresh tens of thousands. There was apparently no end to the helpless starving multitudes of Ireland. Moreover, the relief works were unsatisfactory; for a variety of reasons persons not entitled to relief were receiving it, the attraction of wages was so strong that the fields were being deserted for the roads, and the construction work was so badly done that the new roads were useless.

Parliament turned angrily on the Irish landlords. How had they ever allowed this state of things to come about? What had they done to prevent or to remedy the disaster? The Irish landlords had come forward with no plan, they had provided the Government with no information, they had assumed no responsibility, the miserable hordes perishing on their very doorsteps had been callously ignored. All they had done was to "sit down and howl for English money."

On February 15, 1847, Lord Brougham attacked the Earl of Lucan in the House of Lords. In Mayo six thousand processes had been served, four thousand of which were for rent.

The landlord in Mayo had thought it necessary to serve his tenants with notice to quit in the midst of one of the most severe winters that had ever been known, in the midst of the pestilence too which followed, as it generally did, in the train of famine. He had turned out these wretched creatures when there was no food in the country and no money to buy it.

Six thousand evictions might involve more than forty thousand people, as the average Irish family consisted of seven persons. What, asked Lord Brougham, was the result of this wholesale clearance? A great flood of Irish paupers had begun to pour across the Irish Channel into Liverpool and Glasgow. At Liverpool in the last five days 5,200 paupers were landed, without possessions of any kind, in an advanced state of starvation, and with the cholera among them. They did not come to emigrate, because they had no money and the emigration season did not begin until the end of March or the beginning of April. They came to be fed. Large numbers of these people had come from Mayo.

Lord Lucan's defence was irritable. Anyone who knew anything about Ireland knew that processes were not evictions. The trouble at the present moment was that people made themselves

heard who knew nothing about Ireland. Processes were actions for recovery of rent brought usually by middlemen, and he challenged the figure of six thousand.

Lord Brougham informed the House that the figure was an official return quoted in the House of Commons by the Chancellor of the Exchequer. It appeared that a new system of clearing land was being adopted in Mayo and that the processes now before the courts were novel in Ireland. There had previously been a right of levying a distress on goods and chattels for rent, but this year in Mayo there were no goods and chattels left, so the person of the debtor was to be attached—that is, he was to be imprisoned. The husband and father was to be removed, and the wife and children were to be left to fend for themselves. It was usual in Ireland to allow three months' grace for payment of rent, but this year in Mayo no such period was allowed. The landlords had calculated that these processes would have all the efficiency of evictions, and they had been proved right. The people were distracted by the loss of their potato crop, feared the land would never produce a similar crop again, were terrified by the evictions all round them, were starving and in despair. Before the processes could be heard, people by the thousand abandoned their holdings and fled. Yet when, said Lord Brougham, he connected the poverty now inundating the ports of England with the legal processes carried on in Mayo, he excited the indignation of his noble friend, and he was told he knew nothing about it.

The Marquess of Westmeath rose to observe that it ought to be known that the people who had so left the country had omitted to give up possession of the tenements they held. The very circumstances of having acted in that way showed great dishonesty of principle. What could be more so than for individuals to leave the country still holding possession—a procedure which threw a great deal of trouble on the injured party in obtaining possession of property thus deserted.

The noble Marquess's complaint did not strike the House of Lords as unreasonable. Was not the starving condition of the peasantry involving the landlords of Ireland in immense losses, and was it not the duty of the peasantry to realise their responsibility and do everything in their power to minimise these losses?

No one rose to comment on the Marquess of Westmeath's statement, and the debate on the distress in Ireland came to an end.

Early in 1847 William Forster, a member of the Relief Committee of the Society of Friends, visited Castlebar. The suffering, he noted, was very severe. About 1,200 were being relieved daily in Castlebar by the charity of the townspeople, and some clothing had been made; but the work was stopping for want of funds. Outside Castlebar, out of 460 persons examined, 364 were completely destitute. Nothing, he commented, seemed to have been attempted in the way of relief on the Connaught side of the Shannon, and he cited the case of the Castlebar Union Workhouse. The Castlebar Union was capable of taking 600 to 700 persons, but the gates had been closed by order of the chairman of the Board of Guardians. The chairman was the Earl of Lucan.

