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IRISH PUBLIC OPINION
AND THE
AMERICAN CIVIL WAR

JOSEPH M. HERON
Abstract of

IRISH PUBLIC OPINION AND THE AMERICAN CIVIL WAR

by

Joseph M. Hernon

This thesis is a study of the reaction in Ireland to the American civil war. It deals principally with the dominant issues - each with many facets - arising in Irish public opinion on the war. These are discussed in the five chapters on the Irish attitude toward the abolition of slavery, Southern independence, Abraham Lincoln, Anglo-American relations, and Irish participation in the war. A chapter is also devoted to the religious, economic, social, and political factors influencing Irish opinion on the issues involved. There is an introductory chapter providing the background of Irish history of the period and a chronological survey of the development of Irish opinion on the war. A conclusion is presented and also a bibliographical essay containing, in addition to comments on the sources and on the historiography of the subject, an attempt at a much needed revision of the standard interpretation of the British public attitude to the war.

The sources are primarily contemporary Irish newspapers and periodicals. A few British and American newspapers
IRISH PUBLIC OPINION

AND THE

AMERICAN CIVIL WAR

This thesis, which is entirely my own work, has not been submitted as an exercise for a degree of any other university.

BY

JOSEPH M. HERNON, Jr.

Thesis submitted for the degree of Ph.D. in the University of Dublin, Trinity College, October 1962.

Approved by the Board

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29.4.63.
This thesis is a study of the reaction in Ireland to the American Civil War. I deal principally with the dominant issues arising in Irish public opinion on the war, which I discuss in the five chapters following the introductory survey. In addition, I devote a chapter to the various factors influencing the formation of Irish opinion on the war. Also, the importance of the bibliographical essay should be pointed out. Besides presenting comments on the sources and on the historiography of the subject, it attempts a much needed revision of the standard interpretation of British opinion on the war, noting the recent trends toward revision. I believe it is helpful for the reader to be aware of British opinion on the war and the problems of its interpretation in order to keep Irish opinion in perspective.

One of the drawbacks of a study of this nature is often an excessive concentration on a special theme with a consequent failure to view it in its historical context. Thus, I have discussed opinions and events in Britain, America, and even Canada that have special bearing on the formation of opinion in Ireland. For example, in chapter six I have dealt quite extensively with the background of mine...
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One of the drawbacks of a study of this nature is often an excessive concentration on a special theme with a consequent failure to view it in its historical context. Thus, I have discussed opinions and events in Britain, America, and even Canada that have special bearing on the formation of opinion in Ireland. For example, in chapter six I have dealt quite extensively with the background of Union
recruiting of Irishmen, a comparatively unexplored area, because a knowledge of it is, I feel, essential to an understanding of the Irish attitude to Irish participation in the war. It was often difficult to decide what was relevant background information, and I perhaps have overstepped the boundary of pertinency in parts of the chapters on 'Anglo-American relations' and 'Irish participation in the war' and supplied information that would better belong in an appendix. The borderline of relevancy for a subject such as this is especially blurred. However, in order to trace the shades of opinion of the many factions in Ireland on the very complex issues of the war, it was necessary to mention such diverse subjects as the Canadian confederation and the cotton famine, the unification of Italy and the Act of Union of 1800, and the Battalion of St. Patrick in the papal army and the Irish Brigade in the Union army.

A particularly complicating factor was the almost total lack of research on this period of Irish history. There are few guides, and even an Irishman, let alone a foreigner, would be hard pressed to disentangle the knotted and intertwined threads of Irish political opinion in the early 'sixties. To some, the distinctions between the many political factions may seem contrived, but the civil war presented several basic issues that created clear-cut differences of opinion. I believe that students of Irish history should
find the alignment of factions on various issues fascinating and often enlightening.

I have attempted to follow the rules for punctuation and capitalization prescribed for Irish Historical Studies. I have tried to correct the typing errors in this respect with several exceptions. In the footnotes in chapters three and seven the typist added commas after abbreviations of months: Nation, 22 Apr., 1865 instead of Nation, 22 Apr., 1865. In the footnotes in chapter five, capital Roman numerals were mistakenly used. Also the typists were often inaccurate in placing punctuation inside or outside the end quotation mark. For the sake of neatness I have not erased all these. Finally, apologies are due for the too large right hand margin in chapter five.

I am indebted to many people who aided me in my research: Mr. T.P. O'Neill and the staff of the National Library of Ireland; Miss McGrath and the staff of the State Paper Office, Dublin Castle; Mrs. Goodbody and the staff of the Friends House Library, Dublin; and the staffs of Trinity College Library, British Museum, Institute of Historical Research (London University), Irish Folklore Commission, Public Record Office of Northern Ireland, Rhodes House Library (Bodleian), Edinburgh University Library, Library of Congress, National Archives (Washington), and Catholic University of America Library.

I also wish to thank other research students who took
of their valuable time to read parts of my thesis or notify me of sources for my subject: Robert Hunter, Joseph Starr, and Robert Fitzsimon.

I am especially grateful to my supervisor, Professor T.W. Moody, for his gentle but sure guidance, his encouragement, and his many kindnesses.

Finally I want to thank the Friendly Sons of St. Patrick of Washington whose grant made this research possible and particularly, the chairman of their fellowship committee, Mr. J.P. Tumulty, Jr., for his interest and friendship.
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State Paper Office, Washington
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1. The setting: Ireland at the outbreak of the American civil war.

The American civil war was the principal topic of public interest in Ireland from 1861 to 1865. The large number of Irishmen in the United States guaranteed this. One newspaper rightly remarked: 'The American war touches Irishmen more nearly than almost any other country in the world.' For every several in Ireland, there is at the other side of the Atlantic an almost corresponding colony of people, bond by ties of affection and blood.

**CHAPTER I**

**INTRODUCTORY SURVEY**

1. The setting: Ireland at the outbreak of the American civil war, p. 2. The New York Irish-American editorialized: '...The American question has taken shape, that its discussion is now necessary, that in its development of Irish public opinion on the civil war, p. 18.

2. Chronological survey of the development of Irish public opinion on the civil war.

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It is an absurd notion that national feeling in the United States is blind to the importance of the civil war to Irishmen.
1. **The setting: Ireland at the outbreak of the American civil war.**

The American civil war was the principal topic of public interest in Ireland from 1861 to 1865. The large number of Irishmen in the United States guaranteed this. One newspaper rightly remarked: "The American war touches Ireland more nearly than almost any other country in the world. For every parish in Ireland, there is at the other side of the Atlantic an almost corresponding colony of people, bound by ties of affection and blood. In their sufferings our people suffer." Even Irish-Americans were aware of the excitement the civil war created in Ireland and especially the resulting disputes among Irish nationalists over issues involved in the war. The New York Irish-American editorialized: "...The "American question" has taken so strong a hold on the Irish people at home, that its discussion has superseded every other consideration; and the foremost men of our race are gradually taking sides in opposition on it in a manner which threatens to interfere with the harmony which should prevail among men of true national feeling. It is worse than absurd." The American consul in Dublin was acutely aware of the importance of the civil war to Irishmen.

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and the importance of a favorable Irish public opinion to the United States. He wrote to Secretary of State Seward in 1864:

As Ireland is the most important foreign country to us, having sent more emigrants during the past year, to cultivate our lands and enrich the republic, than all the world beside, and having also supplied our army and navy with many thousands of brave and hardy soldiers and sailors, it is well to keep an observant eye on public feeling and the press of the country, in order the better to enable us to neutralize both, so far as they may be damaging to our interests, and to shape our course to that end. 1

There is a close parallel between Irish and American political history during the nineteenth century. In the 1820s Southerners seriously began to calculate the value of the Union; and from the Act of Union of 1800, abolishing the independent parliament in Dublin and leaving Irish affairs to be decided by an uninterested British parliament at Westminster, Irish nationalists agitated for repeal of the union between Ireland and Great Britain. There is a remarkable forecast in the concluding words of the inscription on the statue of Robert, second marquis of Londonderry and Viscount Castlereagh (1769-1822) in Westminster Abbey: "...And Ireland will never forget the statesman of the legislative union." In the chapter on

1 W. B. West to W. H. Seward, 26 Nov. 1864 (National Archives, Dublin dispatches, vol. 4).

2 Famous remark of Thomas Cooper, a philosopher of secession and president of South Carolina College, in 1827 (R. G. Osterweils, Romanticism and nationalism in the Old South, p. 140).

3 Personal observation.
'Southern independence' we shall see the importance of the parallel between the two unions in the formation of Irish nationalist opinion and also the awareness of British and American contemporaries of the parallel. Also it will be seen how complex the issues of the war appeared to Irishmen; and there will be pointed out the inconsistencies as well as consistencies in the formation of public opinion, such as the editorial late in the war, of the confederate propaganda organ in the United Kingdom, The Index, which, in explaining the cause of the lack of prosperity in Ireland in comparison to England, remarked: 'It is not the union; that is the one salvation of Ireland'.

At the outbreak of the American civil war, Ireland politically was in a very poor condition. It lay limp like a patient on a sick-bed, resigned to the will of God. A contemporary politician wrote that in 1860 'politics in Ireland had apparently gone to sleep... The surface was as calm as it could be made by pinching want and by dire anxiety to obtain the bare means of existence'. W. H. Lecky in 1861, in his first book, described the general character of Irish public opinion at that time. He referred to 'the present disorganized state of public opinion'.

1 The Index (London), 22 Sept. 1864.

2 In announcing his decision to retire from Irish politics in 1855, prior to emigrating to Australia, Charles Gavan Duffy wrote that 'there seems to be no more hope for the Irish cause than for the corpse on the dissecting-table' (C. G. Duffy, The League of North and South [1866], p. 364).

opinion, the strange combination of extreme liberal politics with strong sympathies for foreign despotisms, the intense aversion to everything English manifested by the mass of the people'. He believed that 'national feeling' in Ireland had departed: 'We have an English party among us, and an Italian party; but we look in vain for an Irish party'. Lecky was referring to those Anglo-Irishmen who thought of themselves purely as Englishmen and those Roman Catholic Irishmen who placed their religion, e.g. the temporal power of the papacy, above all else. 'It is hard to say whether those are further removed from the traditions of nationality who repudiate all national sentiments as Irishmen, or those who would make their country simply the weapon of their church, and sacrifice every principle of liberalism upon the altar'. The aristocracy and the Catholic church were the only two well organized pressure groups in 1861. Otherwise, factionalism was rampant. There was no O'Connell - no national leader of public opinion and idol of the people - but only leaders of factions within factions.

At the beginning of the civil war, there were two principal

1 Lecky, The leaders of public opinion in Ireland (1861), pp. 3-4.

2 Ibid.

3 Ibid.
divisions in Irish public opinion, 'West British' and nationalist. The West Britons supported the Act of Union and considered Ireland in all political matters as merely a geographical term denoting a portion of the United Kingdom. Among the West Britons, there were three political groups corresponding to their English counterparts, the liberal-whig alliance supporting the Palmerston administration, the conservatives, and the radicals or the left wing of the liberal party who were followers of Bright and Cobden. Also, closely affiliated with the liberals were the 'castle catholics' or catholic West Britons who were the Irish catholic supporters of Palmerston's administration and who comprised the vast majority of middle and upper-class catholics in Ireland. Many of these 'castle catholics', most of whom were Gladstonian (middle-of-the-road) liberals, were converts from moderate nationalism either because of political opportunism or despair. With the rebirth of the home rule movement in the 'seventies many of them were reconverted.

1 The term 'West British' is used throughout this thesis as a synonym for Irish 'unionist'. Otherwise, because of the peculiarities of the topic of this thesis, if the term 'unionist' were used, there could be confusion between it and 'Union sympathizer', i.e. an Irishman who supported the Union in its war against the Confederacy. 'West British' was a derogatory term applied by mid-Victorian Irish nationalists to those Irishmen who opposed home rule and supported the Act of Union. Although there is still an emotional stigma attached to the term, it is used in this thesis merely to ensure clarity.

2 John Martin to O'Neill Daunt, 18 Sept. 1865 (N.L.I., MS 8047-1).

3 The term 'castle catholic' is used interchangeably with 'catholic whig', 'catholic liberal', and 'catholic West Briton', which are essentially synonymous. Some few 'castle catholics' occasionally supported the conservatives.
They were principally concerned with Roman Catholic interests, to which they subordinated all else.

Opposing the West Britons were the Irish nationalists, who can be divided into two groups. The moderates desired an independent Irish legislature for domestic affairs and sought to achieve this through moral force and political agitation. Most of the moderate nationalists were catholics and joined with the 'castle catholics' on Catholic issues. The extreme nationalists, i.e. the fenians and their sympathizers, desired through revolution to set up a republic of Ireland, completely divested of all political association with Great Britain. They despised the 'castle catholics' and believed that all Ireland's ills would be cured by independence.

Moderate nationalism appeared effete in the eyes of many patriotic and idealistic young Irishmen. In 1858 they formed the Irish Republican Brotherhood or Fenian Brotherhood, a secret organization dedicated to the establishment of a republic. They attacked the moderate nationalists more vociferously than the West Britons and alienated many would-be friends. The fenians created more divisions instead of healing rifts among Irish nationalists. The I.R.B. claimed to have had many town-laborers as members, but it made little headway among the peasants, who were controlled by the parish priests.

Religious issues were very much in the ascendant in Ireland from 1861 to 1865. The Catholic clergy was principally interested in disestablishing the Church of Ireland, which Gladstone
succeeded in doing in 1869. Paul Cullen, archbishop of Dublin, a leader of the 'castle catholics', believed that the best way to achieve disestablishment was to support the liberals. In his view, the conservatives were unalterably pledged to the establishment. However, the Irish catholics also had a grievance against the liberals: their support for the unification of Italy and opposition to the temporal power of the papacy. Some of the catholic West Britons believed that the conservatives should be supported because of their opposition to Italian nationalism. The Tablet adopted this attitude, and its editor referred to Archbishop Cullen as 'Paul Cullen of Dublin, arch-whig as well as arch-bishop'. With Palmerston firmly entrenched after 1859 and with the Gladstonian section of the liberals more interested in the welfare of Irish catholics than the conservatives, the 'castle catholics' followed Cullen's lead.

The attitude of Cullen and most of the catholic clergy toward Irish nationalism was influenced by their religious beliefs. They viewed the fenians as anti-clericals and red-republicans, who were as much a danger to the church in Ireland as were the revolutionary nationalists to the church in Italy. Catholic fenians, however, were not anti-clerical but merely attacked clerical influence in politics, criticizing the self-

1 E. S. Purcell, Life of Cardinal Manning, i. 687.

2 See Peadar Mac Suibhne, Paul Cullen and his contemporaries, i. 391-4 and 397-405.
righteous and omniscient attitude of Archbishop Cullen, an 'apple of God's eye' as James Joyce scornfully referred to him. The Connaught Patriot, in an editorial supporting the principles of the fenians, expressed their attitude toward Cullen's condemnation of the secret organization: 'If a council, representing the entire church, would pronounce them [the principles of fenianism] as dangerous to faith and morals, then, indeed, would we, at once, and, unhesitatingly, yield implicit obedience'. The Patriot saw an historical parallel in the anti-fenian sermons of the Irish hierarchy and clergy: '...We know that red crimes had been committed in the name of the church, when Galileo [sic] had been persecuted by a few narrow-minded prelates and priests...'. However, most catholic Irishmen during the 1860s saw a conflict between fenian principles and their religious beliefs; and their religion generally received their allegiance. Most of the catholic peasants eschewed fenianism and, in principle, remained moderate nationalists but were easily intimidated by the 'castle catholics'.

Religion had certainly pushed politics out of the limelight. The defection of Cullen and the 'castle catholics' greatly contributed to the disintegration of the feeble independent Irish parliamentary party of the 'fifties. The remnants of the independent opposition party disagreed over parliamentary tactics,

1 James Joyce, Portrait of the artist as a young man, quoted in A book of Ireland, ed. Frank O'Connor, p. 116.

2 Connaught Patriot, 26 Mar. 1864.
particularly in reference to Palmerston’s policy on the Italian-Papal States question. They split down the middle in the crucial vote in March 1859 that brought the downfall of the conservative government. Six members voted with the conservatives because of their foreign policy aimed at the preservation of peace in Italy; and five, with the liberal opposition. The party collapsed, but individuals professing the principle of independent opposition, such as John Francis Maguire and The O’Donoghue, continued to sit in the house of commons.

During the civil war, Ireland was in a disastrous economic condition. Through the death-toll of the famine of 1845-7 and the excessive emigration thereafter, the country had lost thirty percent of its population. The first big depression in Ireland after the great famine occurred from 1860 to 1865. This depression is now almost completely unknown, and no research has been done on it. Available contemporary information reveals that it was of no mean proportions. In fact, according to the budget report of 16 April 1863 of the chancellor of the exchequer, W. E. Gladstone, Irish distress was apparently worse than the more publicized Lancashire distress. Gladstone pointed out that as a result of the cotton famine, trade to the United States in British goods fell from £22,000,000 in 1859 to

1 J. H. Whyte, The independent Irish party 1850-9, passim.

2 The population fell from 8.1 million in 1841 to 5.7 million in 1861. See chapter on ‘Irish participation’.
£14,000,000 in 1862 but that at the same time this decrease was more than made up by the £12,000,000 increase in trade to France, such as in woolen goods. However, according to the statistics quoted by Gladstone, the effect of the crop failures in Ireland was worse than that of the cotton famine. The yearly average value of Irish agricultural produce from 1856 to 1859 was £39,000,000. The agricultural produce for 1860 was valued at £35,000,000; for 1861, £29,000,000; and for 1862, £27,000,000. Thus, there was a decrease of £12,000,000 or 'nearly one-half of the total estimated value of the agricultural products of the country' and not far short of the established annual valuation of Ireland in 1862, £15,400,000. Irish agriculture was the biggest economic problem for the United Kingdom in 1862, the crucial year in the diplomatic history of the civil war.

The most important aspect of the depression was its effect on the Irish people. Gladstone's budget report gives an indication and enables one to compare it with the Lancashire distress. In reference to Lancashire he said: 'We have had, then, one of the wealthiest portions of the country, and perhaps the very wealthiest portion of its labouring population, in a condition of unexampled prostration and of grievous suffering'. However, the Lancashire distress was well known, and money was pouring

1 Hansard, clxx. 200-47.
2 Ibid., pp. 207-9.
3 Ibid., p. 207.
in from many parts of the world. But the Irish depression had been 'but partially mentioned' in the house of commons, and Gladstone doubted 'whether the attention of the public has been fully awakened to the amount of calamity which during the last few years has befallen that portion of the United Kingdom'. The Irish depression was 'partially balanced by the favourable condition of the linen manufacture [in Ulster]'. Nor was the depression concentrated like the distress in Lancashire 'at a particular point on the surface of the country' but was 'generally diffused' and 'as broad as the area of agricultural industry...'. As Gladstone's report reveals and Irish observers pointed out, the Lancashire operatives were in a better position to withstand a depression than were the Irish peasants; and since Lancashire distress was more concentrated, it could more easily be alleviated.

On 27 April 1863 in a speech in the house of commons, John Francis Maguire, one of the leading moderate nationalists and lord mayor of Cork, expressed even greater concern about Irish distress than Gladstone: '...I deeply regret to be compelled to assert that nearly all Ireland is now one Lancashire. I am convinced that there is more actual and terrible distress in many counties in Ireland than in all England put together. There are at least many districts in Ireland in which the people

1 W. O. Henderson, The Lancashire cotton famine 1861-1865, passim; also see below.

2 Hansard, clxx. 207-9.
Even the conservative and pro-landlord *Irish Times*, which supported Irish contributions to the Lancashire distress fund against the wishes of many nationalists who opposed such generosity on the grounds that 'charity begins at home', believed that the Irish distress was worse than that in Lancashire:

It is no surprise to us that many bleak and wild districts of the west are suffering severely. The year 1860 had been unfavourable, 1861 was disastrous, 1862 was scarcely better. The peasantry in many districts are impoverished and need help... An Irish labourer will work hard and thankfully, and support his family on one half the weekly sum which a generous charity pours into the lap of the unemployed in Lancashire... Any man who is truthful and acquainted with the condition of trade in Dublin, must acknowledge that the local distress was seldom equal to what it is at present... Let some drops of the stream of charity fall upon the poor of our own land. If it be a violation of fashion, or an offence to faction to ask for the children's bread, let us not be condemned because we ask for the crumbs which fall from the table.

All factions in Ireland were concerned about the distress; but fortunately 1863 was a better year for Irish agriculture, and famine was staved off. It is impossible to estimate the extent of suffering during the depression.

The civil war made the Irish distress even more unbearable. During 1861 and 1862, uncertainty over conditions in war-torn America helped to check emigration when most needed as a

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safety-valve in Ireland. Also, in creating the distress in
Lancashire, another 'El Dorado' of Irishmen, the war deprived
many Irishmen there of jobs and money to send home. Further-
more, as will be seen, the civil war reduced remittances from
America when they were very much needed in Ireland. In
addition, it appears that wives and parents in Ireland were
either overlooked or ineligible for financial compensation for
the death of husbands and sons in the war. Economically, the
Irish peasants were among the worst victims of the war.

The one big exception to generalizations about mid-Victorian
Ireland was the situation in Ulster. The Ulster farmers were
much more prosperous than those in the other three provinces
because of the Ulster custom of tenant-right. East Ulster had

1 See chapter on 'Irish participation'. Despite the war,
emigration increased tremendously in 1863 and 1864 when eco-
nomic conditions in Ireland improved sufficiently to provide many
with money for emigrating. Throughout the war, a controversy
raged over recruiting of Irishmen for the Union army. Emigration
in 1863 would probably have been closer to 200,000 than 100,000
had there not been a war on. In the speech in April 1863 quoted
above, J. F. Maguire said that 'should peace be once established
in America, the rush of the people from their own country would
be something fearful...' (Hansard, loc. cit.).

2 Cork Examiner, 25 Nov. 1862. See Appendix I, 'The
Irish in Lancashire'.

3 See U.S. consul dispatches from Ireland. The American
consul in Galway complained that the 'widowed mothers, wives,
sisters and parents of those, who have lost their lives in sus-
taining our country or now fighting for its liberties and its
honor, are actually perishing of hunger; - Could I not be
authorized to relieve them and have the amt. deducted from the
soldier's or sailor's pay?' (W. B. West to W. H. Seward, 26 May
1862 [N.A., Galway dispatches, vol. 1]).
become increasingly industrialized, which minimized the decline in the population of Ulster during the famine. Belfast had come to dominate Ulster and could be considered an outpost of industrial Britain. In East Ulster, i.e. Antrim and Down, including Belfast, in 1861 there was a protestant preponderance of 71 percent, and presbyterianism was the leading protestant persuasion, with Belfast its major stronghold. Finally, there was developing in Ulster protestant opinion a strong attachment to the union between Great Britain and Ireland and increased opposition to home rule.1

As Gladstone in his budget report in April 1865 noted, the linen boom in Ulster partially offset the agricultural distress in Ireland. Even the Ulster farmers benefited from the boom through the increased cultivation of flax. However, there was an exception to Ulster prosperity. The cotton famine that increased the demand for linen goods wreaked havoc in the handloom cotton weaving industry in Ulster. In fact, the cotton famine of 1862-3 practically swept 'out of existence' the 20,000 weavers and 80,000 muslin embroiderers who worked within a ten-mile radius of Belfast. Many of them were eventually absorbed into the linen industries, but during the winter of 1862-3 the hand-loom weavers suffered great hardships. The


secretary of the Lisburn Relief Committee wrote in January 1863: 'The causes which have produced such distress in Lancashire have acted with still greater severity on our poor operatives, who were only able in the best times to earn bare subsistence, and consequently, when the collapse came, they had no reserve funds to fall back upon'. Some of the unemployed cotton-weavers emigrated. The Lisburn Relief Committee sent 253 persons to New York on one ship and 137 to Philadelphia on another.

Generally, the special conditions in East Ulster created a basic difference in attitude toward the civil war between the people of that area and those in the south and west of Ireland. The war did not have the same significance in Ulster as it did in Munster. The great post-famine emigration to the United States in the decade prior to the civil war was more Celtic-Irish than Scotch-Irish or Anglo-Irish. Celtic-Irish families in Connaught and Munster had many close relatives in America and more of a personal interest in the war than Ulster-Scottish families. The Celtic-Irish were emotionally involved in the war, whereas the Scotch-Irish and Anglo-Irish were more aloof like the English. Furthermore, reflecting their political

1 H. McCall to Messrs. Richardson, Spence, and Co. Liverpool, 20 Jan. 1863, quoted in [Hugh McCall], The cotton famine of 1862-3, with some sketches of the proceedings of the Lisburn Relief Committee (1872), p. 28.

differences over the union between Great Britain and Ireland, predominantly protestant East Ulster supported England in Anglo-American disputes, and predominantly catholic Leinster, Munster, and Connaught sympathized with America.

Finally, in regard to the situation in Ireland at the outbreak of the war, it should be noted that, with nationalism at such a low ebb, the national spirit was nurtured by romanticized accounts of the heroic exploits of Irishmen abroad. The Irish brigades in continental armies had long been a source of pride and inspiration for many young Irishmen and were commemorated in ballads and poems. In 1860 the Battalion of St. Patrick, consisting of about 1,000 men, fought in the papal armies. They returned to cheering crowds in Ireland, and many felt that they had made sacrifices not only for the pope but also 'for the cause of nationality in Ireland'.

Similarly, the heroism of the Irish in the civil war was to be boasted about, and Irish nationalists could find much to take pride in. An authority on foreigners who fought in the civil war wrote of Meagher's Irish Brigade: 'The best known of all brigades was probably the Irish Brigade, since it experienced the hardest fighting of the war and made an

1 At that time two descendants of the 'wild geese' were distinguishing themselves, General MacMahon in the army of Napoleon III and General Leopold O'Donnell as prime minister of Spain.

2 G. F. H. Berkeley, The Irish battalion in the papal army of 1860, p. 220. Many veterans of the Irish papal brigade fought in the civil war. See chapter on 'Irish participation'.
unusual reputation for dash and gallantry'. Its record made for it 'a name inseparable not only from the record of the civil war but from the history of the Irish race'.

2. Chronological survey of the development of Irish public opinion on the civil war.

When news reached Ireland of the secession of South Carolina from the Union on 20 December 1860, following the election of Abraham Lincoln, and of the beginning of the spread of secession to ten other Southern states, there was universal regret. The West Britons, who were principally concerned over the effect of the secession on trade, at first sympathized with the Union. The nationalists were more sympathetic toward the secession movement, regretted that Stephen Douglas had not been elected president, but generally preferred that the Union remain intact. With the passage of the Morrill tariff, which began an era of protectionism, on 20 February 1861 by the republican-dominated congress, the West British ardor for the Union cause was dampened. They still could not support the Confederacy with its cornerstone of slavery but opposed the Northern blockade of Southern ports, proclaimed by Lincoln a

1 Ella Lonn, *Foreigners in the Union army and navy*, p. 123.
week after the outbreak of hostilities. The nationalists after
the bombardment of Fort Sumter on April 12 generally hoped for
the preservation of the Union, but many felt that the North
should not coerce the Southern States back into the Union.
With two notable exceptions, the Irish public generally desired
the restoration of the Union immediately after Fort Sumter.
The reactionary conservatives and whigs were overjoyed at the
failure of the American republic; and apparently some of the
fenians, represented by the Irishman, viewed the secession as
inevitable and were delighted over the possible economic stress
a war would cause in the British economy. Generally, however,
Irish opinion on Southern secession had not jelled.

It was not until after 21 July 1861 and the first important
battle of the war, the first battle of Bull Run or Manassas,
Virginia, that Irish public opinion began to take a definite
shape. In the battle, the Union soldiers panicked and retreated
in stampede fashion toward Washington. It was a tremendous
victory for the confederates, especially in a propaganda sense
in Europe. Among the West Britons, the liberals were convinced
of eventual Southern success, were impressed by the gallant
and chivalrous Southern gentlemen, and denied that to sympathize
with the South was to support slavery. They believed that
British recognition of the Confederacy was inevitable but that
an opportune time should be awaited. The conservatives were much more anxious for recognition and criticized Palmerston. The radicals supported the North on anti-slavery grounds. Among the nationalist majority of the people, there was much sympathy with the South and opposition to the coercion policy of the North. They especially denounced the republican administration ruling the Union. However, most of the nationalists still preferred the restoration of the Union. The important news, as far as they were concerned, was of how the Irish New York 69th, under Colonel Nugent and Major Meagher, performed under fire and how much praised they were in the North.

Public opinion remained static until the 'Trent affair' in November, when an Anglo-American war appeared imminent. Believing that England's difficulty was their opportunity, the nationalists in December organized a meeting at the Rotunda in Dublin to demonstrate their support for the Union in any war with Great Britain. Most of the moderate and extreme nationalists appeared anxious for war, including A. M. Sullivan, editor of the Nation; but a few of the moderates, such as J. F. Maguire, M.P., proprietor of the Cork Examiner, argued that Ireland would suffer terribly from such a war. The West Britons were furious over the insult to the British flag and were prepared for war, though many were hopeful of a peaceful solution through American concessions. Of all the factions,

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1 See chapter on 'Anglo-American relations'.
the 'castle catholics', straddling the ever-widening chasm between the West Britons and the nationalists during the Trent crisis, were most anxious that peace be preserved. The excitement quickly dwindled after the United States released the confederate commissioners, although in February 1862 The O'Donoghue, M.P., chairman of the Rotunda meeting, challenged the Irish chief secretary, Sir Robert Peel, to a duel for his insulting remarks about the nationalists' conduct during the crisis.

During the winter and spring of 1862, there was much Southern sympathy among the West Britons, more anti-Union than pro-Confederacy, in reaction to the Trent crisis. There was considerable support for the Confederacy among the nationalists, although it was latent in the few months after the Anglo-American war scare. In the summer, however, Irish public opinion definitely swung in a Southern direction. Events on the battlefield certainly had an effect. Northern victories, such as Shiloh (Tennessee), were indecisive and cost many thousands of lives. Stonewall Jackson's daring Shenandoah Valley campaign from March to June stole the headlines. McClellan's Peninsular (Virginia) campaign in June and July strategically was disastrous and he was pushed into a subordinate position, as Henry Halleck was named general-in-chief of the U.S. armies on July 11. Union fortunes continued to deteriorate. Jackson won at Cedar Mountain on August 9, inflicting heavy Union losses; and confederate forces under Robert E. Lee at Second Manasses on
August 29 and 30 sharply repelled the Union armies.

To most Irishmen, these events meant one thing: the Confederacy was a nation and could not be conquered. Among the West Britons, the conservatives clamored for recognition of the Confederacy, chiding Palmerston for procrastination. The protestant liberals supported recognition when practicable, believing it inevitable, but also defended Palmerston's cautious approach. However, the 'castle catholics' or catholic 'Gladstonian' liberals, for humanitarian reasons were more anxious for recognition. The radicals, of course, opposed any British connivance with the slave-holding South. Among the moderate nationalists, there was a general desire for an independent Confederacy, a nation struggling to be free. Some had scruples about England's intervention and suggested Napoleon III as mediator. There was also Southern support among the extreme nationalists, though the majority probably favored the restoration of the Union with the return to power of the democratic party. It is very clear, though, that had Palmerston recognized the Confederacy, the decision would have been widely applauded in Ireland.

In the bloody battle of Antietam, near Sharpsburg, Maryland, on 17 September 1862, Lee and McClellan fought to a draw. However, Lee's invasion of Maryland was checked, and he withdrew to Virginia. Militarily, the battle was inconclusive,

1 J. G. Randall, The civil war and reconstruction, passim.
although it did have diplomatic repercussions. In October Palmerston, unlike Gladstone, decided that diplomatic caution was called for and postponed any cabinet decision on recognition of the Confederacy until more decisive results. Thus, 'Pam' changed his opinion held at the time 'when the confederates seemed to be carrying all before them' and believed that the British government should 'continue merely to be lookers-on till the war shall have taken a more decided turn'. However, the Irish and English public still felt that the confederate star was in the ascendant and that the South could not be conquered.

The battle had another repercussion. The psychological Northern victory as a result of Lee's retreat enabled President Lincoln on September 22 to issue his Preliminary Emancipation Proclamation, announcing that on 1 January 1863 all slaves in states or parts of states that were in rebellion against the United States should be 'then, thenceforward, and forever free'. The Proclamation further stated that the executive government of the United States 'will do no act...to repress such persons...in any efforts they may make for their actual freedom', which was interpreted by many on both sides of the Atlantic as an incitement to servile insurrection. It did not apply to the Union slave states, the state of Tennessee, or the portions of Virginia and Louisiana, under Union military control. Lincoln

issued it by virtue of the power in him 'vested as commander-in-chief of the army and navy' and stated that it was an act 'warranted by the Constitution upon military necessity'.

In Ireland, the public reaction to the proclamation was hostile and vociferous. The West Britons considered it hypocritical in not proclaiming universal emancipation, and a concrete proof that the North cared as little or less about the slave than the South. But the nationalists became hysterical with anger. They loathed the abolitionists who they believed were responsible for the war and were the chief threat to the well-being of Irish-Americans. Even most of the nationalists who favored the Union cause opposed the emancipation of the slaves. The Emancipation Proclamation won more public support for those nationalists who sympathized with the Confederacy.

In the autumn of 1862, there was an interesting conversion from the Southern to the Union cause by the pro-Fenian Dublin Irishman. It had been an early supporter of southern independence; but as English sympathies became more and more pro-confederate, it believed that all good Irishmen should desire the restoration of the Union. Generally, however, Irish public opinion became more pro-South during the winter of 1862-3. It paralleled Irish-American opinion to an extent, especially that

1 Randall, Civil war, pp. 489-511: The Thirteenth Amendment, abolishing slavery, was not approved by congress until 31 January 1865 and then was declared ratified by three-fourths of the states, including the seceded states, on 18 December 1865.
in New York and New England. Both disliked Lincoln and the republicans. However, Irish-Americans were generally devoted to the Union, though members of the democratic party - 'war democrats'. In Ireland the mass of peasants with relatives fighting in the war came to desire peace at any price, even the disruption of the Union, like the 'peace democrats' or 'copperheads' 1.

Events at the ballot-box and on the battlefield reinforced the growing amount of 'copperhead' support in Ireland. In the congressional elections in November 1862, the republicans barely maintained control of the house of representatives, probably through the use of federal troops to influence voters in the border states. 2 At the same time, Lincoln relieved McClellan of the command of the Army of the Potomac and replaced him with Ambrose E. Burnside. On 13 December 1862 General Burnside made one of the worst blunders of the war and brought on the disastrous Union defeat at Fredericksburg. The battle consisted of desperate Union charges against an impregnable confederate defense on heights west of the town. Meagher's Irish Brigade was virtually annihilated in this battle. 3

Randall says that after Fredericksburg, 'the nadir of Northern public opinion from January to July 1863';

1 See chapter on 'Southern independence'.
2 Randall, Civil war, pp. 599-601; Five important states which Lincoln had carried in 1860, N.Y., Pa., Ohio, Ind., and Ill., sent democratic delegations to the house in 1862.
3 See chapter on 'Irish participation'.


depression seemed to have been reached. When news reached Ireland in January 1863 of the fate of the Brigade at Fredericksburg, the conduct of Lincoln and Burnside was branded as criminal. To most Irishmen, the war seemed a fanatical and bloody Cromwellian crusade by Lincoln and the Northern republicans to subjugate the South - a campaign in which Irish-Americans were unwilling participants.

During the first half of 1863, there was little change in public opinion. Many nationalists were incensed over the tremendous increase in emigration and the reported Union recruiting of Irishmen; but to many young Irishmen, after the distress from 1860 through 1862, emigration to the United States, with the risk of dying on a battlefield but also with the possibility of obtaining a good job, was much preferable to starvation of body and stagnation of spirit in Ireland. Meagher's resignation from the Union army made many nationalists more bitter. They continued to believe that the South could not be conquered, and the confederate victory at Chancellorsville in May confirmed this opinion. Most Irishmen believed that the war had dragged on long enough and that it was time to end it. An editorial of the liberal Skibbereen Eagle provides the keynote of Irish public opinion from January to July 1863:

We have a great regard for the Americans generally; we feel that they are still in some measure our children, though they do occasionally play the truant; we pity their present

1 Randall, op.cit., p. 314.
position, and mourn that they should commit so imbecile an act as to pitch themselves one against another like Kilkenny cats. To write all the phases and incidents of this civil war is utterly impossible; but it is sufficient to say it has continued all the year round with more or less uncertainty. Battles have been fought; thousands of men have been slain on both sides; generals have been promoted in turn, and in turn deposed; great campaigns have been entered upon, abandoned, and renewed, but no decisive battle has been won, no fatal blow struck.

The Irish radicals were much heartened by the Emancipation Proclamation, especially after it went into effect on January 1 and fears of a slave insurrection proved unwarranted. They intensified their anti-slavery campaign in 1863. Two abolitionist meetings were held in Belfast, organized by some of the presbyterian clergy. Professor J. E. Cairnes's The slave power went into a second edition. However, the radical anti-slavery and pro-North campaign met with little success in Ireland except among some of the Ulster presbyterians - certainly nothing comparable to the support of many English workingmen, though this has probably been exaggerated. The radicals were primarily concerned with the eradication of slavery and the triumph of the North. To them the restoration of the Union was of secondary importance, and many had doubts about the advisability of Northern subjugation of the South.

The Union victories at Gettysburg and Vicksburg in July 1863 had little effect in Ireland. The magnitude of the victories was to an extent realized, but subjugation of the South

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1 Skibbereen and West Carbery Eagle, 10 Jan. 1863.

2 See bibliographical essay.
still seemed very remote. Typical was the reaction of the moderate nationalist Waterford News. In a leader entitled 'Great triumph of the federal arms - will there be peace?', it remarked: 'Peace! peace! peace! still resounds throughout the land by all sensible men and women, but before that happy end is attained, President Lincoln and his abolitionist advisers must be dethroned from their potency, or thousands of lives must still be forfeited'.

By far the most important news in July was the New York draft riots, in which Irish-Americans were principally responsible for the pillaging and the lynching of negroes. For months afterwards, this story dominated the discussion of American news in Irish nationalist newspapers. The nationalists had been perturbed about the administration of the draft for some time, and the riots in New York strengthened their 'copperhead' sympathies. The great majority of the Irish people had become irrevocably opposed to the war policy of the Union.

During the winter and spring of 1863-4, the Irish public was primarily concerned with Union recruiting of Irishmen and related topics. Two incidents of recruiting were substantiated. One concerned the enlisting of seamen at Queenstown on the USS Kearsarge; the other, recruiting of laborers in Dublin and Galway by a Patrick Finney, ostensibly for railroads and various companies in New England, but actually, through trickery, for

1 Waterford News, 24 July 1863.
the Union army. The United States government appeared to be taking advantage of naive young Irish emigrants. Even newspapers hoping for the restoration of the Union, such as the Ulster Observer, remarked:

We can no longer conceal from ourselves the fact that this country is being used as a recruiting camp for the federal armies of America... If the Northerns think their country and their cause worth fighting for, they should themselves wield the sword which they are thrusting into the hand of the stranger... The South has gained, and not undeservedly, sympathy from the chivalry which her children have displayed. They have undertaken to fight their own battles...

The large emigration to the United States, rightly or wrongly, was attributed by many to Union recruiting. The Cork Examiner in an editorial in April 1864 noted that the proportion of young male emigrants at Queenstown was much over what it should be. During the recruiting controversy, sympathy with the South increased. Lieutenant-General U. S. Grant was pictured as 'a soulless butcher' in his campaign to wear out the South through sheer attrition, even though an enormous number of Union soldiers were lost, such as at the battle of the Wilderness on 5 and 6 May 1864. The Irish desperately desired peace.

By 1864, the Roman Catholic clergy in Ireland had become staunch advocates of a quick armistice and an independent

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1 See chapter on 'Irish participation'.
2 Ulster Observer, 31 Mar. 1864.
3 Cork Examiner, 21 Apr. 1864.
4 Ibid., 26 May 1864.
Confederacy. They believed their flocks were threatened by the treacherous tactics of Union recruiting agents. They also believed that the federal government was controlled by the abolitionists who were anti-catholic and hated the Irish. Reports received from catholics in the Union and the Confederacy confirmed the Irish clergy's belief that the Union war policy was damaging to the interests of the church in America. The Rev. Thomas Bennett, president of All Hallows College, Dublin, which had sent many missionaries to American dioceses, heard from the bishop of Hartford, Connecticut, Francis P. McFarland, how the war caused a growth of immorality and vice in the United States and how several of his priests were drafted as soldiers and one was obliged to pay 900 dollars for a substitute. Father Bennett also received a letter from the bishop of Natchez, Mississippi, William H. Elder, describing the terrible conditions in his see after the Northern occupation: how many of the negroes were dying of fever and how two of his churches were destroyed and one robbed with the chalice 'taken off for a drinking cup' but brought back by an Irish soldier. As we shall see in the chapter dealing with religious factors, there were many reasons for the Irish catholic clergy's desire for peace at any price.

During the summer and autumn of 1864, Irish attention

1 McFarland to Bennett, 16 June and 3 Sept. 1864, and Elder to Bennett, 2 Jan. 1864, summarized and partially quoted in Patrick F. Murray, Calendar of the overseas missionary correspondence of All Hallows College, Dublin, 1842-77, pp. 52, 81 (N.I., I., Fos. 3849).
concentrated on the presidential election and a movement for peace. The confederate-sponsored peace petition that called for an end to the war and an independent Confederacy received much more support in Ireland than in any other part of the United Kingdom. As the confederate army was slowly overpowered by numerically superior federal forces, Lincoln was considered to be demanding 'yet more and more victims to offer up to the Moloch of his ambition...'. Like Judas, he doomed young Irish-American soldiers 'to destruction with a kiss'. The Irish nationalists at first hoped that General George B. McClellan 'in the interest of America and of humanity' would defeat Lincoln in the presidential election, for McClellan's election would almost certainly bring peace. However, McClellan campaigned as a 'war democrat'; and after his defeat, the nationalists pointed out that he explained away the peace tendencies of the platform adopted at the Democratic National Convention 'thereby sapping the very cornerstone of the principles upon which alone he could hope to be elected'.

While the Confederacy was crumbling in early 1865 during Sherman's drive north through the Carolinas after his march through Georgia, the Irish public finally realized that the

1 *Cork Examiner*, 8 July 1864.


4 *Nation*, 26 Nov. 1864.
Confederacy was in its death-throes. The Irish people hoped that the Union would be magnanimous in its victory and heaved a sigh of relief with the coming of peace at Appomattox. Lincoln's assassination was especially mourned by the nationalists, for they realized that he was more moderate and conciliatory toward the South than they considered him to be during certain periods of the war.

3. Introduction to the body of the thesis.

The civil war provided a complex of issues which stimulated keen interest and passionate debate in Ireland. There appear to be five primary issues about which were clustered various subsidiary ones. Irish participation in the war, dealt with in chapter six, was the principal issue with which the great majority of the Irish people were concerned. There was an emotional popular reaction in Ireland against Irish-American participation in the war and also against the involvement of Irishmen emigrating to the United States during the war. The welfare of the Irish in America was one of the considerations uppermost in the minds of the people in Ireland.

However, there were other issues which are possibly of more importance to historians. Chapter two deals with the
Irish attitude toward the slavery question and chapter three with Southern independence. These two chapters are complementary and form the core of the thesis in regard to the basic points of dispute in the civil war. The slavery chapter provides the complicated and highly interesting development of opinion on an important issue, but the chapter on Southern independence attempts to supply the key to contemporary Irish opinion on the war. The character and conduct of Lincoln, discussed in chapter four, was a controversial topic in Irish public opinion. The Irishman's Lincoln, indeed, appears as a composite portrait colored by the prejudices of each faction, which were based on attitudes toward the war issues and the principal Irish problems. The Irish reaction to the question of war or peace between the United States and Great Britain is treated in chapter five, 'Anglo-American relations'. This issue was very significant in Ireland; and conversely, Irish opinion on it assumed special importance in England and America.

