Jonathan Swift's Recommendations in "A Modest Proposal" and Economic Conditions in Ireland from 1729 to 1745

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JONATHAN SWIFT'S RECOMMENDATIONS IN "A MODEST PROPOSAL" AND ECONOMIC CONDITIONS IN IRELAND FROM 1729 TO 1745

being

A Thesis Presented to the Graduate Faculty of the Fort Hays Kansas State College in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts

by

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to determine the influence of Jonathan Swift's "A Modest Proposal" upon the economic situation of Ireland prior to 1745.

While Dean of Saint Patrick's Cathedral of Dublin, Swift wrote several articles in which he discussed the problems and oppressions of the Irish people. In his work entitled The Drapier's Letters Swift attacked the grant which had been given William Wood for the coining of halfpence for Ireland. The Irish became very disturbed when they learned that the proposed halfpence would not be worth as much as that which was already in circulation, and Wood was forced to withdraw his patent. This action won for Swift the love of the Irish, and he became a national hero. He continued to write for the cause of the Irish although he never again enjoyed the immediate results he had experienced with the Drapier's Letters.

Swift's political writings reached a climax in 1729 when he published "A Modest Proposal." In this essay he combined all the points he had made earlier in regard to the condition of the Irish people, together with his latest ideas for improving the entire nation. "A Modest Proposal" is a satire which suggests that the Irish rear their children for the purpose of being sold for meat; however, it also lists, point by point, the serious recommendations Swift proposed for
Ireland. It is these serious suggestions which provide the basis for the study of this thesis. Although nearly all the proposals would have benefited the Irish, no evidence has been found which indicates that these points were ever seriously considered. Ireland continued to suffer because of oppression by the English, and from the indifference of the Irish people. Swift appeared to give up on the idea that the Irish might help themselves, and he returned to writing articles for the clergy. In 1742 he was declared unable to care for himself, and shortly thereafter completely lost his mind. Swift died in 1745 leaving the conditions under which the Irish existed nearly as terrible as when he first began his effort to improve their situation.
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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study is to determine the influence of Jonathan Swift's "A Modest Proposal" upon the economic situation of Ireland prior to 1745. Many readers of Swift have misunderstood him. Gulliver's Travels is often used as a book for children, and "A Modest Proposal" is usually remembered as the essay which suggests that the Irish should eat their children. Yet Gulliver's Travels is a severe satire which clearly describes many of the wrongs of the world and, while "A Modest Proposal" does seem to argue that the people of Ireland should rear their children to be sold for meat, in it Swift seriously recommended several remedies for the Irish to put into practice. These positive proposals seem to be, more often than not, over-looked by readers.

To understand Swift's proposals for the Irish, it will be necessary to become acquainted with his life, emphasizing his relations with Ireland. He was born in Dublin, in 1667 of English parents and was a precocious child who learned to read at a very early age. As an older boy, however, he was often considered dull because he scorned studies which did not arouse his interest or meet with his approval. At the University of Dublin he received a degree by "special favor,"
a term implying a lack of proficiency. He was an extremely proud person, and the fact that an uncle had provided for his education was very fallible to his proud spirit. After leaving his position as a secretary to Sir William Temple he began writing. His first works were of little importance, and his poem entitled "To the Athenian Society" (1691)\(^1\) is credited with having caused Dryden, according to Johnson, to state, "Cousin Swift, you will never be a poet."\(^2\)

In 1701 Swift's first political pamphlet, "The DIcussions in Athens and in Rome," which attempted to show that harmony in politics is essential, gained the favor of the Whigs. For the next several years Swift worked for the cause of the Irish clergy. He made four trips to London, chiefly to obtain remission of the taxes on the Irish livings. During this time he was busy writing and one of his strongest works was "The Sentiments of a Church of England man, with respect to Religion and Government" (1708). "The Pickeringrstaff Pamphlets" (1709-10) were a political satire against false learning in the person of the astrologer Partridge. The primary purpose of his trips to London yielded no results, and he was personally disappointed because of his failure to influence the Whig lords.

\(^1\)This method will be used to indicate the publication dates throughout the introduction.

During the four years following 1710, Swift, after giving his services to the Tory party, wrote a large number of political pamphlets. Between 2 November 1710 and 14 June 1711 Swift did all the writing for the Examiner, the Tory weekly. The political service to the Tories resulted in his being made the Dean of Saint Patrick’s Cathedral, Dublin, in June 1713. In August 1713 Swift returned to London intent on solving the conflicts which existed between the Tory ministers, Oxford and Bolingbroke. He supported Oxford and upon his fall Swift closed his political career in England. The death of Queen Anne, the downfall of Bolingbroke, and the complete defeat of the Tory party caused Swift to return at once to Dublin.

Swift again became very active in 1720. From 1720 until he could write no longer Swift’s work has, according to the Encyclopaedia Americana, three main aspects: “that in behalf of the oppressed people in Ireland, both clergy and laity; that for the doctrines and the establishment of the Anglican Church; and the miscellaneous humorous and satirical writings, both in prose and in verse, on which his popular literary fame largely rests.”

3 Americana, XXVI, 130.
4 Americana, XXVI, 130.
The "Proposal for the Universal Use of Irish Manufactures" (1729) was the first of his tracts for the cause of the Irish. The Drapier's Letters (1724), one of his most celebrated writings ended with "An Humble Address to both Houses of Parliament," which was not published until 1733. In "An Humble Address" Swift reviewed the problems of Ireland and offered remedies for them. He continued to expose the miserable conditions of Ireland in such works as "A Short View of Ireland" (1727), and "Maxims Collected in Ireland" (1728). His "A Modest Proposal" (1729) is one of the bitterest satires in literature. Swift seems to have exhausted himself on the woes of Ireland in "A Modest Proposal," and his writings after that time primarily treat the problems of the minor clergy of Ireland and the efforts of the dissenters to gain civil rights.

Swift suffered loss of memory in 1742, and then complete insanity. He died in 1745, leaving his money for the founding of an asylum for idiots. Many Irishmen regard Swift as the first and greatest of Irish nationalists; yet he considered himself a hater of the human race and a lover of individuals.

When you think of the world give it one more lash at my request. I have ever hated all nations, professions, and communities; and all my love is toward individuals; for instance, I hate the tribe of lawyers, [he wrote to Pope, 29 September 1725] but I love counsellor such a one, and judge such a one; it is so with physicians (I
will not speak of my own trade), soldiers, English, Scotch, French, and the rest. But principally I hate and detest that animal called man; although I heartily love John, Thomas, etc. 5

One of the best summations of Swift is that made by Welsh:

He agitated kingdoms, stirred the laughter and rage of millions, and left to posterity memorials that will perish only with the English language. . . . Perhaps his chief legacy to the race is indirect,—the warning spectacle of his powerful and mournful genius, with its tempest of hopes and hatreds.

5 Americana, XXVI, 131.
CHAPTER ONE

IRELAND'S RELATIONS WITH ENGLAND

The events which led to the conditions which existed in Ireland during the eighteenth century began when Henry II of England, who ruled from 1154 to 1189, while professing love for Ireland and a serious desire to restore peace among the different tribes, sought to gain control of the island. Henry claimed to have received permission to take possession of Ireland from Pope Adrian IV, and his attempt to accomplish this feat created many years of persecution, confiscation of lands, and infringement of rights for the Irish.

At the beginning of the reign of Edward III, in 1327, there was civil strife in every part of the English section, as the English nobles who lived there sometimes quarreled among themselves and were often openly feuding. The Irish took this opportunity to start an uprising which threatened the safety of the English who were living there. The English were unable to put down the uprising until they granted the Irish barons complete civil and military jurisdiction in their own districts.

Friendly relations existed between England and Ireland until the statute of Kilkenny, in 1367, again created ill feelings by forbidding intermarriages between Catholics
and Protestants with property. Children of such marriages might be forcibly brought up as Protestants, and Catholics could not be guardians. If a man died leaving children, they had to be brought up under a Protestant guardian. The statute also forbade the assumption of Irish names by persons of English blood, and the use of the Irish language.¹ This law created such strong disturbances between the Irish and the English inhabitants of Ireland that the English viceroy had to make money payments, in the form of tributes, to Irish chiefs in order to protect the area. This situation continued until Richard, Duke of York, was appointed governor of the Pale in 1411; he worked seriously to restore peace.

The resistance of the Irish was so great at the time of Richard II in 1399 that effective English authority extended over only a small section of the eastern coast of the country. This eastern section, called "The Pale," was governed by a group of English nobles who were under the direction of a viceroy.

The Irish Parliament was greatly restricted by Poynings' Law, named for the lord-deputy of Ireland, which was passed in 1495 during the reign of Henry VII. This act provided that all former laws which had passed in England would

also be in force in Ireland, and that no Irish Parliament should be held without first stating the reasons for which it was meeting and the laws which it intended to enact. Up to this time the Irish parliament had met whenever the chief governor and his council pleased, but this law took away all the Irish Parliament's independence and placed it entirely in the hands of the English king and council. The English Parliament was not to legislate for Ireland, but Ireland's Parliament was subjected to a veto from the English Crown. Poynings' Law strengthened the power of the English government in The Pale, but did nothing to improve the condition of Ireland.

Henry VIII received the title of King of Ireland from the Irish Parliament in 1541, but as far as improving conditions for the people of Ireland was concerned he did nothing. The Reformation, which took place in England during the reign of Henry VIII, had very little influence in Ireland, although the monasteries were suppressed and the tribute to the Papal see was abolished.