Huge and forbidding, the Castlebar Union had opened its doors in 1841. Built from blocks of grey stone, surrounded by high walls, standing outside the town on bare and treeless land, and appearing half fortress and half prison, it was regarded by the people of Mayo with dread. Within were stone walls of great thickness, immense wards with wooden platforms where the paupers lay on straw, bareness, chill, inhuman emptiness. But there was food, however revolting, however meagre, and the Union was besieged. Starving mothers dragged their children to the Union doors and besought that they at least should be taken in; whole families made their painful way from the wild lands and collapsed moaning in the courtyard when they were refused.

On February 15, 1847, Viscount Duncan asked a question in the House of Commons. It had been reported in the newspapers that the Earl of Lucan, Lord Lieutenant of Mayo and chairman of the Board of Poor Law Guardians of the Castlebar Union, with twelve other magistrates, had been dismissed by the Poor Law commissioners for not performing his duties. Was that statement correct?

Viscount Duncan produced facts from the Report of the Assistant Poor Law Commissioners. The Castlebar Union workhouse



had been built to hold 600 to 700 persons, but had never contained more than 140. After the potato failure, when distress became acute, its doors were closed and all relief refused. The inmates still in the workhouse were neglected and starved and commonly left without food or attention for twenty-four hours at a time. Very many died, and since there were no coffins, their bodies were left to rot in the dead house. On October 26, 1846, the Earl of Lucan, chairman of the Board of Guardians, had declared the workhouse bankrupt, and, in spite of vehement protests from the Poor Law Commissioner, ordered the Castlebar Union to be entirely closed down. At that time over £1,000 of poor rate were owing, one of the principal debtors being the Earl of Lucan himself. It was customary, when money was urgently required, to "strike" a new rate, that is, to make a fresh assessment and a fresh collection, but this the Earl of Lucan had refused to order. As a result of suspending relief and shutting the doors of the workhouse, upwards of one hundred persons had died of starvation in its immediate vicinity, and a protest had been made, by the coroner who held the inquests upon the corpses.

On February 16, 1847, the Earl of Lucan defended himself in the House of Lords. He was not a man to evade his obligations; though harsh and pitiless he was not one of the landlords who contributed a penny in the pound from their Irish rents to famine relief and continued to enjoy themselves on the other side of the Irish Channel. It was repeatedly, and unwillingly, admitted in the House that his energies were devoted to improving his Irish estates, and that he spent far more on them than the income from his Irish rents. But, inflexibly determined to get rid of the old system, he allowed no mercy to temper his ruthlessness.

He was very angry. He told the House of Lords that anyone who knew anything about Ireland was aware that the organisation of the country had entirely broken down. The Castlebar Union was not warmed because the fuel contractor had failed to fulfil his contract. He, Lord Lucan, had ordered his own agent to produce fuel, but the reply was that in the present state of the country none could be got. The same situation obtained for bread. The supply failed, a fresh supply was ordered, but none was forthcoming. In September he had been requested to come to London to make a

representation to the Government on the state of Ireland. On his return, on September 28, he took the chair at a meeting of the Board of Guardians. He was then informed that all the contracts for the supply of provisions had expired, that not one single fresh tender had been received by the Board, and even if tenders were received there was not one farthing of money to pay for them. The question at that moment was not merely of closing the workhouse for the future, but of putting out those who were actually in it. He then volunteered to keep the workhouse open at his own expense, and this he had done for four weeks. He would like to know what would have happened if he had not come forward.

He entirely denied that he was a debtor for rates. All the rates for which he was responsible were punctually paid. What happened was that when his tenants did not pay he was debited, and for those rates he declined to be liable. As for striking a new rate, it was ridiculous and unjust to strike a new rate while so large a proportion of the old rate was still outstanding, and, in any case, owing to the high proportion of very small holdings in Mayo, striking a rate took too long to be efficacious. Distresses should be levied, and those who owed rates should be forced to pay. He observed that he had been favoured with many declarations about the horrors of starvation, but no practical suggestions.