Following the five chapters on the principal issues there is a chapter on the religious, economic, social, and political factors influencing Irish opinion on the war. The religious section is not only the most important but the most illuminating because the factors are more clear-cut. The economic and social sections, of necessity, are more speculative, though a few
definite determining factors are presented. The brief political section is presented merely for the sake of balance as a summary of the principal political considerations influencing Irish opinion on the war, which are continually evident in the chapters on the issues.
CHAPTER II

THE ABOLITION OF SLAVERY


2. See Richard J. Purcell, Ireland and the American Civil War, in Catholic World, cv.76 (Apr. 1956), in which he states that O'Connell has offered twenty-seven votes on every Irish issue in the House of Commons by the English East India Interest, providing that O'Connell's Irish colleagues reneged from voting on Irish issues

3. Before the Cork anti-slavery society map, authors had "strong anti-catholic prejudice", he delivered a "million anti-catholic address in which he quoted the scriptures, soundly in favor of human liberty". On occasion, he was "compromised" by nationalists (Pagan, op. cit., p. 290). Inevitably, caring the stains, O'Connell was well concerned on the slavery issues by all religious and political factions in Ireland (P. J. Sullivan, The Abolition Movement in Ireland, a study in English pre-eminence, 1900, p. 82). Also see in this line, the American Civil Slavery Map, 1863. For O'Connell's relations with current abolitionists, see p. 83.

In considering the formation of Irish public opinion during the civil war years on the abolition of slavery in America, one must necessarily trace the ante-bellum development of opinion on the issues involved.

During the 1830s anti-slavery sentiment was very strong in Ireland. The outstanding figure among Irish abolitionists was Daniel O'Connell, 'the liberator', who, though not officially a member, spoke in the Irish provinces at many meetings of the Anti-Slavery Society. In 1833 he was one of the leaders in the movement to emancipate negro slaves in the West Indies, even though it may have been in the interest of Ireland that he should refrain from committing himself on the issue. Though he was aware of the anti-catholic prejudices of many abolitionists, he did not permit this to diminish his zeal for their cause. At this time, O'Connell's position seems to have been supported by Irish nation-

1 William Fagan, The life and times of Daniel O'Connell (1848), ii. 239.

2 See Richard J. Purcell, 'Ireland and the American civil war', in Catholic World, cv.76 (Apr. 1922), in which he states that O'Connell was offered twenty-seven votes on every Irish issue in the house of commons by the English West Indian interest, provided that O'Connell's Irish delegation refrain from voting against slavery.

3 Before the Cork Anti-Slavery Society whose members had 'strong anti-catholic prejudices', he delivered a brilliant anti-slavery address in which he 'quoted the scriptures familiarly in favour of human liberty'. On concluding, he was enthusiastically applauded (Fagan, op.cit., p. 240). Apparently, during the 1830s O'Connell was well supported on the slavery issue by all religious and political factions in Ireland (F.J. Klingberg, The anti-slavery movement in England: a study in English humanitarianism, p. 249). Also see R. Coupland, The British anti-slavery movement, p. 133. For O'Connell's relations with American abolitionists, see R. B. Nye, William Lloyd Garrison and the humanitarian reformers, and Lorenzo Sears, Wendell Phillips: orator and agitator.
alists without dissent. In March 1838 in the house of commons, he delivered an eloquent speech on West Indian negro apprenticeship and was influential in abolishing it. In 1840 he proved to be more radical than Bright and Cobden by advocating the exclusion of slave-grown produce through prohibitive duties, which sanctions they opposed because of free trade principles. In the same year he was one of the stars at the World's Anti-Slavery Convention in London where he met and was admired by abolitionists from Great Britain and the United States.

One of O'Connell's followers in the repeal association, Joseph Cartan, the proprietor and editor of the Dundalk Democrat during the civil war, provides an interesting link in the development of public opinion on the slavery issue. In 1839 he published a poem entitled 'An essay on patriotism' whose theme was freedom versus slavery. He insisted that there should be no compromising with slavery. In attacking all forms of slavery, he condemned

1 Stephen Hobhouse, Joseph Sturge; his life and work, p. 42.
2 Ibid., p. 106.
3 Slavery and "The woman question"; Lucretia Mott's diary of her visit to Great Britain to attend the World's Anti-Slavery Convention of 1840, ed. F. E. Tolles, passim.
5 Joseph Cartan, An essay on patriotism together with legends and stories of Louth, p. 28 (N.I.I.; Irish poetry collection, MS 1673). Joseph Cartan is the same person as Joseph Cartan (Ua Dubthaigh, loc. cit.).
the system of slavery in the southern half of the United States. Noting that even in 'those kingless States', which had produced such great men as Washington and Franklin, 'upon the ear the sound of slavery grates', he wept for liberty's sake, for in the United States 'beside her trophies she beholds her bier'.

Although O'Connell championed the anti-slavery cause, the moving spirits of the anti-slavery movement in Ireland were the Dublin radical reformers most of whom were quakers such as the Webbs, Allens, and Haughtons. They were great admirers of William Lloyd Garrison, who, after founding the Boston Liberator in 1831 and organizing the New England Anti-Slavery Society in 1832, formed in 1833 with the Tappan brothers of New York, the American Anti-Slavery Society. The Irish abolitionists had more in common with the New England radical and anti-clerical abolitionists, such as Garrison, who advocated the secession of the Free States from the Union, than with the evangelical abolitionists of western New York state and Ohio, led by Theodore Weld, who advocated political action within the constitutional framework of the Union and broke with Garrison in 1840. After the World's Anti-Slavery Convention in London in 1840, Garrison and Nathaniel Peabody Rogers visited Dublin on their way back to America. Rogers wrote that he had 'a great-souled time' with the Dublin anti-slavery group:

1 Cartin, op.cit., pp. 31-3.

2 See Gilbert H. Barnes, The antislavery impulse 1830-1844, which discusses the controversies among American abolitionists. Garrison evidently was much more popular among British than American abolitionists.
I have seen the Boston abolitionists, the Chapmans, the Sargents, the Southwicks, the Quincys, the Pierponts, the Philipses, and the Jacksons, and others of that constellation, too many to name, but they were not Irish. It takes old Ireland to top out darling human character. Genius, refinement, heart (a bosom full of it), simplicity, hospitality warmer than brotherly love, high-souled philanthropy, reform of the most daring cast. I never felt so much at home anywhere before. Under the roof of my own mother's son, I never experienced such a liberty as I could not help feeling in a single day among those Irish hearts.

Alfred Webb, son of R. D. Webb, a prominent Irish abolitionist, wrote that Richard Allen and the Webbs during the years 1834 to 1845 were

the centre of a general movement for reform, and the amelioration of the ills of humanity in every direction... Slavery, temperance, British India, anti-opium, anti-capital punishment, anti-corn law, mesmerism, cold-water cure - everything was taken up... They were called by a jocose newspaper editor "anti-everythingarians". 2

Irish radical abolitionists shared Garrison's uncompromising attitude toward slavery. Richard Allen disapproved of the decision of the Irish Society of Friends to accept contributions from slaveholders during the famine:

I know that Henry Clay, the prince of orators and of slaveholders, has raised his eloquent and potent voice in favour of our suffering countrymen and that Mr. Duffie, Calhoun, and other eminent slaveholders, unite in this career of benevolence with the purest and best spirits of that land. ... But let us remember... that slavery is not the less wicked or less hateful because of the wretchedness and depredation of the Irish peasant. 3


2 Quoted ibid., pp. 13-14. Another Dublin abolitionist, Dr. R.R. Madden, at that time was serving first as a special magistrate in Jamaica, appointed to aid in abolishing slavery, and later as a judge and protector of liberated slaves in Havana (see The memoirs (chiefly autobiographical) from 1798 to 1885 of Richard Robert Madden, M.D., F.R.C.S. (1891), ed. T. M. Madden).

In the 1840s a divergence of opinion developed among Irish nationalists on abolition of slavery in the United States. The controversy centered on the relationship between the nationalists and their pro-slavery Irish-American supporters. At issue were the idealistic attachment to moral principles of O'Connell and his followers and the pragmatic politics of Young Ireland.

In 1842, O'Connell, Father Theobald Mathew, and 70,000 Irishmen signed an address to Irish-Americans, calling on them 'to cling to the abolitionists in America, and to unite with them to put an end to slavery...by all peaceable means in their power'.

In an anti-slavery speech in Conciliation Hall, Daniel O'Connell exhibited all the fervor of an abolitionist, with a resolute unwillingness to compromise. In this spirit, he felt compelled to lecture his fellow countrymen in the United States: 'Over the broad Atlantic I pour forth my voice, saying, come out of such a land, you Irishmen; or if you remain, and dare to countenance the system of slavery that is supported there we will recognize you as Irishmen no longer...'. He realized that it was not politic for him to speak on the subject from a purely pragmatic point of view but believed that the freedom of mankind should take precedence over all political interests: 'Let them execrate me in America - let their support be taken from Ireland - slavery,


2 quoted in Samuel Haughton, Memoir of James Haughton (1877), p. 287.
I denounce you wherever you are. He reasoned as a man who was
to your knowledge I am a man who will
refuse to consider any way of acting in his outlook and thus
could justify his attitude on abolitionism: "Though this be a
blow against Ireland, it is a blow in favour of human liberty,
and I will strike that blow. Come freedom — come oppression of
Ireland — my conscience shall be clear before God. We may not get
money from America after this declaration, but we do not want
bloodstained money."

In 1845 the annexation of Texas by the United States, with
its effect on the abolitionist movement, created a controversy in
Ireland and the Loyal National Repeal Association, in particular.
As a result, two diametrically opposed attitudes on the abolition
of slavery developed in Irish public opinion. The abolitionists
viewed the annexation of Texas with alarm, considering it a con-
spiracy of slaveholders in an attempt to enhance their political
power in Washington. In a speech before the repeal association,
John O'Connell, the son of 'the liberator', deplored the annexation
of Texas and criticised those Irish-Americans who supported it.
He stated that Irishmen in America 'were warped by the vile in-
fluences of slavery which are experienced in that unfortunate

1 Ibid.

2 Ibid.

3 The abolitionists feared that several more slave states
might be carved from Texas, with a resulting increase in the
number of Southern senators. To buttress their argument that the
annexation was a Southern conspiracy, they pointed to the fact
that John C. Calhoun, the secretary of state and the epitome of
the southern slaveholder, wrote a note in April 1844 to the British
minister vigorously defending the institution of slavery in the
midst of the annexation controversy.
country. The 'noble people of Texas' were 'brigands, gamblers, swindlers, assassins, everyman who found that he could not remain in the southern states of America...went to Texas...rife as the southern states were in crime of every sort, all proceeding like some foul exhalation from the abominable substratum of slavery'.

He also said that even

if the greatest amount of particular good [were] to be accomplished by the annexation of Texas, that act being bad in itself and likely to support the horrible system of the slavery of their fellow-creatures..., the people of Ireland would forgo the particular good rather than accept it at such a cost... Surely he that protested against the conduct of England towards this country, and professed himself to be the friend of Ireland, ought also to be the friend of liberty all over the world. 3

In this speech John O'Connell was expressing the opinions of his father on the annexation of Texas and slavery, though probably in more vitriolic language.

The particular good to be gained for Ireland from the annexation was the resulting setback to British imperialism and the strengthening of the United States. Great Britain desired an independent Texas to serve as a buffer state against U.S. expansion. She also thought Texas would be a valuable source of cotton and a duty-free market for British manufactured goods. 5

Daniel O'Connell's rejection of this particular good is another

1 Nation, 9 Aug., 1845.
2 Ibid.
3 Ibid.
4 Haughton, op.cit., p. 72.
5 Thomas Bailey, A diplomatic history of the American people, p. 254.
instance of his subordinating the repeal movement to the abolition of slavery.

Richard Scott, a solicitor, objected to the opinions expressed by John O'Connell. He said that it was too much for 'humble Irishmen as they were in that association when placed in comparison with America, to expect that anything that could be said in that association could at all put down American slavery, or slavery in any other country'. Since they did not have the power to abolish slavery, he submitted that they should be 'cautious how they injured those who were anxiously assisting them to effect their own emancipation'. Scott concluded his comments by expressing his regrets that the association was made 'the vehicle of a slanderous attack upon the Americans'.

Later in the week, the Dublin Nation, representing Young Ireland, editorialized:

"Ireland cannot grow ungrateful for the care and zeal of America, and cannot become blind to the value of such an intimacy. We are sure, therefore, that the country will not read without some feeling of regret the unhappy discussion of last Monday. No man in that league is pledged to anything save repeal...and the discussion of topics on which its members differ cannot serve the cause they have joined in adopting. Were such disputes frequent, the cause could not prosper nor, perhaps, the confederation last."

1 Nation, 9 Aug. 1845.
2 Ibid.
3 Ibid.
4 Ibid.
During succeeding meetings of the association, the controversy continued to rage, and many opinions were expressed that would play a prominent part in the development of public opinion on the slavery issue during the civil war.

John O'Connell at another meeting commented on the adverse criticism of his father's stand on abolition in pro-Irish journals in the United States. He quoted an article in Brownson's Quarterly Review, accusing 'the liberator' of insincerity in his comments and charging an attempt on his part 'to enlist the abolitionists in Great Britain on his side, and to have it clearly and distinctly understood by the British government and people that however ardently he may desire repeal he is not prepared to carry it by courting or accepting any foreign alliance or sympathy...'. In denying this assertion, John O'Connell said that his father was merely performing his duty as a Christian '...and was throwing aside all considerations of mere policy, and acting in a manner that could not fail to injure the interests of the repeal movement as far as those interests are involved in mere pecuniary considerations...'. He then stated that 'the liberator' had repudiated any connexion with the abolitionists and mentioned his reasons for doing so: 'So far as they are sincere and determined in their desire to abolish slavery their conduct commands admiration, and Mr. O'Connell has freely accorded it to them; but that party, or

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1 Freeman's Journal, 19 Aug. 1845. See Purcell, 'Ireland and the American Civil War', p. 77: At repeal meetings, Daniel O'Connell bitterly attacked slavery in the U.S. so frequently that the U.S. minister to the Court of St. James, Andrew Stevenson, was compelled to speak out in its defense.

2 Ibid.
many of them are imbued with bitterly anti-catholic feelings'.

The O'Connells were very pro-abolitionist, though they avoided official membership in the ranks of the abolitionists because of their anti-catholic reputation.

At the same meeting, Thomas Steele, the 'head pacificator', stressed the importance of the conflict between liberty and tyranny. He said that many well-educated Irish Protestants were Orangemen not through hatred of Catholicism but 'through a sensitive apprehension for human liberty' and that Daniel O'Connell's publicly expressed views on slavery should remove all rational fears on the part of Protestants. He then took exception to remarks made by Edmund Burke in his speech on reconciliation with the American colonies. Steele denied Burke's assertion that the institution of slavery in the Southern colonies made the white people there 'much more strongly, and with a higher and more stubborn spirit, attached to liberty than those to the northward. ...Such will be the masters of slaves who are not slaves themselves. In such a people the haughtiness of domination combines with the spirit of freedom, fortifies it, and renders it invincible.' Steele termed these sentiments 'loathsome, revolting, and accursed' in his idealistic defense of the spirit of freedom throughout the world.

1 Ibid.
2 Ibid.
3 Ibid. See The speeches of the Right Hon. Edmund Burke (1853), ed. James Burke, p. 86: In his speech before the house of commons on 22 Mar. 1775, Burke named slavery in the South as one of the capital sources of the fierce spirit of liberty in the American colonies.
4 Ibid.
James Haughton, a leader of the Hibernian Anti-Slavery Society and a repealer, was naturally very pleased about the sentiments John O'Connell expressed at the Loyal National Repeal Association and published a letter praising him and asserting that it would be 'infamy' to receive aid from the U.S. as 'the price of silence on the subject of slavery'. Haughton was devoted to many humanitarian causes, such as teetotalism and abolition of capital punishment, and fitted very well into the mold of the typical radical abolitionist. His crusading zeal met its match in the blunt pragmatic politics of the Young Irelanders, and a crisis occurred in January, 1847. The members of the Irish Confederation had decided to send an address to James Polk, the slaveholding president of the U.S.; and at a meeting of the Confederation, Haughton attempted to deliver a speech condemning slavery and the address, in particular, but was refused a hearing by his fellow members. Consequently, he withdrew from the Confederation.

As a result of Father Mathew's crusade for temperance in the United States from 1849 to 1851, the abolitionist movement in Ireland received a setback, especially among catholic nationalists, who had adopted O'Connell's attitude on the abolition of slavery. Father Mathew, had urged Irish-Americans in 1842 to support the abolitionists; but in 1849 in Boston he refused to aid the abolitionists in any way when approached by W. L. Garrison, editor


of the *Liberator*, and pleaded that the sole purpose of his mission was to save men from the 'slavery of intemperance, without attempting to overthrow any other kind of slavery'. Thus, Father Mathew had backed down and adopted the pragmatic approach when his back was against the wall. The abolitionists were furious. Garrison reported his interview with Father Mathew in the *Liberator* and printed a copy of the address of 1842, commenting that he was very much saddened by Father Mathew's lack of sympathy for the slave and refusal to support the anti-slavery movement in the United States.

The storm had just begun. Not only had Father Mathew alienated the extreme abolitionists, but after Garrison had publicized the address of 1842, a number of prominent Southern slaveholders became hostile to Mathew's mission. Governor Lumpkin of Georgia withdrew his invitation to him to visit and preach temperance in Georgia, and Father Mathew became the centre of a controversy during his visit to Washington in December 1849.

1 J. F. Maguire, *Father Mathew* (1863), p. 471: Father Mathew was reported as saying: 'I have as much as I can do to save men from the slavery of intemperance, without attempting to overthrow any other kind of slavery. Besides, it would not be proper to commit myself on a question like this under present circumstances. I am a catholic priest; but being here to promote the cause of temperance, I should not be justified in turning aside from my mission, for the purpose of subserving the cause of Catholicism.'

2 *Ibid.* Garrison wrote: 'Not a syllable fell from his lips, expressive of pleasure that the American slave has his faithful and devoted advocates - or of joy at the emancipation of eight hundred thousand bondsmen in the British Isles. It is with great sorrow of heart that I lay these facts before America, Ireland, and the world.'

During his stay in the nation's capitol, a resolution was introduced in the U.S. Senate 'that the Rev. Theobald Mathew be allowed a seat within the bar of the United States Senate during the period of his sojourn in Washington,' which would make him the first foreigner since Lafayette to be so honored. Senator Clements of Alabama opposed the resolution because of Father Mathew's abolitionist background, and then three great personalities who figured prominently in the American slavery controversy entered the debate. Henry Clay, the 'great pacificator,' deplored bringing up the question of slavery in conjunction with the resolution, saying that it was merely intended to honor a distinguished Irish patriot. But Senator Seward of New York, a favorite of the abolitionists, attempted to make Father Mathew a stalking-horse for abolitionism, saying that this resolution would reveal the abolitionist sentiment of the Senate. Then, Senator Jefferson Davis of Mississippi, answering Seward, said that his speech revealed that Father Mathew came to the United States covertly as a 'wolf in sheep's clothing' and, as an ally of O'Connell's, was persona non grata to senators from slaveholding states. The resolution was carried by a vote of thirty-three to eighteen.

1 Ibid., p. 481.
2 Ibid., p. 486.
3 Ibid., p. 482.
4 Ibid.
5 Ibid.
being opposed by many of the representatives of the slaveholders but indicating that a majority of U.S. senators preferred the attitude of Henry Clay.

Father Mathew's modification of his original position coincided with the thinning of the ranks of the nationalist abolitionists after O'Connell's death. It was the Henry Clay or Young Ireland attitude that became predominant among the nationalists in the decade prior to the civil war. Thus, John Francis Maguire, proprietor of the Cork Examiner, in his biography of Father Mathew, published in 1863, could justify his conduct on the issue; but James Haughton, one of the few faithful nationalist abolitionists, in 1862 had still not forgotten one of the 'few dark passages in Father Mathew's life, which serve to show us that even the best men have serious imperfections of character' and which brought divine retribution in the form of poor health. The Irish nationalists had generally come to detest the fanaticism displayed by both the abolitionists and the slaveholders; but circumstances, i.e. the increased animosity of the Irish-Americans toward the abolitionists and the lack thereof in the case of the slaveholders

1 Ibid., p. 486.

2 Ireland and Father Mathew', a paper read before the International Temperance and Prohibition Convention, Sept., 1862, quoted in Maguire, Mathew, p. 473 fn.: 'When he proposed accepting the invitation to America, [Haughton] entreated him not to go, for I knew the danger; and he fell beneath the wiles of the slaveholder. He failed to maintain in the South the noble principles of freedom for the co-race which he had always advocated at home. Like the great Kossuth he, too, was unable to withstand the blandishments of American man-stealers, and both sunk not a little, in the estimation of the world for this false step. Such is the righteous judgement which follows glaring deviations from the path of rectitude - Father Mathew never recovered his health and spirits after his return from America.'
and the general acceptance of the status-quo in preference to a violent upheaval, made the Irish nationalists more antagonistic toward the 'fanatical and puritanical' abolitionists.

In the 1850's in Ireland there continued to be a good deal of discussion of slavery in the United States. Foreshadowing their attitude during the early stages of the civil war, the West Briton element were ardent abolitionists. The Dublin University Magazine reflected their sentiments in its glowing review of Harriet Beecher Stowe's Uncle Tom's Cabin in 1852:

In Uncle Tom's Cabin we have a fine and deeply-impressed mind unburdening itself of a load of bitter truth, gathered from years and scenes of painful experience, until it becomes too mighty for a solitary bosom, and is solemnly committed to the reflective world... The abolition of a real, existing evil will be the problem which concentrates [the reader's] thoughts - the right of one man to barter and enslave another the absorbing question, which will meet him on every human face that crosses his path.1

Asserting that it was thoroughly abolitionist, the magazine attacked slavery with the fervor of a militant revivalist. It stated that the 'christian warfare of the abolitionists' was met by the Southern slaveholders' argument that 'sin itself must be right, since God permits it'. It also commented: 'Slavery is a form of sin; sin we are all bound to extirpate, so far as we can'. This statement placed it beyond all doubt in the ranks of the

1 Dublin University Magazine, xl. 600-3 (Nov., 1852).
2 Ibid., pp. 602-3.
3 Ibid., p. 603.
abolitionists, for as Wendell Phillips, the prominent American abolitionist, said, 'the conviction that slavery is a sin is the Gibraltar of our cause'. However, while the Dublin University Magazine and the Irish aristocrats generally considered themselves abolitionists in principle, in practice during the civil war they would in no way be willing to sacrifice any of their concrete interests in order to support the abstract principle of the freedom of man.

As was pointed out, the majority of Irish nationalists during the 1850s, as they would do during the civil war, adopted the pragmatic approach of Young Ireland on the slavery issue. This attitude was reenforced by their antipathy toward the American abolitionists because of their association with the know-nothing party. Thus in 1852 the Nation deplored the 'arrogant conservatism of the Slave States' and 'the odious institution of slavery' but regarded the election of Franklin Pierce, a Northerner who was friendly to the South and an upholder of the interests of the slave owners as a 'great national benefit'. There were several reasons for their supporting the anti-abolitionist democrat Pierce. First of all, Irish-Americans largely voted democratic; and undoubtedly this had an influence. The democratic party had traditionally been the friend of the immigrant, especially the Irish. The federalists and the whigs and their successor, the

1 Richard Hofstadter, The American political tradition and the men who made it, p. 142.

2 Nation, 4 Dec., 1852.
the republicans, were more inclined to favor the native-American, isolationist point of view, ever since the Alien and Sedition Acts of 1798. Also, the nationalists believed that it was in the interest of Ireland to keep the United States united, and the democratic party was a national party as opposed to the republican party, founded in 1854, which was sectional, depending for its support in the North and West. Consequently, the Irish nationalists, along with their countrymen in the United States, thought that there was less likelihood of a disruption of the Union under a democratic administration. They also believed that the democratic party was more hostile towards England than the republican, with its abolitionist element who eagerly sought support for their cause in England, and its pro-English, monarchical bias stretching back to Alexander Hamilton and John Adams.

Keeping up the abolitionist tradition among the nationalists in the decade prior to the war were those who continued to share O'Connell's views on the subject. They were unquestionably a distinct minority. In this category there were protestants, such as James Haughton, who continued to play a leading role in the abolitionist movement in Ireland, and catholics such as Joseph Cartan. Generally speaking there was much apathy on the question among Irish nationalists - because of the anti-catholic sentiments of many American and British abolitionists and in large trade

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1 See James Haughton, Statistics of free and slave labour in the United States of America, a paper read in the Dublin Statistical Society, 8 Jan., 1859. It is based on Hinton Helper's Impending crisis.
centers such as Belfast because of the 'love of filthy lucre'.

It would take a deep and abiding faith in abolitionism for an Irish nationalist to be an abolitionist in the 1850s, as he read about the tribulations of Irish-Americans. A large part of the abolitionist movement in the Northern States was anti-Irish. The abolitionists believed that the Irish opposed emancipation because they feared the competition of the manumitted negro in the labor market. All the evidence available on the period indicates that the Irishman detested the negro... While Irish support of slavery probably started as part of their democratic party loyalty, its continuance and the intensification of their hatred toward the negro was probably economic.

From 1840 to 1860 unskilled Irish laborers accepted menial employment in the Northern States at low wages and drove out negro competitors. In 1850, negroes comprised the majority of servants in New York city, but twenty years later Irish servants outnumbered the entire negro population of the city by ten to one. Northern

1 Mary McNeill. The life and times of Mary Ann McCracken, 1770-1866, p. 295: In 1859 Mary Ann McCracken, who was prominent in many humanitarian movements in Ireland, such as total abstinence and anti-slavery, wrote that '...Belfast, once so celebrated for its love of liberty' is now so sunk in the love of filthy lucre that there are but 16 or 17 female anti-slavery advocates, for the good cause paying 2/6 yearly, not one man, tho' several quakers in Belfast, and none to distribute papers to American emigrants but an old woman within 17 days of 89'.

2 William D'Arcy, The fenian movement in the United States: 1858-1866, p. 64.

3 F. E. Gibson, The attitudes of the New York Irish toward state and national affairs, 1848-1892, p. 142.
negroes disliked being forced out of their jobs by the Irish to whom they referred as 'white niggers' or 'white buckra'. Frederic Douglass, the negro abolitionist leader, warned that the Irishman would find 'that in assuming our avocation he also has assumed our degradation'. Irish-Americans disliked Northern negroes as economic competitors and thus feared the effect of Southern negro emancipation on the labor situation in the North. Sarah B. Shaw, an American abolitionist and mother-in-law of G. W. Curtis, wrote to Professor Cairnes, an Irish abolitionist:

For some reason, I know not why, unless, perhaps, that all men in a low state of culture like to feel that there are others below them, our Irish have a most groundless, cruel and malignant hatred of our poor colour'd race - now they have adopted the insane idea that if the slaves are freed, they are to come North, and take their work - I had heard of this state of feeling, through our gardener, coachman etc., who having lived with us many years, have learned to feel as we do, and consequently are insulted by their countrymen and called "wooly heads", "nigger-worshippers" the two names furnished them by the N.Y. Herald, which is their gospel, to apply to all anti-slavery people — . . .

To Frederic Douglass, Irish Roman catholics were 'the enemies of human freedom, so far, at least, as our humanity is concerned'. Abolitionism essentially was 'a religious movement, emerging from the ferment of evangelical protestantism, psychologically akin to other reforms—women's rights, temperance, and pacifism —

1 L. F. Litwack, North of slavery, the negro in the free states, 1790-1860, pp. 163-5.

2 S. B. Shaw to J. E. Cairnes, 7 Aug., 1862 (N.Y.L.I., MS 3935).

3 quoted in Litwack, op.cit., p. 165.
which agitated the spirits of the Northern middle classes during the three decades before the civil war. Its philosophy was essentially a theology, its technique similar to the technique of revivalism, its agencies the church congregations of the towns. 1

Many abolitionists were associated with the know-nothing party, which was absorbed by the republican party after the election of 1856. Because of their religion Irish immigrants were cordoned off from the main stream of American life by the know-nothings and their sympathizers. The platform of the know-nothings called for the exclusion of all catholics and aliens from public office and for a twenty-one year period of residence for immigrants before becoming naturalized citizens. The know-nothings in the 1850s instigated a number of anti-catholic riots, especially in eastern cities, in which churches and convents were ransacked and burned and catholics killed and wounded.

The Irish-Americans were under the constant derisive barrage of the abolitionist press and prominent abolitionist authors which increased the resentment of abolitionism in Ireland. A typical example would be the comments of Hinton Helper, the North Carolinian abolitionist, in his famous book The impending crisis of the South, published in 1857, quoted during the war by the New York Metropolitan Record and reprinted in the Cork Examiner. Helper said that the Irish "are a more brutal race and lower in

1 Hofstadter, American political tradition, p. 142.

civilization than the negro... The Irish are coarse-grained, revengeful, unintellectual, with very few of the finer instincts of humanity. He predicted a fusion of Irishmen and negroes which would be of great service to the Irish and improve their character.

Statements of Lydia Maria Child, a prominent abolitionist author, and Mike Walsh, a congressman from New York, sum up the attitudes of the two hostile camps on the role of Irish-Americans in the abolition movement. In a letter to Charles Sumner, Lydia Child wrote:

'The democratic party are, and always have been, ready to compromise any principle of freedom for the sake of securing and retaining the Irish vote; and the Irish hate the negroes and their protectors. I believe the Roman priesthood, and the catholic powers of Europe, wish, and expect, to undermine our free institutions by means of the influence of catholic voters, who, under their guidance, will go to the death to maintain the infallibility of the Pope in politics, as readily as they would to maintain his infallibility in religious matters.’

Reflecting the opinions of the majority of Irish-Americans, Michael Walsh said that the only difference between the negro slave of the South and the white wages slave of the North was that 'the one is the slave of an individual; the other is the slave of an inexorable class... If a dozen of us own a horse in common, we want to ride him as much as possible, and feed him as little as possible. But if you or I own a horse exclusively, we will take

1 Quoted in Cork Examiner, 4 Apr. 1864.
2 Ibid.
3 Quoted in D'Arcy, op.cit., p. 562.
good care to feed him well, and not drive him too much to endanger
his health, but just enough to keep him in good traveling order. 1
It was not that the Northern Irish-American favored slavery as an
institution, but he did not believe that it was necessarily a sin
against humanity that must be blotted out at any price. Preservation
of the Union was more important to the Irish-American.

Another factor buttressing the Irish-American opposition to
the abolition movement, with its influence on the Irish nationalists
was the attitude of the catholic church in the United States on
slavery. Official catholic doctrine taught that 'slavery, thought
of theoretically and apart from specific abuses to human dignity,
was not opposed to the divine or natural law' but that catholic
slave-holders were morally obliged to treat their slaves with
justice and charity. The church was opposed to the principles
of the abolitionists who encouraged opposition to the laws of the
land on slavery and made the slaves dissatisfied. 4 Bishop Francis
P. Kenrick, the leading American catholic theologian of the period,
treated slavery in the United States not as the 'peculiar institu-
tion' that then existed but as the 'classical concept of slavery -
which was preferable to the destruction of society...'

1 Quoted in A. M. Schlesinger, Jr., The age of Jackson,
p. 490.
2 J. Fr. Maguire, The Irish in America (1868), p. 634.
3 Msgr. John Tracy Ellis, American Catholicism, p. 87.
4 Ibid., p. 88.
5 Ibid.
he had a horror of slavery, Archbishop Hughes of New York opposed the manifesto of Daniel O'Connell and Father Mathew in 1842.

Many prominent American catholics were or had been slaveholders, such as Roger Brooke Taney, Charles Carroll of Carrollton, and Archbishop John Carroll. The hierarchy treated abolition as a political question to be decided by the individual, and most of the Irish "reacted favorably to a system which for the first time in their lives had placed others at the bottom of the social 2 ladder".

In tracing the development of public opinion in Ireland during the civil war years on the abolition of slavery, three divisions become apparent: opinion immediately prior to and during the early stages of the war, opinion during the war after editorial policy on the issue of southern independence had jelled into a clear-cut line of interpretation, and finally the importance of the slavery issue in the formation of public opinion in Ireland. As has been seen, there were many cross currents of opinion in Ireland during the 1860s and many factions within factions. Consequently, the attitude of each pressure group will be dealt with in each of the three divisions mentioned above.

The Irish protestant liberals at the beginning of the civil war were abolitionist almost to a man, acting as true Palmerstonian whigs, who were liberal abroad and conservative at home. The

2 Ellis, op. cit., p. 89.
lord lieutenant the earl of Carlisle, had visited America and very much deplored "the crowning evil - the capital danger - the mortal plague-spot - slavery". The presbyterian Banner of Ulster believed that there was one great principle at stake which was worth all the bloodshed of war. If slavery will be abolished 'no sacrifice will be too great'. William Henry Gregory, a self-styled liberal-conservative M.P. from Galway, reveals in his autobiography that he was very much an abolitionist at heart. The Dublin University Magazine, an almost reactionary supporter of the bipartisan domestic policies of Palmerston, believed that the 'Sebastopol of slavery must fall' and proclaimed: 'We hate slavery, not as loudly, but as deeply as any abolitionist in the North'. It is thus evident that the protestant liberals in Ireland almost unanimously favored the abolition of slavery. It was the fashionable thing to do for any self-respecting gentleman. Abolitionist literature, picturing the horrors of slavery, was very much in vogue in Ireland. How deeply felt and sincere were these sentiments will become apparent.

The majority of liberals in Ireland were middle and upper-class catholics, variously known as 'castle catholics' or 'catholic

1 The vice regal speeches and addresses lectures and poems of the late earl of Carlisle, R.G., ed. J. J. Gaskin (Dublin, 1865), p. 420.

2 Banner of Ulster, 6 Aug. 1861.


4 Dublin University Magazine, lvi. 752 (June 1861).

5 Ibid., lviiii. 119 (July 1861).
whigs'. With them their ties with England were stronger than any association with their countrymen in the United States. Consequently they could afford to be anti-slavery and were not afraid of being associated with abolitionists. A number of catholic whig newspapers were most vociferous in their denunciations of slavery. The Galway Vindicator deplored 'the foul system of slavery which has so long dimmed the glory of the "United States"'. The Dublin Catholic Telegraph was horrified at the fact that 'the slave-owners should have a right to pursue fugitive slaves into the territories of free states, and there, with the aid of bloodhounds and any other means they choose, track and tear them, as if they were so many monsters or savage brutes'. The Freeman's Journal, which justly claimed that it was the 'leading organ of the Irish liberal party' and that it was 'looked to as a guide by the commercial and mercantile classes', revealed its anti-slavery sentiments in its comments on the Anderson case, in which the state of Missouri sought the extradition from Canada of a fugitive slave, Anderson, who killed a man in Missouri who tried to prevent his escape. Freeman's praised Canada for preceding England in abolishing slavery, and opposed the return of Anderson to Missouri:

1 Galway Vindicator, 27 Apr. 1861.
2 Catholic Telegraph, 23 Mar. 1861.
3 The newspaper gazetteer, an annual register of newspapers (London, 1860), ed. F. D'A. Newton, advertisement appendix.
He was committing no crime in seeking to escape and improve his condition. It would be no crime in a white man to defend himself, under such circumstances, to the extent of inflicting a fatal injury on his pursuer; and why in a free country like Canada, should that be a felony in a black man which would be justifiable in a white man? 1

Despite these anti-slavery sentiments, Freeman's could not totally neglect the Irish catholics' antipathy toward the abolitionists and would occasionally refer to the 'fanatical abolitionists'.

However, the catholic whigs did not whip themselves into a frenzy and indulge in vituperative attacks on the abolitionists for their anti-catholicism, as did the catholic nationalists.

The Irish conservatives, who differed with the liberals mainly on party affiliation and not issues, were little concerned with the question of slavery. The Irish Times did dislike slavery, especially the Fugitive Slave Act, and a month before the war felt that 'England can by no means support slaveholding states in their resistance to the authority of the Federal Government' but called this 'an unpleasant complication', for 'England will not sacrifice a trade of twenty millions yearly, unless the Washington Government has a naval force adequate for the blackade of the entire seaboard of the South'. The Belfast News-Letter was also principally concerned with the effect of war on trade and the material injuries

1 Freeman's Journal, 5 Jan., 1861.
2 Ibid., 2 Jan., 1861.
3 Irish Times, 16 Mar., 1861.
that would befall the people of Ulster. Thus the conservatives from the very beginning of the war revealed that their concern about slavery was at the most very shallow but that it was not opportune at that time to justify slavery in the South.

Among the West British elements, there was one other faction, a very small one, that was from the first staunchly abolitionist - the Irish radical supporters of Bright and Cobden. The two principal propagandists for this group were Frank Harrison Hill, editor of the Belfast Northern Whig, and John Elliott Cairnes, professor of political economy at Trinity College, Dublin, and later Queen's College, Galway. The Northern Whig, enkindled with abolitionist fervor, commented at the firing on Fort Sumter:

That chivalry of the South which attacks unarmed and unsuspecting enemies in the halls of legislative deliberation, and beats them by unseen blows [Preston Brook's brutal caning of the fiery abolitionist Senator Charles Sumner] - which in duels slays with the bowie-knife the enemy shot to the earth by the revolver much as the highland sportsman puts the hit stag out of his pain - will probably re-open pages deemed to be closed in the annals of war.²

It also referred to the North's superiority in 'moral energies and intellectual aspirations which find expressions in letters and philosophy', and its higher vitality because of a 'devotion to the principles of order, obedience to law, and reverence for freedom'.³

¹ Belfast News-Letter, 1 Jan., and 26 Apr. 1861.
² Northern Whig, 26 Apr. 1861.
³ Ibid., 7 May 1861.
An editorial comment in the *Cork Examiner* can serve as a key to the interpretation of Irish nationalist sentiment on slavery. It stated: 'On the slavery question the catholic church in America does not, as we may say, take sides; though its members are free to form such opinions as their reason may dictate. Some judge it from the point of view of its inherent evil; others from that of the difficulties in the way of abolition'. It was from the latter point of view that Irish nationalists judged slavery, reflecting the opinions of the vast majority of catholic Irish-Americans. The nationalist papers at first occasionally revealed a tinge of remorse on the subject, but full use was made of the art of rationalization in justifying the system of slavery as it existed in the southern half of the United States.

When one is not guided by a moral principle in a particular situation and an act of judgement has to be made, he of necessity becomes a pragmatist and weighs the facts of the case from the point of view of self interest. For the vast majority of Irish nationalists, their consciences dictated that they justify slavery. The *Nation* reprinted an article from an 'American Paper' which provides two of the motivating reasons for the nationalists' attitude. It pointed out that the Churches of Scotland and Ireland could not address a communication to the United States without dragging in their 'stale denunciations' of slavery. This certainly embittered Irish catholics, for whom infringements on

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1 *Cork Examiner*, 27 Nov. 1861.

2 Quoted in *Nation*, 5 May 1860.
their religious freedom were one of the principal concerns in the 1860s. The theme of British hypocrisy was another factor. It was pointed out that 'John Bull' considered himself 'the rightful overseer and moral governor of creation.' The article continued: 'Suppose that every American who goes to England...were to make the history and condition of Ireland the theme of his constant and special remarks... The guilt of America in regard to slavery becomes transparent innocence beside the wrongs which England for ages has persisted in inflicting on Ireland'.

Shortly after the secession movement began, the Nation led the way for the moderate nationalists and set the pattern for their attitude on slavery. At this period, during the early stages of the rebellion, the anti-English theme on the question of slavery could be employed by noting how England was prejudiced against the South because of slavery. The justification of the Southern case consisted chiefly in stressing the obstacles in the path of abolition. It was noted that there was a big difference between slavery in the Southern States and in other countries

1 Ibid.

2 Ibid.: This pro-Irish 'American Paper' revealed that it was a typical racist's journal in the tone of its editorial. It pointed out that if negro slaves flocked across the sea and 'were making the streets of Liverpool and of London black at noonday with their presence, and demanding bread and clothing and shelter and care and coffins from British Poor-law commissioners, and thus imposing upon England the task of their maintenance - the Atlantic would be vexed by the breath of the thick-coming curses, both loud and deep, that she would vent upon the heads of the universal Yankee nation'.
where it had been abolished:

Elsewhere it possessed but comparatively trivial dimensions, whereas in the Southern States it dominated everything, and had become the necessity, if not the sole support and dependence of the country. This is an important fact, which Northern abolitionists and British talkers about Southern slavery keep out of sight... The South has to do with millions of slaves... The naked proposition of abolition, therefore, to them means spoliation - annihilation. 1

Also, the English inconsistency on the economic question involved, was discussed:

Everyone knows that the English people would renounce Christianity itself, ten times over, rather than yield to a proposition which would be likely to affect them as injuriously as abolition would affect the Slave States... The non-slaveholding tax-payers of Ireland, England, and Scotland, had to pay twenty millions of money to a few British subjects to make their tender consciences recognize "the sin of slavery". 2

An important factor used by the moderate nationalists in justifying their stand on slavery was the anti-catholic reputation of the abolitionists and their 'fury of fanaticism'. 3 'We have no faith in the abolition party... From its ranks is recruited every illiberal and intolerant movement in America. The know-nothing party was a direct emanation from that of abolition'. 4 What rendered all abolition movements in America so detestable was that 'philanthropy is employed in hatred' and thus slaves will

1 Nation, 5 Jan. 1861.
2 Ibid.
3 Cork Examiner, 23 Aug. 1861.
4 Ibid.
be freed not because of hatred of sin but because of a desire 'to deprive the enemy of property'. Naturally, this dislike of abolitionists led to a criticism of their leaders. Secretary of State Seward was referred to as 'the idol of the "downeast" levellers'.

There was one moderate nationalist who did favor abolition, the quaker-unitarian James Haughton. In an address to Irish-Americans in the Boston Liberator, he pleaded with them to remember O'Connell, stand up for liberty and oppose slavery. But even he could not place the complete blame on the South. 'The guilty complicity of all the United States in the sin of slavery is now producing the only fruit that could be gathered from such a course of crime'.

The extreme nationalists generally shared the attitude of the moderates on abolition. Dennis Holland's Irishman remarked that it was far easier 'to create an evil than to eradicate it', and attacked the 'insolent and intolerable' attitude of the Northern's who 'with the grossest development of cant' acted 'like genuine Pharisees'. With no love for the Southern slaveholders, it was the attitude of the 'puritanical North' that made it easier

1 Ibid.
2 Waterford News, 22 March 1861.
4 A published letter to Irish-Americans, June 1861, quoted in Haughton, Memoir, p. 160.
5 Dublin Irishman, 4 May 1861.
for the Tipperary Advocate to support the slaveholding South.

There was one nationalist paper, and extreme at that, which from the very beginning was abolitionist to the core and staunchly pro-North, Joseph Cartan's Dundalk Democrat. It believed that the Irish were slaves of England and saw in the slavery question a struggle between liberty and tyranny. Over a year before the war it commented:

O'Connell's splendid intellect, in his efforts for freedom, chased much of the dark shadow of bigotry, intolerance, and wrong which blackened the English atmosphere. He let the light of his great mind beam on her despotic institutions, and he taught English slaves how to obtain their rights. He and his catholic compatriots it was who gave Englishmen a reform of their parliament, a reform of their corporations, and many other rights; and it was O'Connell and his catholic friends who put an end to the base trafficking of Englishmen in the negro race.

After the firing on Fort Sumter, the Dundalk Democrat, alone of all Irish newspapers, not only whole-heartedly supported the abolitionists but also, without any hesitation, equated the abolition of slavery with the cause of the North: 'As the "Stars and Stripes" are menaced on American soil; as the patrons of slavery, so hideous in its every aspect, have resolved to draw the sword in defence of the darkest stain that disfigures the Western World, we hope the punishment they deserve will be inflicted with a heavy hand, and that one of the results of the war will be the complete emancipation of the negro race.'