During the reign of Queen Elizabeth, the Irish waged general war against England, which is usually referred

2T. W. Joyce, Outlines of the History of Ireland from the Earliest Times to 1905 (Dublin: M. H. Gill and Son, 1912), p. 53.

3Ireland, op. cit., p. 100.

to as the Rebellion; this ended in 1603 with the reduction of the entire Irish island by the English. More than 600,000 acres of land were acquired for the English crown from the Irish, and these were nearly all distributed among English colonists.

Between 1603 and 1625 King James demanded Irish chiefs to produce the documents on which they based their claims for their property. If the documents did not completely satisfy the requirements, the land was given to the English crown. Much of the 800,000 acres which came into the king's hands in this manner was given to Scotch and English settlers. In addition, the Catholics, because of the oath of supremacy by which all public officers were required to acknowledge the king as head of the church, remained excluded from all official appointments.

Cromwell was appointed lieutenant of Ireland in August of 1649, and shortly thereafter all the possessions of the Catholics were confiscated; about 20,000 Irishmen were sold as slaves in America; and approximately 40,000 Irishmen entered foreign service to escape the severity of the conqueror.5

During the English Revolution of 1688 the Irish Catholics supported James II, because he had given them a

5Americana, XV, 318.
fair representation in Parliament, and the Protestants favored William III. The army of James was doing very well until William won the battle at Boyne in July of 1690 and provided his followers with greatly needed encouragement. After the battle of Boyne William's army met little resistance except for the city of Limerick, which was the last place in Ireland to give up hope for the success of James; but in early October of 1690 the city capitulated and a treaty was made by the Williamite and Jacobite commissioners.

... the military articles of the treaty, twenty-nine in number, provided that all persons willing to expatriate themselves, as well officers and soldiers as rapparees and volunteers, should have free liberty to do so, to any place beyond the seas, except England and Scotland; that they might depart in whole bodies, companies or parties; that if they were plundered by the way, William's government should make good their loss; that fifty ships of 200 tons each should be provided for their transportation, besides two men-of-war for the principal officers; that the garrison of Limerick might march out with all their arms, guns and baggage, colors flying, drums beating and matches lighting. It was also agreed that those who so wished might enter the service of William, retaining their rank and pay... only 1,000 out of the 13,000 that marched out of Limerick joined the army of William.  

Ireland wrote about the treaty from the religious standpoint:

By the Treaty of Limerick, the Catholic Irish were guaranteed the same general position and privileges that they had held in the reign of Charles II when Catholic worship was open and undisturbed. The Treaty not only was not kept but was flagrantly disregarded.

both in letter and in spirit. To exclude Catholics altogether from the Irish Parliament violated the first provision of the Treaty of Limerick. The Treaty of Limerick, according to Professor Edmund Curtis, covered not the whole Catholic population of Ireland but only the officers, soldiers, and garrisons of the Irish Army, in the cities of Limerick, Clare, Kerry, Cork, Mayo and Galway and all such as are under their protection in the said counties.7

Limerick is referred to by the Irish as The City of the Violated Treaty. To make matters worse for the defeated, the English Parliament divided over 1,000,000 acres of confiscated land among the Protestants after the victory over James.8

The English had invaded, conquered, and mastered Ireland in spite of repeated rebellions. The Irish were brow-beaten, plundered, and despised; but they were a defeated nation and the memory of their rebellions was fresh in the minds of Englishmen. Each rebellion had been followed by severe retribution. The land had been taken away to compensate the victors and to pay for the alien administration which the conquerors had imported. Ireland's economy had been rigidly and absolutely subordinated to England's.

Whatever the causes actually were, each rebellion appeared


8 Americana, XV, 318.
to be a Roman Catholic revolt against a Protestant government, so that every uprising brought harsher laws against Catholic priests and Catholic laymen. In consequence, the institutions of government in Ireland were all in the hands of a small Protestant minority. In 1691 the English Parliament required members of both houses of the Irish Parliament to take an oath of allegiance to the Church of England; a declaration against the Mass, Transubstantiation, and other Roman Catholic doctrines; and an oath abjuring the spiritual supremacy of the Pope. This law successfully barred both Catholics and Protestants, who would not swear their allegiance to England, from taking their seats in Parliament. For some time the Presbyterians were bitterly persecuted, chiefly under the Test Act; for they did not wish to receive the sacrament according to the English rite. Their sufferings were sharp but small compared with those of the Catholics.\textsuperscript{9} It was 1829 before the law was repealed and Roman Catholics were able to sit in parliament again.\textsuperscript{10}

The Protestant Parliament at Dublin had become a permanent institution in Ireland by 1692, in the reign of William; yet its independence of England and its responsibility

\textsuperscript{9}P. W. Joyce, \textit{Outlines of the History of Ireland from the Earliest Times to 1905} (Dublin: M. H. Gill and Son, 1912), p. 103.

to the people of Ireland was completely checked by Poynings' Law. Its powers were very limited, even for Ireland, since it had no control either over revenues or over the Army, both of which were under the control of the English Parliament.\textsuperscript{11} Poynings' Law is also known as the Statutes of Drogheda. By whichever name it was called, it remained a serious problem for the Irish, and in 1698 William Molynex, an Irish philosopher and politician, published a book entitled \textit{The Case of Ireland's Being Bound by Act of Parliament in England, Stated}. This work on the legislative independence of Ireland created some agitation at the time because the author declared that most of Ireland's troubles stemmed from the fact that the Irish Parliament was subjected to the selfish acts of England.\textsuperscript{12} This opinion was the same as Swift's idea that Ireland's misery was caused by a government which was not intentionally cruel, but which was terribly selfish.

The Lord Lieutenant was responsible to the Parliament at Westminster but not to that at Dublin, where he had so little to do that he lived in England.\textsuperscript{13} Because it

\textsuperscript{11}Ireland, p. 189.
\textsuperscript{12}Curtis, p. 283.
\textsuperscript{13}Ireland, p. 191.
lacked power to accomplish anything of importance, the Irish assembly met only every other year and the Lord Lieutenant visited Ireland only once in the two-year period. His duty on his biennial visit was to maintain in Ireland the Protestant Constitution, to obtain supplies for carrying on the Irish Government, and to gain enough votes to keep Ireland safe for the English. Under a measure called Heads of Bills in 1692, either the Irish Lords or Commons could propose a bill, but before it could be passed by the Irish Parliament it had to be accepted by the English Council in Dublin, sent to England, where the Privy Council of the King could either accept the bill as they found it, alter it to suit their desires, or reject it completely. The bill would then be returned to Ireland where the Irish Parliament had either to accept or reject it as written. An Irish bill had a chance of approval in England only if it touched on matters exclusively of Irish concern and only if it touched in no way on any English or imperial interests; for example, defense, navigation, or trade, as to which the English Parliament and King were supreme. If a bill was passed by the Irish Parliament,

14 Curtis, p. 280.
15 Ireland, p. 191.
16 Ibid.
it still had to receive the assent of the King's Lord Lieutenant under orders of the English Secretary of State for Home Affairs. In addition, the King and Parliament in England claimed the final powers concerning the British Empire, and where England's interests were involved, the English legislature acted without regard to the Irish Parliament.17

Then, in 1693, an act was passed which made it illegal for Papists (as Catholic subjects were officially designated for nearly a century) who were not protected by the Treaty of Limerick to carry arms for self-protection or for hunting. The Catholics who were protected had registered under the treaty and were allowed to practice their religion. However, no Catholic could own a horse which was valued at more than five pounds. Even then he could not be certain of retaining a good horse because any Protestant might buy the horse, regardless of the value, by paying five pounds for it. No gunsmith could train a Catholic apprentice because the English government believed that if they did not allow the Catholics to arm, the only way they could rise in arms again would be through foreign aid. No man was permitted to have the advantages of learning unless he was a Protestant; moreover, an act was passed which prohibited the Catholics from going abroad for an education and also prevented them

17Curtis, p. 278.
from operating public schools at home. "They could not," wrote Curtis, "receive degrees, fellowships, or scholarships at the University of Dublin." The idea behind this act was to keep the Catholics in a state as near complete ignorance as possible.

Sir Henry Capel was sent as Deputy to Ireland by the Parliament of England. It was his Irish Parliament, in 1695, which consisted only of Protestants, that framed the set of laws which became known as the Penal Code. According to Curtis, the Penal Laws can be divided into two parts:

(1) "the actual penal measures, which punished people for their religion, and (2) the disabling statutes which excluded the Catholics from office, the army, and civil employment." The Penal Laws did not weaken the Catholic religion, as they were intended to do, but they did destroy respect for the law in Ireland. According to Hayden:

The evil effects of the Penal Laws on the character of both Protestants and Catholics, and on the country itself, can scarcely be exaggerated. The Protestants developed the vices of slave-owners, becoming idle, dissipated, and neglectful of their duties. The Catholics grew, as a serf population always does grow, cringing, shiftless, and untruthful. They were lazy because they had nothing to work for; lawless because

18 Curtis, p. 280.
19 Curtis, p. 286.
they knew the law only as an enemy, to be defied or evaded when possible. 21

Edmund Burke declared of the Penal Laws that:

... their declared object was to reduce the Catholics of Ireland to a miserable populace, without property, without estimation, without education. ... They divided the nation into two distinct bodies ... one of those bodies was to possess all the franchises, all the education: the other was to be composed of drawers of water and cutters of turf for them. 22

The act against Popery in 1704 required office holders to meet the qualifications of their job by taking the Sacrament according to the Anglican church. The act prevented Protestant Dissenters, as well as Catholics, from holding any political power. This measure, in addition to the requirement that they pay tithes to the State clergy, irritated the Protestant Dissenters and united them with the Catholics in hatred of the English. 23

The same act provided that estates which belonged to Protestants could not come into Catholic hands. The only way a Roman Catholic could acquire land was to inherit it from another Catholic, for Catholics were not allowed to purchase land or to take a lease for more than a thirty-one


22Ireland, p. 185.

year period. If they did lease, they were required to pay a rent of two-thirds of the annual value of the lease. Upon the death of a Catholic landowner his estate would be divided among his sons unless the oldest would conform to the Church of England within one year, or by the time he reached the legal age. If the eldest son did conform he would inherit the whole estate according to the rule of primogeniture.\textsuperscript{24}

In the period from 1714 to 1760 Ireland had little or no political history. The Irish Parliament had very few powers and all legislation was controlled by the Privy Council in London. The Irish Parliament was allowed the right to tax the country; however, the English felt that the only way to solve the Irish problem was to keep Ireland completely subordinated to England. The main object of subordination of the Irish Parliament was that England might regulate Irish commerce to the favorable interests of the English.