No man was ever more certain of being in the right. But was he justified, was there nothing to be done for the miserable beings lying down to die as the gates of the workhouse were shut in their faces? The House resented his inhumanity, and the subject was not allowed to drop: the Earl of Lucan and the Castlebar Union were brought up again and again in the Commons, while in the Lords, Lord Brougham, the scourge of Irish landlords, pursued the subject of evictions in Mayo. Within a few weeks, however, the Earl of Lucan was no longer present to reply; he had gone back to Ireland, where a fresh tide of misfortune was sweeping over the Irish people.

Every effort to keep in check the numbers on relief had failed. By March, 1847, more than three-quarters of a million men were working on the roads; and three million persons were on relief. Since January, in eight weeks, an extra million and a quarter persons had thrown themselves on the Government for support, and

on February 19 it was announced in the House of Commons that fifteen thousand persons were dying every day in Ireland. From uneasiness, the Government passed to alarm. The public works were sliding into chaos, and speculations and false returns were reported from all sides. When the Government felt that England was being "drawn into what threatened to become a gigantic system of permanently supporting one portion of the community at the expense of the remainder," drastic action was taken. The public works were closed. On March 20, 20 per cent of the workers on the roads were struck off, successive reductions of 20 per cent following until all had been dismissed. At the same time the method of distributing relief was changed and tightened up. Uncooked food was not now to be distributed. Eminent doctors had been consulted, and the daily ration was fixed at one pound of maize meal and rice steamed solid so that it could be carried away, or a quart of soup thickened with meal, along with a pound and a quarter of bread. This ration was to be collected each day in person by everyone except the sick, the aged, and young children, and, with a few rare exceptions, there was an additional and severe condition—no one occupying more than a quarter of an acre of land was to be entitled to relief.

That spring the roads to the ports of Ireland became thronged with people flying from certain death. Not half the land had been sown with any kind of crop: the people were accustomed only to a primitive method of potato culture, and though the Government had sent round lecturers to teach them to sow wheat, they had not been able to understand what was said. In some districts the starving peasantry had received pamphlets containing extracts from Adam Smith's *Wealth of Nations*. There was want of everything: implements, manure, seed, knowledge, and, after a year's starvation, energy. Above all, there was a fatal want of goodwill. "If only," wrote William Smith, an English engineer in charge of public works, "the people had been treated with a little kindness." As the year advanced, it became evident that the harvest of 1847 had completely failed, and the throng on the roads steadily grew. The "quarter-acre" clause proved fatal, and thousands who had clung to their patches were forced to give them up to obtain food. The food was not enough, and women wailed as they carried it

home to their children; and a coroner's jury in Connaught, holding an inquest on a woman found dead of starvation, brought in a verdict of wilful murder against the Prime Minister, Lord John Russell. Once the patches had been given up, the landlords would not let the people stay: a new race of beggars must not be allowed to grow up on the land. Flight or death was the choice. The people tramped to the ports, for as little as half a crown were transported across the Irish Channel, and the destitute and starving came into the industrial towns of England like an avalanche. Between January 13 and November 1, 278,000 Irish poured into Liverpool, 90,000 into Glasgow, while in Manchester outdoor relief was given to 4,000 a week. Nineteen relieving officers and thirty Roman Catholic priests caught the cholera and died.

The dearest wish of these people was to emigrate, to Canada, to Australia, above all to the United States, but the English Government decided not to undertake any scheme to assist emigration. It was felt that "a burden would be transferred to the tax-payers of the United Kingdom which would otherwise be borne by those to whom it properly belonged, owing to their interests being more immediately concerned." Considerable Irish emigration had already taken place, however, and those Irish already established assisted their relations and friends with extraordinary generosity. In New York the sum required for a family would be made up from small subscriptions, often from strangers, given by the Irish labouring poor. Between £4 and £5 was charged for the passage, the emigrants providing their own food. The English Government did not inspect or regulate the ships, and the greed of the speculator was subject to no control. Inconceivable miseries were endured on the long voyage across the Atlantic, made in small sailing-ships. The low fare charged resulted in only the worst kind of vessels being used, and in hundreds of cases ships, known as "coffin ships," which were notoriously unseaworthy were cheaply hired by speculators. The emigrants were crammed in regardless of health, safety, or decency; they were in the last extreme of misery and poverty, often had been unable to provide themselves with adequate supplies of food, often had the cholera upon them. Of 89,738 persons who emigrated to Canada during 1847, 15,330 perished.