1 Tipperary Advocate, 10 Aug. 1861.
2 Dundalk Democrat, 31 Mar. 1860.
3 Ibid., 4 May 1861.
In summing up the initial reaction, the West British faction can be classified as superficially abolitionist in sentiment, with the exception of the radicals and the presbyterians who gave the cause their whole-hearted support. Only among catholic whigs was any dislike of the conduct of the abolitionists, not their cause, apparent, but it was very mild. Among the nationalists, violent opposition to the conduct and the cause of the abolitionists was evident from the very beginning of the Southern rebellion.

After the war had become full-scale, following the battle of Bull Run on 21 July 1861, opinion among the West British faction, with the exception of the radicals, centered on the disassociation of slavery from the cause of the South. By the autumn of 1862, this faction almost unanimously sided with the South in one way or another. Consequently, their opinion on slavery was colored by their attitude toward Southern independence. In the early part of the war, they had proclaimed themselves abolitionists. Thus they had to reconcile this position with their support for the South.

William Henry Gregory, a leading champion of the Southern cause in the house of commons, in his autobiography reveals some of the reasons proposed by West Britons to justify their conduct. He claimed to believe, as did Lord Russell, that, if the Confederacy were established as an independent state, slavery within a short period would disappear:

1 E. D. Adams, Great Britain and the American civil war, ii. 89.
To hold slaves within even a considerable distance of the frontier would have been impossible. The territory would become populated by free settlers, and so again the slave zone would be thrown back. Slave tillage, moreover, had been always so careless and exhausting that fresh tracts would have been denied to the slaveholding States. There was, therefore, the certainty that arrangements must have been made for the gradual manumission of the slaves, if the Southern Confederacy was established. 1

He also claimed that the cause of the Union could not be equated with the cause of abolition:

The democratic party in the North always stood up for slavery, and I found no more resolute defenders of the system than the New York merchants... It was not till a far later period, when the North hoped to incite insurrection in the South, that abolition was proclaimed. In short, had a peace been made at the beginning of the war, slavery would have been stereotyped in America without a hope of future emancipation. 2

How sincere was this Galway M.P. in his desire for abolition is apparent in a letter he wrote to a Southerner in 1863. He said that Southern independence was of such importance to England’s interests that he ‘would not have hesitated to risk a war’ and that he was proud of the way the British government ‘resisted all the strong appeals to the anti-slavery feeling of England’. 3

The Irish protestant liberals proclaimed their abolitionist sentiments throughout the war and agreed with the lord lieutenant, who said in February, 1862 that the United Kingdom should not

2 Ibid.
'recede one jot from their undying abhorrence of slavery'. However, since they were sympathetic toward the South they concentrated their attacks on certain Northern opposition to abolition. The Dublin University Magazine attacked the Irish and Roman Catholics of New York:

The two strongest antipathies of the low classes of New York are old England and New England. They hate Old England because she is the great conservative and Protestant state of Europe, and they hate New England, because in these six Puritan states is collected the intelligence and virtue of America; and because like the mother country, they have a deep hatred to slavery, the Diana for which the merchants of New York make silver shrines.

Yet in August, 1862, while praising the increased determination of the North to limit slavery, the Dublin University Magazine sympathized with the South and praised its heroes and achievements. The Banner of Ulster, also prior to the Emancipation Proclamation, declared that the North had ignored the emancipation of the slave and that the question of slavery should not prevent the recognition of the South because the negro was hated just as much, if not more, in the North than in the South. This Presbyterian paper was throughout the war in a difficult position in attempting to defend the slaveholding South. It is evident that a number of Irish Presbyterians would agree with the sentiments expressed in a letter to the editor of the paper from 'A voice from Wilberforce',

1 Speech at Mansion House, Dublin, 4 Feb. 1862, in Carlisle Lectures, p. 96; see also speech at Mansion House, 13 Feb. 1863, Ibid., p. 100.

2 Dublin Mag., lxi.127 (Jan. 1862).

3 Ibid., lx. 246-56 (Aug. 1862).

4 Banner of Ulster, 6 Sept. 1862.
who accused the paper of trying to drag the British people into a 'war against the cause of freedom, and in aid of the most diabolic species of slavery that ever brought down the vengeance of heaven upon our guilty world'.

The preliminary Emancipation Proclamation, issued by President Lincoln on 21 September 1862 to go into effect on 1 January 1863, failed to impress the Irish protestant whigs. The Dublin Evening Post, pointing out the deep-rooted hostility to the negro in the North, said that this manifesto 'adopts the principle of the abolition of slavery only where the maintenance of the Federal Union may be thereby promoted'. Lincoln was accused of adopting it as a 'war-cry'. The Banner of Ulster, though wavering a bit, failed to be impressed by the proclamation. Sir Robert Peel, the chief secretary for Ireland, criticized 'the odious and abominable proclamation of President Lincoln, in which he said, "You who are rebels, your slaves shall be emancipated, but you, States that remain united, shall keep your slaves"'. He said that an independent South would further the emancipation of the slaves and

1 Letter to editor, signed.'A voice from Wilberforce', Ibid., 12 Dec. 1861.
2 Dublin Evening Post, 7 Oct. 1862.
3 Dublin Mag., lxii. 472 (Apr. 1864).
that the 'God of battles' was fighting for the South. Peel was more convinced than ever that the United Kingdom 'would by recognition, put an end to the most wicked and most abominable traffic, which he believed in his heart the council of hell imagined for the degradation of a very large portion of the human race'.

From early 1863 to the end of the war, Irish protestant liberal opinion concentrated on repulsing the anti-slavery and reform campaign of the radicals and rationalizing the whig position on the role of the slavery issue in the war. The *Dublin University Magazine* realized that the slavery issue could have implications in the reform movement in the United Kingdom if the radicals had their way. In an article entitled 'Slavery and secession - our answer to Professor Cairnes', it attacked Cairnes's brilliant treatise *The Slave Power:*

...No nation had ever displayed such an ardour for popular freedom as did the zealots of Washington on behalf of slavery...

The natural conclusion of the friends of freedom would seem to be precisely that which the enlightened people of Europe have come to already - namely, that the sooner such a gigantic slave power is broken up, the better for the interests of liberty. But says Professor Cairnes, the right conclusion is by no means so; it is only an ignorant, narrow-minded hatred of liberal institutions that could prompt such an inference.

He [Cairnes] belongs to that extreme class of self-styled liberals, who can never bring themselves to think or speak evil of a genuine democracy... The institutions about which so many fine things have been said for the last fifty years, must be vindicated; if history contradicts theory, it must be flippantly written away. Hence it is that Professor Cairnes first accuses the South of being essentially aristocratic in its institutions,


and then throws upon it the whole blame of slavery...

Even were it quite true, that the Confederacy would become a permanent slave power, that is only what the whole Union has ever been, and would be again, if reconstructed. It is surely better to have a little slave power, than a big one; a weak slave power, than a strong one; one which could not defy the other nations of the earth, than one whose boast it was to equal all of them put together. 1

In December, 1863 the *Dublin University Magazine*, with the radical anti-slavery crusade in mind, remarked that because of the conduct of the North in the war 'all moral considerations, and religious principles have been trampled out, with a sanguinary fanaticism unparalleled in the history of the world'; and in February, 1864 it praised the 'moral superiority of the confederates' and denied that their attachment to the 'peculiar institution' was their motive for secession. It even tried to outmanœuvre the radicals by decrying any attempt to 'Americanize' British institutions, and stating that were 'republicanism' all it was made out to be, it would have been able to cope with slavery in a constitutional and peaceful way as England did with catholic emancipation and electoral reform.

After the tide of victory had turned at Gettysburg and Vicksburg toward the North, the *Banner of Ulster* looked a little more

1 *Dublin Mag.*, lxi. 607-11 (May 1863).
2 Ibid., lxii. 716 (Dec. 1863).
3 Ibid., lxiii. 214 (Feb. 1864).
4 Ibid., p. 221.
5 Ibid., lxiv 483 (Nov. 1864).
6 Ibid., lxvi. 228 (Aug. 1865).
kindly on the North. It reiterated that its only interest was the abolition of slavery, which was worth the great sacrifice of human life in the war. However, it still disliked 'Mr. Sumner and his fellow-fanatics' and near the close of the war felt compelled again to accuse the federals of affected sincerity on the question of slavery in its attempt to sooth the consciences of its presbyterian subscribers. It said that it was the policy of Lincoln's government to "utilize" the negro, not to free him - slavery has only been abolished in name, not in reality... The negro is deprived of all legal status. He has no constitutional rights. He is denied access to the courts of law... He is placed under the irresponsible despotism of Provost-marshals law... We ask is this the abolition of slavery Christian men have laboured to procure?... And what reasonable hope have we that were the war ended tomorrow by the triumph of federal arms, there would be any change for the better in the unhappy condition of the negro race?

After their protestations of abolitionist sentiments at the beginning of the war, the catholic whig newspapers conveniently neglected the question of slavery, as they openly avowed their support for the South. The Emancipation Proclamation, however, gave them a rude jolt and forced them to attempt to reconcile these anti-slavery views with support for the Confederacy. They denied that the Emancipation Proclamation would increase sympathy for the Union in Europe:

It comes too late. If President Lincoln had decreed that all men of colour in the United States were free at the commencement of

1 Banner of Ulster, 10 Sept. 1863.
2 Ibid., 27 Feb. 1864.
3 Ibid., 1 Oct. 1864.
the war, it would be another thing... We should like to see the abominable institution of slavery which darkens the otherwise now glorious escutcheon of the Southern States abolished; but as we believe it can be only gradually done away with after the South shall have achieved its independence, we therefore wish for the triumph of the South, if triumph is necessary to give a place for the Confederate States amongst the family of nations... We believe this ill-timed, ill-considered proclamation of President Lincoln will have the effect of hastening so desirable a consummation.

They echoed the opinion of the prominent English papers in stating that the Proclamation would only free slaves in states, over which Lincoln had no power, and encourage a servile rebellion. Occasionally, the Freeman's Journal would criticize the anti-English attitude and diatribes of Northern abolitionists. These Catholic liberal newspapers continued throughout the war to assert that there would be greater freedom and a better opportunity for the real emancipation of the negro with an independent Confederacy.

'On the whole, the blackman is far more respected and independent in the South than the despised "nigger" in the North. Freedom for the slave can be better arranged for with an independent Southern Confederacy than if the Union...[were] restored by Northern prowess...'.

The only Catholic Whig newspaper that was impressed by the Emancipation Proclamation was the Catholic Telegraph. It believed that the Proclamation had been 'greatly misrepresented' by the

1 Galway Vindicator, 8 Oct. 1862.
2 Freeman's Journal, 8 Oct. 1862.
4 Galway Vindicator, 3 Jan. 1863; see also Freeman's, 24 Oct. 1863 and Galway Vindicator, 23 Dec. 1863.
press and would encourage the flight of slaves to the federal
lines. It even noted that the professed end of the Confederacy
was an empire based on slavery, which is basically unjust. 'But
in no case, unless the professed end at least be good, can revolu-
tion be justified'. However, it still did not abandon an ed-
torial policy that favored the South and even stated that a
proclamation of gradual emancipation by the South 'would secure
the independence of the Confederacy'.

It was not until April 1864 that the catholic Dublin Review
commented on the slavery question in the civil war. It took the
high moral position that slavery could only exist in a protestant
country and was entirely due to the Reformation:

Had the ancient influence of the Holy See continued unchanged,
this great evil could never have been consummated. We are there-
fore justified in pronouncing that American slavery, as it exists,
is the legitimate offspring of protestantism. The protestant re-
formers, like other agents of ill, are the authors of evils and
miseries of which they never thought, and (in this world) never
heard. Negro slavery, indeed, has existed in catholic colonies;
but the whole influence of the church has always been at work
against it - and has already rooted it out of the soil of most of
them. In a protestant country alone could such a system have
prevailed as that which but two years ago was in absolute posses-
sion in the southern states of the American Union.

After establishing its anti-slavery position, however, it con-
cluded that it did not desire a restoration of the Union and that
it was better for America and the world at large to have two

1 Catholic Telegraph, 15 Nov. 1862.
2 Ibid., 22 Nov. 1862.
3 Ibid., 15 Aug. 1863.
separate powers. Interestingly enough, in April 1865, when the Union triumph was imminent, it expressed its sympathy with the Northern effort to restore the Union, which it believed would help to destroy slavery, and said that ‘the war has throughout really turned on the question of slavery’. 2

The Irish conservatives, from the early part of the war, supported the South and had an even more pronounced Southern bias than the liberals. The tories also saw the necessity of disassociating the cause of abolition from the Union cause. They believed at the beginning of 1862 that public opinion generally sympathized with the South, retreating from its abolitionist pro-North attitude at the beginning of the war, and stated that ‘the bubble of abolition burst, and dominion and political power were unveiled in all their deformity’. 3 The conservatives were constantly concerned about the campaign of the radicals, charging that Bright cared little for manumission but was making it a ‘stalking-horse’ for universal suffrage. 4 In answering the radicals, they accused the North of hypocrisy on the slavery issue and stressed the ‘John Bull’ approach to international affairs:

What would we get in return for our self-sacrifice [in not recognizing the Confederacy]? A hollow union with the hypocritical assertors of negro freedom, but the consistent enslavers of the

1 Ibid., p. 362.
2 Ibid., iv. 372 (Apr. 1865).
3 Belfast News-Letter, 1 Jan. 1862.
4 Ibid., 25 Jan. 1862; see also Irish Times, 24 July 1863.
negro, and an alliance with a cabinet which deemed it a wrong when they are compelled to do justice; and for seventy years has threatened us with the seizure of Canada if we did not submit to their fraud and aggression. 1

Naturally, the Irish tories ridiculed the Emancipation Proclamation 'Mr. Lincoln proclaiming the slaves free in a country to which his armies cannot penetrate is like a madman proclaiming that the moon is made of the best Stilton cheese'. 2 The Emancipation Proclamation, they said, was meaningless because the slaves were not free to become citizens, voters, landowners, merchants, or representatives and those in the loyal states were not covered by the Proclamation. Also, reflecting their political philosophy, they believed that the Emancipation Proclamation was 'unconstitutional and revolutionary' and thus 'illegal, as it is certainly immoral'.

The Irish radicals were at the very beginning ardently abolitionist and moderately sympathetic to the cause of the North. In the early stages of the war, they were disturbed by the conduct of the Northern abolitionists and had forebodings about the destiny of the Republic. Undoubtedly, their free trade and anti-slavery sentiments clashed at the outbreak of the conflict, as did those

1 News-Letter, 25 Jan. 1862; see also Irish Times, 2 Oct. 1862.
3 Irish Times, 6 and 7 Oct. 1862. This attitude could not be reconciled with their outlook on Irish affairs.
5 Northern Whig, 16 Mar.; and 10 Aug. 1861.
of Richard Cobden, who had just increased duties in the Morrill tariff, insisted that they did not want to interfere with slavery and the slaveowners asserted that they believed in free trade. Also, the radicals received little encouragement from the organ of the American abolitionists, the Boston Liberator, which on 1 March 1861 advocated letting the South go in peace 'as a good riddance'. It did not take the radicals long, however, to conclude that the real issue in the war was the abolition of slavery, which was implicitly synonymous with the cause of the North. As Bright began his great anti-slavery campaign in the interest of democracy and reform in the United Kingdom, the Northern Whig jumped on his bandwagon and remained there throughout the war. 'We believe that Mr. Bright is quite correct in referring the rebellion entirely to slavery'. However, it was not completely satisfied with the attitude of the North on slavery. It believed that for the North to triumph it would have had to proclaim publicly its intention to abolish slavery. There were those whose ears were 'stuffed with cotton, and ring, even in dreams, to the chink of their pence' - words originally applied to Bright - and others 'to whom slavery is less


2 E.D. Adams, Great Britain, i. 46fn.

3 Northern Whig, 9 Dec. 1861. Evidently, Bright was not very popular in northern Ireland at this time, for the Northern Whig in this editorial felt it necessary to state that it generally disagreed with Bright. Its editorials throughout the war reveal that it was a loyal supporter of Bright's, as do the letters of its editor, Fr. H. Hill (N.L.I., MS 5952).
hateful than democracy.

But we believe that the sympathies of the British people are faint and sluggish, because the policy of the North does not seem designed "to give hope to the bondsmen of the South". [Bright's words]... Let it once be openly proclaimed and clearly seen, that the triumph of the North will seal the fate of slavery, and the coldness and indifference of England will be exchanged for eager and hearty sympathy. 1

The Northern Whig viewed the war in the light of the presbyterian belief in predestination. It was 'a conflict between the opposing powers of good and evil, of light and darkness, between justice and the foulest wrong and oppression'. Jefferson Davis and Abraham Lincoln were 'but the bubbles on the surface of the stream, the straws and other mean fragments which it carries with it in its course... A higher Power is using them for the purpose of a higher wisdom than man's'. It was a war between the Declaration of Independence and 'the principle which the vice-president of the Southern Confederacy announced [that the Confederacy was founded on]...the great truth that the negro is not equal to the white man'. 4

The leading Irish propagandist for the abolitionist movement was professor John Elliott Cairnes. Along with Frank Harrison Hill and Richard Davis Webb, the Dublin printer and publisher of the Anti-Slavery Advocate, he formed the small band of Irish radical

1 Ibid.
2 Ibid., 1 Jan. 1862.
3 Ibid.
4 Ibid.
supporters of the pro-North British Emancipation Society. In May, 1862 he published a book on the slavery issue and the civil war, entitled *The slave power*. It was written from notes of lectures delivered at the University of Dublin in 1861. It treats history in the light of economic determinism and states that slavery was at the bottom of the quarrel in the United States. Cairnes reveals the manner in which he will treat the slavery issue when he states that the purpose of the work is 'to hold up to the world the new confederacy as the most formidable antagonist of civilized progress which has appeared in modern times'. In the book, Cairnes argues that the economy of a slave society is bad because it holds back the growth of regular industry and is incompatible with civilized progress and that a slave society has a bad effect on modern commerce because it enhances the value of crude labor, supersedes the necessity of education, and leads to despotism of the mind. Also he mentions that the moral aspects of slavery are bad. The book stirred up quite a controversy and was bitterly attacked by conservative and liberal journals for its pro-

1 There were, of course, a few Irish nationalist abolitionists, who were not associated with this British organized anti-slavery movement.


3 Ibid.

4 Ibid., p. ix.

5 Ibid., p. xii.
North 'infallibility', its extreme liberalism, and its low estimate of negro intelligence. Though urging moral support for the North, Cairnes concluded that the North should not subjugate the South but should hem it in east of the Mississippi, isolating the South until slavery had disappeared. This suggestion became known as the 'Mississippi compromise'. The Slave power is one of the best contemporary works on the subject in that it is 'scientific rather than sentimental'. It 'influenced in a marked degree' many of the thinking people in the United Kingdom and was considered 'one of the finest specimens of applied economical philosophy'. Leslie Stephen, one of the leading advocates of the Northern cause in

1 Belfast News-Letter, 4 Apr. 1863.
2 Dublin Mag., lxi. 607-11 (May 1863).
3 The Times, as quoted in a letter of F. H. Hill to Cairnes, 23 Dec. 1863 (N.L.I., MS 8952). In refuting the charge, Hill wrote that The Times confounded 'the question of slave and free, as treated by... [Cairnes], with the question of black and white', meaning that Cairnes had a low estimate of slave intelligence and not negro intelligence.
4 This conclusion, the reasons for it, and the role Great Britain should play are treated more thoroughly in the chapter on 'Southern independence'.
5 Hill to Cairnes, 8 Apr. 1863 (N.L.I., MS 8952).
6 D. Jordan and E. J. Pratt, Europe and the American civil war, p. 74.
8 Ibid., (11th ed.), iv. 950. E. L. Godkin wrote to Cairnes, 10 Oct. 1865, that The slave power was 'the most valuable contribution to the literature of the crisis...' (N.L.I., MS 8944-11).
England, wrote that *the slave power was 'the most powerful defence of the cause of the Northern states ever written' and 'made a great impression both in England and America*..." Cairnes, who in his day 'held an authority second only to that of Mill', was certainly one of the most able and prolific abolitionist authors and lecturers.

The Emancipation Proclamation provided a great boost in morale for the Irish radicals. It was the 'most important news that has been received since South Carolina declared itself out of the Union'. They immediately leapt to its defence: 'That the emancipation of slaves, as a belligerent measure, is thoroughly justifiable, is... as clear as any proposition in the ethics of war'. They attacked the press for misleading the people and answered the charge so frequently made that the Northerners were hypocrites on the slavery issue. In reply, Cairnes, taking a realistic approach, admitted that the people in the North had not been on the whole anti-slavery but said that 'slavery has come to stink in the nostrils of the Northern people, as a social nuisance, as a political pest; and the Northern people are therefore resolved to be rid of it. They are learning their duty, as nations for the most part learn their

1 D.N.E., viii. 216-17.
3 See J. E. Cairnes, The revolution in America (1862); Who are the canters? (1863); The Southern Confederacy and the African slave trade (1863); England's neutrality in the American contest (1864).
4 Northern Whig, 6 Oct. 1862.
5 Cairnes, Slave Power, p. xxii; see also Northern Whig, 6 and 7 Oct. 1862.
duty, through the medium of their interests'. The real hypocrites, the canters, are in the United Kingdom asserted Cairnes:

Amongst those here who lift up their hands in pious horror at the thought that they should countenance slavery - and here we all do this - even the Times, while defending slavery on Bible grounds, affects to pronounce against it - are there not some who are never weary of palliating its enormities and eulogizing its champions? Are there not people amongst us who, two years ago, were shocked that the North should have gone to war for any cause less holy than emancipation, but who now, when emancipation is the policy of the North, are shocked that emancipation should be accomplished by means so unholy as war? 2

The radicals were not afraid to tackle and refute the arguments, proposed by influential intellectuals, to support slavery. The Northern Whig gave a different interpretation to Thomas Carlyle's justification of slavery: 'The question about which "Peter of the North" and "Paul of the South" are fighting - the ground question out of which all other disputes have risen...is, as he [Carlyle] expresses it, that of "hiring servants for life": or by "the month or year", in other words, the freedom or slavery not only of the negroes but of all working men in the South'.

1 Cairnes, Who are the canters? (1863), p. 5. Cairnes wrote to Professor William Nesbitt, 23 Aug. 1862: 'The truth is that the bulk of the anti-slavery feeling in the North is based on purely political grounds, and has for its object to break the political power of slavery, not to emancipate negroes. This may not be high ground, but it is perhaps as high ground as we have any reason to expect the majority of a nation to act upon. If we wait till slavery is put down for purely philanthropic motives, we shall give it a long day'. (N.L.I., MS 894K-6).

2 'Canters', p. 7.

3 Northern Whig, 31 July 1863.
It concluded that Carlyle was a champion of the Southerners' own heart in that he considered slavery as 'the natural lot both of all inferior races and of all inferior persons of superior races'.

It is evident that the West British faction, excluding the radicals, were caught in a tug of war between abolitionist sentiments and sympathy for the cause of the South. They attempted to prove that these two attitudes were not mutually exclusive and that they were not inconsistent in holding both opinions. Among the nationalists it was the reverse. They were anti-abolitionist and yet, prior to the war, basically sympathetic towards preservation of the Union. Once the war got into full swing, however, opposition to abolitionism was one of the principal factors fostering pro-Southern sympathies among the vast majority of Irish nationalists. Thus, throughout most of the war, their attitudes on the two great issues, one moral, slavery, and the other political, Southern independence, worked in tandem and generally did not conflict as they did among Northern Irish-Americans. Of course, the seeds of a conflict between anti-abolitionist and pro-Union sentiments were always present, and occasionally among certain Irish nationalist Union sympathizers, a conflict occurred. Generally, the nationalists were more consistent in their opinions on slavery and the war, than were the West Britons.

1 Ibid.

2 In the chapter on 'Southern independence', the many complicating factors will be discussed.

3 Gibson, New York Irish, p. 141.
After the shooting war had begun and prior to the Emancipation Proclamation, the nationalists, unlike the catholic whigs, were very much concerned over the slavery question. While opposing the abolition of slavery, they accused the North of hypocrisy in pretending to favor abolition, while in practice opposing it. Consequently, the moral issue of slavery should not influence the political issue of Southern independence. They admitted that 'the ugliest blot on the confederate cause is the existence of slavery', but they attempted to whitewash the Southern reputation by stating that 'as a fact, the practical difficulties in the way of abolition are insuperable'. They were well aware of the moral issue but rationalized around it: 'On principle we are totally adverse to slavery, but we think it would be best to let it die out with the present generation; while in the meantime the code of slave-laws could be so ameliorated as to make the present race much more comfortable, better housed and fed than the Irish peasant'. The idea that the North favored abolition was a 'sham'. 'To this peculiar institution, to this national sin, whichever the disposition of the thinker may lead him to call it, the North is quite as much committed as the South'. Thus the South should not be censured because of slavery: 'It is impossible, therefore,

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1 Cork Examiner, 11 Feb. 1862.

2 Tipperary Advocate, 20 Sept. 1862.

3 Ibid.

4 Cork Examiner, 11 Feb. 1862.
for one to produce it as a reproach against the other, and the question at issue between the two sections of the States must be decided altogether independently of that consideration. Recognition of the Confederacy would not mean 'an approbation of slavery'. Finally they argued that ironically the Northern campaign against the South was 'an endeavour to enslave a people determined to be free'.

The Emancipation Proclamation had little immediate effect on nationalist sentiment but called for a shift in tactics for the anti-abolitionist nationalists. In addition to criticizing the hypocrisy of the North, they reverted to their old tactics, used in the early stages of the war, of attacking the character and motives of the Northern abolitionists. The purpose of the Proclamation was to encourage a general rising of the slaves desired by the 'cantlying hypocrites who rave about the Sabbath, and temperance, and godliness, and all anti-papery shams'. Taking the same approach as the West British, they said that it had torn away 'the last shred of constitutional pretence' from the cause of the North. It was 'hollow, futile, and hypocritical', for Lincoln

1 Ibid.
2 Ibid.
3 Nation, 13 Sept. 1862.
4 The views of the moderate and extreme nationalists on slavery can be treated as a unit. The distinction between the two groups only really becomes important on political questions.
6 Nation, 11 Oct.; see also Tipperary Advocate, 25 Oct.
had as much power over the slaves in the South as he did 'over the serfs of Siberia'. Despite all proclamation, the North had made the war 'not a war to free slaves but to enslave whites'.

About a month after the news of the Emancipation Proclamation reached Ireland, a slight change took place in Irish nationalist opinion. The Dublin Irishman called for a change in Irish opinion on slavery and the war in general. Since it believed the British were generally pro-slavery and opposed to the Emancipation Proclamation which 'has had at least, one good affect in Europe - it has unmasked England' who would not dare recognize the Confederacy after Lincoln's proclamation, it reasoned that Ireland should modify its position on slavery and come closer to the opposite point of view. It still could not become pro-abolitionist but at least became less pro-slavery and supported the Union cause, more in the manner of a 'war democrat'. It hoped the American people would crush the two factions responsible for the war, the 'black republican' faction and the 'Southern slaveholders'. It was anti-British sentiment and not belief in the cause of abolition that brought about this change.

1 Tipperary Advocate, 11 Oct.; see also Nation, 11 Oct. 1862.
2 Cork Examiner, 8 Oct. 1862.
4 Ibid., 1 Nov. 1862.
5 Ibid.
P. J. Smyth, the editor of the Irishman, pointed out the curious comparison of the practical effect of his hostility to Southern independence on the abolition of slavery with the approval of the Southern cause by those who claimed to be abolitionists.

He wrote to Smith O'Brien:

As for slavery, it was the "sole cause" of the rupture...Northern victory and abolition must go hand in hand...It is true my hatred of slavery is not so great as yours; I would rather see the Union preserved with slavery everywhere, than the Union destroyed and both sections free. It is a curious coincidence nevertheless, that while I occupy the position of a practical opponent of slavery, you occupy that of its defender, and perpetrator.

The attempt at revision by the Irishman was most unsuccessful in influencing nationalist opinion. No other nationalist paper followed its example, and the Nation in a long editorial expressed their reason for refusing:

In this country, previous to the war, there was among the popular party a disposition to speak leniently of the slave system. The English taunts against America on that score were replied to by the remark that the slaves were better cared for than the peasantry of Ireland. But now it would seem that some Irishmen are willing to charge as a heavy crime on the Southern Confederacy that which they considered no crime while it was chargeable upon the Union! The Exeter Hall arguments, the point of which our writers laboured so hard to blunt, have suddenly come into favour; and the use of the lash, the horrors of the middle passage, and of the slave market are now descanted on in excited language by men who would sneer at them all some eighteen months ago.

In answering the Irishman's argument, justifying a change of opinion, 'that England having taken one side of the question, we

1 Smyth to W. S. O'Brien, n.d. (O'Brien papers, N.L.I., MS 3308).
2 Nation, 8 Nov. 1862.
must be right in taking the opposite', the Nation said that the Irish nationalists should not give the English the right of thinking for them and that 'the opinion of Irishmen should be based on the merits of each question'.

It is obvious that the Irishman, at this time the most pro-fenian of Irish newspapers, was trying to adopt the Northern Irish American point of view, in which their love of the Union proved stronger than their hatred of the abolitionists. In 1864, the Irish People, the official organ of the fenians, probably expressed more precisely the opinion of the extreme nationalists on the slavery issue. In urging Irish nationalists to steer clear of the abolitionist crusade, it stated that 'catholic emancipation was accelerated by the attitude taken by the American-Irish' but that in after times, during his struggle for "repeal", O'Connell deprived himself of these potent auxiliaries. His eternal philippics against slavery divided the American-Irish, and paralyzed their exertions in behalf of their native land, and instead of the old cry which carried the Reform Bill - "To stop the Duke, run for gold" - O'Connell himself became a banker. At one and the same moment he flew in the face of the democratic party in America, with which the exiles were identified.

After the Emancipation Proclamation, as the radical abolitionist campaign picked up steam, the nationalists were even more harassed by the moral issue of slavery and to the bitter end emphasized that the war was not 'an anti-slavery crusade'. It was

1 Ibid.

2 Irish People, 3 Dec. 1864.

3 Cork Examiner, 11 Nov. 1862.
not a holy war to free negroes, and the answer to the Union charge that to support the South was to sanction slavery was 'a simple tu quoque'. 'An act of philanthropy was proclaimed by President Lincoln in order to spite a partner who had quitted the firm'. In fact, Lincoln had destroyed 'white liberty' in the North in his pretentious campaign to liberate the blackman. Also, the campaign to discredit the abolitionists, waged by the nationalists, became even more intense. The 'abolition advisors' of President Lincoln were frequently pilloried. Henry Ward Beecher came in for the largest share of abuse. Stories were even reprinted from The Times, ridiculing him. He was accused of being a fanatic, and his anti-Irish comments were given publicity. Even a Northern sympathizer in Ireland wrote that Beecher's 'slanders' on the Irish would 'go far to damp the zeal of many thinking men for what they have hitherto imagined to be a good cause'. Horace Greeley, an

1 Ibid., 22 Oct. 1863.
2 Ibid., 15 Jan. 1864.
3 Ibid.
4 Ibid., 21 Nov. 1864.
6 Tipperary Advocate, 1 Nov. 1862.
7 Examiner, 15 Oct. 1863.
abolitionist and editor of the New York Tribune, was criticized for his anti-Irish prejudice in accusing the Irish population in the North of being the great enemy of the slave race. The Examiner answered his accusation by stating that an Irish-American 'picks up Yankee prejudices as fast as he learns to speak through his nose, and damns a nigger just as readily as he chews tobacco'. Finally, it was asserted that the bulk of the people of Ireland had come to modify their opinions on the abolition of slavery 'in part through dislike of the abolitionists'. The nationalists claimed to dislike the 'lack of real philanthropy in the crusade for abolition, as well as the absence of moderation in the interest of the slave'.

Among the nationalists, only one paper was consistently anti-slavery and refrained from attacks on the abolitionists, the pro-North and pro-Fenian Dundalk Democrat. It attributed the cause of the war entirely to slavery and interpreted every event from this point of view. After the announcement of the Emancipation Proclamation, it commented: 'When the first hostile gun was fired by the South, the president and the Senate should have decreed the abolition of slavery. Had they done so, it is more than probable

1 Examiner, 15 Aug. 1863.
2 Ibid.
3 Ibid., 29 Oct. 1863.
4 Ibid.
that the rebellion would have long since exploded'. It later noted that the Proclamation had all but wiped out the 'vile institution of slavery' and that if anything could save the Union it was the Emancipation Proclamation. In commenting on the New York draft riots, it placed the crime 'at the doors of men who do not wish to see the negro race emancipated'; and after Lincoln's assassination, it editorialized: 'Like a tiger robbed of its prey, the slave-driver becomes more ferocious, and he employs fiends in human form to assassinate the emancipators of his captives'. In short, the Dundalk Democrat and its editor Joseph G. Cartan saw in the slavery issue the underlying theme of liberty versus tyranny and never lost sight of the fact that the result of the contest over this issue in a land 3,000 miles away would have an influence on all nations struggling for freedom.

The one prominent nationalist abolitionist, James Haughton, continued to oppose slavery throughout the war, but his quaker principles prevented him from approving of war as a means to abolition. He wrote that 'the sword has ever been an effective instrument against human freedom, but in favour of it, never'. In October, 1862, in a letter published in the Anti-Slavery Advocate,

1 Dundalk Democrat, 11 Oct. 1862.
2 Ibid., 17 Jan. 1863.
3 Ibid., 1 Aug. 1863.
4 Ibid., 29 Apr. 1865.
5 James Haughton to Henry C. Wright, an American abolitionist, 8 Sept. 1861, quoted in S. Haughton Memoir, p. 161.
the organ of the British abolitionists and pro-North radicals, he wrote: '...I am clearly of opinion, that those members of the Anti-Slavery Society, who started on the principle that moral power alone should be used have made a sad mistake in policy and in principle in giving the least support and countenance to a resort to violent measures'. Consequently, as a pacifist abolitionist, he was of little help to the emancipation cause in Ireland.

Some mention should be made of the Union propaganda organ in Ireland, the Galway-American, later amalgamated into the United Irishman and Galway-American. It was anti-slavery but not with the zeal of an abolitionist. It obviously was trying to cater to the prejudices of the Irish nationalists. 'Slavery was the infernal cause of the war, and for that, if for no other reason, we would wish to see it extinguished'. It definitely attempted to capitalize on the admiration of the Irish aristocracy for the 'slave oligarchy of the Southern States' and the 'chivalrous nigger whippers'.

Several conclusions can be drawn on the role played by the slavery issue in Irish public opinion on the civil war. First of all, there was little organized support in Ireland for the abolitionist

1 Ibid., p. 162.

2 United Irishman, 26 Dec. 1863: In an editorial, James Roche mentions that he is an American citizen. See Galway-American, 14 Feb. 1863: It calls for subscriptions to aid in the publication of a propaganda book written by the U.S. consul at Galway.

3 Galway-American, quoted in Irishman, 15 Nov. 1862.

4 United Irishman and Galway-American, 12 Sept. 1863.

5 Ibid., 19 Sept. 1863.
Almost all the evidence indicates this. There were two anti-slavery meetings in Belfast, the chief value of which according to F. H. Hill, was as 'an expression of the feeling of the presbyterian clergy whose influence in the north [of Ireland] is very considerable on political as well as on religious subjects. However, the presbyterian ministers at these meetings were not supported by the General Assembly and appear to have received little support from their congregations in taking an active anti-slavery and pro-North stand. The Church of Ireland and the Irish Roman Catholic church refused to support actively the anti-slavery movement. Professor Cairnes, writing from Dublin after the Emancipation Proclamation, believed that the people were anti-slavery 'at heart' but had been 'deceived and misled' by the press.

1 Accompanying a letter to J. E. Cairnes from the British Emancipation Society 8 Dec., 1863, was a circular listing about eighty towns and cities in the United Kingdom where anti-slavery meetings were held. Not one Irish town was mentioned (N.L.I., MS 8949).

The C. F. Adams correspondence to Seward up to 20 Mar., 1863 reports meetings in various English and Scotch towns, which had sent anti-slavery resolutions to him, and fails to mention one meeting in an Irish town (E. D. Adams, Great Britain, ii. 107 fn.).

2 Hill to Cairnes, 24 Apr., 1863 (N.L.I., MS 8952).

3 See chapters on 'Religious factors' and 'Southern independence'.

4 E.g., the attitude of the Banner of Ulster.

5 Archbishop Whately to H. B. Stowe, quoted in Belfast News-Letter, 16 Jan., 1863.

6 The Irish hierarchy was undoubtedly influenced by the attitude of the American Catholic bishops.
especially by 'the organized misrepresentation of The Times', whose great influence on the Irish press was constantly evident. The issue of slavery with all its concomitant implications, such as the struggle between social reform and conservatism, was largely hidden beneath the surface like an iceberg and on first glance would only seem to merit one-seventh of the importance it actually deserved. But, in reality, it was a gigantic obstacle lurking in the path of the British aristocratic ship of state; and the Irish aristocracy realized this, as did the radicals who based their reform campaign on it. The intensive campaign of the radicals after the Emancipation Proclamation evidently met with a good deal of success among the dissenting and laboring classes of England and Scotland but ran up against the cold indifference of the masses in Ireland.

In summarizing the attitude of the West British and nationalist factions in Ireland, several observations can be made. Although the protestant West Britons loudly proclaimed their abolitionist sentiments, an overall estimate of their editorial comments and public utterances indicates a compromising attitude toward slavery. If the books touching on British public opinion are accurate, the Anglophile Irish were even more pro-slavery than the upper and

1 Cairnes to W. Nesbitt, 10 Oct. 1862 (MS 8941–6).

2 E. D. Adams, Great Britain, ii. 106; Jordan and Pratt, Europe, p. 165.
The attitude of the Catholic Whigs especially reveals their complete acceptance of the English liberal view of the slavery issue as of most other issues in national and international affairs, except, of course, Catholic affairs. Most of the 'castle Catholics' shared Gladstone's view of the war, in which support for the South as a nation struggling against military coercion did not mean support for slavery. They appear to have been sincere in this view. It is difficult to estimate how much hypocrisy there was in the West British attitude toward the abolition of slavery. In short, the slavery issue was not a determining factor in the molding of West British opinion on the war.

1 Ibid. E. D. Adams claims that particularly among the British provincial press in the first half of 1863 there was a less unfavorable attitude toward the anti-slavery crusade. This is certainly not true of the West British press. General survey American histories, relying on E. D. Adams and Jordan and Pratt, state that there was a substantial amount of anti-slavery sentiment among the British and continental middle classes; which is also untrue of the Irish middle class (see Morris, Encyclopedia, p. 233; also William Miller, A new history of the United States, pp. 209-10).

It should be noted here that the only two published works dealing with British public opinion during the civil war, mainly in conjunction with its effect on diplomacy, Adams's Great Britain and the American civil war (1925) and Jordan and Pratt's Europe and the American civil war (1931), both lay heavy stress on the organized meetings and propaganda of the abolitionists and Northern sympathizers in the United Kingdom. It should also be remembered that these two works, which provide the basis for survey diplomatic histories of the period, such as Thomas A. Bailey's A diplomatic history of the American people, were written during the new era of good feelings in Anglo-American relations, following World War I, and were attempting to reverse or modify the generally held opinion that Britain favored the Confederacy during the civil war (see bibliographical chapter).
Also evident is the blindness of the Irish nationalists to the importance of the issue of slavery. It will be seen how it, together with the question of the preservation of the United States, gave a new impetus after the war to the reform movements in the United Kingdom, from which Ireland would benefit, particularly in the disestablishment of the Church of Ireland and land reform. Perhaps, it was the nationalists' general antipathy toward any English-based movement or their attitude toward Southern independence that blinded them. Perhaps, like Lord Acton, they found the abstract, ideal absolutism of the Northern abolitionists incompatible with the Roman Catholic spirit. It is evident, however, that on the slavery question the nationalists suffered the handicap of all pragmatists - the absence of belief in a fundamental principle that provides coherence in one's opinions, an insight into the problems one faces, and a guide to action. While it would appear that the nationalists' hostile attitude toward the abolition of slavery was influential in determining their opinions on the war, it was by no means the decisive factor in the conflicting crosscurrents of nationalist opinion.

In conclusion, it can be stated that the lack of intelligent leadership among the nationalists on the slavery issue was always apparent. They were floundering about and failed to take advantage

1 Quoted in Lionel Kochan, Acton on history, pp. 48-9.
of the important implications for Ireland in the abolition controversy. In their hatred of the abolitionists the nationalists condemned the anti-slavery cause as well. Although it is only in the realm of speculation, most likely, had O'Connell been alive, he would have been able to distinguish between the cause itself and the anti-Catholic conduct of its champions. Also, a man of his stature and ingenuity could have organized a popular movement and made abolition of slavery a stalking-horse for reform in Ireland. Sir George Stephen, who was active in the campaign to abolish slavery in the British empire, described O'Connell's role as an anti-slavery advocate in Ireland during the 1830s:

Mr. O'Connell did what no other man could do. He lent the whole of his powerful influence to keep the Irish public, as well as the Irish members, steady to the cause; he brought all his political weight to bear upon it. Ireland needed no agitation on abolition; from Cape Clear to the Giant's Causeway, Ireland was an abolitionist in heart and in action, irrespective of party feeling, whether in politics or religion; and much, nay most of this was due to Mr. O'Connell. He did it disinterestedly; he made no bargain for reciprocal support; he was content to fight his own battles with his own forces.  

1 The only article or work that deals with Irish opinion on slavery during the war was evidently based on wishful thinking and not sources. R.J. Purcell, 'Ireland and the American civil war', in Catholic World, cxv. 76(Apr. 1922), states: 'England was spiritually blind. Ireland, on the contrary, read in the civil war the liberation of an enslaved race, not solely the enforcement of an unwelcome political system on the South. This was due to the acumen of the Irish leaders, who guided aright on the slavery issue'. These opinions could not be farther from the truth. Purcell assumed that what was true of the O'Connell era would be true of the 1860s.

There appears to have been a substantial amount of potential support for an anti-slavery movement in Ireland during the civil war among the impoverished pro-American masses, who could have been organized and would have rallied around a real leader. Unfortunately, this source of potential abolitionist sentiment, which cannot be accurately estimated, remained untapped by the nationalists and was not adequately represented in Irish public opinion. Although the civil war and the issues involved therein were the principal items of interest in Irish public opinion from 1861 to 1865, they coincided with the nadir of moderate nationalism in post-emancipation Ireland and the resulting intensification of the revolutionary impulse. In this stagnant lull in organized nationalist opinion, it is not surprising that opinions on such a complex issue as the abolition of slavery were confused and often contradictory, but nevertheless revealing the molding of public opinion in an era of complacency on the surface and turmoil beneath.

1 Henry J. Brownrigg, Report on certain topics connected with the state of Ireland in the year 1862, pp. 41-4, 54; Report on the state of Ireland in the year 1864, p. 37.
CHAPTER III

SOUTHERN INDEPENDENCE
The question of the establishment of the Confederacy as an independent nation was a very controversial issue in Ireland during the civil war, and all the political factions heatedly debated it.

At the very forefront of the campaign for recognition of the Confederacy in the house of commons were certain liberal and conservative Irish members. William Henry Gregory, liberal conservative M.P. for county Galway and later, governor of Ceylon and husband of the famous dramatist Lady Gregory, on 7 June 1861 became the first member to call for the United Kingdom's recognition of the Confederacy. He participated in many of the debates and was furnished with information by the confederate commissioner James Mason. James Whiteside, conservative M.P. for the University of Dublin and later, lord chief justice of Ireland, on 18 July 1862 presented a lengthy lawyer's case for recognition. Other Irish M.P.'s who actively supported the Southern cause were Colonel Fulke Greville, liberal M.P. for county Longford, who was a member of the organization

1 Hansard, clxiii. 762-3; Jordan and Pratt, Europe and the American civil war, p. 99.


committee of the Southern Independence Association; 1 Sir Hugh Cairns, conservative M.P. for Belfast, who protested against the arrest of the confederate commerce destroyer Alexandra and the government seizure of the Laird rams, the Birkenhead-built ironclad warships intended for the Confederacy; and Major W. S. Knox, representing Dungannon. Also, it should be noted that Seymour Fitzgerald, 'the conservative spokesman in the commons on foreign matters' who supported the Confederacy, though an M.P. for Horsham, was and Irishman and the illegitimate son of Lord Fitzgerald and Vesey of Clare and Inchicronan.