The English added to the problems and expense of the Irish in 1719 when seven Irish army regiments were called to England as a protective measure for her, but the expenses involved for the payment of these troops remained in the hands of the Irish. Then in 1722 six more Irish regiments were sent to England at her request, but once again when the Irish requested that the troops be paid from English funds

\textsuperscript{24}Curtis, p. 285.
the request was not granted and Ireland had to pay them. In each case the troops were serving the cause of England while being paid by Ireland, and most of the soldiers' pay was spent in England for English goods.\(^25\)

It was during these troubled and trying years that Swift gained his greatest fame in Ireland. He became an Irish hero by writing the *Drapier's Letters* in 1724, in which he denounced Wood's projected plans for coining money for Ireland. There was a shortage of all denominations of money in Ireland, and the Duchess of Kendal, an ex-mistress of King George I, who received a pension from Irish revenues, was granted a patent for an English ironmaster named William Wood to coin £100,000 worth of halfpence and farthings to be used in Ireland. The estimated profit on the scheme would have amounted to around £40,000, of which a large part would have gone to Wood, although the Duchess of Kendal would have shared a part of it.\(^26\) This proposed project met with the opposition of the Irish Parliament because the value of Wood's money was not equal to that which was coined by Ireland. This would have resulted in a cheapening of the Irish money which


was in circulation at the time Wood planned to issue his, and for the first time the Irish Parliament took a stand against the government of England. The storm excited against the patentee was so great that his Dublin agents were obliged to resign their connection with him, and the royal letters-patent were unwillingly canceled. Curtis credits Swift as being the real force, through his intervention and the scathing wit of the Drapier's Letters, which caused the defeat and the withdrawal of the patent.

The great churchman, in his fourth letter, in the assumed character of M. B. Drapier, tackled the question of legislative independence. Alluding to the pamphlet of Molyneux, which had been published in 1698, he pronounced its arguments invincible, and the contrary system "the very definition of slavery." "The remedy," he concludes, addressing the Irish people, "is wholly in your own hands, and therefore I have digressed a little, in order to refresh and continue that spirit so seasonable raised among you, and to let you see, that, by the laws of God, of nature, of nations, and of your country, you are, and ought to be, as free a people as your

28 Curtis, p. 297.
brethren in England." For this letter the printer, Harding, was indicted, but the Dublin grand jury unanimously ignored the bill. A reward of £300 was then issued for the discovery of the author, but no informer could be found to betray him. 29

Suddenly, because of the disturbance created by Wood's halfpence, Ireland had to be taken seriously. Sir Robert Walpole became alarmed at the situation Swift had created and committed the government of Ireland to Lord Carteret. His policy, in every instance, was English and Protestant, and his main purpose was to defeat the believers in the dangerous doctrines of Swift and Molyneux. 30

Archbishop King asserted, near the close of 1725, that during the time Lord Carteret had been Viceroy the government had already spent £20,000 a year on benefices and employment connected with the Church to persons from England, and to strangers, but said it had not spent £500 on the natives of Ireland. "Those who have the misfortune to be born here," wrote Swift, "have the least title to any considerable employment, to which they are seldom preferred but upon a political consideration," 31 but any office could be had by an Englishman for the asking; Swift considered most of those who did ask

30 Ibid.
31 Lecky, p. 198.
to be second-rate men. He compared Ireland to a hospital where all the household officers grew rich, while the poor, for whose sake it had been built, were nearly starving.

The accession of King George II, in 1727, led to no considerable changes either in England or Ireland. It became fashionable to reward all sorts of English services at the expense of Ireland. Grants to favored persons who had done nothing for Ireland were put on the Irish pay list and paid for by the Irish taxpayer. Walpole described the financial plight by stating:

Half the receipts of the Irish Exchequer consisted of hereditary revenue, derived from a perpetual grant of the excise and customs made at the Restoration, from crown-lands, and the quit-rents reserved to the Crown. Vast sums of this money were wasted on royal mistresses, royal bastards, and the nominees of the king and his ministers. In 1723 the pension list amounted to £30,000. Ten years later it had risen to £69,000. The grievance was not a new one. One king after another had paid for his illicit pleasures through the Irish establishment. Catharine Sedley, James II's mistress, had enjoyed a pension of £5,000 a year; and the Duke of St. Albans, Charles II's bastard, one of £800. The Duchess of Kendal had a pension of £3,000 a year; and her daughter Lady Walsingham, £1,500. The Countess of Leinster, Sophia Kilmansg, had laid her hands on a pension of £2,000; Lady Darlington one of £1,500, and her daughter, Lady Howe, the modest annuity of £500; while Madame de Walmoden enjoyed £3,000 a year, standing in the names of Lord Cholmondeley and Sir Robert Walpole. Besides these horse-leeches, there was Lady Stanhope, who drew £2,600 a year; Baron Bernstoff, who had £2,500; and the Dowager Queen of Prussia, George II's sister, and many others who batten upon the Irish treasury in various amounts. It is not surprising that the national debt, which in 1715 was but £16,106, and arose from extraordinary precautionary expenditure during the Jacobite rising in Scotland.
of that year, in 1717 stood at £91,537, in 1725 was nearly doubled, and in 1733 amounted to £371,312.32

In Chapter VI, Book III, of Gulliver's Travels several ways are given for increasing the tax revenue:

I heard a very warm debate between two professors, about the most commodious and effectual ways and means of raising money without grieving the subject. The first affirmed the justest method would be to lay a certain tax upon vices and folly, and the sum fixed upon every man to be rated after the fairest manner by a jury of his neighbours. The second was of an opinion directly contrary, to tax those qualities of body and mind for which men chiefly value themselves, the rate to be more or less according to the degrees of excelling, the decision whereof should be left entirely to their own breast. The highest tax was upon men who are the greatest favourites of the other sex, and the assessments according to the number and natures of the favours they have received; for which they are allowed to be their own vouchers. Wit, valour, and politeness were likewise proposed to be largely taxed, and collected in the same manner, by every person's giving his own word for the quantum of what he possessed. But as to honour, justice, wisdom and learning, they should not be taxed at all, because they are qualifications of so singular a kind, that no man will either allow them in his neighbour, or value them in himself.

The women were proposed to be taxed according to their beauty and skill in dressing, wherein they had the same privilege with the men to be determined by their own judgement. But constancy, chastity, good sense, and good nature were not rated, because they would not bear the charge of collecting.33

If this method of taxing had been used in Ireland the burden of the masses could have been greatly reduced.

32Charles George Walpole, A Short History of the Kingdom of Ireland (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1862) p. 263.

During the last years of the reign of George I
Swift was:

... the most powerful and popular person in Ireland, [McGee wrote,] and perhaps in the empire. The freedom with which he advised Carteret the viceroy, and remonstrated with Walpole, the premier, on the misrule of his country, was worthy of the ascendancy of his genius. No man of letters, no churchman, no statesman of any country in any age, ever showed himself more thoroughly independent, in his intercourse with men in office, than Swift. The vice of Ireland was exactly the other way, so that in this respect also, the patriot was the liberator.34

England continued its domination of Ireland for many years, and "it was not until the American War of Independence taught the English government the folly of attempting to govern a people by coercion," the Universal Standard Encyclopedia states, "that the severity of the laws relating to Ireland was mitigated," so that in 1776 the Penal Laws were made much more lenient, and in 1783 Roynings' Law was finally repealed.35

34 McGee, p. 619.
CHAPTER TWO

ECONOMIC CONDITIONS IN IRELAND BEFORE 1729

Ireland began the eighteenth century with as poor an economic outlook as can be imagined. As long as the power of the English Parliament prevailed over Ireland, all the efforts which were made to improve her condition were fruitless, and the first eighty years of the century were marked by about as much economic retrogression as by economic progress.¹

The country was not condemned by nature to suffer enduring poverty, even though its lack of coal would have prevented it from ever becoming a competitor of England.² A large part of the Irish soil was fertile and was well adapted for the growing of crops, with the exception of wheat. The land was used chiefly for pasture, much of which was excellent because of so much rainfall, and the main source of Irish wealth to 1666 was the exportation of cattle and other livestock to England. Ireland has always been well supplied with water power, and its natural harbors are among the best in the world. However, the seriousness of the Irish food

¹George O'Brien, The Economic History of Ireland in the Eighteenth Century (Dublin, 1918) p. 1915.
problem became greater because a year of poor crop production would increase tillage the following year and prices would fall. Then the next year there would be little tillage again, and another shortage. This resulted in a surplus for one year with no place to store it, and a shortage the following year when the demand was strong.  