The winter of 1847 was again exceptionally severe, with

heavy falls of snow, sleet, and gales of icy wind. But when spring came, a change had taken place. The demolishing machine and the crow-bar brigade were no longer needed—the period of mass evictions was over. Thousands had died, thousands had fled, thousands were still dying and fleeing, and the problem was solved—the people had disappeared. In Mayo alone it was estimated that 100,000 acres lay without a single tenant. The harvest of 1848 proved a good harvest, and the famine was over.

On November 16, 1849, *The Times* published a long letter which was reprinted next day as a leading article. The writer of the letter, the Rev. and Hon. Sidney Godolphin Osborne, had just travelled through Mayo as *The Times* correspondent and special commissioner. A fearless, indeed a bellicose, philanthropist, he was later to be one of Miss Nightingale's chief supporters and lieutenants in the hospitals at Scutari. Lord Lucan was "utterly unknown to him," and they did not meet when Sidney Godolphin Osborne was at Castlebar, because Lord Lucan happened to be in England.

Lord Lucan is [he wrote] eminently a practical man; that which he determines to do he sets about at once, suffering no expense of pocket or popularity to interrupt him. He is one of the few landlords left in the West of Ireland who reside on and perseveringly endeavour to improve their property. He has been one of those who, finding their estates occupied by masses of small tenants, the majority of whom could not pay rent or taxes, and were in fact paupers, looked the matter in the face and saw that he had the option either of allowing them to remain, and thus to self confiscate his whole property, or of removing them by legal process, and have at least the forlorn hope that should better times arrive he might have this property prepared for a more wholesome system of occupation. I, it is true, have heard him called by very hard names; he has earned himself the character of "a great exterminator" . . . I saw sufficient remains of his exterminating system, in the shape of roofless cabins and roofless villages, which I was informed were on his property, to make my heart bleed for the suffering these evictions must have created. . . . But if I saw this, I saw also, what is not often seen in Ireland, the so-called exterminator giving his every effort, at any cost, to lay the foundation of a system of cultivation which should give to a future generation, if

not to this generation of peasantry, comfortable dwellings, with fair wages for fair work as farm servants, in place of the precarious livelihood that had been the peasant's lot as an occupant of the land himself. . . . I could have wished and prayed from my heart that the stern law of necessity had not driven him, and many other landlords, to the defence of their property by a course which has wrung the hearts and kindled the worst feelings of hundreds of their fellow creatures. . . . I can believe that had Providence not blighted the potato . . . the system of extermination would not have been carried out in the hurried manner it latterly has been, and the transition of the peasantry from the condition of small owners to that of hired labourers would have been attempted with more deliberation. Three successive years of famine, however, brought the struggle between poverty and property at once to a crisis. . . .

Now, Sir, if a Landlord is to be found resident . . . cultivating large tracts of land in the best possible manner . . . he does appear to me to deserve no little credit. . . . It matters not whether he is a popular or an unpopular man, what his creed, what his station; there he is, having weathered so far the storm, always called up by one who, careless of present odium, aims at a given end however painful the means of its attainment, and halts not until he has attained it.

Sidney Godolphin Osborne was genuinely a philanthropist, but how little he felt for the Irish people! He was genuinely a liberal, but how little he foresaw! He felt no more responsibility for the fate of the doomed and wretched masses of Ireland than the Earl of Lucan. The population of Ireland had to be reduced, that was clear, and as a humane man he felt regret that an unavoidable necessity should also be painful, but he felt no more. What happens to the rabbits when the warren is cleared? What happens to the rooks when the trees are cut down? Somehow, somewhere they disappear—and so must the Irish.

No faintest apprehension of the fatal result crossed the minds of landlords, statesmen, and philanthropists. As the "coffin ships" made their slow voyage across the Atlantic, a voyage said by men who had experienced both to transcend in horror the dreaded middle passage of the slave trade, they bore with them a cargo of hatred. In that new world which had been called into being to redress the balance of the old there was to grow up a population

among whom animosity to England was a creed, whose burning resentment could never be appeased, who, possessing the long memory of Ireland, could never forget. The Irish famine was to be paid for by England at a terrible price; out of it was born Irish America.