The pro-south 'castle catholics' or catholic West Britons were well represented in the commons by men such as Sir Colman O'Loghlen, 5 M.P. for Clare, who prosecuted the Irishmen who had enlisted on the Kearsage, and Lord Acton, M.P. for Carlow city, who supported

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1 The Index (London), 14 Jan. 1864.
2 Annual Register, 1863, p. 138; 1864, p. 136. Sir Hugh McCalmont Cairns, later Earl Cairns, an arch-conservative, became lord-chancellor under Disraeli and from 1867 served as chancellor of the University of Dublin (D.N.B., viii. 217-20).
3 Cork Examiner, 14 Mar. 1864.
5 He was supported by the Catholic Telegraph, 1 Aug. 1863, in his by-election campaign in Clare.
6 Examiner, 15 Mar. 1864.
7 Sir John Emerich Dalberg-Acton, Bart., a catholic whig, was an M.P. for Carlow city from 1859 to 1865 (J.S. Auchmuty, 'Acton's election as an Irish member of parliament', in E.H.R., lxi. 394-405 [Sept. 1946]).
the South for religious and political reasons.

In the upper house, Irish lords also played a leading role in the Southern cause. One of the most eager confederate supporters in the lords was Richard John Hely-Hutchinson, fourth earl of Donoughmore, - 'a Tory friend of the South with whom [Mason] had long been in close touch.' Another very active champion of the Southern cause and Mason's 'close friend' was the disreputable marquis of Clanricarde, former lord privy seal and lord lieutenant of county Galway.

Other Irish lords, who were not representative peers in the house of lords, and gentry who actively supported the South were Lord Naas, during the civil war M.P. for Cockermouth, and his younger brother, the Honorable Robert Bourke, a member of the committee of organization of the Southern Independence Association, and Lord Fermoy, the lord lieutenant of county Cork.


2 Adams, Great Britain, ii. 250; see also Jordan and Pratt, op.cit., p. 90. For the close association of James Mason with the Earl of Donoughmore and the marquis of Clanricarde, see the James Mason papers, 8 volumes, Library of Congress.

3 F. L. Owsley, King Cotton diplomacy, p. 454.

4 Jordan and Pratt, op.cit., p. 174; G.E.C., Peerage, iii. 237-8. Further details of his character and career are given in the chapter on 'Social factors'.

5 Examiner, 14 Mar. 1864. Richard Southwell Bourke (Lord Naas), in 1867 became the Earl of Mayo. He served under the conservatives as chief secretary for Ireland during the Fenian uprising of 1867 and in 1868 was appointed governor-general of India. (G.E.C., Peerage, viii. 610).

6 Index, 14 Jan. 1864. He was later created Baron Con- nemara and appointed governor of Madras (D.N.B., 1901-11, i. 199-200).
and M.P. for Marylebone.

The ranks of Union supporters among the Irish members of the commons were very thin, of the lords actually non-existent. The Irish Union sympathizers were led by O'Donoghue, M.P. for Tipperary. Evidently, the only other Irish M.P. to share O'Donoghue's 'Union' views was another nationalist - Edward MacEvoy, M.P. for Meath. John Blake Dillon, a Dublin alderman during the war, who became an M.P. in 1865, indicated his sympathy for the Union cause late in the war but refused to get involved in the public controversy for fear of offending friends. Isaac Butt, the M.P. for Youghal, who rose to prominence in the post-fenian period, appears to have made no public utterance on the subject.

In noting the role played by Irish M.P.s. and lords in the public controversy over the civil war in the United Kingdom, certainly one should mention the fact that the prime minister of the United

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1 Examiner, 15 Dec. 1863. Edmund Burke Roche, as baron Fermoy, was Lord Lieutenant of county Cork from 1856 to 1874 (C.E.C., Peerage, v. 302-3). As is apparent in the cases of FitzGerald at Horsham, Lord Naas at Cockermouth, and Lord Fermoy at Marylebone, it was quite common for members of the Irish aristocracy to represent English ridings.

2 For his pro-Union but anti-North views see below.

3 This was reported in a letter from H. Keenan to W. H. Seward, 22 Feb. 1862 (National Archives, Dublin dispatches, vol. 3).

4 Letter read at 'Mechanics' Institute' meeting in Dublin Irishman, 8 Oct. 1864.

5 However, he is known to have been at this time a Palmerstonian imperialist and an opponent of Bright and Cobden in foreign affairs (David Thornley, Isaac Butt and the creation of an Irish parliamentary party, 1868-79, p. 10; T. de V. White, The road of excess, p. 187).
Kingdom during the war was of Irish heritage, though not of Irish birth or education. Henry John Temple, third Viscount Palmerston of Palmerston, county Dublin, and Baron Temple of Mount Temple, county Sligo, inherited a distinguished Irish peerage. In addition, his maternal grandfather was 'a respectable Dublin tradesman'. 'Pam' was also in the tradition of the absentee landlords - owning 738 acres in county Dublin. Though craftily confederate in a number of diplomatic maneuvers, with no love for the American Union, yet, as a prudent practitioner of nineteenth century diplomacy, he was greatly responsible for the maintenance of neutrality, hostile though it was. His policies and opinions are treated very well elsewhere, and he is mentioned here only to point out how inseparable and interrelated were Irish and English politics and politicians at that time.

Irish protestant liberals (or whigs) from the early stages of the war sympathized with the movement for Southern independence. It was easy for them to be liberal abroad and conservative at home. They asked: 'How is it that Americans who were so quick to see the error of England in 1776, cannot see their own in 1861?' and commented: 'It is curious to remark, the phrases of European politics repeating

1 His father, the second viscount, was the great-grandson of a speaker of the Irish house of commons, whose father was provost of T.C.D., and master of the rolls in Ireland (D.N.B., lvi. 16-33; G.E.C., Peerage, x. 292, 295-8).

2 Bulwer, Life of Palmerston, i. 5, in G.E.C., Peerage, x. 295 fn.

3 Ibid., ix. 365-6.
themselves on free American soil. President Lincoln is a legitimist of the first water; he stands on the divine right of the Declaration of Independence. He talks in the brave old tory style of the right to revolt as a contradiction in terms. But hidden behind their support for the Southern rebellion, despite a professed dislike of slavery, was a hatred of the democratic Union.

Never before did democracy so disgrace itself in the eyes of civilized nations; never before did it furnish such complete proof of its utter incompetency for all the purposes of a government. We may look forward with more composure than Americans do to the disruption of the boasted union, and the formation out of it of several smaller communities.

The liberals were really more anti-Union than pro-Confederacy. Right after the South's success at Bull Run, they believed that the Confederate States had 'virtually established their utter and complete independence'. They continued to be optimistic about confederate chances and noted: 'It has appeared to us that the Yankees, in trying to conquer the revolted Southern States and bring them into subjection to the old Union - for that is the object, so far as we understand it, of the war - are but sowing the wind and reaping the whirlwind.' When recognition of the Confederacy

1 Dublin Mag., lvii. 634 (May 1861).
2 Ibid., p. 750-2 (June 1861).
3 Banner of Ulster, 27 Aug. 1861.
4 Ibid., 25 Nov. 1861; Dublin Mag., lix. 255 (Feb. 1862); Dublin Evening Post, 4 Oct. 1862.
5 Banner, 24 May 1862.
appeared imminent and Gladstone said that Davis had made a nation, the protestant liberals supported recognition and intervention, if necessary. However, they fervently hoped that recognition would not be needed and praised Palmerston's 'caution and prudence':

'To a recognition of the Southern Confederacy this country will probably come at last, but patience and forbearance toward the Northerners in their present circumstances, though ill requited by them, will, we trust, be maintained so long as possible.' They believed that 'the government [had] acted with praiseworthy patience, and masterly vigour and frankness, in their management of our American policy. Individuals have prematurely pressed for a recognition of the Southern States, but no responsible person has felt justified in distinctly moving that such a course be taken.'

Thus it is evident that Irish protestant whig opinion, while favouring the Southern cause, preferred a policy of official neutrality, partial towards the Confederacy, to one of recognition and intervention by the United Kingdom. They preferred the pragmatic Palmerstonian approach.

The bulwark of the liberal party in Ireland was the catholic whigs or middle and upper-class catholics who supported

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1 Evening Post, 9 Oct. 1862; Banner, 6 Sept. and 11 Oct. 1862.


3 Dublin Mag., lx. 383 (Sept. 1862).
the government, chiefly because it was politic to do so. These 'castle catholics' had to walk the tightrope of expediency between the protestant liberals and the catholic nationalists. They were first loyal catholics and then loyal West Britons and in the political arena were courted by the liberals in return for immobilizing the nationalists, most of whom were catholics, by playing up catholic disabilities and playing down nationalist agitation. Consequently, in reference to issues involved in the civil war, the catholic liberals would play the role of catholic humanitarians but at the same time deplore the Southern rebellion.

The catholic whigs deplored the 'illegality and unconstitutional course adopted by the secessionists' and accused them of being 'the aggressors and the originators of the [threatening] bloody conflict.' However, as catholic humanitarians, they denounced any use of force by the North and attacked 'the abolitionists, who would lecture the seceders at the point of the bayonet,' because 'a compulsory return to the Union would be productive of far more destructive consequences than voluntary secession.'

1 The conservative party, so closely allied with the established church and the landed aristocracy, was traditionally repulsive to them. However, a good number of the catholic West Britons shared the bitterly anti-whig and pro-tory view of The Tablet because of Palmerston's policy toward the Papal States: see chapter on 'Religious factors.'

2 Catholic Telegraph, 23 Mar. 1861; see also Freeman's Journal, 2 Apr. 1861.

3 Galway Vindicator, 27 Apr. 1861.

4 Freeman's, 2 Apr. 1861.
Thus, 'it would be a melancholy spectacle to see the two armies pitted against each other'.

After the war began in earnest combat and as the tide first turned towards the South, the catholic whigs called for recognition of the Confederacy to prevent further bloodshed, as they saw no possibility of the restoration of the Union. In the crucial months of September and October 1862, even the cautious government organ, the Freeman's Journal, read and respected by the catholic clergy, called for recognition: 'Now, at least, mediation is opportune... If Europe mediates at all, it must be on the basis ignored by the North - a peaceable separation... In the case of America mediation involves recognition... It may be mortifying to their pride but other nations have swallowed draughts more bitter - England when she acknowledged American independence...’ But, in order that, while calling for recognition of the Confederacy, they might not appear to approve of the Southerners' right to rebel, the catholic liberals deplored the secession of the South, while in effect supporting it. The attitude of the catholic whigs can be thus described as a pro-confederate composite of mixed sentiments heavily sprinkled with opportunism.

1 Ibid., 29 Apr. 1861.
2 Galway Vindicator, 3 and 7 Aug. 1861; Catholic Telegraph, 10 Aug. and 14 Sept. 1861.
4 Freeman, 29 Sept. 1862; for the same sentiments see Galway Vindicator, 1 and 11 Oct. 1862.
5 Freeman, 9 Oct. 1862 and Catholic Telegraph, 22 Nov. 1862.
Irish conservatives were at first upset over the disturbance of the status-quo by the South, but the Morrill protective tariff also disturbed them. The Belfast News-Letter immediately supported the Southern claim to independence after the commencement of hostilities at Fort Sumter, believing that the North could not 'on republican principles, conquer back and govern some ten or a dozen states' and that consequently 'the Republic has utterly failed...'. The News-Letter prided itself on the fact that it was 'the very first journal in the British Isles which ventured to state the case of the South, and put it before its readers in its true colors.' The Irish Times, immediately after the battle of Bull Run, supported the Southern cause. The conservatives became impatient with the Palmerston administration 'whose motto is to rest and be thankful' and were anxious - much more so than the liberals - for recognition or mediation, which would be tantamount to recognition, by the United Kingdom. The conservatives predicted that Gladstone's words would 'ring through North and

1 Belfast News-Letter, 1 Jan., 26 Feb., and 19 Mar. 1861.
2 Irish Times, 19 Mar. 1861.
4 Ibid., 7 May, 1861.
5 Ibid., 1 Jan. 1862.
6 Irish Times, 5 Aug. 1861
7 Ibid., 7 Mar. 1864.
South, tolling the death-knell of re-union in the one, and pealing forth in honour of the newborn nationality in the other...

Hitherto, perhaps in subserving to the Manchester supporters of the ministry, the recognition of the South has been unfairly delayed. The conservatives differed from the liberals mainly in tactics, banking on the military might of Britain to back up her recognition of the Confederacy, and failing to see the merit of Palmerston's wait-and-see policy.

The only element among the West British supporting the North was the radicals. In their minds, the question of Southern independence was subordinate to the abolition of slavery. Also, while being liberal in the truest sense of the word, they were at the same time loyal subjects of the queen. Consequently, they had to prove to their fellow West Britons that it was in the best interests of Britain to support the North and that the Southern slave power was in the long run a greater threat to the United Kingdom than the democratic North.

The Irish radicals believed in the 'justice and necessity' of the war waged by the North against the South in that it was the only way to root out the cancer of slavery in the Union, and they despised the confederate bias of most papers, especially The Times 'with its usual reliance upon the ignorance of its readers.'

1 I. Times, 9 Oct. 1862.
2 Northern Whig, 6 Oct. 1862.
3 Ibid., 7 Oct. 1862.
The works and correspondence of John E. Cairnes, the principal Irish radical and abolitionist, reveal the attitude of the radicals towards the civil war.

Shortly before the publication of his famous *Slave Power*, Cairnes wrote that the object of his book was 'to awake the public mind to a sense of the kind of power they have to deal with in the Southern Confederation in the hope that when the terms of its independence come to be settled, as I expect they will soon be, people may know the danger they have to encounter and the most effectual means of meeting it.' Thus, while urging Great Britain to remain neutral, since there was no danger of the South's taking over the Northern States, and also to render her moral support to the North, Cairnes argued that the North should not try to subjugate the South but should hem in the 'Slave Power' east of the Mississippi — the 'Mississippi compromise.' He denied that it was impossible for the North to conquer the South and refuted the analogy of the Southern States to the colonies in the American revolution by stating that the North had 'greater facility of conquest in the present struggle...' than did Great Britain then. However, he proposed a Mississippi compromise because otherwise the North would have to employ despotic principles to control the South: 'The task of holding the South in subjection would

1 Cairnes to Professor William Nesbitt, 23 Feb. 1862 (N.L.I., MS 8941-8).
3 Ibid., p. 314.
thus, as it seems to me, inevitably imperil the cause of popular institutions in North America... The loss of popular government would be a heavy price to pay for subjugation of the South, even though that subjugation involved the overthrow of the Slave Power.  

These views were supported by F. H. Hill, the other prominent radical in Ireland and editor of the Belfast Northern Whig, as 'a nice balancing of probabilities' and foreshadowing 'the course of the war and the object to which it must be directed', although some extreme Unionists disapproved of the 'halting policy' of the compromise. Naturally, American abolitionists such as G. W. Curtis, while praising Cairnes's work as 'most masterly and exhaustive', could not agree with his conclusion calling for a 'desirable conditional disunion'. Later in the war, Cairnes

1 Ibid., pp. 321-2. The Times misinterpreted Cairnes's distinction between the ability of the North to conquer the South and the advisability of military subjugation. In commenting on a lecture of Cairnes's before the Dublin Young Men's Christian Association on 30 October 1862, the Times's Dublin correspondent reported: Cairnes 'made repeated attacks on The Times, which he accused of misleading the public on the American question, and of prophesying falsely about the issue; but he was obliged to admit the truth of the principle prediction of The Times, that the South can never be subjugated by the North, and that the Union can never be restored.' (Times, 1 Nov. 1862).

2 Hill to Cairnes, 3 Apr. and 18 May 1863 (N.L.I., MS 6952).

3 Curtis to Cairnes, 20 Apr. 1863 (N.L.I., MS 6948).
discarded this conclusion, as he rejected a more extreme
suggestion of Professor Goldwin Smith's:

His [Goldwin Smith's] suggestion that the North should offer the
secession principle as a lure to the South, showed I think rather
remarkably his deficiency in true statesmanlike instinct - as if
by any possibility the Northern people could be got to make the
distinction for which he contended, and at a moment's notice to
insert the order of their ideas on the objects of the war. It
will probably occur to you to remind me that I also made a similar
blunder. No doubt I did, but it was when we all but partially
understood the subject, not in the full blaze of light which we
now enjoy. Besides my blunder did not go the length of recommending
a concession of the Principle of secession, which irrespective of
the impracticability of the advice, is, I should say, on the
merits very questionable.  

Professor Cairnes had no difficulty in demonstrating that
moral support for the North and the republican party was in the
best interests of Britain, as he cut out the heart of the argument
advanced by the West British liberals and conservatives in support
of the Confederacy. His reasoning follows logically from his
thesis on the menace of the 'Slave Power' not only to the United
States but to civilization throughout the world:

1 It should be noted that his observations on the effect
of Northern subjugation of the South provide a remarkable forecast
of the reconstruction period and the South's uncompromising
attachment to the 'Lost Cause'. He wrote regarding the South that
'...the hatred of the North which now inspires and sustains the
rebellion is probably powerful enough to survive conquest and
even the extinction of its cause. If this be so, the only expediad left
to the North, in the event of complete success, would be to establish a military despotism over the Southern States...'
(Letter of Cairnes, 3 Mar. 1863, to Anti-Slavery
Advocate, in North Whig, 3 Apr. 1863).

2 Cairnes to Nesbitt, 27 Feb. 1865 (N.L.I., MS 8941-11).
YOU speak of the fear inspired by a gigantic confederation which never lost an opportunity of expressing its ill-will toward this country. [the attitude adopted by the West British press, following the example of the Times -] Now is it not a fact that this confederation was simply the slave power in possession of the federal government, that all its aggressive acts and language arose directly out of the exigencies of slavery and the habits of mind which that accursed institution engenders? What were the practical illustrations of the doctrine of "Manifest destiny"? Were they not the seizure of Florida, of Texas — the war with Mexico, the expeditions of Lopez and Walker — conquests and adventures all undertaken in the interests of slavery, and, with the exception of the war with Mexico, all undertaken in the teeth of the protests of the great majority of the Free States. And what were the occasions in which the insolence of the Confederation was most flagrant towards us? Was it not in disputes directly growing out of slavery, as, for example, those connected with the question of the right of search; and, even where slavery was not immediately in question, the controversy was carried by men bred in the school of slavery, and under the influence of the overbearing passions and vulgar arrogance which the practice of domestic tyranny cannot but produce. These, I believe, are facts notorious to all the world, and I believe it is not less true that the party now predominant in the North is the fruit of a reaction against the aggressive tendencies and insufferable insolence from which we in common with the rest of the world have been suffering. I believe it will not be denied that there are generous and cultivated minds in the Northern States, [and] now that these are all comprised in the republican party...

Thus, Cairnes concluded: "...That party in the North which is now the soul of the war, represents, as I believe, all that is healthy and hopeful in American society, in such a sense that on its defeat or triumph depends the defeat or triumph of the best interests of the human race in the new continent."

Cairnes used practical arguments — in effect urging the government to stall for time — in order to refute the practical reasons advanced for a quick recognition of the Confederacy on...

1 Cairnes to Nesbitt, 4 Oct. 1862 (N.L.I., MS 8941-6); see also Slave Power, pp. 99-103.

2 Cairnes to Nesbitt, 9 Oct. 1862 (ibid).
the grounds of 'success';

... It should not be forgotten that the conditions of the problem for the South were altogether simpler than those with which the Northern leaders had to deal. Everyman in the South was bound together by the tie of the fundamental institution, while the institution of their society was aristocratic and the lead fell at once into the hands of a few men. In the North interests and views were multiple, the leaders were numerous, and the government was surrounded with traitors and spies. 1

The Irish radicals were interested primarily in the triumph of the North and the republican party, as an aid to the advancement of democracy and reform in the new world and the old through the effects of the abolition of slavery. Like the English radicals, they were willing to sacrifice the integrity of the Union to advance human progress in North America and the United Kingdom and were sceptical of the practicality of a complete restoration of the Union. Cairnes, in a published letter, wrote that '...the idea [of a United States] has been no more than a dream from the day when the interests growing out of slavery suggested the thought of making it the basis of political power [the Missouri compromise]. The loss of that inspiring hope is a portion of the penalty entailed on North America by the great curse'.

In treating the reaction of Irish nationalists, moderate and extreme, to the question of Southern independence, it is first

1 Cairnes to Nesbitt, 4 Oct. 1862 (ibid.).

2 Northern Whig, 3 Apr. 1863: The Spectator and Thomas Hughes both advocated a conditional disunion or a Mississippi compromise. As has been seen, Goldwin Smith of Oxford did not consider restoration of the Union essential.

3 Ibid.
necessary to deal with the great debate waged by the prominent Young Irish on both sides of the Atlantic on the overriding political issue of the war - the South's right to revolt against the Union. This issue dramatically coincided or collided, depending on the individual nationalist's point of view, with Ireland's right to revolt against or repeal the Act of Union with Great Britain of 1800. For nationalist confederate sympathizers, it was impossible to reconcile support for one union with opposition to another. For nationalist federal sympathizers, the restoration of one union was needed to repeal another. Thus, two of the principal issues in American and Irish history confronted each other in the formation of Irish public opinion on Southern independence.

Many American and British onlookers of this Irish nationalist debate were well aware of the implications of the struggle over the American Union on the union between Great Britain and Ireland. George Francis Train, a prominent American promoter of the Union cause in Britain, while speaking before a group of confederate sympathizers in London on 7 June 1862, said:

All the speakers tonight have been arguing that the Southern Confederacy ought to be acknowledged... Observing this, I am disposed, for argument's sake, to agree with you, and apply the rule to Ireland... Let me say to the Irish people - come to America - where you are appreciated - come over in thousands and hundreds of thousands, where a welcome shall await you - for Americans cannot forget your deeds of bravery in the dark pages of our war... If you think disunion in America beneficial, how much more so would be disunion between these islands.1

1 London-American, quoted in Cork Examiner, 11 June 1862.
William Henry Seward, secretary of state during the civil war and great champion of independence for Ireland while U.S. senator from New York and still dependent on the Irish vote there, wrote in 1853, describing a visit to the Irish parliament house in College Green, Dublin, the home of the independent Irish parliament from 1783 to 1800:

Whilst traversing its apartments, I reverted to the debate when the degenerate representatives surrendered their parliament; and I thought that had I occupied a place there, I would have seen English armies wade in blood over my country before I would have consented to so disgraceful a union... I confess that, overleaping all obstacles which are deemed by many well-wishers of Ireland insurmountable, I wish the Repeal of the Union.¹

As secretary of state during the war, however, Seward carefully avoided giving any overt support to the nationalists, as he adhered to the two hemispheres concept of the Monroe Doctrine in order not to give Great Britain any pretext for intervention. In a letter to Smith O’Brien in December 1861, he carefully avoided any public comments on the relationship of Ireland to England or the United States’s sympathy with Irish nationalism - a policy he followed throughout the war.² In a leader on this letter, The Times seized the opportunity to compare the two unions:

¹ Boston pilot, 1853, quoted in W. J. O’M. Daunt, Ireland and her agitators, p. 163.
² Seward to O’Brien, 28 Dec. 1861 (N.L.I., MS 3254) - also published in many newspapers; see also W.B. West to W. H. Seward, 15 Aug. 1863 (N.A., Galway dispatches, vol.1): Seward severely reprimanded the Galway consul for his too friendly attitude in his official capacity as consul towards an Irish nationalist organization.
Singularly enough, the secretary owes the opportunity of defending the cause of union to his "generous friendship" with a man who only became known by his attempts to break in sunder the United Kingdom, and thus destroy a connexion, not of 70, but of 700 years. Indeed, the arguments which the American politician uses apply with tenfold force to the union between England and Ireland...

Thomas Colley Grattan, an Anglo-Irishman and a leading confederate propagandist in the United Kingdom, expressed in a pamphlet the opinion of most West Britons on the parallel between the American Union and the United Kingdom:

The powerful confederacy called the United States of America did not really possess a national character, although their amalgamation in some measure sanctioned their claim to one. ...The United Kingdoms of Great Britain and Ireland have distinct and distinguishing characters. It is only the accepted superiority of the larger of these two states that justifies the application of the admitted term national to the character of England, typifying as it does that of all the integral parts of the British Empire in Europe. The term American has been in the same manner, but rather loosely, applied to designate the general character of the United States, but only as long as they held together by a common bond. Henceforth a distinction must be made between the separated communities, who will clearly display the difference between North and South, now that the spread of pure Yankee preponderance is overthrown.

James Bryce, an Ulsterman and student at Oxford during the civil war, commented in 1921 during the war of independence in Ireland on the hypocrisy of the Englishmen who had viewed the civil war as proof of a fatal flaw in the American Constitution and yet overlooked the Irish problem in their own backyard:

1 The Times, 27 Jan. 1862.

The [U.S.] national government tried for forty years to settle this question [the extension of slavery]; but no settlement could be reached, and the result was civil war. English critics used to think this a fatal blot, and praised the efficiency of their own system, but they have latterly come to perceive that their own government may succeed no better. The British parliamentary system has for more than eighty years failed to settle a question less formidable indeed, but always threatening strife and deranging the proper working of its own machinery, that of securing peace and good government in Ireland.  

Finally, Justin McCarthy, who rose to prominence in the Parnell era and was the lone Young Irisher who supported Bright's and Cobden's policy on the civil war, wrote in his History:

Not a few Englishmen condemned, boldly and out of hand, the whole principle of coercion in political affairs [as exemplified in the war policy of the Union]... Yet the same men would have drenched, if need were, Ireland in blood rather than allow her to withdraw from a partnership into which, after all, unlike the Southern States, she had never voluntarily entered.  

The great debate among the leading Irish nationalists, most of whom had been Young Irishers, began with William Smith O'Brien's letter to Thomas Francis Meagher on 21 October 1861 in which he stated that it was not right for the North to subjugate the South, criticized Meagher for not stating fairly the case of the Southerners,


2 See Jordan and Pratt, Europe and civil war, pp. 19, 86, 180: McCarthy during the civil war was a British Radical and lived in London, serving on the staff and becoming editor in 1864 of the Morning Star. There he became a friend of John Bright and John Stuart Mill (D.N.B., 1912-21, pp. 351-2).  

3 Justin McCarthy, A history of our own times from the accession of queen Victoria, III. 295.
and also contended that

...the Irish in America ought to appear as mediators, instead of being participants, in the fratricidal strife... Instead of denouncing as "a conspirator" and as a "propagandist of national dishonour and of national ruin" the man who seeks to re-establish peace in America, you ought rather to hail such a mediator as a friend to the great nation of which you have become a citizen. Perhaps it may still be possible to preserve the Union by peaceful adjustment; but if this be impossible, let the separation be conducted on amicable terms. 1

O'Brien, mentioning that he was acquainted with the leading statesmen of the North and South, as a result of his visit to the United States in 1859, offered to go to America 'as an unostentatious missionary of peace' to mediate between the contending factions.

O'Brien followed this letter with one to Secretary of State Seward, written during the 'Trent affair', urging the North to make peace with the South because of the danger of war between the U.S. and Great Britain and arguing that England would only declare war on the United States if she thought the Union would not be able to defend itself. Thus reasoned O'Brien: 'If you make peace with the South there will be no war with


2 Ibid.

3 See chapter on 'Anglo-American relations'. 
In December 1862, he proposed the intervention of France on humanitarian grounds, and in late 1863 he expressed succinctly his political reasons for supporting the South's right to independence:

It is difficult therefore, to understand by what process of reasoning he [Meagher] can satisfy himself, that Ireland enjoys such a right - that Poland enjoys such a right - that Canada enjoys such a right - but that the States of America, which never for a moment, relinquished the title of sovereignty that belongs to them individually, ought to be debarred from the enjoyment of a similar right.

John Martin, another prominent Young Irelander still active in Irish politics in the 1860s, shared O'Brien's sentiments and with O'Brien, assisted Father John Bannon, the confederate agent, in his propaganda campaign in Ireland. Possibly, John Martin's confederate sympathies were due to some extent to his friendship

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1 W. S. O'Brien to W. H. Seward, 2 Dec. 1861, published in the Nation, 7 Dec. 1861. The Banner of Ulster, 10 December 1861 editorialized on his letter: "The soldering-up of the Union on the one side of the Atlantic and the repeal of the Union on the other may be aspirations of the heart, but are both equally unlikely to be realities of future history." Actually, O'Brien's proposal envisaged a defensive alliance between two independent confederacies against external aggression, and his plan would have forced the United States to recognize the independence of the Confederacy.


4 Letter of John Martin in Nation, 8 Nov. 1862

5 Bannon to confederate secretary of state, 17 Nov. 1863, (loc. cit.).
with John Mitchel, his brother-in-law. In a letter printed on a Bannon broadside, Martin referred to

...the argument which has been offered by Mr. Smyth, Mr. Meagher, and some others, to separate and distinguish the case of the Confederate States from that of other communities who seek their independence at the price of their blood. The argument is that, in those gentlemen's opinion, other struggling nationalities revolt against their "union" for the purpose of obtaining "equal rights, fair-play, the God-given rights of conscience, national life and position, an unfettered manhood, an ample sphere in which to pursue the most useful and brave career", while the confederates are actuated by a "lawless ambition and lust of power." 2

But in refutation of this argument Martin contended that the South struggled

rather than submit to a foreign yoke. I call it yoke; will those gentlemen call it Union? To me it seems right to leave to every people the right to judge as to their own government, and their associates and allies. This is what I understand by free government. They only are the proper judges of the reasons which actuate them in choosing a separate national existence. If they judge foolishly, it is their own affair. Mr. Meagher says the integrity of the Republic must be preserved, and war must be waged upon the South to keep "one country, one flag, one destiny" in the regions between the lakes and the gulf and the Atlantic and the Pacific. The English say that the integrity of the empire must be preserved; and that the Union Jack must wave over the fleets and armies of these united islands. 3

From Richmond, Virginia, the capital of the Confederacy, came words of inspiration for Southern sympathizers from John


2 Letter of John Martin, 11 Nov. 1863, printed on Bannon broadside (Bannon letters, loc. cit.).

3 Ibid.
Mitchel, who served during 1862 and 1863 as editor of the
Richmond Enquirer: 'As for the Northern Irish, who seem to have
got themselves persuaded that the enfranchisement of Ireland is
somehow to result from the subjugation of the South, and that
repeal of one union in Europe depends on the enforcement of an-
other union in America, our friends here do not well understand
the process of reasoning which leads to that conclusion, nor do
I.'  Mitchel presented the confederate cause in the light of
nineteenth century romantic nationalism of the Latin-Celtic
variety. In a letter dated 30 September 1863, he wrote that the
confederates have 'now universally repudiated Anglo-Saxonism'
and reported that the confederate press persistently inculcated
into its readers the fact that separation from the yankees was
necessary 'by reason of the difference of race. We consider
ourselves here rather to belong to the "Latin races" and claim

In the latter part of 1863, Mitchel broke with the Davis
administration, left the Enquirer, and wrote the lead articles
for the anti-administration Richmond Examiner (ibid., pp. 187-90).

kindred with the Celts. 1

An Irish-American in a letter to the Nation summed up the argument of the leading nationalists who supported the Confederacy, in an attack on the Dublin Irishman and the Dundalk Democrat, two nationalist papers which supported the Union cause, for having "gone in against "the rebels", and for the "Union", as heartily as Castlereagh did in Ireland long ago." 2

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1 Printed in Cork Examiner, 4 Jan. 1864. Correspondingly, John Martin compared the Yankees or New English with the Old English (Martin to O'Neill Daunt, 9 Aug. 1865 [N.L.I., MS 8047-1]).

Rollin G. Osterweis in his history of Southern romantic nationalism would agree with Mitchel's statement on the Southerners' belief in their racial homogeneity - in actuality, of course, a myth - (see his Romanticism and nationalism in the Old South, p. 134) - but would deny their exclusive importation of Latin and repudiation of Anglo-Saxon romanticism. Probably, the only influence of Celtic romanticism on Southern nationalism would be the poems and melodies of the Anglo-Celt, Thomas Moore: 'One of the earliest romantics from across the sea to enjoy Southern acclaim was Thomas Moore, the Irish poet. His influence was especially strong in the Upper South, in Baltimore and in Richmond (ibid., p. 26). Osterweis recounted an interesting incident of Moore's popularity in the South: 'General George Pickett recalled, in a letter to his wife, that the latter had been reading Moore's Melodies to him, as he lay wounded in Richmond, when the news arrived of Stonewall Jackson's death.' (Intimate letters of General Pickett, ed. La Salle C. Pickett, New York: Seth Doyle, 1915, p. 131, quoted ibid., p. 218 fn.).

2 Nation, 1 Nov. 1862.
The leading Union sympathizers among Irish nationalists was Daniel 'The' O'Donoghue, M.P. for Tipperary and apparently the only member of parliament who flirted with the Fenian movement prior to 1867. In a speech in the house of commons on 13 July 1863, he argued that a policy of recognition of the independence of the Confederacy would be 'the surest and safest means of striking a deadly blow at the greatness and prosperity of America', and remarked that 'though his sympathies leaned more to the North than to the South, it was simply because the object of the North had been the reconstruction of the Union. If, however, by the triumph of the South the Union should be restored, he would equally rejoice, considering that one of the greatest calamities that could befall, not only America, but the world had been averted'.

He later wrote: 'Union at any price ever has been and is my motto'. He maintained that O'Brien's views were those of the oligarchy, the West British faction, and 'the well-meaning but mistaken few who carry their theories on the right of self-government to a length which would justify every parish in setting up for itself', and asserted that the South had 'no more right to set up for themselves than...the prentice boys of Derry would have to set up for themselves, if Ireland were an independent nation...'

He challenged Mitchel's views: The confederates 'are not a distinct

1 Hansard, clxii. 672.

2 A reply to O'Brien, in Cork Examiner, 16 Nov. 1863.

3 Ibid.
nationality, and they have not one tangible grievance of which to complain.' The crux of O'Donoghue's reasoning was that 'it is the interest of England that America should be weak - it is the interest of Ireland that America should be strong'.

P. J. Smyth, a Young Irisher and editor of the Dublin Irishman, wrote to Smith O'Brien:

I felt that your invitation to the U.S. government to yield could never be acceded to, and was hardly fair. If the government had been the aggressor the case might have been different, but notoriously the South was the aggressor; therefore the party in the wrong; therefore the party that should be asked to yield. Further, the South can never put down the North, but the North can put down the South; and as the success of one would be the overthrow of a great and pure government, and the success of the other but the conservation of that which has existed only to benefit mankind, I feel that we should rather help the North than encourage the South...[If the South is successful] the mischief will not end with two confederacies, nor in my opinion with four. I see clearly grounds for the establishment of six confederacies out of the debris of the Union - and for that matter, why may not every state set up on its own account? All this means ruin to America - domestic wars interminable, foreign interference, protectorates, and ultimately subjugation. With America dismembered there goes the last and only hope of Ireland. With the Union restored comes Irish Freedom. Let the Union come out of this conflict intact, and America may dictate, and I will do it, the independence of Ireland... A solemn duty devolves then upon Ireland and Irishmen. The United States are fighting our battle.

Smyth later wrote to O'Brien and reemphasized the necessity of viewing the civil war with reference to the interests of Ireland:

1 Smyth to O'Brien, n.d. (N.L.I., MS 3307).
2 Smyth to O'Brien, n.d. but appears from context to be January 1862 (N.L.I., MS 3307).
Your voice is for peace; but you advocate a policy which would perpetuate domestic strife... You do not look at the question at all in its Irish aspect - which much surprises me. The condition of the country is now such that we should think, speak, and act with an exclusive regard to the interests of Ireland. From which has Ireland the more to gain - from America divided, weak, torn into petty discordant states, distracted with internecine strife, and the prey of foreign ambitions? Am I utopian in believing that the reconstruction of the Union means Irish freedom?...

From New York came letters from Thomas Francis Meagher, commander of the New York Irish Brigade and a famous Young Irelander. He criticized the nationalist confederate sympathizers for ingratitude toward the United States which had been so generous to them. He claimed that one must 'discriminate between the unjustified and treacherous revolt of the South and the revolutions which [occur] in Europe aiming to shake off not sworn alliances and sacred compacts but mastership and domination...'

Naturally, the British were delighted over this controversy among the Irish nationalists. The Times's Dublin correspondent commented: 'It is curious to find gentlemen who would probably be members of a provisional government in Ireland, if they would carry out their theories and establish an Irish republic, holding

1 Smyth to O'Brien, n.d. (N.L.I., MS 3303).
such conflicting opinions as to the right of nations and communities to govern themselves.¹

The vast majority of moderate Irish nationalists came to sympathize with the movement for Southern independence; but prior to the war, they deplored the disruption of the Union. Right after Lincoln's election, the Nation hoped that the Union would survive the crisis 'gravely as the precipitancy of the hot-blooded South seems to threaten an eventuality which would rejoice all the enemies of that great confederation, founded by the genius, the bravery, and the patriotism of Washington.'² However, in early 1861, it proclaimed: 'We by no means share that prejudice against the South, or that ignorance of its case in the present dispute, which in England, and largely even in this kingdom, goes to fix upon it all the odium and responsibility of dismembering the Union without pretext or justification. There is not a doubt that the South has been driven to its present stand, and tempted to these extreme resolves, by the policy and conduct of the North.'³ But, it continued, although 'the Southern States, by the unfair and unconstitutional conduct of the North, have received what many would consider ample provocation and justification for withdrawing from the Union,...we cannot see that secession would remedy, while we think it rather likely to aggravate, what they complain of.'⁴

¹ The Times, 7 Dec. 1863.
² Nation, 1 Dec. 1860.
³ Ibid., 5 Jan. 1861.
⁴ Ibid.
Although before the outbreak of war, the modern nationalists preferred the preservation of the Union in theory, shortly after the first shots at Fort Sumter, they deplored 'a fight which can bring victory to neither' and, bitterly attacking the North, proclaimed the inalienable right of the Southern states to choose their own rulers:

No tyranny or despotism of Old Europe ever drew the sword more savagely to put down "rebellion" and trample on the voice of the people, than this same central government of a republican confederation... In the face of such a unanimous determination for secession - right or wrong, according to construction of constitutional technicalities - this bloody war to force union on the Southern people at the point of the sword...is a blot upon humanity. We cannot pause to weigh the niceties of the rival constructions of the silence of the deed of union with reference to the right of secession.  

Though professing their Southern sympathies really to be 'painful neutrality' and deprecating slavery in the South, the moderate nationalists believed that the cause of the North was not good, for it was not right that 'in the name of equality one-half the states should dictate its form of government to the other'. Therein lies one of the principal reasons for the moderate nationalists' sympathy for the South - the coercion policy of the North. 

It was only natural that to Irish nationalists, who had suffered from numerous acts of coercion passed by the British

1 Waterford News, 3 May, 1861.
2 Nation, 8 and 15 June, 1861.
3 Ibid., 17 Aug., 1861.
4 Cork Examiner, 26 Aug., 1861.
parliament, coercion was a noxious policy. In fact, it was a reason for the shift of popular sympathy in Ireland toward the Southerners: 'Had they been peaceably permitted to withdraw from the Union, under which they believed they could not live advantageously, opinion would have gone hard against them. But an unfair coercion has put them into the position of men resisting oppression'. The moderate nationalists claimed that the sympathy of the Irish people for the Confederacy did not arise so much from any inherent justice in their case in reference to the original quarrel, but rather from the fact that they are now in a sort of defensive position, and would readily end the war if they might 'only be let go free of their troublesome neighbours.' At the end of the war, the Nation editorialized: 'We would at any time have preferred the Union to two independent confederacies, if it were to be a union by free choice, not by compulsion. But we had rather see each state a separate and independent power, than hail a "Union" of coerced and manacled members.'

The moderate nationalists argued that they preferred a union of the states for external affairs but that, contrary to what those nationalists who supported the Union cause believed, it was better for the States of America to be separated peacefully into two confederations than to be united through force. The war of the North to maintain the Union was not worth 'the exasperation

1 Ibid., 4 Sept., 1861.
2 Ibid., 11 Feb., 1862.
3 Nation, 22 Apr., 1865.
which the struggle must create amongst men who might be more friendly, and firmer allies under two separate governments, peaceably established, than in States "united" by conquest and coercion. The moderate nationalists pointed out to their friends in America who were astonished that Irishmen should be hostile toward the Union cause that 'an abstract desire for the integrity of the Union is quite consistent with a dislike to see that Union maintained by mere brute force... All who are sincerely anxious for the prosperity of the once United States cannot now wish them better than a speedy separation upon amicable terms'. In fact, those Northerners who urged on the Union war effort were not moved by a spirit of patriotism but by hatred. They were like the Orangemen in Northern Ireland who were primarily anxious to persecute others in that 'there exists in the North a stronger desire to gratify the feeling of hatred than to restore the diminished greatness of their country'. The moderate nationalists who supported the Confederacy thus asserted that they were true friends of America and denied the charges of the extreme nationalist federal sympathizers:

There are in this country certain people of federal proclivities who go heart and soul for all the fanaticism of the North. They believe that to dissent from the present policy pursued in the states under the rule of President Lincoln is to be an enemy to the republic which contains so many of our countrymen. In the

1 Ibid., 26 Oct. 1861.
2 Cork Examiner, 26 Apr. 1862.
3 Ibid., 24 Jan., 1862.
same partizan spirit they fail to see that those who oppose the prevailing impulse may be truer friends of the North than those who hark in with a popular cry. 1

As the crucial months of the summer and autumn of 1862 approached, even the moderate nationalists' abstract desire for the preservation of the Union quickly dwindled and turned into a burning desire for the freedom of a persecuted nation and an end to the war in which Irishman killed Irishman. They first began to favour European mediation, especially by France, for the fact that it is time to put an end to this hateful strife seems to be the opinion of every man outside the United States, with the exception of a few fanatics who in the hope of abolishing the system of slavery would be content to see the North and South cutting each others' throats for years. 2 The 'confederate' nationalist newspapers made use of the O'Brien-Martin argument that 'Irishmen who at home are anxious to separate from England cannot with very great consistency deny the same right to an aggregation of States so important and so powerful as the Southern States of America.' Soon these nationalists began to call for recognition of the Confederacy and chided England for her unwillingness to permit France to lead the way in intervening.

However, after the British cabinet decided to postpone any decision on intervention in October, 1862, the moderate nationalists with

1 Ibid., 10 Sept., 1863.
2 Ibid., 8 May 1862.
3 Ibid., 10 Sept., 1862.
4 Waterford News, 26 Sept., 1862.
tongue in cheek modified their position and praised this action as the 'better part of valour which discreetly avoids fighting with a powerful enemy as long as he can be conviently conciliated.' They claimed that the truth was that 'England could not go in with clean hands.' In fact, England wanted to avoid providing the North with 'a guest for vengeance,' and England's policy of non-intervention was due to a 'wholesome fear of the strength of the North...'. J. J. O'Connor, who was active in Cork politics, in a letter to the editor of the Examiner, wrote that Lincoln ought to place the bust of our present distinguished minister for foreign affairs between those of Webster and Patrick Henry in his house at Washington. Lord John... is supplying him with men - with arms - with ammunition, and he has thrown the ships of the South into chancery. He has continued to recognize a fictitious blockade, and he has slighted the Southern ambassadors... Is it to prolong peace that they [Russell and the liberal party] are acting in this pusillanimous and cowardly manner?