An average of 60,000 head of cattle had been shipped into England annually from Ireland during the three years following the Restoration of 1660. The quality of the cattle was good, and this, coupled with the low price for which they were sold, had tended to harm the English cattle-breeding industry. When Englishmen began complaining about the Irish rivalry in the cattle market, because it was lowering their profits, an act was passed which prevented Irish cattle from being sent to England from 1 July to 20 December of each year. This act hurt the Irish, but the English were still not satisfied and another act, the Irish Cattle Bill of 1666, was passed which completely prohibited the exportation of Irish cattle.

During the period when Ireland had concentrated on shipping cattle to England, the Irish had paid little or no attention to improving the quality or the quantity of milk production, or to improve the quality of the meat. The law

\[3\] O'Brien, p. 102.
of 1666 had ruined the cattle market, which had been the mainstay of the Irish economy, but it forced a change on the Irish. A new industry, that of provisions, grew as a result of the loss of the cattle market, and the country turned to the production of dairy products and meat.4

No restraints were placed on provisions which were exported to foreign countries or to the English colonies in America,5 and Ireland found a way of salting and packing her beef for shipment overseas. The economy increased to the point that as a contemporary observer reported, "in lieu of exporting 70,000 head of live cattle to England at 40 shillings a head, which cost England but £40,000, and which they manufactured afterwards, and had all the hides and tallow into the bargain, Ireland now manufactures and exports that beef to the value of £260,000 and butter worth £200,000 more; about 3,000 raw hides to England; 70,000 raw hides to France and Spain, and about £70,000 worth of tallow." This amount of trade greatly increased the volume of Irish shipping. The quality of the Irish provisions was high, the price low, and many foreign ships, including some from England, found it cheaper to buy their supplies in Ireland rather than at English ports.

5O’Brien, p. 221.
In 1666, when the export of Irish cattle was prohibited, the Irish landowners turned their land into sheepwalks, and the woolen manufacturing industry began to develop quite rapidly. The quality of the wool was excellent, and Ireland came to be known as the best wool producer in Europe.\textsuperscript{6} An industrial enthusiasm soon spread over the nation as large numbers of Scots, Englishmen, and other foreign manufacturers moved to Ireland. The woolen industry probably provided employment for at least twelve thousand Protestant families in Dublin and for another thirty thousand throughout the rest of the nation.\textsuperscript{7}

Eventually, when the woolen industry began to rival that of England, the British Parliament passed a law in 1699 which prevented Irish exportation of manufactured wool to any country except England.\textsuperscript{8} Ireland's lower wages and greater skill were defeating England's woolen manufacturing industries through competition in the foreign market. The new law, through crushing prohibitive duties, prevented the entrance

\textsuperscript{6}Tom Ireland, \textit{Ireland, Past and Present} (New York: G. P. Putnam's and Sons, 1942) p. 179.

\textsuperscript{7}Lecky, p. 180.

of Irish woolens into England. Thus, deprived of any market either inside or outside of England, the woolen industry of Ireland was destroyed by an act which deliberately ruined the largest industry of the country merely because the English woolen manufacturers were beginning to regard the Irish as competitors.  

The destruction of the woolen industry brought an end to the best chance Ireland had yet experienced of becoming a prosperous and happy nation. Many leading manufacturers began to emigrate to England, America, and other countries which offered better chances for economic improvement.

Ireland had an abundance of wool, which France and Holland needed, and smuggling with France developed on a huge scale. Wool was smuggled out of the country as wine, brandy, and tobacco were smuggled in. 

Ireland's having so many excellent harbors made the task quite easy. Profits from smuggling with France are estimated to have amounted to more than the profits from the total legal foreign trade of Ireland. 

In general, however, the Irish were reduced to leasers and beggars who ate potatoes for their main food and who worked as laborers for trifling wages which were

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9 Ireland, p. 180.

10 P. W. Joyce, Outlines of the History of Ireland from the Earliest Times to 1905 (Dublin: R. H. Gill and Son, 1912) p. 103.

11 Ireland, p. 180.
so low that it was almost useless to work. For nearly fifty years after the ruin of the woolen industry poverty was so great in Ireland that every poor season produced a famine.

Finally, linen-weaving became a large business and the trade soon spread over the entire island with its main stronghold among the Presbyterian weavers of the North. Even then its size hardly touched the many thousands of peasants who lived in want and in fear of starvation.

In 1705 a measure was passed which permitted the Irish to export their white and their brown linens to the British colonies, but an act of the English Parliament in 1696 had made it unlawful for goods to be exported directly from the colonies to Ireland. This law hurt the Irish linen industry seriously because Ireland was dependent on America for flax seed and potash, the latter of which was used for bleaching linen. Flax was grown in Ireland but much of it was imported. It was this act, which prevented the colonies from shipping directly to Ireland, that caused Swift to write to Sir Robert Walpole stating that the colonists in America were still Englishmen and were therefore entitled to English rights, and that the English Parliament had deliberately crushed the trade of the American colonies for the benefit of the English who were still living in the mother

\[12\] Lecky, p. 179.
country. The linen manufacturers suffered greatly at the hands of the retail dealers of flax seed who bought from the American colonies and sold to the Irish farmers. Some encouragement was given to the industry in 1708 by England when a bounty of a penny a yard on exported sail-cloth was given, providing the value fell within a specified price bracket.

In 1708 spinning schools were in operation in every county of Ireland, and in 1710 a board of trustees was appointed for the management of the industry. The board had the power to dispose of all duties granted by Parliament for the support of the manufacture and to settle and adjust all disputes which arose within the industry. Then, in 1719, lappers were appointed to stamp linen goods with their official seal, and several acts were passed which put the whole trade under control and regulation.

An effort to aid the industry was made by the Dublin Society, in 1724, when it began making yearly grants

14O'Brien, p. 206.
16O'Brien, p. 197.
of £2,000 for the improvement of the growing of flax; a similar sum for the encouragement of the linen industry in Leinster, Munster, and Connaught was granted annually. Water driven machinery had been introduced by 1725 and did much of the work which had previously been done by women.17

The total value of the Irish linen exports amounted to £14,000 in 1700 but by 1727 the exports of linen amounted to one-third of the total exports from Ireland.18

Cotton manufacturing had been making some progress in Ireland during the late years of the seventeenth century but it was never of any considerable importance in the eighteenth century because of too many restraints and the imposition of heavy duties.

One of the most serious restraints was created by the Navigation Laws which prohibited the importation of raw cotton, and prevented the finished goods from being exported to the English colonies. A high duty on imported cottons in England served to close that market, and an English Parliament act of 1721 prohibited the people of Great Britain from wearing any article made of cotton which was not manufactured in that country. Swift suggested that Ireland pass a similar law for the benefit of the Irish industry, but his advice was

17 O'Brien, p. 198.

18 O'Brien, p. 201.
not heeded; consequently, the English continued to send their cotton goods into Ireland under a very low duty. At the same time that the Irish markets were being closed Ireland had to import agricultural implements because of the lack of iron manufacturing at home.

Near the end of the seventeenth century the Huguenot immigrants had founded the silk industry in Dublin, but, like cotton, it was never able to employ many persons because Irish silk was excluded entirely from Great Britain.

Glass was another of the Irish industries which was held down by English restraints. Manufacturers were allowed to ship any place in the world with the exception of the English colonies in America, because of the Navigation Acts, and to England because of prohibitive duties. The industry appeared to be prospering until the English prohibited glass exportation by the Irish, but allowed other countries to ship glass into Ireland. Although the manufacturers managed to survive, the home market was not sufficient to support a large industry, and it never reached the size it would have under normal conditions.

19 O'Brien, p. 207.
20 O'Brien, p. 126.
21 O'Brien, p. 208.
During the first half of the eighteenth century the only Irish industry to enjoy continuous prosperity was that of distilling. Distilling produced a large revenue and was not hampered by government regulations. This important factor, along with a large home demand for the product and the encouragement of the landed gentry, who sold large amounts of grain to the distillers, made it an almost certain success.23

At the close of the English Revolution of 1688 large sections of Irish land had been let on lease at very low rents to Englishmen, and especially to the Protestants of Scotland. In 1718 great numbers of these leases, which had been granted on very easy terms, expired in the north-eastern counties, and if they were renewed, the landlords often doubled or trebled the rent.24 This resulted in the tenant paying so much rent that he had nothing left for use in improving his land or for stocking it. "Here the tenant, I fear," Swift wrote, "has hardly ever more than one-third for his share; too often but a fourth or fifth part."25 All improvements were made by the tenant because the landlord furnished only the land to be rented, and as there was very

23O'Brien, p. 212

24Lecky, p. 246.

little capital available for agricultural purposes the Irish were not effective farmers. Because the tenants were never certain how long they would remain on the land they did little to improve its capacity for production. Some of the tenants held leases but these were binding only the Catholics and could be terminated at any time at the option of the Protestant landlord. The Penal Act, which prohibited Catholics from lending money on the security of a mortgage on land, also prevented their making improvements which might otherwise have been made. 26

The Presbyterians were in a situation where they paid high rents for their land, a hearth tax on the land to the State, and tithes to the Established Church of England. 27 Thousands of Presbyterians began to emigrate to America every year in order to escape these oppressions.

Although the Presbyterians were oppressed, it was the Catholics who suffered unduly under the land laws because of the Gavelling Act which provided that the eldest son would succeed to the whole estate if he conformed to the Church of England; otherwise the estate would be equally divided among the sons. This act made it necessary for Catholics either to conform and hold the land together or to be impoverished

26 O'Brien, p. 106.
27 Curtis, p. 286.
by subdivision. In either case the law served to benefit the English. If the eldest son did turn against his father's faith and become a Protestant, he could make his father a tenant for life. Ireland, in this manner, came to be divided between Catholic and Protestant: The Protestants owned the land, and the Catholics worked it and paid rent on it. There were a few Catholic landlords, and there were many Protestant farmers; but generally Protestantism was the religion of an English speaking gentry and Catholicism of an Irish-speaking peasantry. Three-quarters of the Irish land belonged to Englishmen or to Anglo-Irish Protestant families. Many of these people found that it was necessary for them to remain in Ireland if they wanted to maintain their social standing because the extravagance of the English aristocracy was beyond their means.

It was soon learned that one of the easiest ways for a Protestant to make money was by becoming a middleman. Under this plan a person would rent a large tract of country from

28 "Ireland, the Penal Laws," Encyclopedia Britannica, 1963, XII, 609.

29 Ireland, p. 184.


an absentee landlord at a long lease and then sub-let a part
of the land to a smaller tenant, after raising the rent of
the landlord in order to make a profit for himself. Because
the landlords did not like to be troubled with the collection
of rents, they were willing to rent all of their land to a
single tenant. If the head tenant could make enough profit
from his rents he would also become an absentee. At times
there were as many as five persons between the landlord and
the farmer who was actually working the land.32 I confess
myself," Swift said, "to be touched with a very sensible
pleasure when I hear of a mortality in any county, parish or
village, where the wretches are forced to pay for a filthy
cabin and two ridges of potatoes treble the worth; brought
up to steal and beg for want of work; to whom death would be
the best thing to be wished for, on account of both themselves
and the public."33 These conditions would not have been
possible if the tenant could have had any other means of
making a living.

The Irish House of Commons passed measures for the
erection of public granaries and persuaded the English govern-
ment to agree to a bill which would allow five out of every

32Lecky, p. 215.

33Stephen, p. 165.
one hundred acres of land to be cultivated; but there was still extreme poverty, heavy unemployment, and a scarcity of currency. One reason for the lack of currency was that "the rents of Ireland may be computed to about two Millions," as Swift asserted, "whereof one third part, at least, is directly transmitted to those who are perpetual absentees in England."34

Even though the trade and industry of Ireland was chiefly in the hands of Protestants, King William III promised the English Parliament that he would promote English trade and discourage that of the Irish.35 Ireland, as it had every right to do and through no fault of its own, was producing about the same things as England, and England was very concerned with what was exported from Scotland and Ireland because the trade of the Empire and the commerce of the seas were protected by England, and she felt that neither Scotland nor Ireland had done anything to found or to conquer the English colonies.

Ireland's harbors could have created a large shipping industry, but the English Navigation Act of 1663 prohibited nearly all European articles from being shipped to the English

35Curtis, p. 282.
colonies. This and similar acts influenced Swift, in later years, to write that "The convenience of ports and harbors which Nature bestowed so liberally on this kingdom, is of no more use to us than a beautiful prospect to a man shut up in a dungeon." 36

A letter written in 1702 by a member of the Irish Parliament stated that the money of the country was almost gone and the poverty so great that the Court mourning for the death of William III would probably exhaust the funds of the government. 37 By 1715 there were so many people begging in Ireland that a measure was passed whereby the minister and church wardens of every parish in Ireland were allowed to give any child they found begging to any respectable Protestant housekeeper or tradesman who would assume the task of rearing the child. 38 The only stipulation placed on the church people was that they must have the consent of a justice of the peace before placing a child with a Protestant. "Whoever travels through this country and observes the face of nature," Swift exclaimed in his Proposal for the Universal Use of Irish Manufactures, "or the face and habits

36 Lecky, p. 174.
37 Lecky, p. 161.
38 Lecky, p. 131.
and dwellings of the natives, would hardly think himself in a land where either law, religion, or common humanity was professed."  

"The poor," wrote Thomas Sheridan, "are sunk to the lowest degree of misery and poverty—their houses dunghills, their victuals the blood of the cattle, or the herbs of the fields."

Swift's "Short View of the State of Ireland," which appeared in 1727, and his "A Modest Proposal for Preventing the Children of Poor People in Ireland from Being a Burden to their Parents or Country, and for Making them Beneficial to the Public," which appeared in 1729, depict the conditions of Ireland during the early part of the eighteenth century. The famine which had its beginning in 1727 impelled Swift to write "A Modest Proposal," in which he suggested several ways that Ireland could help herself. Swift knew that no one would sell his children, as he would cattle, for slaughter, but he realized that he could use this topic as a means of describing how the people of Ireland had been treated:

I desire those politicians who dislike my overture, and may perhaps be so bold to attempt an answer, that they will first ask the parents of these mortals whether they would not at this day think it a great happiness

40 Lecky, p. 184.
to have been sold for food at a year old, in the manner I prescribed, and thereby have avoided such a perpetual scene of misfortunes as they have since gone through, by the oppression of landlords, the impossibility of paying rent without money or trade, the want of common sustenance, with neither house nor clothes to cover them from the inclemencies of weather, and the most inevitable prospect of inflicting the like, or greater miseries upon their breed for ever.\textsuperscript{41}

Ireland continually lived in a state near famine, and the years which are mentioned by historians as famine years were simply years when conditions became extremely acute.\textsuperscript{42} The famine which provided the theme for "A Modest Proposal" caused the Irish to suffer for three long years, and the fact that the law allowed only five acres out of every one hundred to be under cultivation added to the seriousness of the situation.

Frimate Poulter described the beginning of the famine when he wrote:

Last year the dearness of corn was such that thousands of families quitted their habitations to seek bread elsewhere, and many hundreds perished; this year the poor had consumed their potatoes, which is their winter subsistence, near two months sooner than ordinary, and are already, through the dearness of corn, in that want, that in some places they begin already to quit their habitations.\textsuperscript{43}

\textsuperscript{41}Swift, \textit{Gulliver's Travels}, p. 495.
\textsuperscript{42}O'Brien, p. 102.
\textsuperscript{43}O'Brien, p. 193.
Swift wrote in "A Modest Proposal:"

Some persons of a desponding spirit are in great concern about that vast number of poor people, who are aged, diseased, or maimed, and I have been desired to employ my thoughts what course may be taken to ease the nation of so grievous an encumbrance. But I am not in the least pain upon that matter, because it is very well known that they are every day dying, and rotting, by cold, and famine, and filth, and vermin, as fast as can be reasonably expected. And as to the younger labourers, they are now in almost as hopeful a condition. They cannot get work, and consequently pine away for want of nourishment, to a degree that if at any time they are accidently hired to common labour, they have not strength to perform it; and thus the country and themselves are in a fair way of being soon delivered from the evils to come.\(^{44}\)

Another writer described the famine by stating:

The calamities of the year 1728 are still fresh in our memory: when many of the poorer sort in the Northern parts who were not able to fly from the famine perished in it, and died in their native country through want of food.\(^{45}\)

The early years of the eighteenth century in Ireland were well summarized when Swift wrote:

Whatever can make a country poor and despicable, concurs in the case of Ireland. The nation is controlled by laws to which it does not consent; despised by its brethren and countrymen; refused the liberty of trading even in its natural commodities; forced to seek for justice many hundred miles by sea and land; rendered in a manner incapable of serving the king and country in any place of honor, trust, or profit; whilst the governors have no sympathy with the governed, except what may

\(^{44}\)Swift, Gulliver's Travels, pp. 491-2.

\(^{45}\)G. Brien, p. 103.
occasionally arise from a sense of justice and philanthropy.\(^46\)

"Ireland's worst enemy was not the English King but the English Parliament," O'Brien wrote, "and the policy of oppressing Ireland commercially grew simultaneously with the rise of the power of the English Parliament. The Parliament was eager to discourage the growth of sources for royal revenue which were beyond Parliamentary control."\(^47\)

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\(^{47}\) O'Brien, p. 6.
CHAPTER THREE

REMEDIES SUGGESTED BY SWIFT

Under Queen Anne, Jonathan Swift had employed his genius for the good of the Tory party, but after moving to Ireland in 1713 he used his wit in the cause of the Irish.¹ "As the world is now turned," Swift wrote to Charles Ford in 1719, "no cloister is retired enough to keep politics out, and I will raise my passions whenever they come in my way."² An "Act for the better securing the Dependency of the Kingdom of Ireland upon the Crown of Great Britain" was passed in March 1720, and Swift expressed the feelings of most Irishmen in a letter to Charles Ford when he wrote:

I do assure you I never saw so universal a Discontent as there is among the highest most virulent and anti-church Whigs against that Bill and every Author or Abettor of it without Exception. They say publicly that having been the most loyall [sic] submissive complying Subjects that ever Prince had, no Subjects were ever so ill treated.³

A few years later he wrote:

Ireland is the only kingdom I have ever heard or read of, either in ancient or modern story, which was denied the liberty of exporting their native commodities


³Swift, Letters, p. 86.
and manufactures wherever they pleased, except countries at war with their own prince and state. Yet this privilege, by the superiority of mere power, is refused us in the most momentous parts of commerce; besides an Act of navigation to which we never assented, pressed down upon us and rigorously executed. 4

In "An Address to both Houses of Parliament," which was a part of the Drapier’s Letters, Swift listed several wishes of the Irish people. Among those listed were:

To put an end to Wood’s Halfpence
That halfpence might be coined in Ireland, by a Public Mint, with due limitations.

That due Encouragement should be given to Agriculture; and a Stop put to that pernicious Practice of Graziers, engrossing vast Quantities of Land, sometimes at great Distance; whereby the County is extremely depopulated.