Thus, the Irish moderate nationalists were actually much more pro-South than the British parliament. They wanted the war terminated as quickly as possible before both parties were completely exhausted and charged Great Britain with maintaining neutrality because she wanted to lengthen the war and thus weaken and

1 Examiner, 10 Jan., 1863.
2 Waterford News, 21 Nov. 1862.
3 Examiner, 10 and 15 Jan., 1863
4 He was elected to the Cork city council in 1864 (ibid., 26 Nov., 1864).
5 Ibid., 15 Jan., 1864.
humiliate both the North and the South.

Throughout the war, the moderate nationalists retained their confederate sympathies. They welcomed the address of the "copperhead" leader, Senator Vallandigham, calling for peace, criticized the vindictive attitude of Meagher towards the South, and even urged the people of Ireland to join the people of England and Scotland in performing 'an act of Christian mercy' by signing a petition to the people of the Northern States, circularized by confederate agents, urging the North to give up the war. These nationalists were very upset over the hospitality the Russian fleet received in New York city, while the Czar's armies were brutally stamping out the revolution in Poland, and drew a comparison between the Union and Russia:

It is a rather curious position for the free citizens of a republic to find themselves in, having for their only sympathizers the sanguinary tyrant of the Poles. He and they are both engaged in suppressing an insurrection. Does not the North shrink from the association? If it does not feel ashamed of the companionship of the wretches whose career in Poland has for the last twelve months been one continued crime, then a sad proof is indeed given how party hatred has blinded the people to the principles which have made their nation great.

1 Nation, 1 Nov., 1862.
2 Examiner, 4 Aug., 1863.
3 Nation, 17 Oct., 1863.
4 Examiner, 10 Sept., 1864; also see below: The pro-British language of this petition should have been hard for Irish nationalists to stomach.
5 Ibid., 14 Oct., 1863: Polish independence was unanimously supported by Irish nationalists.
The Cork * Examiner* summed up very well the attitude of the moderate nationalists in supporting Southern independence and opposing the war policy of the Union: 'The war, then, is a war of conquest - a war of vengeance - a war of extermination; and in a war of this nature, we Irishmen are asked to have sympathy, although we know it is mainly waged with Irish soldiers, and that in each and every collision Irishmen fall at either side, struck perhaps by an Irish bullet or pierced by an Irish blade'.

At the end of the war, the *Nation*, representing the moderate nationalists, drew a parallel between the Confederacy and Ireland for the benefit of the Fenians and their sympathizers who advocated the use of physical force alone to gain Irish independence. In rather despairing editorials, the *Nation* claimed that 'no country in the world has more solemn cause than Ireland' to contemplate the Southern lesson: "Ourselves alone" was preached in song and story of Irish liberty...well: the Southern States were cast upon "themselves alone." It pointed out how much better was the South's position for attaining independence through revolution and yet it still failed:

If the South, possessing all the advantages it did possess when declaring its independence - entering on the fight with an unanimity Ireland has never displayed in a conflict with England - with armies ready to hand, and all the resources and functions of existent government engaged in furthering the war of independence - with valour such as Ireland may equal but never surpass - with endurance, fortitude, and perseverance throughout crucial suffering.

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2 *Nation*, 20 May 1865.
such as Ireland might hardly hope to endure so inflexibly—has, up to this time, after four years of such terrific struggle, not even held its ground, what would be our chance?

Thus the Nation concluded that one would have to be 'criminally ignorant or infamously wicked' to tell the Irish people that fighting is the only way to gain self-government: 'We cannot fight, and we cannot submit.' What was really needed was a blending of 'moral force' and 'physical force' within the constitution.

Among the moderate nationalists there appears to have been no support for the Union cause. The Irish 'Union' supporters were to be found among the extreme nationalists, but even they were divided on the question of Southern independence. There were a good number of Southern sympathizers among the extreme nationalists, and there were also some Republican-Union sympathizers or those who fully supported the aims of the Lincoln administration and the republican party. The majority of extreme nationalists apparently favoured the preservation of the Union as it was before the war. Undoubtedly, many of these like The O'Donoghue, would not have cared if the South conquered the North, if the South would then reestablish the 'Union' as it previously existed. Most of these, however, adopted the attitude of the 'war democrats' of the North, like the Irish-Americans of New York, and favored the Northern prosecution of the war to preserve

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1 Ibid., 8 Apr., 1865.
2 Ibid., 20 May 1865.
the Union but a more lenient attitude toward the South than shown by the republican party. These Irish 'war democrats', however, were not completely immune to 'copperheadism' and would frequently drift into the ranks of the 'peace democrats'.

The fenians officially took the attitude that the war was a 'quarrel with which [an Irishman] has no concern on earth'. As has been seen, their official paper even attacked O'Connell for the crime of offending many Irish-Americans by supporting the abolition of slavery in the United States. Though the fenians were scrupulously neutral - obviously due to the fact that they had fellow-members in both the union and confederate armies, one

1 James Ford Rhodes points out that the term 'copperhead', which originated in the autumn of 1862, was 'an approbrious epithet applied by Union men to those who adhered rigidly to the democratic organization, strenuously opposed all the distinctive and vigorous war measures of the administration and of congress, and deeming it impossible to conquer the South, were therefore earnest advocates of peace.' In contradistinction with these 'peace democrats' or 'copperheads', were the 'war democrats' (History of the United States, from 1850 to 1877, iv, 224-5). The term 'war democrat' can be confusing. I use it to denote those who favored prosecution of the war but opposed the Lincoln administration on various issues and supported democratic candidates in the elections of 1862 and 1864. According to J.G. Randall, The civil war and reconstruction, p. 599, in most of the Northern States, the 'war democrats' coalesced with the republicans under the name 'union party'. (Andrew Johnson, who ran as vice-presidential candidate with Lincoln on the union party ticket in 1864, is considered a 'war democrat'). However, Governor Horatio Seymour of New York and General George McClellan, Lincoln's opponent in 1864, who were moderate democrats and fought both the republicans and the extreme 'copperhead-peace democrats', in my opinion are the typical 'war democrats'. Both Seymour and McClellan were supported by the New York Irish.

2 Irish People, 23 Jan., 1864.

3 Ibid., 3 Dec., 1864.

4 John Devoy, Recollections, passim.
could occasionally detect slight sympathy for the 'peace democrats,' as the Irish People referred to the 'steady resolve [of the Union] to prosecute the war to its utmost extremity' and reflected on how 'painful' the war was to Irishmen. Also, the Irish People bitterly condemned the United Irishman and Galway-American, a staunch Union supporter, edited by a friend of Meagher's, for encouraging Irish enlistment in union armies. Naturally, at the end of the war, the Irish People did not leave unanswered the parallel between confederate and Irish independence, drawn by the Nation:

The success of the Federal States is used as an argument by certain newspaper agitators to prove that an attempt on the part of Ireland to reconquer her independence would be hopeless. When the Confederates, say those pseudo-nationalists, were not able to resist the power of the North what chance would Ireland have? All we shall say to this is that it took two millions of men and four years hard fighting to put down rebellion in America, and that the federal army at this moment is 500,000 strong. A force greater than what England could send into the field might be taken from Grant's army almost without being missed. And America had no distant colonies to hold and protect.

It is not easy to ascertain the attitude of the Fenian leaders toward Southern independence. Although no definite evidence is available, it might be suggested that Thomas C. Luby, John O'Leary, and James Stephens would tend to sympathize with the South, as being in the tradition of nineteenth century romantic nationalism, to which they were firmly committed. The available evidence indicates that James Stephens, the Fenian leader, had little love for Americans. He wrote from New York that the

1 Irish People, 7 Jan., 1865.
2 Ibid., 5 Mar. 1864.
3 Ibid., 22 Apr., 1865.
American people are very different from our own and very far indeed from a consciousness of inferiority. And yet taken for all in all, they are far inferior. Nor did he admire the democratic institutions of the United States, but, it would appear, looked more towards the France of the Napoleons for inspiration. On the other hand, Jeremiah O'Donovan Rossa, the 'very incarnation' of the spirit of fenianism, openly sided with the Union cause, though to what extent he supported the Union war effort is not evident. Undoubtedly, like many of his fellow-Irish peasants of Munster and Connaught, Rossa had certain familial reasons for supporting the Union in principle, though these probably worked in reverse, as they did with other Irishmen who had close relatives fighting for the Union, in influencing him to desire peace at all costs.

1 James Stephens to his wife, 24 June 1864 (N.I., MS 10, 491-1).

2 See 'A silent politician' [James Stephens], On the future of Ireland, and on its capacity as an independent state (Dublin, 1862), p. 1: In his proposed constitution for Ireland, he called for 'a president [or king], elected for life, and governing by adicts signed by responsible ministers', with the representative body having very little power.

3 Devoy, op. cit., p. 276: He spent his exile years there after the uprising of 1867.

4 Ibid., p. 319.


6 Rossa to Secretary of State J. G. Blaine (rough draft), 17 Jan., 1861 (N.I., MS 3648-2); see chapter on 'Irish participation'.
The Dublin *Irishman* probably best reflects the attitude of
the extreme nationalists on the civil war. The *Irishman*, as did
most of the extreme nationalists, took a purely pragmatic view
of the war for Southern independence. At the beginning of the
war, it editorialized:

We cannot join in England's sorrow at this "fratricidal war". It
seems to us a natural result of natural growth... And then —
sweet heaven! — is not England's difficulty Ireland's opportunity?
If that American war cuts off the cotton supply, and plunges four
millions of the English into temporary destitution, paralysing the
action of the English government, why should we weep, if out of the
hurly-burly we are enabled to win the independence of our country.

After the Southern success at Bull Run, it commented: 'We may
safely conclude that there is no chance whatever of any future
union of the Southern States and the North'. However, in the
autumn of 1862, the Irishman completely reversed its position:
'We charge the South with this tremendous crime, that they knew
from the beginning they never could succeed, and that their only

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1 This paper was respected by the Fenians and was
considered to be more or less their paper until the publication
of the Irish People, beginning in December 1863. P. J. Smyth,
the editor of the Irishman, in contrast to A. M. Sullivan of the
Nation, would have to be considered an extreme nationalist and a
Fenian sympathizer in many ways, though in private correspondence
he deplored their 'bad purposes' and desired a 'rational but bold
and open movement' (P. J. Smyth to Smith O'Brien, 21 Nov., 1863
[N.L.I., MS 3308]).

2 Irishman, 4 May 1861.

3 Ibid., 10 Aug., 1861.
It justified its change of opinion on the war as follows:

When the dispute between the North and the South first broke out, our sympathies, we confess, were very much with the Southerners. Our impression was that they had been badly treated and were unnecessarily provoked. But as time went on, the conviction (built of fact piled upon fact) rose upon our mind—that a traitorous conspiracy was ruining the greatest free nation of modern times; and that conviction was unshakably strengthened when we saw how eagerly England, our enemy and the enemy of the American Union, took up the cause of those Southern malcontents.

The Irishman bitterly attacked the Nation as 'that once noble journal, fallen to the miserable thing it now is' when it alleged inconsistency of the Irishman's part. In criticizing this 'coarse and vulgar attack', the Irishman reiterated its reason for opposing confederate independence: 'As England's allies, they are our foes: we cannot consort with them'.

Throughout the rest of the war, the Irishman supported the Union cause, urging after the Union victories at Gettysburg and Vicksburg: 'South submit! North, be magnanimous!' Its editor, P. J. Smyth, participated in the great nationalists' debates, attacking the Martin-O'Brien arguments. However, Smyth in a letter to Smith O'Brien, reveals the doubts of these extreme nationalist 'war democrats' who being devoted in public to the

1 Ibid., 25 Oct. 1862.
2 Ibid., 1 Nov. 1862.
3 Ibid., 8 Nov., 1862.
4 Ibid.
5 Ibid., 25 July 1863.
American Union in so far as it affected Anglo-Irish relations, could on occasion support the aims of the 'peace democrats'.

Smyth wrote:

I do not believe with Mr. Seward that any mischief can result from the discussion on the American war. Neither, I am sorry to say, can I agree with you that your argument is conclusive in favour of the South... On both sides you overlook the point—how's peace to be made? You say by Northern submission, thereby proclaiming yourself a partizan, and proposing also what is clearly impracticable. O'Donoghue says, by putting down the rebellion. That may be impracticable, but it is nearer the mark I think, than the mode you suggest. For my opinion, and I have written to this effect to Meagher, the North should have left the South go after the capture of Vicksburg—that is, acknowledged the independence of the South within the limits which the Southern forces there actually held. The South could not justly claim more. Would you advise the South to accept that? But we know that she would refuse it, and refusing it how is it possible for anyone, especially an opponent of slavery, to defend the Southern cause?...  

There was a small group of extreme nationalists that gave their whole-hearted support to the Union cause, without any reservations. Their views were represented by the United Irishman and Galway-American, officially the organ of the National Brotherhood of St. Patrick but also a Union propaganda organ in Ireland similar to the London-American, and the Dundalk Democrat, the only nationalist abolitionist paper.

The United Irishman and Galway-American, whose editor was James Roche who had lived in New York for a few years and with Michael Doheny had edited the New York Phoenix, claimed that the
crux of the question was that a permanent disruption of the Union would render the United States as a nation, 'no longer formidable' in thwarting the designs of its European enemies. The United Irishman was too pro-American and pro-Union for the Fenian leaders, and a dispute developed between it and the Irish People. James Roche, in an editorial, accused the Irish People of attempting to foster 'hostility towards the United States and create a feeling of sympathy for the Southern rebels...'.

The only Irish nationalist newspaper thoroughly faithful not only to the Union but also to the Northern-Republican cause was the Dundalk Democrat. It urged the Irish people to 'cherish a fond desire for the triumph of the North, and the restoration of the Union,' for 'it is to the uprising of the Americans they owe their first relief from English tyranny [the British recognition of Irish parliamentary independence in 1783]; and they may rely upon it that if the United States be severed, English tyranny will be rampant once more in Ireland.' Unlike most of the other extreme nationalist Union sympathizers who had no love for the republican party or interests except in so far as the Union was preserved, the Dundalk Democrat supported the restoration of the Union with the North dominant, the republican party in control of

1 United Irishman, 7 Nov., 1863.

2 In the chapter on 'Irish participation', their conflicting attitudes on recruiting and emigration will be discussed.

3 United Irishman, 12 Mar., 1864.

4 Dundalk Democrat, 16 Aug., 1862.
the federal government, and the complete abolition of slavery, and scorned any appeasement of the South, charging that 'he is a traitor to this country, and a foe to America, who urges the North not to persevere till the rebellion is struck down, and the entire States again placed beneath the glorious banner of the Republic.'

It provided an interesting reason for the Southern secession which contains much truth. Pointing out that the Southerners were bitterly disappointed at the election of Lincoln in 1860, for they were accustomed to the election of presidents of their own choice, it believed that the South revolted because of 'pride, nothing but pride.' At the end of the war, it mocked the hypocrisy of the West British 'rebel' sympathizers who were trying to cover their tracks where they strayed from the path of righteousness: 'It is amusing to see how certain English and Irish newspapers which supported the infamous cause of the rebels are now dealing with the question, particularly Sir John Gray's Freeman's Journal. The creatures are disappointed on finding that English rascality was not successful, and that the American Union is still preserved.'

The extreme nationalists who made no pretension of being 'war democrats' and hoped for an independent Confederacy were ably represented by the Tipperary Advocate, an influential paper in Munster among the lower classes, edited by P. E. Gill. From

1 Ibid., 8 Nov., 1862.
2 Ibid., 1 Oct. 1864.
3 Ibid., 6 May 1865.
4 Gill played a prominent part at many extreme nationalist and Fenian meetings.
the beginning of the war, it had little doubt that the outcome
would be the complete severance of the South from the North. In
September 1862, it called for recognition of the Confederacy,
advancing the expected nationalist reasons but also foreseeing
some form of North-South alliance:

The Confederates have proved themselves worthy of recognition as
a separate power, an event which we have no doubt will be the
ultimate consequence of the struggle... As there is no chance of
an amicable unification - one not subject to internecine convul-
sions - the next best thing would be a recognized separation, and
then a league offensive and defensive.

One of the federal generals in a recent harangue denounced
the Confederates for the crime of secession; he said the South
had no more right to separate from the North than Ireland had to
separate from England. If we had the same material as the South
we would behave in the same manner towards England as she has
done with the North, and it is for this reason that the former 2
commanded our sympathies since the commencement of the struggle.

Of course, it emphasized that when it proposed mediation, it was
to be by 'some friendly powers - England not to be one of them'.

The Advocate denied that in the realm of power politics the dis-
ruption of the United States would do irreparable harm: 'We are
confident that before many years are past North and South separa-
tely will be equally potent as had been the great federation which
they formed when united...' Although the Advocate supported the
South, believing that 'the Union...was simply one of free will,
and never intended to be enforced at the bayonet's point'.

1 Tipperary Advocate, 27 Apr., 1861
2 Ibid., 20 Sept., 1862.
3 Ibid., 4 Oct., 1862.
4 Ibid., 23 Aug. 1862.
it pleaded that the diversity of opinions on the war among Irish nationalists should not lead to 'a lessening of faith in the good motives of one another...'

Some mention should be made of the popular meetings and petitions in Ireland expressing opinions on the war. The first and most important meeting was held on 5 December 1861 in the Rotunda in Dublin. The meeting was primarily concerned with the possibility of a war between the United Kingdom and the United States over the 'Trent affair' and also, behind the scenes, with a struggle for the leadership of Irish nationalists between the moderate nationalists and the Fenians. On first appearance this meeting would seem to indicate that the Irish nationalists sympathized with the Union cause, which undoubtedly is one of the reasons for the generally held opinion that the Irish nationalists supported the Union. It should be noted, however, that support for the United States in a war against England did not mean support for the Union's war against the Confederacy. A. M. Sullivan, editor of the pro-South Nation, attended the meeting, and John Mitchel in a published letter praised the aims of the meeting and pointed out that the Irish in the Confederacy would be glad to fight for Lincoln and Seward in

1 Ibid., 15 Nov., 1862.

2 See Joseph Denieffe, A personal narrative of the Irish Revolutionary Brotherhood, pp. 72-3. It is dealt with in detail in the chapter on ' Anglo-American relations'.

3 Report from Freeman's in Cork Examiner, 7 Dec. 1861.
a war against England, if the federal government should recognize the independence of the Confederacy. The resolution passed at this meeting on the 'Trent affair' carefully avoided siding with either the North or the South:

That the population of America, from the St. Lawrence to the Gulf of Mexico, from New York to San Francisco, being largely intermixed with men of Irish birth and Irish blood, it would be unnatural to suppose that Ireland could remain an indifferent spectator of the struggles between England and America. 2

According to the New York Irish-American, the Northern-republican press assailed the Irish nationalists at this meeting because they proclaimed the fact that Ireland regarded with equal affection all sections of America' and did not sympathize with the aim of the republican party - 'the humiliation of one portion of the American people, their subjugation or utter extermination'.

There appear to have been four meetings held in Ireland to express sympathy for either the Union or Northern cause. Two were held in Belfast during the first half of 1863, principally attended by presbyterian clerics. The American consul in Belfast commented on the first of the two: 'Our success was nothing to boast of'.

1 Letter from Paris, dated 10 Dec., 1861, in Cork Examiner, 14 Dec., 1861; He singled out for criticism the one speech - that of Neilson Underwood's - attacking the South.

2 Report from Freeman's in Examiner, 7 Dec., 1861.

3 New York Irish-American, 5 Dec., 1863.

4 Belfast Northern Whig, 18 Feb., and 22 Apr., 1863. These meetings will be discussed in the chapter on 'Religious factors'.

Furthermore, the most prominent person present at these two meetings, Dr. James McCosh, a professor at Queen's College, Belfast, and later president of Princeton for twenty years, in his speech at the first meeting undoubtedly revealed the sentiments of those present, who were concerned primarily with the abolition of slavery and little solicitous about the restoration of the Union:

I deny that the people of America expect us to feel the same interest that they do in the sustenance of the American Union. That is a question for the Americans themselves. I confess I sometimes wish that the North was free from the South altogether. I sometimes wish that they were free from the incumbrance to which they are joined; for I believe if they were free and had nothing whatever to do with slavery, there is a great and glorious career before them; and, if the issue of the war be that the South does declare their independence, then the North will, perhaps, declare that they will purchase all the slaves in all the slave countries that adhere to them... - if that be the issue of the war, then I say it is worth all the bloodshed that has occurred, and all the hardships that have been endured. 1

The two other meetings were held in Dublin. The National Brotherhood of St. Patrick held a meeting on 25 May 1863 in St. Patrick's Hall 'for the purpose of adopting an address to the president of the great American republic, on behalf of the Irish nationalists, expressive of their abhorrence of the portion of the press which misrepresents the federal cause, and assuring the federal government of their warmest sympathy and the most earnest hopes of the Irish people for the maintenance of the Union'. 2

According to the police report on the meeting - even the friendly

1 Northern Whig, 18 Feb., 1863.
2 Cork Examiner, 28 May 1863; also Irishman, 30 May 1863.
newspapers gave scant notice to it — the address to the president was proposed and seconded by O'Neill Russell and James Roche, the proprietor and editor respectively of the *United Irishman* and *Galway-American*. About 200 persons were present, 'nearly all of whom were of the humbler class' and a number of whom were boys about twelve to fourteen years old. Apparently, the chairman of the meeting and hon. secretary of the Brotherhood, Charles Doran, in his speech to the members, though sympathizing with the federalists, rather regretted the 'suicidal war'.

On 3 October 1864, a lecture and meeting were held at the Mechanic's Institute in Dublin to adopt an Address of working-men of the capital of the fatherland to their kindred of their own order in the loyal states of the republic. Father Thaddeus O'Malley, the patriot priest who had lived in the United States for a number of years and was often at odds with the Irish hierarchy, delivered the lecture and drew up the address. The purpose of the address was to urge Irish-Americans to support the union (republican) party and reelect Lincoln. According to the *Dublin Morning News* and the *Nation*, the meeting failed to demonstrate any substantial support for the North; and no public meeting was held after the lecture, as was originally planned, to approve the


4 *Irishman*, 8 Oct., 1864.
address. The *Morning News* reported:

The attendance was lamentably poor in point of numbers, although one of the United States consuls, and nearly all the prominent abolitionists, as well as the most prominent upholders of the Northern cause in our city, were present or invited. This lecture was the first step of the kind taken to test the public feeling of Dublin on such an issue by a public meeting, and was to have been specially a demonstration of the trades as against the South and in favour of the North. ¹

Evidently, this was the only Union meeting of the *Bright-workingmen* held in Ireland.

There appear to have been no public meetings organized in Ireland to support the Confederacy. Of course, periodically...

¹ *Dublin Morning News,* 4 Oct. 1864; see also *Nation,* 8 Oct. 1864.

² The abolitionist *Boston Liberator,* 4 Nov., 1864 printed the address. E. D. Adams, citing this issue of the *Liberator* commented: 'Even in Ireland petitions were being circulated for signature among the workingmen, appealing to Irishmen in America to stand by the administration of Lincoln and to enlist in the Northern armies on the ground of emancipation'. (*Great Britain and the American civil war,* ii, p. 240). This statement is an exaggeration in that Father O'Malley's address was the only one of its kind, and petitions were not circulated among Irish workingmen. This statement is also untrue in that emancipation of the slaves was generally anathema to Irish labourers, and not even O'Malley's address urged support for the North 'on the ground of emancipation' (The address states: 'Nor is it for the sake of the poor negro that we would exhort you' to vote for Lincoln, but it emphasized the desire of pro-slavery capitalists to enslave all laborers). One is tempted to say that this statement of Adams's is an example of his over-emphasis placed on the emancipation question in his attempt to prove that slavery was 'the insuperable barrier, in the fall of 1864, to public support of the South [in the United Kingdom]' (ibid.).
various organizations, such as the Trinity College Historical Society demonstrated their support. The Irish confederate sympathizers did, however, organize petitions. In July 1864, the marquis of Clanricarde headed a delegation from the Society for Obtaining the Cessation of Hostilities to Lord Palmerston to urge him to propose British mediation between the North and South, which he refused to do. The delegation used as evidence of public support 'petitions to parliament from the clergy and laity in eighteen English and thirteen Irish counties'. The Irish counties mentioned were 'Meath, Cavan, Leitrim, Roscommon, Antrim, Longford, Sligo, Queen's County, Waterford, Galway, Tipperary, Cork and Dublin'. The principal petition was a last-ditch effort in September 1864, as Sherman was tramping through Georgia. It was

1 The 'Hist', the oldest university debating society in the United Kingdom, in its three debates on the question of an independent Confederacy, from 1862 to 1865, approved motions favoring the dissolution of the American Union, while in another debate during the war approved the motion: 'That England acted wisely in attempting to prevent her American colonies from asserting their independence in 1776' (Addresses, College Historical Society, Dublin).


3 Ibid.

4 The Times, 16 July 1864.
an address entitled 'The people of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, to the people of the United States', and the wording of it, originating as it did in London, should have been sufficient to prevent Irish nationalists from signing it:

You are of Saxon blood, and we hoped that you would make the new world renowned for true greatness... If you will run the parallel between the South now and the Colonies in 1776, and compare the course pursued by the North now, and the mother country then, we think you will discover some striking resemblance; and among them, that with you now, as with the crown then, rests the privilege of giving peace to the American continent.

However, The Times noted that of the 500,000 people in the United Kingdom who signed the pro-confederate peace address over a three-week period during the autumn of 1864, 130,000 or nearly half were Irishmen. A Dublin correspondent of the confederate Index reported that it was 'most gratifying...that catholics and protestants, the pulpit and the press, are now uniting their efforts in the cause of peace'. He also reported that among the papers commenting favorably on the petition were the Irish Times, Cork Examiner, Dublin Evening Mail, Dublin Morning News (A. M. Sullivan's paper), Dublin Evening Post, Belfast News Letter, Waterford Mail, Wicklow News, Drogheda Conservative, and Limerick


2 The Times, 12 Oct. 1864.

3 The Index, 1 Sept., 1864.
Chronicle. In addition, he noted that the petition had been read in the various churches in Queenstown on the preceding Sunday and that "the congregations were affectionately and solemnly invited to sign it". In Dublin sheets for signature were placed in the porticos of churches, public streets, the Rotunda, the Chamber of Commerce, the principal hotels, newspaper offices, shops, the offices of young men's societies, and Trinity College. The Irish Times reported that "as a proof of the spirit in which the address has been received in Ireland, on last Sunday [25 September 1864] 25,000 persons signed it, and on Monday 12,000" and noted very ambiguously that in Dublin from 10,000 to 15,000 persons added their names daily. Lieut. James L. Capston, a confederate agent in Ireland, had reported in the spring of 1864 to Judah Benjamin that if time would permit he could get at least 500,000 signatures in Ireland on a peace petition but that in any case he could furnish enough "to show that the Irish people are anxious to stop the war resulting in the independence of the Confederacy". Even Union sympathizers, while attacking or belittling the address, attested to the substantial number of signatories. The Irishman stated that

1 Ibid.
2 Ibid.
3 Irish Times, 24 Aug., 1864 and Index 1 Sept., 1864.
4 Irish Times, 28 Sept., 1864.
5 Capston to Benjamin, Queenstown, 14 Apr., 1864 (Pickett papers, box N, no. 56).
'a good many persons who did not take the trouble of looking into it were induced to attach their names', for they were 'ignorant of the poisoned source from which it emanated', namely British conspirators who desired to destroy the federal government. Also the principal agent in Ireland for the petition, reported the *Irishman*, was 'a clergymen of Trinity College, the nursery of the orange system in Ireland'. Even the American consul in Dublin reported that the petition would 'no doubt have many thousand names attached to it' but stated that in Ireland it did not excite 'any accord or unanimity among the masses, and [he learned] that its success [was] chiefly confined to school children and the aged, who [were] led to sign it, at the different Roman Catholic churches, under misrepresentations'. However, the Irish reception of this address, circulated as it was during the death-throes of the Confederacy, would tend to indicate that there was a very sizeable amount of support in Ireland for an independent Confederacy. How extensive and how important was this segment of public opinion cannot be determined by this address in itself.

In assessing Irish public opinion, particularly its most important segment, nationalist opinion, on Southern independence, the comments of Irish-Americans are most valuable. The New York *Irish-American* in attacking *Martin's* and *O'Brien's* 'specious but

1 *Irishman*, 8 Oct., 1864.

2 Ibid.

ill-founded' arguments pointed out the principal reason for the confederate sympathies of the majority of Irish nationalists. Irish-Americans, concentrated for the most part in the northeastern States, considered themselves first and foremost, loyal American citizens and only secondarily Irish nationalists - something incomprehensible to the nationalists in Ireland. Undoubtedly, the attacks of the Native-Americans on the subversive influence of catholic Irish immigrants prior to the civil war made Irish-Americans anxious to prove their patriotism during the war. This question of patriotism was the decisive difference between nationalist opinion in Ireland and the opinion of Irish nationalists living in the United States. The Irish-Americans reasoned as follows:

'To the extremists on both sides, our [Irish-American] countrymen have always been opposed; and in fighting the battle of the constitution - whether with the ballot or the sword - against abolitionism on one side and disunionism on the other, they are only adhering consistently to the record which tells of the faithful discharge of their duties as American citizens'. Thus, Irish-Americans only exercise the privileges [e.g. criticizing the mistakes of elected officials, such as those of the Republican administration] and comply with the duties [e.g. loyalty to the Union] of good citizens; and hence the apparent anomaly [support for the federal prosecution of the war but opposition to Lincoln and his party], so difficult to be understood by those in Ireland who assume to argue the American case with only an imperfect knowledge of its

1 New York Irish-American, 29 Nov., 1862 and 12 Dec., 1863.
2 Ibid.
bearings. The Irish adopted citizen here takes no part in any contest, local or national, as an Irishman. His status, under the Constitution, is that of an American born on the soil; and while claiming and assuming the rights thus guaranteed to him he can no more separate his duties from those of the native-born citizen than he can divide with him the elements of the air upon which both exist in common. 1

The Northern Irish-Americans were well aware of the Confederate sympathies of the nationalists in Ireland and were acutely disturbed at the fact. The Boston Pilot replied to the Irish nationalists' criticism:

Our transatlantic contemporaries are going too far. Their suggestions are a disgrace, and they are spit upon. Why did they not write down the brigade for the Pope? Why do they not condemn the valor of Irish troops in France? There was no obligation to enlist for the Holy Father; and the brigade in France fought for a country not their own. The entire reverse is the fact in regard to the Irish in America. This is their country. Let our Irish contemporaries have nothing to do with matters they do not comprehend. 2

Even soldiers on the battlefield, fighting in Northern Irish regiments, were disturbed by the Irish nationalist attitude on the war. One, writing from the camp of the Irish Brigade at New Creek, Virginia, noted that the editor of the Cork Examiner, John Francis Maguire, M.P., seemed 'desperately biased in favour of the South' and that his leaders 'would do credit to the Richmond Whig', and was puzzled as to 'why the liberal [nationalist] press of Ireland should so chime in with derisive English

1 Ibid.

2 Boston Pilot, quoted in Cork Examiner, 28 June 1862.
Leading Young Irishmen who had become American citizens testified to the extent of support for the confederate cause among Irish nationalists. Speaking in Cork on 12 December 1861, Colonel Michael Loheny said that the United States was 'very little understood' in Ireland. Thomas Francis Meagher provided the most telling indictment of Irish nationalist opinion on the war. In a long letter to P. J. Smyth, he praised Smyth and 'those few intelligent, grateful, and upright men, who in Ireland recognized the justice and grandeur of the [American] national cause, and the military proceeding it became necessary to resort to in its defence'. Meagher moaned that 'the sentiments and disposition of the Irish public - as far as speeches and newspapers can be taken to interpret them truthfully...were not such as the loyal citizens of this republic had reason to expect.' He warned the Irish nationalists that their confederate sympathies were not unnoticed in the United States and might have dire consequences:

It was with a feeling of sore and somewhat scornful disappointment that the partizanship of the Irish public with the aristocrats of Carolina and Virginia was regarded here. This unnatural partizanship has done more harm to Ireland than, in the present circumstances it could possibly do to the United States...

The identification of the Irish people at home with the orangement and Tories of England in their avowed sympathy and

1 Letter to a Kerryman, 1 Mar., 1863, in Cork Examiner, 16 Apr., 1863.
2 Cork Examiner, 12 Dec., 1861. ibid.
4 Ibid.
active connivance with the rebels...will not be forgotten by the jealous exclusionists of this country when the war is over. Nay, it may be difficult hereafter to rouse some of the staunch old friends of the Irish people,...when they remember how, even in the very season when the loyal states were pouring their grain and gold into Ireland to relieve the starving poor [the Irish depression of 1860 to 1863], the public opinion of Ireland...went forward to condemn the action of the national government, and approve the infidelity and usurpation of its enemies. 1

Meagher was appreciative of the fact that 'the generous heart of Ireland is ever prompt to sympathize with the efforts of a people in arms to strike down an oppressive mastership and establish their independence' and that the Irish nationalists' sympathy with the disloyal states of the American Union is the error of generous natures, inflamed with the love of liberty and an intense hatred of oppression'. 2 However, he thanked God that the thousands of Irishmen in the union armies would 'rescue the Irish name from the disgrace of being involved in the infamous scheme to rend asunder' the haven of the oppressed. 3

In estimating the Irish attitude toward Southern independence, another factor must be considered: the obvious preference of Irish emigrants for the Northern States. Does this indicate that the Irish masses sympathized with the Northern cause? The Irishman answered yes and contended that 'neither Mr. O'Brien nor Mr. Martin represents the sentiments of the immense majority of the Irish nation. The sentiments and sympathies of the Irish people are

1 Ibid.
2 Ibid.
3 Ibid.
traced, all too vividly, in the heavy-freighted ships which daily leave our ports, not for the Southern, but for the Northern States. However, in point of fact, most of the steamship lines had New York or Boston as their destination, and there was not much opportunity - even less during the war - of sailing directly to the South. Of course, in conjunction with the Irishman's argument is another - that the Irish masses supported the North during the war because the majority of their relatives in the United States lived in the North. This line of reasoning will be discussed in the chapters on 'Social factors' and 'Irish participation', but it should be said here that this 'personal' factor also provided the Irish masses with a desire for peace at any price and even an antagonism toward the North for the way it 'used' their relatives to fight the war. Moreover, in refutation of the Irishman's argument there is the overwhelming evidence of Irish support for the confederate cause in one way or another. Father John Bannon would probably be closer to the truth in reporting the comment of a 'labouring peasant' in 1864 who said: 'We, who were all praying for the North at the opening of the war, would now willingly go to fight for the South if we could get there'. Furthermore, Sir Colman O'Loghlen evidently felt that he was expressing popular opinion on Southern independence in the west of Ireland - the area with probably the highest percentage of emigration to the United States. (See P. J. Purcell, 'Ireland and the American Civil War', p. 75.)

1 Irishman, 7 Nov., 1865.
2 See P. J. Purcell, 'Ireland and the American Civil War', p. 75.
3 Bannon to J. P. Benjamin, 9 Mar., 1864 (Pickett
States — when, in his speech to his constituents on the day of his election to parliament in the by-election in county Clare in August 1863, he said that

when the war originally commenced, his sympathies were entirely with the North, because he felt that Ireland owed a debt of gratitude to America that should never be forgotten; for when distress and misery forced the people of Ireland to go to America they were received there as brothers. He would be sorry to say anything to diminish the importance of the American republic, but he was bound to state that after the gallantry shown by the Southern nation — for a nation they were at present — after the manner in which they had defended their rights, his sympathies were now entirely with the South. ¹

In conclusion, perhaps the best and most succinct summation of Irish public opinion on Southern independence is contained in a stanza from an anonymous contemporary Irish poem entitled 'Song of the South':

Cheers for the South — the virtuous South;
And for the Irish press,
Where creeds and parties all unite
To bid her cause success;
Experience tells them the serf's chain
Hurst not, not yet depraves.
Cheers for the South, her Irish press,
Her freedom and her slaves; ²

¹ Clare Journal, 3 Aug., 1865, quoted in Catholic Telegraph, 8 Aug., 1865.

the Lincoln image in Ireland ranged from vilification to exaltation. Whether he was a hero or traitor, humane, insane or sybarite, as champion of cause providential also or as agent of iniquity, varied according to the Irishman's political and religious points of view. Lincoln's personality which pervaded his public utterances had a certain quality that brought out the best or worst in the nineteenth century Irishman. Yet after all the acclamation, either gratefully or begrudgingly, he was apotheosized by the Irish public.

CHAPTER IV

THE LINCOLN IMAGE IN IRELAND

As Abraham Lincoln portrayed in most English materials, it was only natural that among middle and upper class mid-Victorian Protestant Irishmen, Abraham Lincoln would be more vilified than respected. To them, the more urban and politically experienced Secretary of State Seward was "a statesman gabling in nineteenth century power politics while the buckwoodry Lincoln was a man of fair abilities". In fact, Seward could be compared to the despised but respected Cardinal Antonelli and Lincoln to the magnificent Antonelli. Seward was

Belfast Newsletter, 27 Apr. 1865.
The Lincoln image in Ireland ranged from vilification to canonization. Whether he was hero or traitor, humanitarian or despot, an instrument of God's providential plan or an agent of iniquity, varied according to the Irishman's political and religious points of view. Lincoln's personality which pervaded his public utterances had a certain quality that brought out the best or worst in the nineteenth century Irishman. Yet after his assassination, either gratefully or begrudgingly, he was apotheosized by the Irish public.

The West British protestant liberals and conservatives in a psittacine fashion accepted the image of Lincoln portrayed in most English editorials. It was only natural that among middle and upper class mid-Victorian protestant Irishmen, Abraham Lincoln would be more ridiculed than respected. To them, the more urbane and politically experienced Secretary of State Seward was 'a statesman' gambling in nineteenth century power politics while the backwoodsly Lincoln was 'a man of fair abilities'. In fact, Seward could be compared to the despised but respected Cardinal Antonelli and Lincoln to Pius IX. Like Antonelli, Seward was

1 Belfast News-Letter, 27 Apr. 1865.
the second in name but the first in real power in America... Old uncle Abe sits, it is said, by the fireside in the great White House of Washington, and tells stories of his rail-splinter's days on the Mississippi. He was happier doubtless then, and thus goes back to it as Christopher Sly to his tinker's experience when he rubs his eyes in the duke's bed. A rail-splinter may discharge the duties of the president; the secretary of state must be a statesman, and that Mr. Seward undoubtedly is'.

Most of their criticism, however, centered on his actions as chief executive and those of his subordinates. His supporters were 'fanatics', and he and his administration were merely a 'hack lot'. His reelection in 1864, like the plebiscite of Napoleon III, demonstrated that the trappings and machinery of democracy were no substitute for the real thing: 'We have a remarkable illustration in France of how universal suffrage and vote by ballot can be manipulated to sustain an imperial despotism, and America furnishes another illustration of how the same institution can be worked to destroy freedom of election under a republican form of government'. Generally, these pro-South protestant West Britons, many of whom scorned or were at least sceptical of things American, adopted the attitude that Lincoln, as incapable as he was, was what the American people really deserved for a president. Of course, after his assassination, from most of these critics gushed

1 Dublin Mag., lix, 126 (Jan. 1862).
2 Banner of Ulster, 27 Feb. 1864.
3 Belfast News-Letter, 23 Nov. 1864.
4 Banner, 26 Nov. 1864.
forth praise for Lincoln, 'a great and good man' with 'in-
domitable tenacity, coupled with political sagacity, and a
thorough reliance on what he believed to be the justice of
his cause...'. Undoubtedly, the Belfast News-Letter expres-
sed the true sentiments which the opportunistic majority of
protestant West Britons were afraid to express: 'His death
has given a dignity to him which his conduct never could
have bestowed...'.

The catholic West Britons held an opinion of Lincoln
similar to that of their protestant counterparts in regard
to his policies and actions, though generally more respectful
of his character and ability. Some 'castle catholics' suf-
fered from an excessive case of Pisonism and viewed Lincoln
and the civil war in the light of their interpretation of the
conflict between Italian nationalism and the temporal power
of the papacy. The Tablet summed up the attitude of the more
conservative element when it stated that 'President Lincoln
and the King of Sardinia are brothers; their aim is one; and
the means by which they labour to attain it are alike in both
cases'. They both hoped to crush their opponents by a
'Liberal despotism', but Lincoln used even 'more ignoble
chicanery and stupid criminality' than Victor Emmanuel.

Lincoln was 'striving for power, extent of dominion, the

1 Ibid., 27 Apr. 1865.

subjugation of his opponents, and for an unquestioned rule over millions of obedient slaves. 1 Most 'castle catholics' did not attack Lincoln's character but only his policies. He stood for war, and they wanted peace. He represented merely the know-nothing and abolitionist faction and not 'the free choice of the majority of a free people'. 3 Still, since these catholics were not as prejudiced toward Americans as the protestant West British, they did not belittle Lincoln personally. Lincoln was 'an able statesman', and there could be no question about the 'perfect integrity' of both Lincoln and Jefferson Davis. 4 Upon the assassination of Lincoln, though believing that he pursued a 'mistaken policy', they were compelled to praise his 'wisdom and kindly disposition', and admit that 'he raised himself to an equality with the greatest statesmen of the age'. 7 In truth, they confessed that they realized his greatness too late. He fell 'at the moment when the virtues of his character had just begun to be recognized as the great hope of those who longed to see peace restored to their distracted country'.

1 Tablet, 8 Nov. 1862.

2 Catholic Telegraph, 17 Sept. 1864.

3 Galway Vindicator, 23 Nov. 1864.

4 Freeman's Journal, 5 Jan. 1865.

5 Galway Vindicator, 29 Apr. 1865.

6 Ibid - somewhat of a contradiction.

7 Freeman's Journal, 27 Apr. 1865.

8 Catholic Telegraph, 29 Apr. 1865.
Lincoln personally was much revered and his policies much acclaimed by the Irish radicals - the small nonconformist left wing of the liberal party which supported the North. The Belfast Northern Whig proclaimed with great foresight upon his first inauguration: 'Mr Lincoln, to his advantage, or disadvantage, as it may turn out, steps at once into a historical position. Events have made a "situation" for him. It remains for him to show whether he will be "master" of it:' He did not disappoint the radicals. After his first term, he showed promise to be the first really capable president since Andrew Jackson. The presbyterian Northern Whig was delighted over his ugly but admirable image in the United Kingdom: 'The descriptions which Sir Philip Warwick and Dr. South have given us of Oliver Cromwell - "the bankrupt, beggarly fellow with a thread-bare torn cloak and a greasy hat" - "his countenance swollen and reddish, his voice sharp and untunable" - do not represent a more grotesque figure than that which, in the popular English imagination stands for the likeness of Mr. Lincoln.' Lincoln's now famous second inaugural address was considered 'one of the most remarkable state papers of modern times. We cannot imagine it, or anything like it, proceeding from the pen of a merely professional politician.

1 Northern Whig, 18 Mar. 1861.
2 Ibid, 22 Nov. 1864.
3 Ibid.
of Europe or America. It breathes throughout the tone of one who feels himself to be the instrument of a great providential work, in the recognition of which self-exultation and self-abasement are alike swallowed up, and all personal thoughts are lost.