That the Defects in those Acts for planting Forrest [sic] Trees, might be fully supplied, since they have been hitherto been wholly ineffectual; except about the Denesnes of a few Gentleman; and ever there, in general, very unskillfully made, and thriving accordingly. Neither hath there yet been due Care taken to preserve what is planted, or to inclose grounds; not one Hedge in a Hundred, coming into Maturity, for want of Skill and Industry. The Neglect of corsing Woods cut down, hath likewise been of very evil Consequences. And if Men were restrained from that unlimited Liberty of cutting down their own Woods before the proper Time, as they are in some countries; it would be a might Benefit to the Kingdom. For, I believe, there is not another Example in Europe of such a prodigious quantity of excellent Timber cut down, in so short a Time, with so little advantage to the Country, either in Shipping or Building [sic]. 5


For nearly ten years Swift had been fighting for the cause of the Irish, but in 1729 when he wrote "A Modest Proposal" he touched upon all the complaints he had made previously. "Swift's indignation was in fact more easily aroused by human than by legal injustices," Curtis explained, "and his genius with its Saeva indignatio directed itself chiefly against the shocking wrongs of the social order and the unreason, cruelty, and follies of mankind."6 While Swift wrote vividly of the inhuman treatment of Irish Catholics, it cannot be said of him that he advocated their receiving equal rights.7

In addition to suggesting ironically that the children of Ireland could be used as meat to sustain the life of others and to provide an income for several thousand families, "A Modest Proposal" also stated Swift's serious remedies for the existing conditions of Ireland:

I desire the reader will observe, that I calculate my remedy for this one individual Kingdom of Ireland, and for no other that ever was, is, or I think, ever can be upon earth. Therefore let no man talk to me of other expedients: Of taxing our absentees at five shillings a pound: Of using neither clothes, nor household furniture, except what is of our own growth and manufacture: Of utterly rejecting the materials and instruments that promote foreign luxury: Of curing the expensive of pride, vanity, idleness, and gaming in our women: Of

6Curtis, p. 298.

introducing a vein of parsimony, prudence, and temperance: Of learning to love our country, wherein we differ even from Laplanders, and the inhabitants of Topinamboo. Of quitting our animosities and factions, nor act any longer like the Jews, who were murdering one another at the very moment their city was taken: Of being a little cautious not to sell our country and consciences for nothing: Of teaching landlords to have at least one degree of mercy towards their tenants. Lastly, of putting a spirit of honesty, industry, and skill into our shop-keepers, who, if a resolution could be taken to buy only our native goods, would immediately unite to cheat and exact upon us in the price, the measure and the goodness, nor could ever yet be brought to make one fair proposal of just dealing, though often and earnestly invited to do it.8

Landa believed that:

What Swift wanted for Ireland was not fewer people but more opportunities—opportunities that would present themselves if England adopted a less restrictive policy, if the Irish absentees were regulated, and if the Irish people could be made to see wherein their welfare lay. He maintained that Ireland possessed the potentialities of a rich country and could, under proper conditions, easily support its population.9

When Swift spoke of the Irish nation, he meant the Irish Anglicans. He desired humane treatment for the Irish Catholics, but he never thought of giving them equal rights. He was also bitter towards the claims of the Presbyterians.10


Of Swift's seriously intended proposals, which he ironically disavowed, we may isolate five for comment here.

They are:

1. **Taxing our absentees at five shillings a pound.**

   This proposal could have provided considerable revenue for the government if it had been carried out, but, of course, it was not. The government did very little to ease the situation of the Irish, but in 1729 a measure was passed which was supposed to tax all incomes of those who did not live in Ireland for at least six months a year at four shillings a pound. Too many absentees were exempted however, and the measure was relatively useless.\(^{11}\)

2. **Using neither clothes nor household furniture, except what is of our own growth and manufacture.** In his *Proposal for the Universal Use of Irish Manufactures* Swift advocated the same policy as had the Irish House of Commons in the years 1703, 1705, and 1707, when they agreed unanimously that the people of Ireland should use only products which had been made in Ireland. In the same pamphlet Swift suggested, among other things, that the Irish burn everything from England except her coal. The *Proposal for the Universal Use of Irish Manufactures* had been an anonymous writing, and

\(^{11}\)Lecky, p. 217.
the government tried to prosecute its printer because it was considered to be seditious, but a grand jury could not be found which would convict him.\textsuperscript{12}

In "An Address to both Houses of Parliament," from the \textit{Drapier's Letters}, in which Swift listed the wishes of the Irish nation, one of the wishes was:

That the sense of both Houses of Parliament, at least of the House of Commons, were declared by some unanimous and hearty Votes, against wearing any Silk or Woolen Manufactures, imported from abroad; as likewise against wearing Indian Silks or Calicoes, which are forbidden under the highest Penalties in England; and it behoves us to take Example from so wise a Nation; because we are under a greater Necessity to do so, since we are not allowed to export any Woolen Manufactures of our own; which is the principal Branch of Foreign Trade in England.\textsuperscript{13}

This suggestion was the same as the one made in the Proposal for the \textit{Universal Use of Irish Manufactures} except that he specified the products which should be outlawed.

"Sir William Temple only expressed the sentiments of all intelligent well wishers of Ireland," Lecky wrote, "when he urged those who presided over its destinies to make it their first aim 'to introduce a vein of parsimony through the country in all things that are not of native growth.'"\textsuperscript{14}

\textsuperscript{12}Curtis, p. 297.
\textsuperscript{13}Swift, \textit{Drapier's Letters}, p. 170.
\textsuperscript{14}Lecky, p. 288.
If the Irish had used only products which had been manufactured in Ireland it would have solved Swift's point of utterly rejecting the materials and instruments that promote foreign luxury.

3. Two sections of "A Modest Proposal" treat the subject of Irish women and their expensiveness of pride, vanity, idleness, and gaming. Swift suggested that his proposal would "prevent those voluntary abortions, and that horrid practice of women murdering their bastard children, alas, too frequent among us, sacrificing the poor innocent babes, I doubt, more to avoid the expense than the shame, which would move tears and pity in the most savage and inhuman breast,"¹⁵ and also stated that his proposal could have been used to advantage for "several plump young girls in this town who, without one single great to their fortunes cannot stir abroad without a chair, and appear at the playhouse and assemblies in foreign fineries, which they never will pay for."¹⁶ "The women," Lecky wrote, "except in the North where they were engaged in the linen trade, lived for the most part in perfect idleness."¹⁷ In the Drapier's Letters Swift had

¹⁵Swift, Gulliver's Travels, p. 488.
¹⁶Swift, Gulliver's Travels, p. 491.
¹⁷Lecky, p. 229.
suggested that the clergy set the example by wearing Irish
gowns and other habiliments of Irish drapery. Swift stated
in "A Modest Proposal" that the Irish should introduce a
vein of parsimony, prudence and temperance. The Irish had
very few worldly possessions, but they were willing to share
everything they had in the way of food and would serve liquor
until there was not a drop left in the house. Lecky stated
that they often broke the stems off the glasses so that they
could not be put down until they were empty. The entire
country, poor as it was, had become addicted to horse racing,
gambling, sporting, drinking, cockfighting, acting, and danc-
ing; and there was a general love of ostentation and extrava-
gance. Horse racing had become so popular that the Parliament
of 1739 tried to restrict the number of races by making it
unlawful for a horse to race for a purse amounting to less
than twenty pounds. If a horse were caught racing for less
than the prescribed amount, the horse would be confiscated
and the owner would be fined twenty pounds. The law also
discouraged spectators by fining them at five shillings
each. In this manner the government tried to discourage
wagering by people who were financially unable to meet their
other obligations.

18Swift, Drapier's Letters, p. 165.
19Lecky, p. 288.
4. The fact that so many Irishmen had emigrated and another 120,000 'Wild Geese' had joined foreign armies rather than stay at home probably influenced Swift to state that the Irish needed to learn to love their country, wherein they differed even from Laplanders, and the inhabitants of Topinamboo. He also suggested that the Irish quit their animosities, and factions, and not act any longer like the Jews who were murdering one another at the very moment their city was taken. This point was probably made because duelling was so common in Ireland, and because very few persons were ever punished for this offense. He wanted the Irish to be a little cautious not to sell their country and consciences for nothing. These points had been offered because false ideals and false standards had grown up among the Irish and they had come to look upon idleness and extravagance as noble things; upon parsimony, order, and industry as degrading to a gentleman. He seemed to be describing Ireland in Chapter VI, Book III of *Gulliver's Travels* when he wrote:

... That in the kingdom of Tribnia, by the natives called Langden, where I had long sojourned, the bulk of the people consisted wholly of discoverers, witnesses, informers, accusers, prosecutors, evidences, swearers, together with their several subservient and subaltern instruments, all under the colours, the conduct, and pay of ministers and their deputies. The plots in that kingdom are usually the workmanship of those persons who desire to raise their own characters of profound politicians; to restore new vigour to a crazy administration; to stifle or divert general discontents;

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1. *Tribnia* and *Langden* are anagrams for *Britain* and *England*. 
to fill their coffers with forfeitures; and raise or sink the opinion of public credit, as either shall best answer their private advantage. It is first agreed and settled among them what suspected persons shall be accused of a plot; then effectual care is taken to secure all their letters and other papers, and put the owners in chains. These papers are delivered to a set of artists, very dextrous in finding out the mysterious meanings of words, syllables, and letters. For instance, they can decipher a closet-stool to signify a privy-council, a flock of geese a senate, a lame dog an invader, a codshead a ----, the plague a standing army, a buzzard a minister, the gout a high priest, a gibbet a secretary of state, a chamberpot a committee of grandees, a sieve a court lady, a broom a revolution, a mousetrap an employment, a bottomless pit the treasury, a sink a court, a cap and bells a favourite, a broken reed a court of justice, an empty tun a general, a running sore the administration.

He preached the doctrine that all Governments must be in the interest of the governed, and that government without the consent of the governed was the very definition of slavery.

5. One of the most important lessons Swift stressed was that of teaching landlords to have at least one degree of mercy towards their tenants. Landlords demanded very high and unfair rents in return for small plots of land. Every improvement of the land was made by the tenant, even the building of houses, because landlords furnished only the land. All farmers paid tithes, tenth of the land's produce, to the Established Church. The Irish Parliament decreed

20 Gwynn, p. 215.

that land used for sheep rearing or for cattle should be free from tithes. Land used in this manner provides very little employment, and only the wealthy people could afford an operation of this type. The result was to throw the full charge of tithes on the small farmers, and to exempt the more wealthy ones. Swift also stressed the idea of making shopkeepers honest and fair. He preached incessantly that Irish traders injured their own commerce by supplying dishonest wares and inferior goods. He had stated that clergymen bought their gowns from England because those the Irish sold were of very inferior material. The shipment of goods which the French returned to Ireland has been discussed earlier, and Lecky stated that parents could not send their children to the store to buy piece-goods because they were almost certain to be cheated. The Irish people were compelled to buy English goods because they received much more quality for their money. Many of the Irish merchants were trying to make money too rapidly and were therefore willing to cheat their customers, even if they were fellow Irishmen. It was dealings such as these that prompted Swift to write recommendations in his *A Modest Proposal* such as the one relating to shopkeepers:

"Lastly, Of putting a Spirit of Honesty, Industry, and Skill into our Shop-keepers; who, if a Resolution could now be taken to buy only our native Goods, would"

22 Gwynn, p. 211.
immediately unite to cheat and exact upon us in the price, the measure, and the goodness; nor could ever yet be brought to make one fair proposal of just Dealing, though often and earnestly invited to do it.\textsuperscript{23}

"Ireland," Swift wrote, "is the poorest of all civilized countries in Europe, with every natural advantage to make it one of the richest."\textsuperscript{24}

Swift did not seem to see any improvements in the country and in 1737, when proposing a remedy for the masses of beggars in Dublin, he said that he was a desponder by nature. He apparently had decided that the people of Ireland would never stir themselves to remove any of the grievances.\textsuperscript{25}

The Dean of Saint Patrick's had done everything for the good of Ireland that was possible for him to do, but "What I did for this country," he wrote to Francis Grant, "was from perfect hatred at tyranny and oppression..."\textsuperscript{26}

In addition to being the main voice in the fight against Wood's halfpence Swift had done some smaller things for his country, such as lending his own money at no interest,

\textsuperscript{23}Swift, \textit{Gulliver's Travels}, p. 494.

\textsuperscript{24}Landa, p. 169.


\textsuperscript{26}Jonathan Swift, \textit{The Correspondence of Jonathan Swift}, ed. F. Elrington Ball (London, 1914-1919) V, 64.
but in the same letter to Grant he wrote, "I can do no more. I have too many years upon me, and have too much sickness. . . . The governing people here do not love me; for as corrupt as England is, it is a habitation of saints in comparison of Ireland. We are slaves, and knaves, and fools, and all, but the bishops and people in employment, beggars. The cash of Ireland does not amount to two hundred thousand pounds. The few honest men among us are deadhearted, poor, and out of favor and power." 27

By 1742 Swift could stop trying to improve the state of the Irish people for he was declared, in that year, mentally incapable of caring for himself.

27Swift, Correspondence, V, 64.
CHAPTER FOUR
ECONOMIC CONDITIONS AFTER 1729

In the years between the writing of "A Modest Proposal" and Swift's death, in 1745, the situation grew progressively worse. The problem of the absentee landlords became more serious because the more they knew of the rest of the world, the less agreeable they found Ireland and Irish manners. The absentees increased their rents in proportion to their cost of living.¹

Use of the Irish land was an even greater problem after 1729 than it had been prior to that date because more and more land was being used for pasture. In 1730 Matthew Prior estimated the rental spent by absentees in England at about £620,000.² Swift computed the rents of Ireland to be about two million pounds, of which one third was transmitted to absentees in England. This is an indication of how great the problem of absenteeism was becoming. What money Ireland had continued to leave the country for payments of rent, and


"by the middle of the century," Flumb states, "three-quarters of a million pounds in rent was leaving Ireland each year for the pockets of the absentee landlords living in England." According to these figures the amount of money paid to absentees had increased by £130,000 per year in a twenty-year period.

The agricultural position of Ireland continued to favor the landlords and to suppress the tenants. Cultivation of land steadily declined from about 1730, and one of the many bad results of this was that the smaller tenants were driven from the land and usually became cottiers, which meant that they rented small portions of land directly from the owner and gave personal service as a part of the rent. This form of renting was a necessity because it was impossible to earn a living as an agricultural worker or as a mechanical worker in most parts of Ireland.

Nearly all of the land was converted into pasture which indicated that the larger tenants were not devoting their attention to raising crops which could be marketed, and much of the cause of the nearly continuous famine was due to the fact that more land needed to be cultivated rather than turned into pasture. (Because the business of pasturage

required little industry, only a very few people were employed for the purpose of raising cattle and sheep. The profits received from pasturing cattle were smaller than from other agricultural pursuits, but were more immediate.

A more serious situation in agriculture would have developed if it had not been for potato cultivation and its rapid development. The potato kept the Irish alive, and the famines of 1730 and 1741 would have been much more serious if it had not been true that nearly every family had a potato plot.4

Glass manufacturing, which had seemed to offer some hope as a growing business in the early years of the century, was in a state of decline because of over-production at a time when an English act stopped the export of glass and prevented every country except England from sending glass into Ireland.5 Tom Ireland, in his work Ireland, Past and Present, states that Ireland was forbidden to manufacture any glass. He agrees with O'Byrne that if Ireland purchased any glass it had to come from England.6

4Plumb, p. 179.

5George O'Byrne, The Economic History of Ireland in the Eighteenth Century (Dublin, 1910) p. 215.

In 1730 the silk industry was keeping three hundred looms busy in Dublin with the manufacture of garment silk.\textsuperscript{7} Linen weaving, however, was the most important industry in Ireland, and in 1737 there were three hundred and thirty-nine linen looms at work in the North.\textsuperscript{8} It is true that linen making spread, to some extent, over the entire island; but the industry gained its chief hold and employed the most people in the North.\textsuperscript{9} Added encouragement was given the linen industry in 1743 by the English Bounty Acts which gave a penny for every yard of British or Irish linen, provided it was exported from Great Britain and was worth from sixpence to twelvepence per yard.\textsuperscript{10} Irish linen had acquired a good reputation abroad, and the German and Scottish manufacturers sometimes counterfeited the Irish trade marks in order to increase the price of their products.\textsuperscript{11} At the same time the Irish manufacturers sometimes sold such cheap materials at home that the Irish customers purchased English linen goods in order to get their money's worth.

\textsuperscript{7} O'Brien, p. 220.
\textsuperscript{8} O'Brien, p. 220.
\textsuperscript{9} Ireland, p. 180.
\textsuperscript{10} O'Brien, p. 193.
\textsuperscript{11} O'Brien, p. 220.
The English Parliament continued to oppress Ireland with measures that hindered its chance to improve. An act of 1731 provided that no hops could be imported into Ireland except from Great Britain. This act gave the English hop farmer a monopoly of the Irish market. A great hindrance to the Irish brewing industry was the fact that English beer could be shipped into Ireland under very light import duties, but beer going from Ireland into England was subject to very high duties.\(^{12}\) Gwynn states in *The Student's History of Ireland* that in the matter of commerce all trades in which the Irish could compete with the English were ruined.\(^{13}\) "Under the blighting influence of oppressive trade laws," Ireland declared, "Industry and commerce sank into utter ruin."\(^{14}\)

Swift felt that the Irish problem was thoroughly political. His opinion, as was mentioned in Chapter I, was that Irish misery was caused by Ireland's subjection to a government which was not intentionally cruel but which was terribly selfish.\(^{15}\) Ireland provided a convenient and easy source of revenue for England, and the government simply felt

\(^{12}\) O'Brien, p. 223.

\(^{13}\) Gwynn, p. 211.

\(^{14}\) Ireland, p. 192.

that the welfare of England was more important than the happiness of Ireland.16

In Book III, Chapter VI, of Gulliver's Travels, Swift relates some incidents which seem to be related directly to England and her treatment of Ireland. In it he wrote:

These unhappy people were proposing schemes for persuading monarchs to choose favourites upon the score of their wisdom, capacity and virtue; of teaching ministers to consult the public good; of rewarding merit, great abilities and eminent services; of instructing princes to know their people; of choosing for employments persons qualified to exercise them; with many other wild impossible chimeras, that never entered before into the heart of man to conceive, and confirmed in me the old observation, that there is nothing so extravagant and irrational which some philosophers have not maintained for truth.17

Living conditions became even worse than they had been, and a law passed by the Irish House of Commons in 1735 relieved pasture land from the burden of tithes. Under this incentive a very large proportion of the Protestant, and nearly all of the remaining Catholic landlords, turned their land into pasture. An enormous increase of jobless people was evident as more and more land was turned into pasture. Many of the jobless began roaming the country in search of employment. Catholic employers could not take more than two apprentices except in the linen-weaving trade; consequently,

17 Swift, Gulliver's Travels, p. 115.
about the only commercial activities left open to Catholics were the linen trade, grazing, farming, and the practice of a few professions, among which were medicine and brewing.