The leading Irish radical, Professor Cairnes, had high admiration for Lincoln. In a letter commenting on a quite well known and truly remarkable published letter from Lincoln to Congressman James Conkling, dated 26 August 1863, in which Lincoln answers the charges of his Northern Irish-American opponents, Cairnes wrote:

It may be that I am disposed to over-rate its merits, for I do feel as if I had in a manner staked my character for discernment on Lincoln; but it has strengthened my opinion immensely both of his wisdom and his worth. The Spectator [one of the leading English Northern supporters, according to E. D. Adams], as you will see in the interesting article on the letter, admits the ability (and indeed I cannot understand how it can be denied, for more powerful and trenchant logic I have seldom seen), but sneers at the "fateful want of dignity", the "vulgarity", the low moral tone, the "attorney-like" shrewdness - all which phrases appear to me utterly unjustifiable, snobbish, and unworthy of the Spectator. I am unable to see the defects in question. High purpose with directness of aim and simplicity of language (and these are emphatically the characteristic attributes of the letter) are never, in my opinion, undignified, vulgar, low, or in the least "attorney-like". Indeed it is a puzzle to me how Lincoln could ever have been an attorney: it is curious that petty-fogging should not have left some trace on his mind. The "attorney-like" sharpness, it seems to me, is all on the side of his critics... In another point also I think the Spectator has done
Lincoln gross injustice: it says that he fairly represents the average American, because he is himself an average American, neither better nor worse than the mass. Now, I think, every line of the letter bears evidence that he consciously descended from his own moral platform in order to meet those with whom he reasoned on their own ground; indeed in some passages the effort to keep his higher sense under is plainly visible, and in one or two not successful, as where he says:—"You say you will not fight to free negroes. Some of them seem willing to fight for you". On the whole, I have not yet seen any criticism of the letter that really satisfies me... It has perfectly convinced me that Lincoln is not only a very worthy, but a very able, and even remarkable man. 1

Lincoln's assassination moved the radicals to soul-stirring tributes. His conduct was 'the noblest living type of Christian statesmanship', and he died 'a martyr for principles as noble as those for which ever martyr died'. Indeed, Lincoln was 'a character such as providence calls forth only in the great crisis of nations and the world... If the memory of the just shall not perish, his name will survive to all time'.

About a week after the news of Lincoln's assassination reached the United Kingdom, Cairnes noted the superficiality of the pious tributes of most British and Irish newspapers and the 'positively revolting' hypocrisy of The Times in attempting to capitalize on the event and cover up its blasphemous conduct during the war. He wrote: 'The impression made by Lincoln's death seems to be fading, and there

1 Cairnes to Professor William Nesbitt, 22 Sept. 1863 (N.L.I., MS 8941-8).
2 Northern Whig, 27 Apr. 1865.
3 Ibid, 28 Apr. 1865.
is I think too evident a rather dastardly eagerness to utilize the catastrophe as a means of covering over our confusion under the triumph of the Union cause.

For better comprehension of the Irish nationalists' opinion of Lincoln, it is good to examine the hostile attitude of Irish-Americans toward him and review his policy and character in the light of their criticisms. The Irish-Americans 'are perhaps the only English-speaking contingent [in the Northern States] which has never claimed credit for sending Lincoln to the White House'. The 'vast majority' of Irish-Americans voted for Stephen Douglas in 1860.

Irish-American support for Douglas was due to their hatred of abolitionism coupled with a strong desire to preserve the Union through the leadership of moderate Unionist democrats. Douglas also symbolized much more to the Irish-Americans who were thoroughly imbued with the spirit of Young Ireland of 1848. He was 'popularly reputed to be the soul' of Young America, an aggressive nationalist movement that sympathized with the European revolutions of 1848 and called for American 'expansion and progress'. Furthermore, Douglas had declared himself in favor of the use of force to gain Irish self-determination.

1 Cairnes to Jesbitt, 5 May 1865 (N.I.L. MS 8941-11).
3 Carl Wittke, The Irish in America, p. 130; see also Oscar Handlin, Boston's Immigrants 1790-1865, p. 217.
5 N.Y. Herald, 10 Jan. 1852, cited ibid., p. 38 fn.
Douglas and the moderate democrats embodied the aims of Irish-Americans, an intense American patriotism and a desire for the independence of Ireland, whereas Lincoln and the republicans were too much beholden to the Anglo-American alliance of abolitionists and thus considered the Union of secondary importance to the abolition of slavery and were influenced by English thought and opinion. Consequently, in November 1864, after the Irish-Americans were even further antagonized by the actions of Lincoln, such as the enforcement of the draft, they were responsible for an increase in the democratic majority against Lincoln in New York city over that of 1860.

Thomas Francis Meagher, the only prominent Irish-American to campaign for Lincoln's reelection, bitterly castigated the Irish-Americans for their persistent Democratic views: 'To their own discredit and degradation, they have suffered themselves to be bamboozled into being obstinate herds in the political field, contracting inveterate instincts, following with gross stupidity and the stoniest blindness certain worn-out old pathways described for them by their drivers, but never doing anything worthy of the intellectual and chivalrous reputation of their race'.

However, at the end of the war, Irish-Americans considered Lincoln's assassination as a national disaster, for

1 N. Y. Post, 10 Nov. 1864, in Gibson, New York Irish, p. 170.

they strongly supported his moderate attitude toward the
reconstruction of the South and feared the program of radical
republicans such as Stevens and Sumner.

An examination of Lincoln’s writings reveal that he and
the Irish-Americans saw eye to eye on most issues and that
their image of him was a misconception. First of all, he did
not in any way sympathize with the know-nothings. He wrote
in the 1850s:

I am not a know-nothing. How could I be? How can anyone who
authors the oppression of negroes be in favor of degrading
classes of white people? Our progress in degeneracy appears
to me to be pretty rapid. As a nation we began by declaring
that “all men are created equal.” We now practically read
it “all men are created equal except negroes.” When the
know-nothings get control, it will read “all men are created
equal, except negroes and foreigners and catholics.” When it
comes to this, I shall prefer emigrating to some country
where they make no pretense of loving liberty — to Russia,
for instance, where despotism can be taken pure, and without
the base alloy of hypocrisy.

Like the Northern Irish-Americans, Lincoln proposed ‘to
conduct the war for the preservation of the status quo which
had produced the war’. He considered the Emancipation Procla-
mation ‘a military necessity’ and always thought ‘primarily
of the free white worker: the negro was secondary’. These
views were very close to those of the Irish-Americans.

1 Gibson, op. cit., p. 172.

2 Hofstadter, American political tradition, pp. 100-01.

3 Ibid., p. 127.

In a letter published a month after the New York draft riots, Lincoln pointed out Irish-American inconsistency and refuted many of their criticisms of his policies. He began:

There are those who are dissatisfied with me. To such I would say: - You desire peace, and you blame me that we do not have it; but how can we attain it? There are but three conceivable ways. First, to suppress the rebellion by force of arms. This I am trying to do; are you for it? If you are, so far we are agreed. If you are not for it, a second way is to give up the Union. I am against this; if you are, you should say so plainly. If you are not for force, nor yet for dissolution, there only remains some imaginable compromise. I do not believe that any compromise embracing the maintenance of the Union is now possible. All that I learn leads to a directly opposite belief...

He then attacked the Irish-Americans' chief reason for criticizing his conduct of the war:

But, to be plain. You are dissatisfied with me about the negro... You say you will not fight to free negroes. Some of them seem to be willing to fight for you; but no matter, fight you, then, exclusively to save the Union. I issued the proclamation on purpose to aid you in saving the Union. Whenever you shall have conquered all resistance to the Union, if I shall urge you to continue fighting, it will be an apt time then for you to declare that you will not fight to free negroes. I thought that in your struggle for the Union, to whatever extent the negroes should cease helping the enemy, to that extent it weakened the enemy in his resistance to you. Do you think differently? I thought that whatever negroes can be got to do as soldiers leaves just so much less for white soldiers to do in saving the Union. Does it appear otherwise to you...?

Moreover, in very beautiful prose aimed at the peace-loving Irish-Americans, Lincoln expressed his desire for a


2 Ibid. See Cairnes's comments on this letter above.
real and permanent peace:

Peace does not appear so distant as it did. I hope it will come soon, and come to stay, and so come as to be worth the keeping in all future time. It will then have been proved that among freemen there can be no successful appeal from the ballot to the bullet, and that they who take such appeal are sure to lose their case and pay the cost. ... Still, let us not be over sanguine of a speedy, final triumph. Let us be quite sober. Let us diligently apply the means, never doubting that a just God in his own good time will give us the rightful result. 1

Consequently, the Lincoln image among Irish-Americans was a very disfigured one - undeservedly so.

As might be expected, there is a Lincoln anecdote on the political attitude of Irish-Americans. In the summer of 1864 he reportedly told a private story about 'a green emigrant from Ireland' who at a polling place in New York was asked by the election judge whom he wanted to vote for:

Poor Pat was embarrassed, he did not know who were the candidates. He stopped, scratched his head, then, with the readiness of his countrymen, he said: "I am forment the government, anyhow. Tell me, if your honour plases, which is the rebellion side, and I'll tell you how I want to vote. In ould Ireland, I was always on the rebellion side, and, by Saint Patrick, I'll stick to that same in America." 2

The pro-South majority of Irish nationalists accepted the hostile image of Lincoln among their relatives in America

1 Ibid.

2 Isaac Arnold, Abraham Lincoln, a paper read before the Royal Historical Society, London, 16 June 1861, p. 28.
and embellished it with the customary Celtic flair for rhetoric. A reader of the _Nation_ would not even have known that Lincoln was a candidate in the presidential election of 1860 until 17 November, after the election was held and while news of the result was being awaited, whereas Douglas's candidacy had been fairly well publicized. Of course, after Lincoln's election, the Irish nationalists took much more notice of him and were generally disappointed at his inaugural address. The _Nation_ revealed their initial attitude toward Lincoln in an editorial on the death of Stephen Douglas in June 1861, lamenting that his defeat in 1860 brought on the civil war.

As soon as it became evident that Lincoln was determined on a war policy, the Irish nationalists became more hostile towards him than their Irish-American friends. President Buchanan had been 'wise and statesmanlike' for his 'determination of not interfering' with the South, whereas Lincoln was 'foolish and impossible'. The Irish nationalists began to praise the 'intelligent sensible' Jefferson Davis and ridicule the 'old rail-splitter'. With the Emancipation Proclamation and the suspension of habeas corpus for seditious

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1 _The Nation_, 17 Nov. 1860 reported: 'The chance seems to be with Lincoln'. - its first mention of Lincoln.


3 _Nation_, 29 June 1861.

4 _Cork Examiner_, 19 July 1861.

editorials and speeches in the North, Lincoln had sacrificed 'a whole country for the gratification of a few politicians...'

Lincoln's administration was 'a species of tyranny and peculation', and statements of Secretary of War Stanton - possibly with some truth - 'had a puritanical snuffle that prepared the mind for some shabby performance eventually'. To the Irish nationalists, 'the almost illimitable freedom and happiness' of the United States had sunk into 'the meanest depths of despotism, under the incompetent and imbecile rule of Abraham Lincoln. The brilliant achievement of Washington, and the noble work of the framers of the constitution have no longer merit; and are held to be perishable articles by the illiterate Abraham Lincoln. With his election commenced the break-up of the constitution...'

These freedom-loving nationalists, who so admired American democracy in contrast to their West British pro-South counterparts, became much more violent in their hatred of Lincoln. The extreme nationalist Tipperary Advocate concluded: 'The removal of Lincoln and his party, and the appointment of McClellan as military dictator, would be the surest means of restoring the North to something like a state of order...'

1 Cork Examiner, 18 Oct. and 2 Dec. 1862.
3 Cork Examiner, 1 May 1862.
5 Tipperary Advocate, 3 Jan. 1863.
The moderate nationalist Cork Examiner contemplated a revolution in the North to overthrow Lincoln:

...Peace and good will amongst the American people means the extinction of such foul birds as Mr. Lincoln and his tail of unscrupulous followers. Like the stormy petrel or Mother Carey's chickens, he and the wretched covey to which he belongs should fade out of sight when the waves of the tempest were stilled. And no one expects even the most infinitesimal self-sacrifice from any of the present administration, no matter how grand the object to be attained; the first step towards the pacification of the country must be to put him and his out of the way of continuing mischief. It is a strange feature of this dream of peace that it involves so directly the possibility of violent convulsions. Yet such an issue is distinctly upon the cards... Men in their longing for peace may turn upon those who have been plunging them into an ocean of hatred and misery and blood.

A popular convolution would certainly take place if Lincoln attempted a coup, but the examiner did not expect a coup or convolution:

The courage of the coup d'état is not his. A certain stupid tenacity has been the main feature of his political character, but he has nowhere shown the combination of recklessness, audacity, and calculation necessary to convert a popular office into a throne, and by the operations of a day to subvert the liberties of a people. We have not the least doubt that Abraham Lincoln has all the ambition needed to induce him to emulate the example of a Napoleon, whether le grand or le petit, but he lacks certain qualities which belong to that audacious race. If the democracy of the North be true to itself - if the people have indeed a longing for peace, they may go forward and fear not. Abraham Lincoln is not of 2 the mettle long to keep them from the object of their wishes.

1 Cork Examiner, 23 Aug. 1864.

2 Ibid.
The Irish nationalists generally were certain that Mc' Clellan would be elected president in 1864; and after Lincoln's reelection, they launched into hysterical tirades against him. The 'ignorant and incompetent' Lincoln would continue his war policy of murder and robbery. He had made war 'in a fashion more resembling that of Baber or Tamerlane than of a ruler of the nineteenth century'. He had reduced the great republic to a state of despotism which of all the European nations, Russia alone can now parallel... Liberty will be utterly banished from the shores of what was once the American Union...that Abraham Lincoln may have four more years of office.' Indeed, his tyranny was comparable to that of Cromwell's in Ireland.

Lincoln's assassination brought forth many qualified tributes to his character and ability. Since peace has been established, the tragedy seemed even greater to the Irish nationalists for they realized that Lincoln had a much more lenient attitude toward the South than they had perceived and that the tragic event threatened a policy of vengeance against the South. He was 'one whose career will fill the

1 Ibid., 16 Sept. 1864.
2 Waterford News, 6 Jan. 1865.
3 Cork Examiner, 21 Nov. 1864.
4 Ibid.
5 Ibid., 17 Dec. 1864.
largest space in the history of the age, whose name will go
down to posterity associated with the greatest war witnessed
in modern times', and 'long shall he be pointed out by the
American citizen to his children as an example worthy of
imitation'. These pro-South nationalists were forced to
confess that he was very merciful in suppressing the rebel-
lion and that 'no man of his party, in his position—com-
mitted to a war for the Union and pledged to abolition
principles—could bear himself on the whole with greater
moderation'. Still, they frankly admitted that their senti-
ments over the event were mixed and that the greatest tragedy
was the timing: 'Whatever may have been the feeling with
which Lincoln was regarded by a great mass of the people of
this empire, who undoubtedly disapproved strongly of his
policy, there can be no question that his death at the mo-
ment when the crisis of the war has arrived, is a calamity.
With all his faults Lincoln was at least animated by a
sincere love of his country'. He 'was not a brilliant man';
and in the South there were 'tragedies a thousandfold more
revolting' than his assassination. Yet his death occurred
'at the moment and in the manner most certain to immortalize
him...[and] throw around his name the halo of martyrdom'.

1 Ibid, 26 Apr. 1865.
2 Tipperary Advocate, 29 Apr. 1865.
3 Nation, 29 Apr. and Cork Examiner, 27 Apr. 1865.
4 Examiner, 26 Apr.; see also Waterford News,
22 Apr. 1865.
5 Nation, 29 Apr. 1865.
Among those extreme nationalists who supported the Union, Lincoln had a favorable image, although the 'war democrats' such as the Irishman at times could be very critical. After the disastrous Union defeat in the battle of Fredericksburg and the destruction of Meagher's Irish Brigade in the senseless charge on confederate fortifications in the battle, Lincoln was called 'buffoonish' and accused of 'thick-headed stupidity' for his selection of the 'incompetent' Ambrose Burnside, the general in charge at Fredericksburg. However, these Irish Union supporters unanimously hoped for Lincoln's reelection, for he was 'the man to bring permanent peace' and he had 'done his duty honestly, ably, and efficiently, and were his public career to terminate tomorrow, not Washington himself would better deserve the gratitude of his country'. They had nothing but praise for Lincoln and condemnation of the South and England after his assassination. No Southerner could 'lift his head without feeling that the brand of Cain is on his brow'. It was pointed out that Lincoln's assassin, John Wilkes Booth, was 'born and bred in the midst of English traditions', being the son of an English actor. Also, these extreme nationalists remarked that the English press, the queen, and the

1 Irishman, 17 Jan. 1863.
2 Dundalk Democrat, 8 Oct. and Irishman, 8 Oct. 1864.
3 Irishman, 29 Apr. 1865.
4 Ibid. and Democrat, 29 Apr. 1865.
Government ministers 'shed crocodile tears over the murder of the indomitable Lincoln, and hope by these means to prevent the United States from invading Canada and Ireland...'

However, despite the catastrophe, the extreme nationalist Union supporters were optimistic about the future of the United States: 'President after president may fall; but the nation lives — the nation rules'.

The fenians' official newspaper commented on Lincoln only after his assassination. They were 'sad, for, with some faults, he was clearly a well-meaning and strong-willed man whose loss will be deeply deplored by his countrymen'. The fenians admired him for being 'conciliatory' and possessing a 'spirit of forgiveness and humanity'. Their principal worry was that the assassination would 'darken the prospects of peace and harmony'.

The Lincoln image in Ireland can thus be described as a rather ugly one distorted by political bias. Yet the personality of the real Lincoln was brought into focus by his assassination and in death became venerated.

1 *Democrat*, 15 May 1865.
2 *Irishman*, 29 Apr. 1865.
3 *Irish People*, 29 Apr. 1865.
4 Ibid.
5 Ibid.
CHAPTER V

ANGLO-AMERICAN

RELATIONS

The Trent affair crystallized Irish opinion on the question and from late 1861 until the war's end, in Ireland and England Anglo-American relations were trilaterally viewed with reference to the principle of Anglo-Irish-American relations. The brief facts of the incident are as follows: Captain Wilkes of the Union ship San Jacinto was authorized action on 6 November 1861 intercepted the British steamer Trent on its journey from Havana to England, forcibly removed the Confederate politicians James Mason and John Slidell, and permitted the Trent to continue on her journey. Northernmen were jubilant,
The Irish attitude on the relations between the United Kingdom and the United States, involving the question of war or peace, was greatly influenced by Anglo-Irish relations. It was a general rule that in all Anglo-American disputes, the West British supported the English and the nationalists the Americans. But this rule-of-thumb, while indicating a general trend, is far too great an oversimplification in defining Irish opinion on Anglo-(federal) American relations during the civil war.

The Trent affair crystallized Irish opinion on the question and from late 1861 until the war's end, in Ireland and England Anglo-American relations were trilaterally viewed with reference to the triangle of Anglo-Irish-American relations. The brief facts of the incident are as follows: Captain Wilkes of the Union sloop San Jacinto in an unauthorized action on 8 November 1861 intercepted the British steamer Trent on its journey from Havana to England, forcibly removed the confederate commissioners James Mason and John Slidell, and permitted the Trent to continue on her journey. Northerners were jubilant,
and there was a war scare in the United Kingdom. Lord Russell in an ultimatum demanded the release of the prisoners and an apology. Secretary Seward in his note to the British ambassador in Washington on 26 December 1861 admitted that Wilkes had erred and ordered the commissioners released, thus satisfying the claims of the British government. However, Seward stated that Wilkes's mistake had been not to have seized the entire ship and hauled it into court; and the secretary of state noted sardonically that Great Britain had at last accepted the principles fought for by the United States in the war of 1812. These qualifications appeased warmongering elements in the North. Consequently, the war threat blew over, partially the result of the absence of an Atlantic cable.

Among the protestant West British, the Trent affair prompted a very belligerent attitude toward the United States. The conservatives were more warlike and stated that the Trent affair 'seems to leave us no alternative but to declare war or to abandon forever our boasted sovereignty of the seas.'

1 Belfast News-Letter, 28 Nov. 1861.
The liberals were more reluctant to chime the war-gong but nevertheless believed that 'silence and submission under such an insult are impossible; there is a cry for redress, if not for vengeance that must be satisfied' and that if the United States withheld all redress for the insult '...in the high-handed insolence of manner with which it has been perpetrated, there will be one course open to this nation. It will be our duty to fight, and England will do her duty.' Both liberals and conservatives consoled merchants by claiming that if war broke out between the Union and the United Kingdom, the interruption of trade with the Union would be compensated for by an abundance of cotton and an opening up of Southern ports. Even reform-minded men such as the abolitionist Professor W. Neilson Hancock became warlike over the principles involved. He believed that the Trent case could not be arbitrated, for it involved a violation of 'human rights and liberties' and England's example in advancing liberty for mankind necessitated 'promptness to stop the further barbarism of the Americans...'

1Banner of Ulster, 30 Nov. 1861.
2Ibid., 7 Dec. and News-Letter, 29 Nov. 1861.
3Hancock to Jonathan Pim, 2 Jan. 1862 (Pim letters, Friend's House). See W.N. Hancock, The abolition of slavery, considered with reference to the State of the West Indies since emancipation, a paper read... at Belfast, 2 Sept. 1852.
After the threat of war abated, however, the lord-lieutenant, the earl of Carlisle, undoubtedly expressed the sentiments of the protestant West British faction in his speech at the annual banquet at the Mansion House, Dublin on 4 February 1862:

Casting our eyes round the wide horizon, we must all feel grateful and relieved that we can still, without any sacrifice of national honour, retain the invaluable blessings of peace. When it appeared for a moment that under the shelter of our honoured flag the honoured right of asylum might have been violated, I believe the country at large applauds the spirit, the promptitude, and the efficiency with which preparations were made to exact due reparation. That object has been fully and happily achieved; and while we thankfully feel that we are not ourselves called upon to draw the avenging sword, would that we could plant the olive branch of peace between the two contending bands, both springing from our own race...

After considering the reaction of Irish nationalists and their friends in the United States to the Trent affair, the protestant West British naturally laid the blame on them for the strained relations between the United States and the United Kingdom.

In January 1862, the Dublin University Magazine criticized Irish-Americans: 'It is the Irish element in New York which has dragged down Mr. Seward to its level. The accident that his mother's name was Jennings... seems to have led him to conclude that he

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1 The vice-regal speeches and addresses, lectures and poems of the late earl of Carlisle, K.G., ed. J.J. Gaskin, p.96.
must take Celtic nationality under his especial patronage, and get a seat in the senate as the champion of an oppressed nationality. The following month, in a scandalously slanderous and snobbish article, the Dublin University Magazine charged the Celtic Irish-Americans with responsibility for the Trent affair:

We have not far to look for the cause of all this. Two operations in British husbandry have been carried on side by side, and often by the same agency. We have planted America, and at the same time weeded the old country. We sent out the choice of our citizens — the adventurers who planted Virginia, Maryland, Carolina, and Georgia, but we also shipped off the famine-stricken remains of the Celtic population of the west and south of Ireland.

America is thus of two minds on all international questions with this country. Much as we may despise the cock-a-doodle-doo of Meagher, Mitchel, and the other stage rebels, who look daggers though they can use none, this leaven of Celtism is that which keeps up the estrangement and suspicion between the two branches of the Anglo-Saxon race. The struggle going on in Mr. Seward and other native Americans between pride and principle — between the shame of being taunted as cowards by the New York Irish, and the conviction that the old country has both might and right on her side... 

We cannot hope to conciliate Young America. It is his boast to be half-Indian, half-alligator. The dash of Celtism does not come amiss in such a fine hybrid as this. We only hope, that in the course of improvement, such a gorgon, hydra, or chimera dire, may be improved off the face of the American continent; or, if Mr. Darwin's principle of natural selection be preferred, that in the struggle for existence the old homely Smiths, Joneses, and Robinsons may get the better of the Indo-Celtic alligator.

1Dublin Mag., LIX.124 (Jan. 1862).
2Ibid., pp. 251-2 (Feb. 1862).
The protestant West Britons sneered at the pro-
American editorials of the nationalists and their
meeting held at the Rotunda to express sympathy for
the United States in the dispute with Great Britain
over the Trent:

"England's difficulty is Ireland's opportunity." This
dastardly cry is being revived at a moment when Eng-
land is, in fact, in no difficulty whatever. The
wretched fellows who live by ministering to the hatred
of England that the ultramontane party have long been
inculcating, are about to hold a meeting to devise
what is to be done "at this crisis of Ireland's fate." The Nation, of Saturday, is more jubilant than when
our soldiers were perishing on Crimean heights - more
exultant than when English ladies were being massa-
cred at Cawnpore!  

The Rotunda meeting was considered by the pro-
testant West Britons as a 'contemptible affair' and
a 'mob meeting', which would not have been permitted
in Baltimore or New York, for where else would 'idle
men ... have the privilege of spouting sedition.'

The meeting was belittled:

If the party which aspires to the separation of Ire-
land from England had desired to prove to the world
their utter weakness, they could not have desired a
more convincing evidence than the meeting. There was
not one of those whom the people usually regard as
leaders present. There was an absence of purpose, too,
which indicates divided or unsettled councils. No
one knew for what precise object the meeting was con-
voked. The audience departed just as wise as they

1 See below in this chapter.
name. There were, indeed, a few semi-treasonable expressions used, but they were thrown out timidly.\footnote{1}

The protestant West British attitude on the Trent affair and the Irish nationalist meeting was summed up in the rhetorical question: 'How can we [the Irish] hope to be respected when a "magnificent meeting" promises its "sympathy" to the most arrogant and insolent of nations, because it has wantonly insulted a great people who have been too forbearing?\footnote{2}'

The catholic West Britons or 'catholic whigs' were caught in a predicament in the controversy over the Trent affair: how to keep a foot in both camps on an issue that showed a deep cleavage between the West Britons and the nationalists. The obvious solution was to call for peace between the United States and the United Kingdom - appease the British by ignoring the nationalists' desire to carpe diem and appease the nationalists by failing to join in with the British war-whoop. The Trent affair was an 'unfortunate dispute', and it was

\footnote{1}{Irish Times, 6 Dec. 1861.}
\footnote{2}{Ibid.}
hoped that a settlement would be reached by 'goose-quill', not gunpowder. The North was admonished: 'No people ever suffered in their dignity in admitting an injustice and making compensations.' The deterrent effect of Britain's army and navy were stressed:

It would be madness to go to war with England, and therefore we entertain the strongest hopes that the matter will be amicably arranged by the diplomats... At all events, the vast preparations made by England and the great vigor displayed may cause the federal government to calculate before they submit their country to all the calamities of a war with a power whose means of aggression are of so destructive a character.

The *Freeman's Journal* even equated the cause of the North with the abolition of slavery - something it denied before the Trent crisis and afterwards, throughout the rest of the war - in urging a peaceful settlement: 'Providence must have heard the prayers and gratified the wishes of the slave-drivers in creating a hostile spirit between the North and England! But let not those devout folk be so sure of the result they so earnestly desire.'

Generally, these 'castle catholics' prudently

1*Catholic Telegraph*, 7 Dec. and *Freeman's Journal*, 29 Nov. 1861.
2*Freeman's Journal*, 29 Nov. 1861.
3*Galway Vindicator*, 14 Dec. 1861; see also *Catholic Telegraph*, 11 Jan. 1862.
avoided any comment on the Rotunda meeting in order not to exacerbate their relations with the nationalists. However, those less tactful and of an extreme anti-nationalist bent, resulting from events in Italy, did not remain silent. They shared the sentiments of the Tablet which attacked the attitude of the Nation and pointed out that it was their view, supported by the comments of such antagonists as John Mitchel and Dr. Cullen, 'that the designs of the revolutionists, ... flattering the lower orders of the Irish people with the hopes of a successful insurrection, or of a French or American invasion, must bring them into collision with the spiritual authority of the Church.'

In reference to the nationalists' Rotunda meeting during the Trent crisis, the Tablet said that because of his oath to the Sovereign, The O'Donoghue, who chaired the meeting, was not 'free to make up his own mind whether he shall fight for or against his Sovereign...' and ridiculed those 'self-styled nationalists... [who] take it on themselves to speak in the name of the Irish nation, in which, as it actually exists at present, they occupy so small and so

1E.g., Freeman's Journal and Catholic Telegraph.  
2Tablet, 7 Dec. 1861.
obscure a place.' These extreme 'castle catholics,' bitterly attacked the warlike attitude of 'the yankee journals, erewhile so full of bunkum and tall talk, repudiation and rowdyism...' However, despite these few inflammatory editorials against the opportunistic designs of the nationalists and their Irish-American friends, the catholic West Britons generally counselled a negotiated peaceful settlement to end the dispute over the Trent affair.

The small group of Irish radicals, who supported the North, naturally hoped for a peaceful solution and urged both parties in the dispute 'to look at the question involved as a point of law to be settled, rather than as an insult to be avenged or a right to be maintained... The Northern Whig contemptuously scorned the Rotunda meeting and warned against taking seriously the warlike ravings of the New York Herald and the Dublin Nation: 'To imagine that the New York Herald speaks the governing sentiment of America is a more serious error even than to identify the people of Ireland with the sentiments of

1 Ibid., 14 Dec. 1861.
2 Limerick Reporter (and Tipperary Vindicator), 3 Jan. 1862.
3 Belfast Northern Whig, 7 Dec. 1861.
4 Ibid.
The Nation newspaper. The Whig also attacked the Irish-Americans for creating the atmosphere of tension between two basically friendly nations:

The tone of the Irish in America is doubly deceitful. We mistake their voices, as they come to us across the ocean, for those of native Americans; while the people of the United States, by an equal mistake, argue from the sentiments of these persons to those of the Irish in Ireland. This twofold error is the cause of temporary irritation between the United States and the United Kingdom, but it would be madness to allow it to embroil nations which, in their inmost hearts, are, we believe, well-disposed to each other.2

The moderate nationalists reacted as they might be expected to in proclaiming their sympathy with the United States in the dispute with Great Britain. However, these nationalists were divided on the advantages for Ireland to be derived from a war between the United States and the United Kingdom. The Nation believed that '...at this hour, the nation begins its onward march, and takes the first step in advance'; after the meeting at the Rotunda. During the Trent crisis, the Nation said that small was the chance of peace and that 'rapidly the tremendous contest, which shall shake the earth approaches', prayerfully proclaiming: 'Sursum corda! Lift up your hearts

1 Ibid., 30 Dec. 1861.
2 Ibid., 7 Jan. 1862.
3 Nation, 7 Dec. 1861.
ye peoples who have long been bowed beneath oppression..." 1 The Waterford News hoped that 'the liberation of the Southern commissioners will never be acceded to whilst a fortress on American soil can hold them.'

However, a voice of dissent came from the Cork Examiner. It did sympathize with the case of the Northerners: 'The Americans have, it is confessed, after all, done only what England has been in the habit of doing herself constantly.' Also, it noted that it had 'no great sympathy with Great British boasting...' Yet it called for a realistic Irish appraisal of the situation: '... We in interests which may be called selfish, that is, in the interest of our own immediate country, Ireland, rejoice that there is a probability of averting war', for war would result in the following: 1) It would be 'a sentence of death to thousands of our people', because 'hunger... would be the direct result. Our own crops having failed, and the scarcity in France absorbing all European superfluities, the Northern States of

3 Cork Examiner, 28 and 30 Nov. 1861
America alone can afford a sufficient supply of food for our people. War would prevent a sufficient supply. 2) All communications between the United States and Ireland would be cut off — a terrible punishment: 'Most families in Ireland have dearer ties in America than in the next village to them — closer in fact than in any part of the world outside the door of their cabin.' 3) England would profit by opening up the cotton supply, but 'we, alas, have no cotton manufacturers and must endeavor to keep out of a contest where like those famous allies the dwarf and giant, our neighbour would reap all the profit and we all the misery and the blows.' 4) It would be a 'fratricidal war', for many of the best British regiments were Irish. 5) Many Irishmen were in the American navy, and if they should be captured, they would be hanged.

The Examiner hoped that the United States government would be realistic also. The Examiner realized that 'having been a tradition of the country that they are able to whip the British, and having

\[1\text{Ibid., 28 Nov. and 27 Dec. 1861.}\]
been indeed pretty well accustomed to seeing England bear their scorns and insults with the meekness that she only displays towards states that were strong and dangerous, their proud stomachs will now find it difficult to swallow their humiliation of making reparation.¹ This moderate nationalist newspaper noted that if France should join England or remain neutral, while the confederates were superior upon the land and Great Britain superior on the sea, federal chances in a war with Great Britain could not be rated very highly and advised that the Washington cabinet 'confess an error, rather than plunge into a war which could not but be disastrous.'²

Consequently, the Examiner heartily praised Seward's decision ending the crisis and laid the blame on the British government for bringing the two nations to the brink of war:

Now it is quite open to question, if equal moderation would have been shewn in England. In fact, no American minister ever played his card so directly for popular applause as have the cabinet of England in this matter. From the very first moment that there seemed to be a chance of war, a shaky government snatched at it as the drowning man at the straw which

¹Ibid., 2 Dec. 1861.
²Ibid., 29 Nov. 1861.
deluded him... War between England and America was risked and would have been waged in order that a few politicians might hold their places.¹

Moreover, after the Union release of the Southern commissioners, even the Nation and the Waterford News supported the action as a policy of avoiding a war. It was 'most beneficial to the great family of nations', for it prevented a fearful outlay for armaments by Britain, which would have affected the Irish economy, and also avoided additional shedding of blood. The Nation summed up well the final reaction of the moderate nationalists to the Trent crisis:

It is not unlikely that the government of England will very much regret the peaceable surrender of the Southern commissioners. England is now strong, and America, divided against itself, is weak... But America will not always be unprepared and distracted as she is at present;... and a war with England will come sooner or later.... [Americans] know also what would be the feelings of Ireland in the contingency of war between their country and Great Britain.²

Extreme nationalist newspapers took the same line as moderate nationalists in editorials on the Trent affair. The extremists hoped that Ireland

¹Ibid., 9 Jan., 1862.
²Waterford News, 10 Jan., 1862.
³Nation, 11 Jan., 1862.
would profit from an Anglo-American war. The Irishman stated that 'in any war with America, England will find that the whole sympathy of the Irish people is with the United States.' Yet, even among the extreme nationalists, there were those who did not favor war. The ardently pro-North Dundalk Democrat, which sympathized with the fenians, stated that it hoped 'that, however she may get out of the difficulty, she will not enact the folly of wasting powder in a conflict with America.'

The Democrat evidently was fearful of the effect of such a war on Northern chances in the civil war.

It is interesting to note how closely the attitude of Irish nationalists paralleled that of Irish-Americans on the Trentaffair. Both were unanimous in their hatred of the British government. Commented the Cincinnati Catholic Telegraph: England 'is here, as in Italy, Mexico, Spain, and Austria, the general disturber of the human race, the enemy of peace, the conspirator against God and man,' and one of her reasons for

1Irishman, 7 Dec. 1861.
2Democrat, 14 Dec. 1861.
hostility toward the United States is the fact that 'we gave a home to the Irish, who were wanted to fill the army and people Australia...'. Irish newspapers carried a speech of Meagher's in favor of a war with England, stating that the yankees would fight the Southern rebels and that the Irish-Americans would defeat the English and invade Canada. John Mitchel proclaimed for the Irish-Americans in the Confederacy: 'Our hearts go with any enemy of England,' even the North, provided the North recognize the independence of the Confederacy - an indication where their first sympathies lay. The New York Irish-American referred to the affair as a 'casus belli' and predicted a war. However, it undoubtedly expressed the sentiments of most Northern Irish-Americans when it heartily approved of Seward's statement bringing a peaceful solution yet at the same time slapping 'Fam's' clenched fist.

1Cincinnati Catholic Telegraph, 1 Jan. 1862, quoted in Sister M.C. Paluszak, The opinion of the Catholic Telegraph on contemporary affairs and politics, 1831-1871, pp. 119-20.
2Waterford News, 3 Jan. 1862.
5Ibid.
The only practical application of the Irish nationalists' aroused sentiments over the Trent affair was a public meeting at the Rotunda in Dublin, ostensibly to avow their united support for the United States in the crisis. However, the meeting became ensnared in a behind the scenes power-struggle between the moderate and extreme nationalists, which gave the proceedings the appearance of producing more hot air than fire. According to John O'Leary, the fenians were aware that the Trent affair had produced in Ireland 'a feeling, almost universal in the ordinary average mind, that another war than that of words was becoming fast inevitable.\(^1\) However, it was the Sullivanites or moderate nationalists who organized the meeting at the Rotunda on 5 December 1861 to capitalize on this universal feeling. Placards announcing the meeting papered the walls of Dublin with such slogans as 'War between America and England - Sympathy with America - Ireland's Opportunity!' The significant purpose of the meeting, though, was the formation of a new open organization, which the I.R.B. (fenians) viewed

\(^1\)John O'Leary, *Recollections of fenians and fenianism*, p. 171.
as a 'covert attack' on them. Wrote Thomas Clarke Luby:

The intriguer of the Nation and the moderate nationalists craftedly added that the time at length had come for the formation of a new patriotic organization - to be not a villainous secret one, as ours was said to be, but honest, open, above board; in short, blatant, of the old stereotyped canting, humbugging stamp. Resolutions sympathetic with Federal America were to form the first act of the drama. But then was to come the cream of true significance of the business. A resolution calling for the establishment of the brand new organization to be proposed and seconded.

James Stephens, the fenian head center, decided to oppose the new organization, and the fenians packed the meeting, with seven or eight hundred members on the floor and a good number on the platform.

The meeting passed a resolution proposed by P.J. Smyth, proclaiming that Ireland could not remain indifferent to a struggle between England and America, and one proposed by O'Brennan of the Connaught Patriot recalling the generous aid Ireland had received from America. Both avoided the issues.

1Joseph Denieffe, A personal narrative of the Irish Revolutionary Brotherhood, p. 72.
2Quoted in O'Leary, op.cit., p. 172; see T.C. Luby, 'Brief synopsis of early fenian events in Ireland and America', p. 129 (N.L.I., MSS331-3).
3Denieffe, op.cit., p.73.
4Tipperary Advocate, 7 Dec. 1861.
involved in the civil war and referred only to Anglo-
American relations. Then, Lieutenant Crean of the
papal brigade of 1860, 'the officer-hero of Spoletto,'
proposed the following significant resolution, which
was seconded by T.D. Sullivan, associate editor of
the Nation: 'That the events of the hour imperatively
dictate to all Irishmen a forgetfulness of past dif-
ferences and a united rally for the old cause of
their country.' But Jeremiah Kavanagh, a fenian
from California, offered an amendment to the effect
that a committee - whose members had already been
decided on by the fenians, packing it with their
own men and certain popular figures like The O'Don-
gehue - be first appointed to investigate whether the
crisis demanded a new organization. The amendment
was passed; and with the fenians controlling the
committee, the new organization came to nothing.

Thus, the issues at stake, pertaining to Anglo-
American relations, were of secondary importance to
both the moderate and extreme nationalists, as they

1See chapter on 'Southern independence'.
2Advocate, 7 Dec. 1861.
3Denieffe, op.cit., p.73.
battled for the leadership of the Irish people. The moderate nationalists had used the Trent affair as window-dressing in their campaign for popular support, but the fenians had outfoxed them and through the Rotunda meeting had "vigorously fanned the growing popular belief in fenian power and audacity"; yet at the same time smothered the latent sympathy for themselves among many moderate nationalists.

The Trent affair and Rotunda meeting did produce an interesting and highly amusing incident, worthy of a Dion Boucicault play. In a speech in the house of commons on 21 February 1862 on the state of Ireland, the chief secretary for Ireland, Sir Robert Peel, the younger, referred to the Rotunda meeting:

... The people of Ireland now, I believe, have yielded to the good influence of the age in which we live, and to the efforts, for her regeneration, of wise and enlightened statesmen. Of the justice of that opinion no more remarkable proof can be addressed than that which took place the other day when there was danger of a rupture with America, and Ireland was filled with American emissaries who were trying to raise there a spirit of disloyalty. A meeting was then held in the Rotunda. I well recollect what took place there, at which a few mannikin traitors sought to imitate the cabbage-garden heroes of 1848; but, I am glad to say,

1 See chapter on 'Southern independence' for their confederate sympathies.
2 Luby, quoted in O'Leary, op.cit.,p.177.
they met with no response. There was not one to follow. There was not a single man of respectability in the country, who answered the appeal. And why is that so? It is because Ireland is changed. 1

The O'Donoghue, who chaired the Rotunda meeting, took offense at Peel's comments and through a second, Major Gavin, challenged Peel to a duel. Undoubtedly, The O'Donoghue was encouraged in this action by a similar reaction of William Smith O'Brien's. Meanwhile, Palmerston intervened and in a speech to the house of commons on 24 February 1862 quoted his letter to Peel, notifying him that it was a breach of parliamentary privilege for The O'Donoghue to take offense outside the house for comments within the house and that if Peel accepted the challenge he would be a party to the breach of privilege. 'Pam' shielded Peel, and The O'Donoghue immediately expressed regrets over any action of his that might violate the privileges of the house of commons.

Thus, there was no affair of honor, but the wags had a field day. The Times said that at the

1Hansard, CLXV, 575.
2O'Brien wrote to Peel, 22 Feb. 1862 (N.L.I., MS3262), that he would duel him in any part of Europe Peel desired. O'Brien then wrote to The O'Donoghue (N.L.I., MS3263) and asked him to be his second if Peel accepted his challenge.
3Hansard., CLXV, 617-19.
4Ibid., pp. 623-5.
Rotunda The O'Donoghue was 'a self-declared enemy of the British flag, the British law, and the British people' and that he performed 'on the stage of parliament an old Irish farce of as thoroughly fictitious a character as the Colleen Bawn or the Lily of Killarney... - the best thing he can do.'

Among the West British, the protestant liberals praised Palmerston's 'usual tact and judgment' and criticized O'Donoghue. The Irish conservatives scorned the whole affair as 'a scene somewhat more befitting the American congress' and scolded Peel because 'official position does not give impunity for vituperation.' The 'castle catholics' had little love for Peel, who had publicly criticized Archbishop Cullen in Londonderry. Thus, they partially praised The O'Donoghue: He 'may be mistaken in his politics; he may have wrong ideas of what is the best course for the country to pursue in the present position of our affairs; but no one ever doubted his thorough integrity and honesty of purpose.'

1 The Times, quoted in Cork Examiner, 26 Feb. 1862.
4 Galway Vindicator, 26 Feb. 1862; see also Catholic Telegraph, 1 Mar. 1862.
The Irish nationalists were full of praise for O'Donoghue and contempt for Peel. O'Brien congratulated O'Donoghue for 'having vindicated' his honor and that of his country. Though the nationalists thought duelling evil, they thought Peel deserved 'to be ignominiously expelled from the society of gentlemen' and deplored The Times's shabby attempt to 'whitewash' him. Of course, numerous nationalist poems commemorated the event, one of which, 'Bob Acres', was written by an Irish priest in London:

Oh! can it be the news is true
Or have you joined the sect of Quakers?
Your ruddy hue is turned to blue
And fright you show, not fight, Bob Acres!

Oh! when we heard you talk so big,
And roar so loud, it made us merry;
We thought you were the bravest Whig
That ever led the boys of Derry.

And thus, when Gavin sought you out,
He found you under Pam's broad eegis,
And satisfaction, 'twas no doubt,
You'd only give in hance regis.

Throughout the rest of the war, the Irish question was a principal irritant increasing friction between the United States and the United Kingdom.

10'Brien to O'Donoghue, 25 Feb. 1862 (N.L.I., MS3264).
3Tipperary Advocate, 1 Mar. 1862.
4Examiner, 26 Feb. 1862.
The English were well aware of this, were incensed over the anti-English statements of prominent Irish-Americans, but usually reacted in a condescending and ridiculing manner. The Times facetiously referred to the problem in 1860: 'No longer cooped up between the Liffey and the Shannon, he [the Irishman] will spread from New York to San Francisco and keep up the ancient feud at an unforeseen advantage. ... We must gird our loins to encounter the nemesis of seven centuries of misgovernment.' In a leader on Archbishop Hughes's speech to the New York draft rioters in July 1863, it caustically noted that 'hatred of England was the key-note of Archbishop Hughes's specific harangue...' and that 'the forcible enlistment of citizens having been resisted as illegal and oppressive, the archbishop reminds them that it is nothing to the oppression endured by the subjects of Great Britain.' In a leader in October 1863 on a threatened invasion of Ireland by the American Fenians, it realistically remarked: 'They are more likely, we fancy, to find their way to Tennessee than to Tipperary.... The federal government is more disposed to get men from Ireland than to send men over there.'

1 Quoted in Nation, 5 May 1860.
2 The Times, 1 Aug. 1863.
3 Ibid., 20 Oct. 1863.
The West British protestant liberals and conservatives generally adopted the attitude of their English counterparts. However, after counselling peace during the Trent crisis, the catholic West Britons in their ambiguous position soft-pedalled the Anglo-American friction, generally underplaying the various disputes and overlooking the role of Irish-Americans in exacerbating American public opinion, so as not to arouse the catholic nationalists. Thus, the 'castle catholics' had little to say on Anglo-American relations as such but of course attacked the fenians who hoped to profit from an Anglo-American war: The protestant liberals - more anti-American than the catholic liberals - believed that 'the Celto-American "notion" of assailing England through Ireland is the wildest vision of that moonstruck people' and attacked the U.S. claims against the depredations of the Alabama: 'The Washington government is only feeding the malignant feeling of a few Northern malcontents, when it seeks damages from our government, and is lowering its character in every European court.' The protestant conservatives

1 Dublin Mag., LXI. 255 (Feb. 1863).
2 Banner of Ulster, 9 Dec. 1862.
took a somewhat tougher line, principally in order to criticize the liberal government's policies. They opposed the government detention of the Laird steam rams, which were to become confederate blockade breakers, believing that Lord Palmerston should not yield to 'the threat of foreign Bobadils' or 'the bidding of a federal clique.'

The West British radicals were the eloquent advocates of a new era of good feelings in Anglo-American relations and attacked the bellicose imperialists in Great Britain and the warmongering Irish-Americans. The leading radicals such as Professor Cairnes had a special affection for the New England intellectuals, who were also staunch advocates of peace and friendly relations between the United States and the United Kingdom. Shortly after the Trent affair, Cairnes wrote: 'It is really astounding to reflect on the recklessness with which men, in utter ignorance of all the facts necessary to form a sound judgment, lend themselves to the task of kindling national passions, and creating a state of feeling which can scarcely issue in anything

but war. Later, in reference to a possible Anglo-American war, he wrote: '... What a spectacle would England present in such a war? England, who submitted patiently to every conceivable insolence from the U. States while the nation was powerful, and govt in the hands of a clique of slaveholders, now when the reins are transferred to honest men, taking advantage of its moment of weakness to pay off old scores! There would be something almost sublime in the meanness of this!' He also pooh-poohed the idea that the United States was a threat to the security of the United Kingdom: 'That a people absorbed in industry, held together by a federal tie, and lying across the Atlantic, should be seriously formidable to England as an aggressive power is simply an absurdity, and the writers who employ this topic so industriously know this well.'

Another radical, Frank Harrison Hill, editor of the Northern Whig, shared Cairnes's views, attacking the hostile neutrality of the Palmerston adminis--

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1 Cairnes to Professor Nesbitt, 15 Feb. 1862 (N.L.I., MS 8941 - 6).
2 Cairnes to Nesbitt, 22 July 1862, (ibid.).
3 Cairnes to Nesbitt, 9 Oct. 1861, (ibid.).
tration and even at times praising Senator Sumner's bitter attacks on the English role in abetting the destruction of Northern commerce.

Sharing the radicals' opinions were their political counterparts in the United States, the New England yankees. Cairnes made a big impression upon them, and he had many influential correspondents there, commenting on the need to improve Anglo-American relations and pointing out the divisive influence of Irish-Americans. In fact, it is interesting to note that the bane of the alliance between the Celtic-Irish nationalists and their Irish-American relatives was not the saber-rattling of the reactionary British imperialists who were anti-American and anti-Irish but the intellectual bond between the zealous reformers on both sides of the Atlantic, the Anglo-Irish and British radicals and the New England reform-minded republicans, who eased tensions between the United Kingdom and the United States. Ninety-one year old Josiah Quincy, the famous anti-War-Hawk of 1812 and president of Harvard, wrote

\[1\text{Hill to Cairnes, 27 Sept. and 11 Dec. 1863 (N.L.I., MS 8952).}\]
to Cairnes that there existed 'among the intelligent and influential classes' in the United States 'a prevailing hope and anticipation that the time is not distant when the British monarchy and the American republic will stand "shoulder to shoulder"... in support of the civilization of the human race and for the annihilation of every form of slavery and serfdom throughout the world.'

G.W. Curtis, the famous journalist and Liberal-Republican, was a frequent correspondent of Cairnes's. Curtis regretted that 'the good feeling of this country toward England... was of very, very slow growth by reason of the constant accession of Irishmen to our population, who joined the democratic party, which was usually dominant and which to secure the Irish vote was obliged to adopt the Irish hatred of England...'

He agreed with Cairnes: 'In the realm of principle and progress there is no Englishman, no American, but every honest, intelligent, hopeful man is an equal citizen. It is in that view that I sympathize so entirely with the wish you

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1 Josiah Quincy to Cairnes, Boston, 18 Nov. 1863 (N.L.I., MS 8944 - 9).
2 Curtis to Cairnes, 13 Jan. 1863 (N.L.I., MS 8948).
express that trouble between Great Britain and this country should be avoided. At the end of the war, Curtis pointed out realistically: '...I trust all good men in England and this country will see that we cannot honestly be enemies. You have not been deceived, I imagine, by any bluster of war between you and us. We have had enough fighting except for a real cause.'

Finally, Mrs. Sarah B. Shaw, a prominent New England abolitionist whose son Colonel Robert Gould Shaw commanded the first regiment of negro troops in the North, the Massachusetts 54th, in a letter to Cairnes, after the war and the fenian uprising of 1867, claimed that New England republicans shared the Anglo-Irish radicals' hatred of fenianism, though she admitted that it did afford all Americans a little pleasure:

All that you say of "this fiend fenianism" is what we feel entirely - of course what seems to be sympathy with it here, comes from two causes - first

1 Curtis to Cairnes, 18 Jan., 1863, (ibid.).
2 Curtis to Cairnes, 10 Apr., 1865, (ibid.).
3 Appleton's Cyclopaedia of American Biography, v. 486. Cairnes named his new-born son after him (S.B. Shaw to Cairnes, 30 Jan., 1864 [N.L.I., MS 8965]).
the political capital demagogues make of it, and then the certain little feeling that still exists against England for the part she took during the war, expressed in a letter I have just received from a friend who says "I abominate the Fenian mode of proceeding, but I am so un-Christian, as rather to enjoy having stepmother England a little scared."  

The Irish nationalists' opinion on Anglo-American relations became entangled with their attitude toward Southern independence. Nationalist Union supporters claimed that their cause was in the best interest of Ireland, for a reunited America would declare war on Great Britain and liberate Ireland. Confederate supporters countered, however, by claiming that war against Great Britain was much more likely with two independent aggressive nations on the American continent and that indeed the South had always befriended the Irish immigrant more than the North and was much more anti-English than the North whose leaders were imbued with the 'New English' spirit and thus more pro-English.

The moderate nationalists, who were almost unanimously pro-South, reacted accordingly on the question of Anglo-American relations. The Nation stated:

1S.B. Shaw to Cairnes, 9 Feb. 1868 (ibid.).
'The chances of a war with England are far more numerous in case the North should abandon the attempt to conquer the South before both parties have been utterly exhausted.... Should the South be conquered, small indeed will be the chance of a war between America and England for many a weary year to come.' It also claimed that 'the Southern party were always the most inimical to England, and that the abolition party, who are now in power, were her friends, admirers, and toadies.'

John Martin, after bitterly reflecting on the Cromwellian campaign in Ireland, linked the New English with the old English, writing:

Glancing over Northern American papers that are sent me I am sometimes struck with the resemblance between those New English, the present Yankee rulers of America, and the old English of our "sister country" that have been confiscating, robbing, and slandering the Irish these centuries past, in the name of religion and virtue, - of civil and religious liberty, humanity and Christian civilization. What a greed for other people's lands and money both the old and the new have! What a heroic, all-sacrificing, ruthless selfishness!

The Cork Examiner warned its countrymen against the North's 'affected animosity against England' for the pur-

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1 *Nation*, 1 Nov. 1862.
2 Ibid., 3 Jan. 1863.
3 John Martin to W.J.O'N. Daunt, 9 Aug. 1865 (N.L.I., MS 8047 - 1).
pose of winning Irish support. 'The delusion that Mr. Seward or the present Lincoln administration, or any genuine American will make any sacrifice for Ireland is one that it would be wise to dispel at the earliest possible moment. ...Any man who watches the course of that administration cannot fail to perceive that war with England is in reality the very last thought of the federal government. Talk is cheap and in many respects useful.' In fact, if the United States should go to war with Great Britain, it would be for American interests and not from a romantic Quixotism in favor of Irish liberty; and it is not for the interest of America to go to war with England, no more than it is for the interest of England to go to war with America.  

After Lincoln's reelection and his apparent desire for a peaceful settlement of difficulties between the United States and Great Britain arising out of the confederate raid from Canada on St. Alban's,

1 *Examiner*, 8 Apr. 1863.
Vermont in October 1864, the Nation bitterly remarked: 'The election and re-election of Mr Lincoln mark the triumph of the New England and pro-English party, and give assurance that on the suppression of the Southern difficulty an era of thorough agreement, of unparalleled civility, of mutual flattery, will open on the two nations.' Common ancestry will be emphasized, 'and the "foreign element" - the Irish more especially - will be more than ever disregarded and despised.'

Thus, both the Examiner and the Nation, the two leading moderate nationalist papers, claimed that they were anti-English and pro-American, yet pro-Confederacy. The Examiner did not want war between the United States and the United Kingdom and stressed that Irish nationalists were very naive if they supported the Union, whose leaders were inately pro-English, on the assumption that the Union would eventually wage war on Great Britain. The Nation, however, hoped for an Anglo-American war and believed that those Americans who

1 Nation, 7 Jan. 1865.
2 Examiner, 25 May 1864 and 26 Apr. 1865.
were most pro-English were most hostile toward Southern independence and those Americans who supported the aims of the Confederacy, both confederates and 'copperheads', were more favorably disposed toward a war against Great Britain and for Irish independence.

The extreme nationalists also tied in the issue of Southern independence with that of Anglo-American relations. In fact, many such as the Irishman overcame Southern sympathies because of English sympathy for the South. Still, some continued to support the South, like the Tipperary Advocate, believing that to do so was the most anti-English course. The Irishman believed that it was doing England's work to side with the South and that the triumph of the Union meant: 'America preserved, England humiliated, and Ireland freed!' After the Union victory at Gettysburg, the Dundalk Democrat claimed that 'it is England that is now fighting the North on American soil. She has armed the South, and given the rebels everything they wanted.' However, the Tipperary

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2 Democrat, 25 July 1863.
the Advocate could justify its firm adherence to the Southern cause, stating that the formation of independent Northern and Southern republics would lead to 'the erection of two powerful empires, the former of which will ultimately absorb the flourishing province of Canada, and the latter all the territory that ensircles the Gulf of Mexico, and the Spanish and British possessions in that quarter.' The extreme nationalist Union supporters believed the intervention of a re-united United States was necessary to establish an Irish republic. P.J. Smyth wrote that when the American Union is restored, 'a million of men in arms, a first-class navy, a government in which Irish influence will be supreme, a people filled with bitter memories will demand for Ireland Irish freedom.'

At the end of the war, the Irishman expressed the attitude of the extreme nationalists on the effect of the war on Anglo-American-Irish

1Tipperary Advocate, 27 Apr. 1861; see also 23 Aug. 1862.
2Smyth to W.S. O'Brien, n.d. (N.L.I., MS 3307).
relations: 'War has not weakened her [the United States]; in battles she has mightily increased; in the strife her broad blade has been tried and tempered till every flash of it sends a ray of hope and courage to downtrodden nations.'

Irish-Americans generally expressed anti-British opinions on Anglo-American relations similar to those of the Irish nationalists. The Milwaukee Sentinel commented: 'This rebellion is England, but it is not England open armed, but England in her own masked, assassin, slimy, serpentine character.' John Mitchel believed that England hoped to profit from the war and cared for neither section, but he realistically acknowledged that the South was ready to make use of friendship with England to gain independence, although the Confederacy 'in her inmost soul' despised England. In 1866 the Irish American claimed that it was fear of the fenians which prevented Great Britain from intervening in the

1Irishman, 6 May 1865.


3Letter in Nation, 21 Sept. 1861.
civil war. 1

Just as Irish independence in the opinion of many Irishmen was to a great extent dependent on Anglo-American relations, so was the formation of a Canadian confederation, whose future was a bone of contention in Irish public opinion at the time. A brief look at Canadian public opinion at this time and the Irish nationalist reaction to it is most helpful in explaining Irish opinion on the civil war and Anglo-American relations.

The Northern attitude toward Canada during the civil war, and the activities of the fenians in the United States, who attempted invasions of Canada shortly after the war, aroused hostility toward the United States in Canada, even among most Irish-Canadians. During the Trent crisis

1New York Irish American, 16 June 1866.

2See C.F. Stacey, 'Fenianism and the rise of national feeling in Canada at the time of confederation', in Canadian Historical Review, XII. 238-61(Sept.1931).
the catholic and pro-Irish Ottawa Tribune com-
mented on the warlike threats of Northern poli-
ticians against Canada: 'Canadians of all classes
and creeds will defend the soil from foreign ag-
gression.'  

Irish-Canadian Roman catholics also
nursed a grudge against the United States for
'they had not forgotten how, when peace and pros-
perity flourished in the States, Irish nationality
was a butt for the ridicule and sneers of native-
born Americans, and how the abominable doctrines
of know-nothingism were cherished and received
with popularity throughout the length and breadth
of the nation.'  

Thus, the Irish-Canadians believed
that their religious rights were more secure under
a monarchical than a republican government - an
attitude shared by the clergy and hierarchy in
Ireland.

The Irish Lord Dufferin, in his speech in
the house of lords on 6 February 1862 moving an

\[\text{Ottawa Tribune, 20 Dec. 1861, quoted in}
\text{Helen G. Macdonald, Canadian public opinion on}
\text{the American civil war, pp. 97-8.}
\text{Ottawa Tribune, 3 Jan. 1862, (ibid.).}\]
address of thanks to the Queen's Speech from the Throne, noted the loyalty of Canadians and especially D'Arcy McGee and Irish-Canadians during the Trent crisis:

... No one can have failed to mark with extreme satisfaction the loyal and patriotic spirit which has been evoked in Canada by the prospect of an American war; ... an unanimity of sentiment which could not have been exceeded in this country...

When a gentleman with such antecedents as Mr. Thomas D'Arcy McGee gives the signal for the onset, ... when even the poor Irish emigrants, so cruelly maligned by those who professed to be their friends, form themselves into regiments for the defence of their Queen and for the protection of her empire, the old-fashioned notion of the province being tainted with secessional disaffection may well be considered as for ever exploded, and from henceforth the loyalty of Canada is as completely established as that of Middlesex or of Kent. Doubtless a certain proportion of this feeling may be traced to the wisdom with which the British government has consulted the interests of that important section of the empire...¹

D'Arcy McGee, a former Young Irisher, was the leader of the Irish-Canadian Catholics and 'the chief apostle of Canadian national unity.'²

In advocating confederation, he 'made much of the American menace' and warned the Canadian people:

'That shot fired at Fort Sumter was the signal gun

¹ Hansard, CLXV, 16-17.
³ C.P. Stacey, op. cit., p. 239.
of a new epoch for North America, which told the
people of Canada, more plainly than human speech
can express it, to sleep no more except on their
arms.' In a speech on the United States govern-
ment’s attitude toward the fenians, he said: 'We
have to understand this at once, that it suits
well the views of a large number of the active pub-
ic men of the United States at present, to en-
courage these people, to worry us, as they hope
into annexation. That is at the bottom of it all.
They keep a bull-dog, and they like to show him
and make him snarl, as much as to say, "how we
could tear you to pieces, if we only let this ugly
customer loose at you."'

Thus, in the New World, Irish-Canadians op-
posed Irish-Americans, and fenianism 'lent im-
petus' to the movement for Canadian confederation
under the Crown but also fostered in Canada a
self-reliant national feeling 'distinctively Can-
adian' and not dependent on Great Britain. Un-

1Carl Wittke, A history of Canada, p. 176.
2Toronto Leader, 11 Sept. 1866, quoted in
Stacey, op. cit., p. 260.
3Ibid., pp. 254-5.
der the British North America Act of 1867, there was formed the Dominion of Canada - much to the dislike of the Fenians in Ireland and the United States.

The Irish nationalist reaction to events in Canada pointed up the difference between the extreme and the moderate nationalists. The extreme nationalists hated everything with British associations. The Irishman expressed their opposition to a Canadian confederation and their support for American annexation of Canada, even if force had to be used:

The object of the confederation movement in Canada ... is the establishment of a "British American nation". The attempt to destroy the American nation represented by the United States not being likely to prove a success, the British government seek compensation in the creation of a "British American nation" at the north. The Southern Confederacy, could it be established, would do admirably for a "British American nation" to the south of the United States; but the Confederacy

1 After the U.S. House of representatives, full of Fenian sympathizers, deplored the Canadian confederation as tending to strengthen monarchy (Bailey, Diplomatic history, pp. 407-8) and the abortive insurrection of the Fenians in Ireland in 1867, the British foreign minister, Lord Derby, wisely suggested changing the title of the confederation from the 'Kingdom' of Canada to the 'Dominion' (H. Macdonald, op. cit., p. 218).
proving a failure, John Bull must fain be content with such "British American nation" as he can manufacture out of the heterogeneous material composing the present British Provinces of North America.... "A British American nation" is a British absurdity. British, the Canadians must cease to be with the restoration of the Union, and the only question they have now got to determine is, whether they shall continue to exist as Canadians merely, or shall resolve to live as Americans—governing themselves, but component parts of one great American nation. A restored and regenerated Union will tolerate no bastard "British nation" at its door. ... Canada independent, or Canada part and parcel of the Great Republic—such is the alternative.... The British spirit is strong in Canada, and it is, therefore, not impossible but that she may require to have "greatness thrust upon her".  

This statement, except the reference to the Confederacy, represents the unanimous sentiment of the extreme nationalists. Thomas D'Arcy McGee was specially scorned as 'a traitor, a renegade, an apostate'. The Fenian official newspaper attacked him during a visit to Ireland for leaving the United States where it was 'too hot for him' and emigrating to Canada where he 'sought the protection of the British flag, and was soon well rewarded for his treason to Ireland.' In reference to those Irishmen who were

1Irishman, 15 Oct. 1864.
2Irish People, 20 May. 1865.
3Ibid.
friendly toward Mc Gee, it commented: 'It would be a relief if more of them were bought and paid for and shipped off to a British colony.'

Interestingly, the moderate nationalists did not share the extreme nationalists' hatred of a British Canada under the monarchy, probably because the moderate nationalists were nationalist-monarchists (a British Queen but an Irish lords and commons) whereas the extreme nationalists wanted to sever all ties with Britain and form a republic. Essentially, under the British North America Act of 1867, the Canadians got what O'Connell, Parnell, Gladstone, and the moderate nationalists wanted for Ireland.

In an editorial remarkably similar to that already quoted from the Ottawa Tribune, the moderate nationalist Cork Examiner urged those to whom emigration was a necessity to emigrate to Canada, stressing the danger for catholics of

1 Ibid.

2 Cork Examiner, 9 Jan. 1861: It printed a letter from the Bishop of St. John, N.B. Brunswick, recommending the plan for the settlement of Irish emigrants.
losing their faith in the United States and noting: 'An Irish labourer in America is a degree higher than a nigger, while his labour is often less estimated than that of a slave.' This attitude of preference for Canada over the United States seems to have been quite prevalent among the Irish catholic clergy at this time.

The Nation summed up the moderate nationalists' attitude toward Canadian loyalty to the British Crown by comparing British policy in Canada and Ireland:

There is joy in Great Britain because of the loyal demonstrations that have taken place in Canada.... Try us with similar treatment, and see whether it will not produce a like effect! ... The loyalty of the Canadians is a very intelligent sentiment. It is loyalty to laws made and administered by themselves; loyalty to their own fields, and woods, and rivers; loyalty to their own corn, and beef, and butter; loyalty to property which belongs to them and their children for ever. It is not loyalty to anything like the Irish Establishment Church, for no such monstrosity exists in the country; it is not loyalty to anything like Irish land laws, for such hideous and cruel things are unknown there; it is not loyalty to a system of rack-renting, confiscation, eviction, depopulation; it is not loyalty to arms acts and coercion acts.... The loyalty of Canada, therefore, to her own institutions, supplies no argument to shame or silence those who seek for the rights of Ireland; it furnishes rather a justification of their efforts.

1Cork Examiner, 9 Aug. 1861: It printed a letter from the Bishop of St. John, New Brunswick, recommending the place for the settlement of Irish emigrants.
and it should be a powerful inducement to the British government to treat Ireland as it does Canada...1

The Nation also justified D'Arcy McGee's actions during the Trent crisis with a qualification:

If the principle on which Mr. McGee acted - that of fidelity to one's adopted country, more especially in case of invasion - were to be denied by Irishmen, the consequence would be that they would soon be hunted from every country in the world as bad citizens. We hold that it would have been much better taste on the part of Mr. McGee, under all circumstances, to have contented himself with a less demonstrative loyalty to the British connection...

The Irish extreme nationalists were ignorant of the situation in Canada which ever since the Quebec Act of 1774 was a remarkable example of the best side of British colonialism - a fact the moderate nationalists appreciated. Also, it should be noted that the Canadian 'mania' of certain American fenians led to the split in the American fenian organization which, according to John Devoy, 'was beyond all doubt the chief cause of the failure of fenianism in Ire-

1 Nation, 25 Jan. 1862.
2 Ibid.
In order to evaluate Irish opinion on Anglo-Irish-American relations, one must examine the views expressed in the light of reality. Those who believed that the Northern government only affected anti-English sentiments, particularly the moderate nationalists, would seem to have been correct. In a conversation shortly before the election of 1860, Senator Seward reportedly informed the duke of Newcastle of the likelihood of his appointment as secretary of state and commented: 'I shall be forced to insult you [Great Britain]. My position will oblige me, but I have not the least intention of war.'

Irish-American voters were appeased by the Lin-

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1Devoy, Recollections, p. 90: It substantially weakened John O'Mahony's wing which wanted to concentrate on gaining Irish independence.

2Conversations with distinguished persons during the Second Empire from 1860 to 1863 by the late Nassau William Senior, ed. M.C.M. Simpson, II. 143. Senior, who reports conversations with a number of Northern and Southern officials, quotes William L. Dayton, the U.S. minister in Paris, as saying: 'There is no man more friendly to England than Seward, but he has lived the little idol of a clique, and does not weigh his words' (ibid., p. 144).
coln administration with words, the British gov-
ernment with actions. Admittedly, the American
people sympathized with the aims of the fenians.
Seward wrote to Charles Francis Adams: 'The
sympathy of the whole American people goes with
such movements, for the reason there is a habi-
tual jealousy of British proximity across our
northern borders and especially for the reason
that this nation indulges a profound sense that
it sustained great injury from the sympathy ex-
tended in Great Britain to the rebels during our
civil war...'. But sympathy was one thing, and
war another - a fact not appreciated by the ex-
treme nationalists.

John Devoy believed that if an insurrection
had broken out in Ireland in late 1865 or early
1866, it would 'in all probability have brought
about war between the United States and England'
and that the split in the American fenian organi-
sation prevented the raising of 30,000 Irish-Ameri-
can soldiers to be led by General Philip Sheridan

1Seward to Adams, 28 Mar. 1867, Great Britain
Inst., XXI, MS Dept. of State, in D’Arcy, Fenian
movement, p. 255.
in a war against Great Britain. Devoy pointed out how much the Irish Fenians hoped for American help and an early American recognition of Ireland's independence, once the insurrection had begun. However, the Fenians naïvely overlooked many important questions. How was the United States to press claims against Great Britain for violations of neutrality and other thorny disputes involving important rights and principles and millions of dollars, if the U.S. government aided Ireland? Actually, Fenianism provided a useful weapon for the United States to use in extracting concessions from Great Britain. How was the United States government to whip up popular enthusiasm for a war against Great Britain after such a bloody civil war and such a costly one for American merchants? Indeed, it would have been most difficult. What about the Monroe Doctrine and the principle of American non-interference in European affairs in exchange for no European meddling in American af-

1 Devoy, op. cit., p. 116.
2 Ibid., pp. 185, 399.
3 E.g., see Carl Wittke, The Irish in America, p. 158.
fairs? The Cleveland Plain Dealer remarked that the fenians had knocked the Monroe Doctrine 'in the head with an Irish shillelagh'. According to Dexter Perkins, by the 1860s 'the principles of Monroe's pronouncement had taken deep root in the consciousness of the American people...'

Certainly, the United States could not oppose the puppet regime of Napoleon III's in Mexico, if the U.S. went to war with England over Irish independence. Evidently, even Phil Sheridan's American patriotism was stronger than his Irish nationalism, for in 1865 after the civil war, he wanted a vigorous policy on the Mexican question in defense of the Monroe Doctrine. Thus, the Irish fenians overestimated the possibility of an Anglo-American war and though they preached the slogan 'ourselves alone', they depended too heavily on Anglo-American friction to spark a successful Irish revolution. In fact, the fenians

1 Plain Dealer, 14 Mar. 1866, ibid., p. 159.
3 Ibid., p. 503.
on both sides of the Atlantic were out of touch with reality on the opposite side.

The moderate nationalists were more realistic in their expectations. They realized that Irish nationalists could win support for Irish home rule from the more liberal and war-fearing West British and English, if the nationalists argued that the best way to dampen Irish-American belligerency toward Britain was to grant Ireland home rule. Shortly after the war and during the Fenian troubles, John Francis Maguire wrote: '... How is England to reach, influence, or counteract these [Irish-Americans], her eager, watchful, vengeful enemies? But through one channel - Ireland!'

Basically, the extreme West Britons and the extreme nationalists when discussing Anglo-American relations could not distinguish between the vital and secondary interests of Great Britain and the United States in the eyes of the British and American governments. This confusion over priority

of interests led to unjustified expectations of war among the extremists in Ireland. The extreme West Britons considered John Bull to be much prouder and more chauvinistic than he actually was; the extreme nationalists thought Uncle Sam more revengeful and aggressive than he really was.
CHAPTER VI

IRISH PARTICIPATION IN THE WAR

1 In 1860 there were 1,871,303 officees of Ireland in the United States or 19% of the foreign-born population. (Arnold Schrader, Ireland and the American Emigration, 1820-1900, pp. 160-161). According to the United States Census the statistics from Marcus Saxon, The Irish in America, 1847-1860, p. 250 and Schrader, op. cit., 38-39. These cited U.S. government figures - however being in certain subsequent terms at this time comprised 30% of the foreign-born population and Englishmen, 10%. After the Civil War the Northern overtook and surpassed the Irish.

2 Schrader, op.cit., p. 38. Definitely, the Irish role more accurately would be 143,6 for the Irish population in 1861 was 3,784,943 (Annu. Register, 1862, p. 161).
The American civil war aroused the intense interest of the Irish people chiefly because of the role the Irish were playing on and off the battlefield. At that time the Irish were the principal immigrant group in the United States and probably the largest foreign element in the armies of the Union and the Confederacy. Furthermore, emigration to America had a much greater effect on Ireland than it did on any other country. In 1860 the U.S. census commissioner remarked that for every Irish immigrant in the United States only five remained in Ireland, whereas the ratio for Germany was 1:33; for Norway, 1:34; and for England, 1:42. Consequently, the Irish had more of a 'personal' interest in the war than any other European people. In Ireland, the exploits of Irishmen in the war were much discussed, and the tragedy of the

1 In 1860 there were 1,611,304 natives of Ireland in the United States or 39% of the foreign-born population (Arnold Schrier, Ireland and the American emigration, 1850-1900, pp. 160-161). According to my calculations based on statistics from Marcus Hansen, The Atlantic migration 1607-1860, p. 280 and Schrier, op.cit., pp. 157-68 - both of whom cited U.S. government figures - Germans (a rather heterogeneous term at this time) comprised 31% of the foreign-born population and Englishmen, 10%. After the civil war, the Germans overtook and surpassed the Irish.

2 Schrier, op.cit., p. 5. Actually, the Irish ratio more accurately would be 1:3.6, for the Irish population in 1861 was 5,764,543 (Annual Register, 1861, p. 367).
fratricidal war was very 'real' and 'hit home'.

Irishmen participated in the war in many different ways. Their greatest contribution was as soldiers. In the Union armies there were at least 150,000.\(^1\) John Mitchel claimed that there were 40,000 Irish-born confederate soldiers.\(^2\)

Some of the Union Irish units were the famous New York 69th regiment of Colonel Michael Corcoran's and the New York 88th regiment or 'Connaught Rangers' which included Irish veterans of the British army in India and the Crimea - two of the units of Meagher's Irish Brigade; the Massachusetts

\(^1\) This figure refers to natives of Ireland. There were, of course, many more thousands of second-generation Irishmen. Carl Wittke places the Irish-born figure at 144,221, basing it on a report of the U.S. Sanitary Commission in 1869 (The Irish in America, pp. 135-6). He also states that more than 400,000 foreign-born men fought in the Union army (ibid.). 39% (the Irish percentage of the foreign-born population) of 400,000 is 156,000. Marcus Hansen places the total foreign-born number at 'almost 500,000' (The immigrant in American history, p. 142). 39% of 500,000 is 195,000 men. If one takes into account the thousands who must have been overlooked, those who were registered as British (citizens of the United Kingdom), and the comparative unreliability of statistics at that time, especially statistics on a civil war, 150,000 certainly seems a safe number. Other estimates range from 160,000 to 200,000.

\(^2\) Ella Lonn, Foreigners in the Confederacy, p. 218; see also Mitchel's letter in the Cork Examiner, 9 Feb. 1863. Another estimate made after the war is 83,000, which most certainly is an exaggeration unless second-generation Irishmen were included (Michael Cavanagh, John Mitchel, Jr., p. 2 [Hickey collection, N.L.I., MS 3225]). About all that can be said with certainty is that there were many thousands of Irishmen fighting for the Confederacy and that they comprised the largest foreign element in the confederate armies.
'Irish Ninth': the Pennsylvania 24th, the Ohio 10th, the Indiana 35th, and the Missouri 7th regiment; and the Wisconsin 17th regiment, with companies such as the Mulligan Guards of Kenosha, Corcoran Guards of Sheboygan, Emmett Guards of Dodge, and Peep O'Day Boys of Racine. Some of the confederate Irish units were the Fifth Confederate Regiment, commanded by General Patrick Cleburne of Arkansas, the Louisiana Irish Tartars, the Emmett Guards of Richmond, Virginia, and the Emerald Guards of the 8th Alabama regiment.

There were many famous Irishmen who fought in the war. Major-General Philip Sheridan was one of the greatest Union generals. Brigadier-General James Shields, who defeated Stonewall Jackson in a battle near Winchester, Virginia, had been a general in the Mexican war and at various stages in his political career served as U.S. senator from Illinois.

1 Wittke, The Irish in America, pp. 140-1 and Sister McDonald, Irish in Wisconsin in the nineteenth century, p. 141 fn. See also M. H. Macnamara, The Irish Ninth in Bivouac and battle (1867) and two unpublished M.A. dissertations at the Catholic University of America with chapters on the Irish in the civil war: Dom R. D. Quirk, The Irish element in the New Hampshire to 1865 (1936) and Sister M. F. Walsh, The Irish in Rhode Island from 1800 to 1865 (1937).

2 Wittke, Irish, p. 147.

Minnesota, and Missouri. 1 Brigadier-General Thomas Meagher, commander of the New York Irish Brigade, the most famous Irish unit in the war, had won renown as a Young Irisher and "Meagher of the Sword." On the confederate side the most famous Irishman was Major-General Patrick Ronsayne Cleburne, who was killed at the battle of Franklin, Tennessee on 30 November 1864. He was one of the great confederate generals: Robert E. Lee called him "a meteor shining from a clouded sky" and Jefferson Davies characterized him as the "Stonewall Jackson of the West." 2 Other famous Irish confederate soldiers were the three sons of John Mitchel. The eldest son Captain John Mitchel, Jr. was killed while in command of Fort Sumter on 20 July 1864. 3 Another, Private Willie Mitchel,

1 Dict. Amer. Biog., xvii. 106-9. He emigrated from Ireland during his teens. In 1842 he challenged Lincoln to a duel over an article lampooning Shields, which was written by Mary Todd. Contrary to the expected result, Lincoln and Shields did not duel but became friends (see Carl Sandburg, Abraham Lincoln, the prairie years, i. 282-3).

2 T. R. Hay, Pat Cleburne, Stonewall Jackson of the West, p. 14. Cleburne was born in county Cork, served in the British army in Dublin for three years, and at the age of twenty-one in 1849 emigrated. He settled in Arkansas and became a lawyer. He most likely would have been made a lieutenant-general had he not made himself suspect by his early advocacy of enlisting slaves and freeing those who were faithful. He had a brother fighting for the Confederacy and another for the Union. Named in his honor are a town and county in Texas, a town in Kansas, and a county in Arkansas (ibid., passim; Irving Buck, Cleburne and his command (1908), passim.; and Lonn, Foreigners in the Confederacy, pp. 60, 442-7).

3 Cavanagh, John Mitchel, Jr. (loc.cit.).
was killed in Pickett's charge at Gettysburg.\textsuperscript{1} The third, James, lost his right arm in a battle near Richmond.\textsuperscript{2} As can be seen in this brief sketch of Irish prowess in the armies of the Union and the Confederacy, the Irish public had much to be proud of but also much to be concerned about.

There were Irishmen prominent in many other walks of life in America during the civil war era. Edwin Lawrence Godkin, born in county Wicklow and a 'militant liberal' product of Queen's College, Belfast\textsuperscript{3} was one of the leading Northern journalists and a member of the abolitionist 'internationals.' Writing for the London Daily News from 1862 to 1865, he was 'the best informed New York correspondent writing to the London press,' and his letters were of 'great value in encouraging the British friends of the North.'\textsuperscript{4} Godkin's counterpart in the Confederacy was the pro-slavery, fire-eating 'Forty-eighter' John Mitchel, who during the war was at first editor of the Richmond Enquirer and later, leader writer for the Richmond Examiner.\textsuperscript{5} Mitchel was a correspondent to the

\textsuperscript{1} Ibid., p. 26 and Lonn, Confederacy, p. 155 fn.

\textsuperscript{2} Lonn, Confederacy, p. 155 fn. His son, John Purroy Mitchel, was elected on an anti-Tammany ticket and served as mayor of New York from 1914 to 1918 (Dict. Amer. Biog., xiii. 37-8).


\textsuperscript{4} E. D. Adams, Great Britain, i. 70 and fn.

\textsuperscript{5} William Dillon, Life of John Mitchel, ii. 174, 187-90.
Irish press, who gave encouragement to the nationalist friends of the South. On the Union side there were also Charles G. Halpine, whose letters to the press in the style of an ignorant Irish private under the pen-name 'Miles O'Reilly' were very popular in the North; Patrick Ford, who began his newspaper career under the abolitionist W. L. Garrison and became famous as the founder of the Irish World; and John Savage.

1 See The life and adventures, songs, services, and speeches of Private Miles O'Reilly (1864). Halpine, the son of a Church of Ireland clergyman who was editor of the Dublin Evening Mail, was educated at Trinity College, Dublin. He was a Young Irisher and after 1848 settled in New York where he was active in democratic politics and became associate editor of the New York Times. He served on General David Hunter's staff during the war, prepared for him the first order for the enlistment of a negro regiment, and helped to overcome the objections of Northern soldiers to negro recruiting with his poem 'Sambo's right to be kilt.' Halpine was breveted a brigadier-general (Dict. Amer. Biog. vii. 160-1).

The first stanza of 'Sambo's right to be kilt' goes:

Some say it is a burnin' shame
To make the naygurs fight,
An' that the thrade o' bein' kilt
Belongs but to the white;
But as for me, upon me sowl,
So liberal are we here,
I'll let Sambo be murthered in place o' meself
On every day in the year.
On every day in the year, boys,
And every hour in the day,
The right to be kilt I'll divide wid him,
An' divil a word I'll say.

(The poetry and song of Ireland, ed. John Boyle O'Reilly, p. 877).

2 He was born in Galway and fought in the war, taking part in the charge of the Irish Brigade at Fredericksburg (Dict. Amer. Biog., vi. 518).
journalist, poet, and Fenian, and author of 'The starry flag.' On the Confederate side, there were John William Mallet, a famous chemist who was supervisor of the ordnance laboratories of the Confederacy and later a founder and president (1882) of the American Chemical Society, and W. M. Browne, assistant secretary of state for the Confederacy.

An Irishman was also a prominent song-composer of the war. Patrick Sarsfield Gilmore, the Boston bandmaster who was born near Dublin, wrote the lyrics of the ballad When Johnny comes marching home in 1863.

1 He is said to have fought in Corcoran's 69th regiment (ibid., xvi. 388-9).

2 He was born in Dublin, the son of a famous engineer, and received his B.A. from Trinity College, Dublin and his Ph.D. from Göttingen (Deasmumhan O’Raghallaigh, 'John William Mallet: the Irish director of the Confederate ordnance department,' An Cosantóir, ii. 555-7; see also Cronie, Dict. Irish Biog., p. 149, and Dict. Amer. Biog., xii. 223-4).

3 He was 'a cadet of an Irish family' who had emigrated some years before the war (W. H. Russell, My civil war diary, ed., Fletcher Pratt, p. 91 and Owsley, op. cit., p. 106).

4 John T. Howard, Our American music, p. 651; Oscar Handlin, Boston's immigrants 1790-1865, pp. 74, 220; and Dict. Amer. Biog., viii. 312-13. The air of the ballad is remarkably similar to the air of the anonymous 18th century Irish ballad Johny, I hardly knew ye.

Henry McCarthy wrote The bonnie blue flag, the most popular Confederate song except for Dixie (Howard, op. cit., p. 263). The air of this song is almost definitely Irish. McCarthy's background and birthplace have not been established.

The air of a ballad sung during the civil war, 'The girl I left behind me,' is Irish and probably goes back to the time of the 'wild geese.' A couple of decades before the civil war, Thomas Osborne Davis (1814-45) wrote lyrics for the air.

(cont.)
The leaders of the Catholic Church in the Union and the Confederacy were Irishmen. Archbishop John J. Hughes of New York, the principal Catholic Union supporter, and Bishop Patrick N. Lynch of Charleston, South Carolina, the chief Catholic Confederate supporter, were both Irish-born. They were both also sent by their governments to Ireland as goodwill ambassadors during the war. 

Irish-born Americans were indeed prominent in many different walks of life during the Civil War, and without even considering the importance of second-generation Americans with Irish-born parents, such as Stephen Russell Mallory, the secretary of the Navy of the Confederacy; Mathew Brady, the war photographer; Father John Ireland, who was born in Kilkenny and became Archbishop of St. Paul, won renown as the fighting chaplain of the Fifth Minnesota Volunteers (ibid., ix. 494-7); Father James Gibbons, American-born but reared in Ballinrobe, Co. Mayo from the age of three to eighteen, who became Archbishop of Baltimore and the first American cardinal, was the chaplain at Fort McHenry and a Union sympathizer, who had a brother fighting for the Confederacy (ibid., vii. 238-42).

The first stanza goes:

The dames of France are fond and free,
    And Flemish lips are willing,
And soft the maids of Italy,
    And Spanish eyes are thrilling;
Still, though I bask beneath their smile,
    Their charms fail to bind me,
And my heart flies back to Erin's isle,
    To the girl I left behind me.

(O'Reilly, Song of Ireland, p. 520).

1 Hughes was born in Co. Tyrone and Lynch at Clones (Dict. Amer. Biol., ix. 352-5, xi. 521-2). The two men who would become the most famous members of the American Catholic hierarchy were priest-chaplains during the war and Irishmen. Father John Ireland, who was born in Kilkenny and became Archbishop of St. Paul, won renown as the fighting chaplain of the Fifth Minnesota Volunteers (ibid., ix. 494-7). Father James Gibbons, American-born but reared in Ballinrobe, Co. Mayo from the age of three to eighteen, who became Archbishop of Baltimore and the first American cardinal, was the chaplain at Fort McHenry and a Union sympathizer, who had a brother fighting for the Confederacy (ibid., vii. 238-42).
photographer; and Father Abram Joseph Ryan, the poet-laureate of the Confederacy, one can say that the level of influence of the Irish in America during the civil war was very high.

Brief mention should be made of the Irishmen whose careers brought them to America during the civil war era and made them important in the history of the war on both sides of the Atlantic. Sir Charles Stanley Monck, fourth viscount Monck, was governor-general of British North America from 1861 to 1867 and of the Dominion of Canada from 1867 to 1868. He was notably successful in his efforts to maintain peace between Great Britain and the United States and to bring about the Canadian confederation. 1 William Howard Russell, the first great war correspondent, was The Times's correspondent from the theatre of war during the first year of the civil war. He was very able and fairly impartial in his reports; and though not approving of the confederate cause and abhorring slavery, he did admire their determination and ability. His truthful report of the Northern debacle at Bull Run was bitterly resented by the Northern press, and the New York Times labelled him 'Bull Run' Russell. Ridiculed and ostracized in the North, he resigned and returned to London; and a bitterly

anti-Northern successor was appointed.\textsuperscript{1} Dion Boucicault, the Irish dramatist, was an important figure on the nineteenth century American stage. Two of his plays contributed to contemporary civil war literature. The first, The octoroon, or life in Louisiana, opened in New York in 1859, and both Northerners and Southerners thought he sympathized with their own cause. According to a biographer, his 'Old Pete' in the play was 'far more genuine and human than Uncle Tom' — more of the Joel Chandler Harris type appearing in the romantic literature of the 'Lost Cause', but nevertheless capturing the mental and spiritual horrors of slavery, while underplaying the physical. A second play, Belle Lamar, based on incidents in the war, opened in New York in 1874.\textsuperscript{2} The careers of Monck, Russell, and Boucicault further demonstrate the extent of Irish participation in the war — all types of Irishmen, including the Anglo-Irish.

\textsuperscript{1} Russell was a county Dubliner and was educated at Trinity College, Dublin. He made his reputation during the Crimean war. His letters during the first year of the civil war were very influential; and upon returning to England, he became editor of the Army and Navy Gazette (John B. Atkins, The Life of Sir William Howard Russell, i. 2-3, 16-17; ii. 3, 25, 66-78; E. D. Adams, Great Britain, i. 177-8; ii. 229, 277; and Thomas Bailey, Diplomatic History, p. 358).

\textsuperscript{2} He was an illegitimate child born in Dublin. Of his many plays, The colleen bawn and Arrah-No-Pogue are probably the most famous (Townsend Walsh, The career of Dion Boucicault, pp. 3-10, 63-9, 122-3).
Although there was a keen interest in the war in Ireland, it was the Irish nation, the peasants and labourers, that proudly singled out the heroic feats of their countrymen in the war and recoiled the most at the terrible bloodshed. Most of the Anglo-Irish ascendancy took scant notice of the trials and heroism of the Celtic-Irish in the war, having mainly political and economic but little 'personal' interest in the war. The masses had the most to lose and the most to be proud of.

Public opinion in Ireland on Irish participation in the war can be divided into two sections: opinion on the activities of Irish-Americans in the war and opinion on the participation of Irishmen in the war. The former concerned the achievements and tribulations of Irishmen living in the Union and the Confederacy at the outbreak of the war. The latter involved the problem of Irish emigration to the United States during the war and more especially the question of Union recruiting of emigrants in Ireland and in the dockyards of the north-eastern American ports.

The contributions of Irish-Americans to the Union and confederate causes were one of the principal topics of conversation among the Irish people during the civil war years. Throughout the four years of the war, the nationalist press daily carried numerous stories and editorials on the Irish in the war. It was painfully obvious to all that Irishmen were killing Irishmen and for this reason there was an almost uni-
versal desire for peace and an end to the bloodshed.