The huge death rate from starvation and the loss of an estimated 120,000 men who left Ireland between 1690 and 1733 to enlist in foreign armies should have drastically reduced the population of the country. Instead, the birthrate was so tremendous during this period that the population remained relatively unchanged. While the overall population was about the same, the number of families was decreasing; for example, the hearth tax collectors reported the number of families paying the tax in the county of Kerry at 14,346 in 1733, but at only 9,372 in 1744.18

Living conditions were poor and deaths frequent in this period. Poverty reached nearly every Irishman, and many of those who had started their wanderings at the time so much of the land was turned into pasture soon acquired a taste for a way of life in which they worked only occasionally. It was practically useless to work because the financial rewards were so small that saving was almost an impossibility. Work was only intermittent and could not be counted on for any long period. Some of the suffering which resulted from the famine of 1741 could have been avoided if the country had had

18Lecky, p. 168.
granaries filled with the crops from surplus years, but there were none.

It has been estimated that ten pounds was more than sufficient for the expenses of an Irish family for an entire year. This was true even for those families who tried to maintain a permanent home. Their houses and their clothing were so miserable that food was practically the only expense they had.\textsuperscript{19} Families depended entirely on their potato plots, and when these failed the people died by the thousands.

In the beginning of 1730 so many of the people were hungry that when two ships, which were loaded with barley, docked at Drogheda a mob formed and forced the unloading of the ship.\textsuperscript{20} The situation remained so critical for ten or fifteen years following the famine of 1727 that the entire country suffered from a severe and almost continuous food shortage. Bishop Berkeley wrote in May, 1741:

\begin{quote}
The distresses of the sick and poor are endless: the havoc of mankind in the counties of Cork, Limerick, and adjacent places has been incredible. The nation will not recover this loss in a century. The other day I heard from the county of Limerick, that whole villages were entirely depopulated.\textsuperscript{21}
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{17}Lecky, p. 222.
\textsuperscript{20}Lecky, p. 185.
\textsuperscript{21}O'Brien, p. 104.
One contemporary writer wrote:

Families are without a spoonful of meal between them for some weeks, and that not such as are reckoned the very poor. 22

Another contemporary stated:

On my return to this country last summer, I found it the most miserable scene of universal distress that I have ever read of in history; want and misery in every face; the rich unable almost, if they were willing, to relieve the poor; the roads spread with dead and dying bodies. Raining the colour of the rocks and nettles which they feed on: two or three, sometimes more, on a car going to the grave for want of bearers to carry the bodies. The loss must be upwards of two hundred thousand souls. 23

Still another writer declared:

It is well known that multitudes of poor families have been under great difficulty to subsist, and many of their lives but barely preserved, and that very much by the corn which they gathered for food through the summer in the fields: and what rendered their case more pinching was the scarcity of milk. 24

The famine of 1740 and 1741, although it is not as famous as some of the others the Irish experienced, was one of the most terrible. Those who did not become cottiers usually emigrated to countries which offered better prospects for an easier and more rewarding life. 25

22 O'Brien, p. 104.
23 O'Brien, p. 105.
24 O'Brien, p. 105.
Swift, in a letter to Charles Wogan, described the poor cottagers as having a much better natural taste for good sense, humor, and raillery than the people of England who lived under similar circumstances. "The millions of oppressions they lie under, the tyranny of their landlords, the ridiculous zeal of their priests, and the general misery of the whole nation," he wrote, "have been enough to damp the best spirits under the sun."26

26Swift, Correspondence, IV, 328.
CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION

The first half of the eighteenth century in Ireland was, as O'Brien stated, marked about as much by economic retrogression as by economic progress. However, no man did more for the good of the country than Jonathan Swift, who used all the power of his pen in trying to improve the economic situation. His "A Modest Proposal," which is a continuation of his plea for domestic consumption of domestic products, was his strongest bid to expose Ireland's evil conditions.

What positive steps taken during this period, and there were very few, did not reflect Swift's proposals. Although he spent a great deal of time and energy working for the cause of the Irish, and won the love and gratitude of the people through his efforts to prevent wood's halfpence from entering circulation, his other efforts proved to be of no immediate avail, and nothing was done in any of the directions in which Swift pointed. Many of his political writings were controversial merely because they were written to help a party or a cause, but The Drapier's Letters was the only work which brought immediate results, and then only in the matter of the halfpence. For example, in the assumed role of M. J. Drapier, Swift stressed the need of legislative independence for Ireland. He told the people that the problem was wholly
in their hands and explained that they had every right to be as free as the people of England; yet with the exception of the instance when the whole population seemed to rise against the halfpence issue, the Irish appeared to be content to exist in a situation which Swift described as the very definition of slavery.

The Dean of Saint Patrick's believed it was the duty of every Irishman to improve to whatever degree possible the unstable economy of Ireland.1 If Ireland had been her own ruler, the English Navigation Acts of 1663 would not have restricted the use of the many ports and harbors of the country, and Ireland would not have been "refused the liberty of trading even in its natural commodities... ."2

In "An Humble Address to both Houses of Parliament" Swift suggested that halfpence might be coined in Ireland at a public mint. The reason for this proposal was that the country suffered because of a lack of currency, most of which was being sent to England in the form of rent. He also recommended that encouragement be given to agriculture and a damper placed on the practice of over-grazing. The best way


to help agriculture help itself, he believed, was to allow the farmers to cultivate more acres. A law was passed which provided that farmers might cultivate five out of every one hundred acres, but this amount was so small that the increase was hardly noticeable.

Swift wanted a restraint placed on the practice of cutting woods before they were mature. If properly cared for, the woods of Ireland could have supplied lumber for the construction of buildings and ships and could have provided the necessary hops for the distilling industry. Again his advice was not followed; the woods were cut so early that the timber was of little value for anything except use as fuel, and the English market supplied the hops for the Irish distillers.

A proposal that Ireland pass a law which would forbid the citizens to use clothing and household furniture which was not of their own growth and manufacture was also recommended by Swift. He wanted the Irish to utterly reject the materials and instruments which promoted foreign luxury, but no such laws were passed and the gentry continued to import luxuries and to neglect agriculture.3

Of the several remedies suggested by Swift in "A Modest Proposal" the only one which received any attention was that of taxing absentee. A bill to this effect was passed,

3Ferguson, p. 1476.
but there were so many exceptions granted that the law proved to be of very little value.

Nothing was done to improve the plight of the masses in Ireland. Some aid was given, but this was chiefly to help the linen industry. For example, the Dublin Society, in 1724, offered some help to the flax growers by granting £2,000 yearly for the improvement of flax. A similar sum was given the linen industry in Leinster, Munster, and Connaught annually. Another society which was founded in Limerick in 1736 attempted to improve conditions by offering money grants for the improvement of tillage, and for the encouragement of manufacturing in the county.  

The English Bounty Acts of 1743 were the only positive steps taken by the English to help the Irish during this period. These acts were a benefit to the linen industry. However, they stipulated that the linen be worth from six to twelvepence per yard, and that it had to be exported from Great Britain.  

The Irish Parliament of 1743 aided the schools by giving them the proceeds from the sale of licences which the law required peddlars to purchase. 

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6Lecky, p. 234.
While these measures helped, they were not the kind of help Swift advocated; and he continued for the remainder of his life to attack England's oppression of Ireland. He attacked the policy which the English used for filling high offices of the Church and of the State with pureborn Englishmen whom he believed to be, for the most part, second-rate men with no other purpose in mind than that of serving the interests of the king of England. In regard to the Anglican Church in Ireland, Swift stated that for twenty years prior to 1733 there were probably not ten clergymen in Ireland who had not been given their jobs, or promoted to their positions, because of their declared allegiance to the king of England. He also attacked the corrupt parliamentary system, which was not representative of the country, and spoke of the legislators of this period as men carking with the spirit of shopkeepers to frame laws for nations.

Why did Swift take it upon himself to fight so vigorously in the cause of the Irish, a cause in which he had no real stake and in which he had so little visible success to spur him on? According to Landa most critics feel Swift had no real concern for Catholic Ireland and that he defended "Ireland less out of humanity than out of a desire to revenge himself on his enemy, Robert Walpole and the Whig administration
in England." Quintana, however, holds that "of the many misapprehensions of Swift none is wider of the mark than that which represents him as a satirist who wrote out of a bitter mind and a bitter heart." It is hard to believe that so much vigor could have proceeded from mere bitter resentment; and Swift himself felt that he was acting for the good of Ireland and had done everything in his power to help the Irish people.

Although Swift claimed he hated humanity in general, "Humanity," wrote Curtis, "as well as Ireland has much to learn from the Latin epitaph that he made for himself in St. Patrick's":

HIC TERRIESTSIT JONATHAN SWIFT
UBI INDIGNATIO SARVA CONDEMN NON IAN.

ABI, VIATOR,
ET IMITARE, SI POTERIS
STRENUUM PRO VIRILI LIBERTATIS VINCICER.


8 Ricardo Quintana, "Recent Discussion of Swift," *College English* II (October, 1940), 39.

9 Swift, *Correspondence*, V, 64.


11 The English translation is:
Here rests Jonathan Swift,
Where bitter indignation can no longer rend the heart.
Depart, traveller, and imitate, if thou canst,
So strenuous a champion of Liberty.
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