Before the outbreak of the war, the Nation hopefully prayed that it would not witness 'the horrors of civil war in the States. Irishmen must have a special abhorrence of such a contest, as from the large number of our countrymen scattered through all parts of the Union, it is but too likely that Irish blood would flow on both sides.' After Fort Sumter, it expressed the sentiments of the moderate nationalists and most of the Irish people:

Our countrymen in the Northern States desire to defend the Union to which they swore allegiance; on the other hand, we cannot but recollect that in the South our countrymen were safe from insult and persecution, while "nationalism" and "know-nothingism" assailed them in the North. There are friends of ours on both sides of this quarrel. It is a strife between brothers. We cannot desire to see either party beaten down in blood. We shall look out anxiously for news, not of victories and defeats, but of peace and reconciliation.

After the Northern rout at Bull Run, the Tipperary Advocate summed up the attitude of most extreme nationalists, who were primarily interested in the welfare of their countrymen in the States and secondarily concerned with other issues in the war. It commented:

Whatever be the result of this war it cannot but be useful
What mattered it to us, whether puritanical North or slave-holding South, carried off the laurels of victory....It was of no moment to us whether the stars and stripes of the Union or

1 Nation, 12 Jan. 1861.
2 Ibid., 11 May 1861.
the palmetto ensign of the Confederates waved over a triumphant host. Our concern was with another flag—the sunburst of Erin, under whose folds were marshalled the truest, loyalest, and bravest hearts on either side....In our opinion adhesion on the part of Irish-Americans to North or South is a mere question of locality....

The Fenians could be enthusiastic about Irish participation in the war. In its first editorial on the war, the short-lived Fenian newspaper noted that good results had accrued to Ireland from the war: 1) 'It has restored the somewhat tarnished military prestige of our race. It has restored the Irish people's weakened confidence in the courage of their hearts and the might of their arms.' 2) 'It has shown to us the Irish people, in our own days, a living example of what a people's army can do—an army officered exclusively by men sprung from the ranks of the people, and (what touches us more nearly) a large proportion of whom are Irish-born.' 3) After the war, those officers and soldiers of Irish birth 'will turn their eyes and hearts fondly towards the land of their birth....' However, the Fenians came to have second thoughts about all the Irish blood that was shed, and near the end of the war the Irish People commented: 'Whatever be the result of this war it cannot but be painful to us to reflect that so much Irish blood has been shed in any cause save that of Ireland. Doubtless, at the end of the war, 1 Tipperary Advocate, 10 Aug. 1861.

2 Irish People, 26 Dec. 1863. It began publication in December 1863.
many Irish soldiers will remain who will be willing to shed their blood for Ireland. This at least is some consolation.\(^1\) Thus, among the Irish people, there was an unanimous desire for peace and among the vast majority a desire for peace at any price even ensuring the establishment of an independent Confederacy.

The two incidents in the war that had the greatest effect on the Irish public were the virtual annihilation of Meagher's Irish Brigade at the battle of Fredericksburg in December 1862 and the New York draft riots in July 1863. However, there were numerous other events that aroused interest in Ireland. The exploits of the members of the Irish papal brigade who were fighting in the Union army were closely followed. The Battalion of St. Patrick of about 1,000 men, commanded by Major Myles O'Reilly, which fought in the army of the Pope in 1860, were the toast of Ireland and banqueted and honored upon their return to Ireland in the autumn of 1860 after their unsuccessful venture.\(^2\) According to the Rome correspondent of the Tablet, 'the greater of the Irish brigade in the papal service....passed into that of the Northern States, where they have greatly distinguished themselves.'\(^3\) Irish editorials and

\(^1\) Ibid., 7 Jan. 1865.

\(^2\) See C. F. H. Berkeley, The Irish battalion in the papal army of 1860, passim.

reports on the war substantiate this statement and reveal the age-old appeal of military heroism which aroused many young men to serve as soldiers of fortune in Irish brigades in France, Austria, the Papal States, and the United States.

In an editorial mourning the death of Captain Patrick Clooney of the Irish Brigade at Antietam, the Tipperary Advocate noted the role of veterans of the papal brigade in the Union army: 'In that disastrous retreat from Richmond [Bull Run], which was only saved from degeneration into a shameful flight by the valorous steadiness of Meagher's command, one and twenty brave youths who had escaped the fire of Piedmontese artillerists unscathed, fell before the Southern rifle.' Mentioning the names of those killed, such as Costello, Dargan, and Herbert, it commented on Pat Clooney's career: He 'with two other comrades of Perugia, Costello and Synan, left Waterford in the opening of '61 for the express purpose of taking arms under his townsman Thomas Francis Meagher, whom he loved with all the fidelity and fullness of heart of a clansman for his chief....' Clooney 'did not live long to wear his spurs and though he died the death he ambitioned, perhaps, most of all, we do not think he perished quite on the field he desired.' With his 'indomitable Munster pluck,' he 'risked his life once for Faith, and following the martial promptings of his breed, he devoted it the second time to Gratitude — a 'chivalrous,
albeit some might deem it an erring, impulse....\(^1\)

There were numerous references in the newspapers to members of the papal brigade. The commander of company 'H' of Meagher's Irish Brigade at Antietam was Lieutenant John H. Gleeson, 'formerly of the Irish papal brigade.'\(^2\) Killed in battle fighting in the Irish Brigade was Lieutenant Michael O'Connell of Ballybunnion, whose family was of the aristocracy of Kerry. He won the Order of Pius IX, fighting in the Battalion of St. Patrick.\(^3\) Reports of other papal brigade veterans, who won glory fighting for both the Union and the Confederacy, were received in Ireland, such as the outstanding career of Captain John Coppinger, who later rose to the rank of general in the U.S. regular army, and the 'reputation for exceptional courage' of Captain Martin Luther, who was serving in the Union army after fighting for the Pope at Perugia.\(^4\)

Perhaps, the most famous Irish veteran of the papal brigade who fought in the Union army was Captain Myles Walter Keogh who was immortalized in death with Custer at the Little Bighorn. Keogh was brevetted as major for gallantry at Gettysburg and later as lieutenant-colonel. He wrote

\(^1\) Tipperary Advocate, 11 Oct. 1862.
\(^3\) Munster News, quoted in Cork Examiner, 6 Sept. 1864.
regarding his military career and love of adventure to his brother in Ireland: "...Now having my order of Chevalier de St. Gregoire and the position of colonel in this army I may rest satisfied that I have carried out some at least of the rather visionary fancies we as boys indulged in in days of long ago."\(^1\)

Any incident concerning an Irishman was of interest in Ireland. Most of the unpleasant incidents involving Irishmen occurred in the North. Some incidents aroused hostility toward the North, even among those favorably disposed toward the Union cause. One such was the unjustified arrest of twenty-four years old James McHugh of Belfast in late 1863 as he disembarked from a ship at New York because of his known pro-South sympathies. After having been imprisoned in Fort Lafayette for seven months, he was released and died at Halifax, Nova Scotia in the summer of 1864. His brother-in-law, A. J. McKenna, the editor of the Ulster Observer, vigorously protested in a letter to the pro-North London Daily News in January, 1864, that McHugh was on 'purely commercial business' and wrote:

Surely, Englishmen, or Irishmen, who in their own country express an opinion on the merits of the present contest in

\(^1\) Keogh to 'Tom', Fort William Kansas, 30 Nov. 1867 (Keogh letters, N.L.I., MS3885). In the Keogh collection there are about fifteen letters written during the war and about thirty in all.
America, are not amenable for that opinion to the authorities at Washington. . . . I have myself supported the cause of the Union in the journal which I conduct; and although even this case of injustice cannot shake my faith in the principles to which I cling, I must confess that it leads me to believe that many of the accusations preferred against the Lincoln administration are not wholly unfounded.¹

Any hero of the war with the slightest bit of Irish blood was claimed as a fine product of the Irish race. In an editorial on the death of Stonewall Jackson, the pro-North Dundalk Democrat referred to 'that energetic Irish Celt, General Jackson (Macshane)' and proudly claimed that he 'was only once out-generalized during the war, and that was by a brother Celt, General Shields, at Winchester.'²

The first big opportunity of extolling the heroism of the

¹ Letter reprinted in Cork Examiner, 20 Jan. 1864; see also ibid., 1 Sept. 1864. In the commons on 23 June 1864, Isaac Butt asked whether there would be any parliamentary papers on the McHugh case and whether there was 'any expectation of an early release of Mr. McHugh.' Mr. Layard, the under secretary for foreign affairs, revealed that the government had made representations on McHugh's behalf and that they 'expected by every mail to hear of the release of Mr. McHugh....' (Hansard, clxxvi. 159). See Papers respecting the arrest and imprisonment of Mr. James McHugh in the United States, passim,[c.3365], H.C. 1864, lxii. 462; Further papers....Mr. James McHugh....,[c.3384], ibid., p. 481; Further papers....,[c.3394], ibid., p. 551.

² Democrat, 30 May 1863. See 'Jackson', Dict. Amer. Biog., ix. 557: Jackson was of Scotch-Irish descent, several generations removed. On 23 Mar. 1862, marching up the Shenandoah valley, Jackson turned on his pursuer, General Shields, 'under a misapprehension of the federal strength, and was repulsed with heavy losses at Kernstown, near Winchester....' This was the only incident to mar Jackson's brilliant Shenandoah valley campaign in 1862. For General James Shields, see above.
Irish in the war came at the battle of Bull Run in July 1861, involving Colonel Corcoran and Acting-Major Meagher's New York 69th, soon to be part of the Irish Brigade. The ups and downs of this Brigade were followed in Ireland more closely than any other Irish unit in the war. At Bull Run the 69th joined in the retreat of the rest of the Northern army and did not particularly distinguish itself, except perhaps in comparison to the other Northern units. However, Southern journals praised the valor of the 69th; and of the various groups in Colonel W. T. Sherman's brigade at Bull Run, the 69th had the largest number killed.\(^1\) The Irish nationalist press attacked The Times's correspondent, W. H. Russell, for supposedly slandering Meagher's courage and overlooking the valor shown by the 69th during the battle.\(^2\) Meagher's hometown Waterford News stated that Meagher and the 69th were the heroes of the North and that 'every citizen of Waterford feels a just pride in the glory of Thomas Francis Meagher has won for himself.'\(^3\) The extreme nationalist Dublin Irishman contrasted the 'noisy "native American" regiments running home to their mother's apronstrings as fast as they could' with the 'brave Irish fighting with desperate bravery, under "native American"

\(^{1}\) Athearn, Meagher, pp. 96-8.

\(^{2}\) Russell replied to criticisms of his report, that his account of the battle was misinterpreted and that he did not criticize Meagher's conduct (Cork Examiner, 12 Aug. and Nation, 14 Sept. 1861).

generals of astounding incompetency, for that very people who, a year or two before, burned their convents, insulted their priests, and threatened to rob themselves of all lawful rights of citizenship.\footnote{Irishman, 10 Aug. 1861.}

While the Irish public were proud of the 69th, they also regretted the spilling of Irish blood. The pro-North Dundalk Democrat criticized those Irishmen who hoped the confederate victory would bring an early peace and end the shedding of Irish blood: 'Some of our contemporaries appear to enjoy this defeat of the Northern forces, and to weep over the fate of the Irish, who were engaged in both armies. We regret to find any such feelings displayed by the national press of this country. In the first place a battle without Irishmen in the ranks or commanding would be a very stupid affair. Being the best soldiers in the world, it does one good to hear of their gallant deeds....' It also noted that their glory helped to keep up the spirit of Ireland 'which will yet assert its own independence.'\footnote{Dundalk Democrat, 10 Aug. 1861.} However, the vast majority of Irishmen at this early stage deplored the war which would cost so many Irish lives. Commented the Catholic Telegraph after Bull Run: 'We deeply regret the large loss of life sustained by the gallant 69th in this fratricidal strife.'\footnote{Catholic Telegraph, 10 Aug. 1861.} The Cork Examiner

\begin{itemize}
\item \footnote{Irishman, 10 Aug. 1861.}
\item \footnote{Dundalk Democrat, 10 Aug. 1861.}
\item \footnote{Catholic Telegraph, 10 Aug. 1861.}
\end{itemize}
hated to see Irish courage wasted in 'this miserable war.'

As the war dragged on, the Irish public became stronger and stronger advocates of peace. It was the North, in their opinion, that was on the offensive; and it was in Northern armies where most Irishmen were losing their lives and yet were least respected. Thus the North would be urged to give up the war.

The two incidents that did the most to firmly mould Irish public opinion were the battle of Fredericksburg and the New York draft riots. Both concerned the New York Irish, the largest concentration of Irish in any state or city and the most strategically located, for events in New York through reports of the New York newspapers were well publicized in news stories on the United States in Europe. An estimated 51,206 or 15% of the soldiers from New York state were Irish-born.

In the autumn of 1861 the Irish Brigade was formed, composed of the 69th, 88th and 63rd New York Volunteers. Through political conniving, Meagher got himself appointed its commander and brigadier-general of volunteers. The Brigade distinguished itself and at the bloody battle of Antietam in September 1862 was praised for bravery. However, it was at

1 *Examiner*, 12 Aug. 1861.


Fredericksburg that it really won its fame. On the orders of Major-General Ambrose Burnside, on 13 December 1862, the Irish Brigade, with every man wearing a sprig of green boxwood in his cap, charged up steep Marye's Heights toward the confederate installations and was cut to pieces. Meagher wrote that of the 1200 he had led into battle only 280 remained the following morning.¹ This charge of the Irish Brigade was indeed a splendid display of courage, and we have the testimony of the confederate generals. George Pickett wrote to his wife: 'Your soldier's heart almost stood still as he watched those sons of Erin fearlessly rush to their death. The brilliant assault... was beyond description. Why, my darling, we forgot they were fighting us, and cheer after cheer at their fearlessness went up all along our lines.' James Longstreet said that it was 'the handsomest thing in the whole war,' and Robert E. Lee commented that 'never were men so brave' and reported how A. P. Hill had cried out: 'There are those d----- green flags again!'²

Fredericksburg is today the most remembered incident of Irish heroism in the war. J. I. C. Clarke's famous poem 'The

¹ Ibid., p. 120. The Nation, 3 Jan. 1863, reported that 250 out of 1300 survived, and the Tipperary Advocate, 3 Jan. 1863, reported 250 out of 1350.

² Quoted in Athearn, op. cit., pp. 120-1. John Devoy in his Recollections, p. 34, relates how John C. Hoey's poem 'That damned green flag again' was recited everywhere by the fenians. It refers to this incident.
fighting race' commemorates it in one stanza.\footnote{1} John
Boyle O'Reilly wrote a narrative poem about the battle
entitled 'At Fredericksburg - Dec. 13, 1862,' romanti-
cizing the role of the Irish on both sides. He notes
the presence of a confederate Irish Brigade on Marye's
Heights and their horror at having to shoot fellow Irish-
men in Meagher's brigade:

Strong earthworks are there, and the rifles behind them
Are Georgia militia - an Irish brigade -
Their caps have green badges, as if to remind them
Of all the brave record their country has made.

What is it in these who shall now do the storming
That makes every Georgian spring to his feet?

\footnote{1 Quoted in A book of Ireland, ed., Frank O'Connor, pp. 65-67:}

Said Shea, "It's thirty-odd years, bedad,
Since I charged to drum and fife
Up Marye's Heights, and my old canteen
Stopped a rebel ball on its way.
There were blossoms of blood on our sprigs
Of green -
Kelly and Burke and Shea -
And the dead didn't brag." "Well, here's to
the flag!"

Said Kelly and Burke and Shea.
"O God! what a pity!" they cry in their cover,
As rifles are readied and bayonets made tight;
"'Tis Meagher and his fellows! their caps have green
clover;
'Tis Greek to Greek now for the rest of the fight!"

O'Reilly praises the heroism of the Irish in both armies during the battle:

Bright honor be theirs who for honor were fearless,
Who charged for their flag to the grim cannon's mouth;
And honor to them who were true, though not tearless,
Who bravely that day kept the cause of the South.¹

The reaction in contemporary Ireland was far from jubilant. The nationalists mourned the virtual annihilation of the Brigade and became more hostile toward the Union cause.² The way the Irish were 'driven to mere slaughter' upon the heights of Fredericksburg was another example of the Northern

¹ O'Reilly, Poetry and song of Ireland, pp. 756-8. See Hugh F. McDermott, 'Meagher's brigade' (ibid., pp. 922-3).

² Tipperary Advocate, 3 Jan.; Nation, 3 Jan.; and Cork Examiner, 1 Jan. 1863.
attitude toward the Irish. However, a few nationalist Northern partisans, while believing that Lincoln should dismiss the incompetent men he has about him, did not see any use in 'wailing' for the Irish Brigade. After the resignation of Meagher from the army in the spring of 1863, the nationalists wondered how Irishmen could still fight for the Union, and even the staunchly pro-North Dundalk Democrat commented: 'We consider General Meagher unfairly treated, and we wonder the president would permit it. The safety of the Union is due to the noble gallantry of the Irish, who when treason showed itself, rushed manfully to the rescue, and spilt their blood in torrents to protect the federal flag.' When Meagher was given permission to recruit another Irish brigade in the autumn of 1863 - an unsuccessful venture - the nationalists commented: 'He is to be at liberty to raise another Irish brigade. If by his eloquence, or the prestige of his name, four or five thousand more Irishmen can be trapped into serving in the ranks of President Lincoln, then there is so much trouble saved to the federal recruiting officers.'

1 Examiner, 27 Mar. 1863.
2 Dundalk Democrat, 3 and 10 Jan. 1863.
3 Nation, 30 May 1863.
4 Dundalk Democrat, 30 May 1863.
5 Cork Examiner, 23 Nov. 1863. See Athearn, op. cit.
The West Britons generally took no notice of the Irish role at Fredericksburg. Some of the 'castle catholics,' the converts from nationalism, mourned the slaughter of the Irish there. But most of the protestant and catholic West Britons viewed it as just another battle and used the Northern defeat there as an opportunity to call on the North to end the War. The West British radicals were principally concerned about the effect of the defeat on the Northern cause. Cairnes considered the 'Fredericksburg disaster' 'a fearful one,' which could not fail 'to impair' Lincoln's power, and, while deploring the way the Northern soldiers were marched regiment after regiment to their death, failed to notice the Irish aspect of the disaster.

However, the Dublin correspondent of The Times did realize some of the implications of the destruction of the Irish Brigade on Ireland and gloatingly commented in the summer of 1863:

It is something of concession for the Nation to rely on votes

pp. 131-2 et passim: Meagher was reinstated as a brigadier-general in December 1863 but had no Irish brigade to command and was shunted about from minor post to minor post like a hot potato by various generals because he was considered a political and not a military general.

1 Galway Vindicator, 3 Jan. 1863.
2 Catholic Telegraph, 10 Jan.; Banner of Ulster, 6 Jan.; and Belfast News-Letter, 2 Jan. 1863.
3 Cairnes to Nesbitt, 2 Jan. 1863 (N.L.I., MS8941-7).
in parliament instead of fighting men. Perhaps this arises from the dispiriting news about the Irish in America. Great things were expected one day from "Meagher of the Sword" and his Irish Brigade; but the brigade is now annihilated, and the Nation trusts that the treatment the Irish generally have experienced from the government of the Northern States will induce them to consider "whether they have not been heedlessly precipitate in their hurry to assist in the attempted subjugation of a young nation which has taken arms in defence of its rights to choose its own rulers and form of government."

Undoubtedly, the disastrous fate of the Irish Brigade did much to increase the mounting sentiment in Ireland, especially among the nationalists, against the restoration of the Union.

The other incident that turned the Irish public irrevocably against the war policy of the North and the forcible restoration of the Union was the New York draft riots in July 1863. During the week of 12 July 1863 'the most violent race riots of American history took place in the streets of New York,' as a result of the enforcement of a conscription act which congress had passed four months earlier. The number of negroes lynched by white rioters can never be known, but between 1200 and 1500 white persons died in these riots — mostly killed by police and soldiers — and an estimated 85% of those killed came from Ireland.

It is not surprising that the Irish figured so prominently in the New York riots for, living in squalor and comprising

1  The Times, 1 June 1863.

about 25% of the population of New York city, they were ideal mob material. Furthermore, in 1862 and 1863 the Irish were active in other draft disturbances such as those in Boston; Pottsville, Pa.; Troy, N.Y.; Milwaukee, Wis.; and Dubuque, Iowa. Of course, in these cities they were joined by Germans and other laborers, who were the hardest hit by the draft.

These draft rioters did have a grievance, for the law was grossly unfair in allowing a draftee to escape by paying 300 dollars in cash or by furnishing a substitute. The Irish also had another reason for rioting: their opposition to negro emancipation because of the fear of negro labor competition and what the Irish considered to be the hypocrisy of the abolitionists who were oblivious to the white wage slavery in the North.

The anti-negro, anti-draft sentiment of the Irish-Americans had been building up to a fever pitch for some time. In the summer of 1862, the Irish had been incited to anti-negro riots in a number of cities, such as the riot in Brooklyn, N.Y. on 4 August 1862 in which two or three thousand Irishmen assaulted negroes. John Jay, the grandson of the chief justice, wrote

1 B. L. Lee, Discontent in New York city 1861-1865, p. 104 fn. The 1860 census showed that there were 203,000 people of Irish nativity and 169,000 of German nativity in New York city.

2 Wittke, The Irish in America, pp. 143-4.

3 New York Evening Post, 5 Aug. 1862. The abolitionist Post editorialized: '...The cunning ringleaders and originators of these mutineers against law and order, who are not Irishmen, have thus sought to kill two birds with one stone — to excite a strong popular prejudice against the Irish, while they used these to wreak their spite upon the blacks.'
to Secretary of War Stanton that 'the minds of the Irish are inflamed to the point of absolute and brutal insanity.'

The pro-Irish and 'copperhead' New York Freeman's Journal expressed the hostility of most Irish-Americans to the federal draft. It was a 'palpable infraction of the Constitution' and a 'deadly attack on the state' — an opinion shared by democratic Governor Horatio Seymour of New York and Mayor Fernando Wood of New York city. Many immigrants were 'beguiled' from other lands 'under the pretense of work' and tricked into enlisting. When they attempted to leave the army, they were shot down as deserters. In apportioning the draft quota, the administration discriminated against the poor.

An authority on the New York riots concluded:

New York had reason to oppose the draft. It was based on partiality, and its application to New York was unfair and dishonest. If an enemy were trying to stir up discontent, he could have conceived of no measure so suitable as the draft laws as they were applied. The poor, who had suffered through unemployment and inflation, were drafted, while the war profiteers were able to pay for exemption and substitutes. Moreover there is no doubt that the quotas for New York were excessive and that in individual districts they were unfairly applied.

Also, it should be noted that many Irish-Americans disapproved of the riots and suffered at the hands of the New York

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1 Quoted in Lee, op.cit., p. 104.


3 Lee, op.cit., p. 124.
mobs. A Colonel O’Brien was brutally killed, and the mob destroyed the house of Colonel Nugent, who had succeeded Corcoran as commander of the N.Y. 69thand was in charge of the draft in New York city. ‘It was not the Irish as Irish who revolted, but the penniless Irish laborer who saw his life thrown away in a cause, abolition, in which he had no interest.’Commented an historian of the New York Irish: ‘The Irish did the rioting, the killing, and the dying, the Irish took the blame for the disgraceful events, but it was American politicians who stirred them up for their own cheap ends. Once more the Irish had proved themselves the tools of men who should have known better.’Even Garrison’s Liberator, in noting the role of the Irish, remarked: ‘For them we have no burning indignation: they are the wretched victims of intelligent and desperate conspirators, who deal with them as the gambler does with his loaded dice.’

F. L. Godkin in a report to the London Daily News summed up the attitude of the Irish-Americans in the North until the end of the war, after the riots in New York and other cities:

A soldier in uniform can hardly show himself with safety in the Irish quarter in the great cities....Such men as Mr. Richard O’Gorman, one of the "martyrs" of 1848, are just as passionate

1 Ibid., p. 105.
3 Boston Liberator, 24 July 1863.
in their defence of slavery, as if they had never spouted on behalf of human rights under the shadow of the "ould house in College Green." The only one of the whole company of Irish apostles of freedom who has remained true to his principles, and boldly repudiated all connexion with the democratic party and with his own countrymen, is Thomas Francis Meagher, and he has done so with so much manliness, and honesty, and courage, that it ought, even in the eyes of Englishmen, to cover a multitude of sins.

In Ireland, the New York draft riots confirmed the pro-confederate sympathies of most people. The nationalists had been continuously opposing the draft. In the summer of 1862, the Nation expressed their attitude toward a new conscription of 300,000: 'Not an Irishman liable to the conscription will be left behind by the military authorities. Irishmen are good fighting material, excellent food for powder, and so they will be drafted off to die by sickness and the sword, in the vain attempt to subjugate the people of the Southern States...'

Commenting on an Irish draft riot in Pennsylvania in the autumn of 1862, the Cork Examiner said:

Our countrymen have played the part of the dwarf in this war, to the giant - the native American - the know-nothings - the abolitionists. They have fought the battles, got the blows, and bear the wounds, while their companions receive the glory and the plunder. For the latter are the colonelcies and the generalships, the army contracts, and all the other sources of honor and profit which a great opens to the unscrupulous. Our countrymen seem to be getting tired of this state of things. In Leauserne county, Pennsylvania, a number of them resisted the

1 Report from New York, dated 2 Nov., quoted in Dublin Warder, 19 Nov. 1864.
2 Nation, 23 Aug. 1862; see also Cork Examiner, 23 Aug. 1862.
The military were called out and shot four or five... It is certainly hard that our people should be sacrificed both in the battlefield and at the booths for the gratification of a self-interested political faction. The effect of this tragical incident... should be an opening of the eyes of our countrymen to the recklessness of the faction for whose interests they are flinging away their lives.

Thus, by the time of the New York riots, most Irishmen were already in a hostile frame of mind toward the draft and the Union cause in general.

The protestant West British generally took little notice of the Irish role in the New York draft riots. However, it is interesting to note that those that did, laid the blame on others or sympathized with the Irish in New York. Even these staunchly pro-British Anglo-Irishmen hated to see the reputation of Irishmen smeared. The conservative Irish Times noted that as usual the Irish were blamed for the riots but asked: 'If so, will the Irish soldiers continue to fight for a government which insists that the Irish should struggle for the aggrandizement of the North, perforce, or else be bayoneted shot down, and blown to pieces by cannon in the streets of New York?'

The liberal Banner of Ulster denounced the anti-negro riots, justified the draft because the North did not have a standing army to fall back on, but did not especially blame the Irish for the riots: 'The wretches who composed that lawless multitude were the low Germans... the offscourings of

2 Irish Times, 29 July 1863.
other nations...and the bitter elements of the slave school.\textsuperscript{1} However, the radical \textit{Northern Whig} blamed the Irish without naming them, claiming that the mob was led by a Southerner and that 'the persons who constituted it were probably naturalized foreigners, and not native Americans -- the organized "following" of Fernando Wood.'\textsuperscript{2}

Among the West Britons, the 'castle catholics,' who had more in common with the Irish people, staunchly defended the New York Irish. They criticized laying all the blame on the Irish: 'Of course the know-nothing press of New York labours hard to throw all the blame of the outrage on the Irish.' The Irish-Americans did resist conscription but 'were not the authors of the fiendish outrages.' 'As a body,' the New York Irish were not guilty, but 'the lowest rabble' were. The New York newspapers and the yankees, in their attempt to blame the Irish for the ferocities of the riots, 'have exhibited the blackest ingratitude to those who have fought their battles...'

The 'castle catholics' noted the lynch-hanging of Colonel O'Brien: 'The murder of Colonel O'Brien...was an act which reflects upon the humanity of the age. It was a deed which plainly proves that there is still a very bad feeling in the minds of the yankees against the Irish.' Though deploring the riots which they claimed were the worst disturbance in any

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{1} \textit{Banner of Ulster}, 1 Aug. 1863.
  \item \textsuperscript{2} \textit{Northern Whig}, 27 July 1863.
\end{itemize}
civilized city since the French Revolution, these catholic West Britons deplored the draft which 'is only adopted by the despotic governments of the continent....'\(^1\)

The greatest reaction to the New York riots occurred in nationalist opinion - among those who had more of a personal interest in events in New York. Shortly before news reached Ireland of the riots in New York, the **Cork Examiner** commented on the new draft: 'Three hundred thousand men are to be dragged from their homes to cut the throats of their Southern brethren.'\(^2\) When it heard of the riots, it commented: '...The people are at last beginning to shew their disgust at the crimes of his [Lincoln's] government;' and it noted: 'The city, which has given so many of its people for what is called an abolition war, signalised its zeal by the wanton slaughter of about fifty negroes.'\(^3\) It also made an interesting claim. It stated that in the suburban towns the riots were repressed by the catholic clergy and remarked: 'It is only over the Irish section of the States that the catholic clergy have the useful influence which they have carried from home.'\(^4\) The **Examiner**, unlike most other nationalist papers, admitted that the Irish were the chief participants in the riots.

1 Catholic Telegraph, 1 and 8 Aug. 1863; Freeman's Journal, 27 July and 4 Aug.; Galway Vindicator, 29 July and 1 Aug.

2 Examiner, 20 July 1863.

3 Ibid., 26 July.

4 Ibid., 28 July.
riots and sympathized with them, though not condoning their actions: 'In those riots we feel a deep interest, for there is no disguising the fact that the chief parties concerned were Irish, our countrymen in New York feeling that they were made the victims of this wretched war....This circumstance has brought out the latent hatred of the yankee know-nothings.... This is the fitting expression of yankee gratitude to the Irish.'

The Nation ignored the Irish role and said that the 'ruffians' who beat and killed negroes were 'deserving of the execration of all honest men throughout the world.' However, it sympathized with the aims of the rioters, believing that the draft dispute was a question of states' versus federal rights and that 'the unpopularity of the government' was 'plainly at the bottom of the affair....' Instead it steadfastly defended the New York Irish against 'all the abolitionist papers, preachers, and politicians' who class 'the "low ignorant Irish" as among the chief authors and actors of the late riots in New York.'

Many of the other nationalists also buried their heads in the sand, refusing to admit the Irish responsibility for the riots. The extreme nationalist Tipperary Advocate attacked the unjust manner of conscription and added: 'The riots at

1 Ibid., 29 July 1863.
2 Nation, 1 Aug. 1863.
3 Ibid., 15 Aug. 1863.
New York, if they had not been disgraced by ruffianism, would have grown into the respectability of a revolution.\footnote{Tipperary Advocate, 1 Aug. 1863; see also Waterford News, 31 July 1863.}

Among the nationalist Union supporters, the extreme nationalist \textit{Irishman}, which had switched its allegiance to the Union, was caught in a predicament. It at first said that the riots were 'a grievous error' and 'but a passing ebullition' and that the hands of New York Irishmen were clean, though conscription would have fallen chiefly on them. It thanked God that 'no reviler of our race has dared to identify the Irish of New York with these bloody proceedings.'\footnote{Irishman, 1 Aug. 1863.}

However, a week later, after the Irish role was starkly apparent, it took an about-face, pointed out that 'a high legal tribunal in New York' had pronounced the draft illegal, and, mentioning the elements other than the Irish involved in the riots, castigated the republican New York press and the London journals for casting 'the entire odium of the late unhappy riots upon the Irish population.'\footnote{Ibid., 8 Aug. 1863.}

The extreme nationalist and abolitionist \textit{Dundalk Democrat} made no reference to Irish responsibility and placed 'the crime at the doors of men who do not wish to see the negro race emancipated.'\footnote{Dundalk Democrat, 1 and 8 Aug. 1863.}

Several months after the riots, the nationalist \textit{Dublin...
Morning News expressed the general reaction of the Irish public to the New York riots. In an editorial on a speech of the Rev. Henry Ward Beecher in London, it quoted him on the New York riot: "It was no more an American riot than if it had taken place in Cork or Dublin. Therefore, when misinformed persons say this riot is a specimen of what Americans can do, I say it is a specimen of what can be done by foreigners, and by ignorance and misrepresentation." The News replied that the Irish were treated unfairly in the draft, denied that they instigated the riots, and remarked that the New York atrocities have 'a yankee smell about them. They are redolent of the methodistical canters that pity the slave and kick the coloured man out of an omnibus, or confine him to a particular boundary, even in the house they place under the honours of religion.'

Thus the New York draft riots further alienated the Irish public from the Union cause and made them more hostile toward the 'hypocritical' Northern yankees and more sympathetic toward the 'gallant' Southern freedom-fighters.

There was one issue in the war on which the Irish public almost unanimously agreed: the question of Irish participation in the war or more exactly, recruiting of emigrants for the Union army in Ireland or as they disembarked at a Northern seaport. Because of the blockade around its coast, the Confederacy did not have access to the Irish soldier market.

Union recruiting was not so much of an issue in 1861 and 1862 because of the comparatively small emigration to the United States of 28,000 and 33,000 respectively. However, when the number jumped to 94,000 in 1863 and numerous recruiting agents were reported circulating throughout Ireland, a furious storm of public indignation developed. As the number remained at 94,000 in 1864 and two instances of alleged Union recruiting of Irishmen made international headlines, the storm increased in intensity.1

During 1861 and 1862, the combination of a depression in Ireland and the decrease in remittances from the States because of the civil war greatly checked emigration to the United States. The U.S. consul in Dublin wrote: 'The condition of the laboring classes of Ireland is so bad that those desirous and willing to emigrate have not the amount of money necessary to buy their passage ticket and outfit...'2 However, there was still much comment on Union recruiting of Irishmen. In the autumn of 1861 recruiting agents were reported in Ireland, and members of disbanded Irish militia regiments were viewed as likely prospects.3 In the summer of 1862 Secretary of State Seward sent a circular to all U.S. consuls for publi-

1 Emigration statistics are from Schrier, American emigration, p. 157. Only a little more than half of the emigrants were males, and many of these would be ineligible for enlisting.


3 Dublin Evening Post, quoted in Nation, 21 Sept. 1861.
cation noting 'the enhanced price of labour' due to the increased demand for the army and stating: 'It may...be confidently asserted that, even now, nowhere else can the industrious labouring man and artizan expect so liberal a recompense for his services as in the United States.' The Cork Examiner believed there was 'a smack of the recruiting sergeant about Mr. Seward's circular' and remarked:

It was yankees who ran at Bull's Run, and it was Irishmen who died there. It was Irishmen whose bodies have been burned upon the swamps of the Chickahominy, and who perished at Fair Oaks and Seven Hills in the vain attempt to save the honour of incompetent generals. It is to Irishmen they now look to fill up the gaps that have been made in the ranks of the Northern army. The emigrant ships are watched, the railroads are swept clean, and every haunt of Irishmen is pounced upon by the crimp and the recruiting sergeant.

The Queenstown correspondent of the Dublin Saunders News-Letter said that Seward wanted 'human material for the war' and graphically described how Irishmen were 'hunted throughout the streets of the towns of the Union, as if they were canine brutes affected with hydrophobia in the hope of worrying them into submission to face fatigue, famine, disease, and death in the pestiferous swamps of the sultry South.' The Nation angrily protested against recruiting in Ireland for either army, and the extreme nationalist Irishman cited the advice of John O'Mahony, the American fenian head center, to his

1 Cork Examiner, 29 Aug. and 4 Sept. 1862.
3 Nation, 15 Nov. 1862.
friends in Ireland. It quoted O'Mahony as telling the people in Ireland that even starvation at home is not much worse than 'fever, neglect, and mis-government, in the swamps of Virginia.'

In early 1862, the American consul in Dublin reported to the Irish under-secretary requests by soldiers in regiments in Dublin to be sent to fight for the Union, and assured Sir Thomas Larcom that he was not sending Irishmen to America and violating the Foreign Enlistment Act. Nevertheless, applications poured into the Dublin and Galway consulates for free passage to the United States in exchange for enlistment in the army. The Dublin consul wrote to Seward: 'Every day applications are made to me for a free passage to the United States to join the army. They are made by stout healthy young men who would make fine soldiers for the army.' Wrote the Galway Consul: 'I have to contradict repeated rumours that our govt. was recruiting for the army in Ireland, many applications having been made to me in consequence.' Undoubtedly, there were thousands of potential Union recruits that could not get to the United States in 1861 and 1862 because of lack of funds.

1 Irishman, 16 Aug. 1862.
3 Hammond to Seward, 31 July 1862 (N.A., Dublin dispatches, vol.3).
for the steamship tickets. However, it was not until the spring of 1863 that union recruiting appeared to be a real threat to the Irish people.

1863 was a fairly prosperous year for Ireland in comparison to the previous three years. The improvement provided many, who had become discouraged after three successive years of depression, with the opportunity and means for emigration. The constabulary report for county Waterford in 1863 stated: 'The condition of the agricultural classes of this county is certainly better than in any of the last three years, of which the younger portions are taking advantage by increased emigration.' 1 The U.S. consul in Cork reported that the good harvest in 1863 'instead of checking emigration...only affords the means for a much greater increase...' 2 The U.S. consul at Dublin wrote in April 1863: 'This spring has opened with such an emigration, as has not been known for many years, and new incentives are being given to increase it. In a few days a new line of screw steamers will commence running between Liverpool and New York, every week 'to call at Kingstown in this consulate for emigrants...' 3

The New York correspondent of The Times listed some of the

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1 Sir H. J. Brownrigg, Report on the state of Ireland in the year 1863, p. 44.
causes of the increased Irish immigration into the United States: 1) Increased demand for Laborers: he claimed that 100,000 would be absorbed in ten months. 2) Seward's published letter to encourage emigration. 3) 10,000 laborers were supposedly wanted on one railway in the West, which would pay one dollar per day and passage from Ireland to New York. 4) A fear 'extensively prevalent' that the British government was about to pass a law forbidding emigration to the United States. However, this reporter believed there was subterfuge in the Union's campaign to encourage emigration:

The emigrants are beset by the recruiting officer the moment they touch American soil....There can be no doubt that the federal government, in encouraging Irish immigration so vigorously, had in view the probability of converting a large percentage of the ablebodied new comers into soldiers of the Union. There can be as little doubt that it has not been disappointed in its hope, and that if the British government should be unwise enough to complain, it has its answer - that the encouragement of immigration is a national duty in America at all times, and more particularly at the present; and that if the immigrants prefer the rifle to the plough, there is nothing the federal government can or ought to do to prevent them from indulging their fancy.

It is difficult to say how many army recruits there were among the Irish emigrants to the United States in 1863. It would appear that most had the intention of filling the labor vacuum in the North, but undoubtedly many young men fell prey to the snares of the recruiting sergeant. About all that can be definitely said is that the North profited from Irish immigration in a number of ways and that Union officials were

1 The Times, 4 June 1863.
well aware of this. The Galway consul wrote of the prospects of the tremendous emigration of 1863: 'The current is now in our favor; something may occur to change its course. Let us then seize the prize whilst it is within our grasp — it is our most effective recuperative power, and would, I believe, help materially to resuscitate our exhausted resources.'

Throughout 1863 and especially during the spring, there were numerous reports of Union recruiting in many parts of Ireland. Every rumor got into the newspapers, and Dublin Castle was flooded with reports from constables, militia officers, various local officials, and private citizens. Most of the evidence, however, was hearsay.

In April 1863, a sub-inspector at Queenstown remarked in a constabulary report:

Within the last fortnight — 1270 have sailed from Queenstown, the greater portion of the number being strong active young men. There can be no doubt from all I can learn that they are intended for the American army. In fact, many of them do not deny it. On Thursday last I was present when about 30 "stowaways" were discovered and brought back from the vessel by the tender, most of whom were I think militia men from Cork and its vicinity, and they stated in my hearing to Capt. Kerr RN, the emigration officer, that they would get from 250 to 300 dollars bounty, and that this was circulated throughout the country generally. I have been informed that the friends of those people in America are paid so much for obtaining and bringing them over to New York. An American officer not long since on landing here asked one of the officials as the agent for the Inman line of steamers if there were many for the next boat. The man said yes they are fighting to get out to fight, when he replied with an oath: "We'll make them fight well...."

For tomorrow's vessel there are already booked about 800.

It is now freely spoken of that all the young men are going to join the Northern army of which there can hardly be a doubt entertained.

Notwithstanding the company having put on additional steamers, the number of applicants cannot be accommodated. They are obliged to leave several hundred back each week.\(^1\)

The Italian consul reported a conversation he had overheard at an emigration office in Dublin to the superintendent of the Metropolitan Police. The consul mingled with a crowd at an emigration office at Eden Quay where he saw one man shake hands with another, and heard him say, "Good-bye James, and when you go to Italy I hope you'll cut down many of those B----y Italians as we'll the B----y English when we go to America."\(^2\) It should be noted that Union recruiters appealed to young Irish immigrants to enlist in the Union army in order that they might fight the English as soon as the Union was restored.

Other reports included one that Union agents were "waiting the disembodiment of [the] Tipperary Militia Artillery - to enlist them for the American service...,"\(^3\) one from Coleraine that an American agent, Andrew Craig of Philadelphia, was "delivering tirades against the English government and inciting..."\(^4\)

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1. P. George Graves to Dublin Castle, 8 Apr. 1863 (Larcom papers, N.L.I., M87585).


3. Mr. Penefather to the secretary to the lord lieutenant, 22 May 1863 (S.P.O., R.P.4704).
the people to go to America,' 1 another from a man in Burrin, Co. Clare, who claimed he saw a letter from a major-general in the federal army offering ten pounds a head for each emigrant landed in America, 2 and one from a man in Oranmore, Co. Tyrone, whose son had gone to the United States on business and had enlisted in the federal artillery, although he was under age and was 'now seventeen.' 3 These reports reveal the concern in Ireland in 1863 over Union recruiting and the danger of emigration to the United States, although they are vaguely worded like most other reports on Union recruiting and inconclusive in proving any large-scale Union recruiting of Irishmen.

One of the few fairly concrete reports, not based on second-hand evidence, came from a soldier stationed at Fortress Monroe, Virginia, a former Dublin shop-assistant, who wrote to his master:

Sorry I am and that to the heart that I should become the dupe of a federal agent, who does not reside far from the old and welcome home of 70 Thomas Street. I am not the only one. You will find young fellows leaving the finest situations in all parts of Ireland foolishly led to believe the falsifying statements of the federal agents. They are enlisting young men every day. In fact they are coming out here in thousands and the moment they land they are drafted to the battle field where danger mostly stands. I enlisted in Dublin on the 23rd day of June '63 in the New York Engineers. I received a

2 Will Smyth to Sir Robert Peel, 22 June 1863 (S.P.O., P.R.5677).
3 W.W.W. Scott to the chief secretary, 22 July 1863 (S.P.O., R.P.6544).
bounty 150 dollars which amounts to £30 in English currency.¹

There were also at this time recruiting hoaxes to swindle young men desirous to emigrate. One such occurred in Munster in May 1863. A middle-aged man 'with military gait and yankee dialect and costume' claiming to be a Mr. Pittman from New York visited Fermoy, Mitchelstown, Cahir, Tipperary Town, Newcastle, Kanturk, Charleville, and Mallow where he signed up young men to emigrate to the States and enlist in the Union army after they had paid him three pence in return for free passage across the Atlantic. He had promised his secretary a 'lucrative post in the War Department of the Union States.' The man disappeared after arriving in Cork, never to be heard from again. In his room was found a list of 2,000 names, but his secretary said that certainly 5,000 had signed up, which meant that he swindled about sixty-three pounds.²

The public reaction in 1863 was quite vociferous. The West British charged that 'the yankees want but one thing - to get these fresh young men from Ireland to fight against the confederates, or rather to be led or driven by incapable and blundering generals to certain destruction' and that the young

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¹ John Egan to Mr. John Keane, 10 Oct. 1863 (copy) (S.P.O., R.P.9965).

² Saunders News-Letter, 22 May 1863. See also Freeman's Journal, 22 May; Dublin Evening Post, 21 May; and Cork Examiner, 20 May. Also see Mitchelstown constabulary to Larcom, 14 May 1863 (S.P.O., R.P.4372); Patrick Wallis, Emigration Office, Bruff, to Lord Carlisle, 21 May (R.P.4736); and J. Arthur Butler, R.M., Cahir, to Larcom, 22 May (R.P.4608).
men 'foolishly imagine that the best thing they can do for their country is to assist America, or any other power, to make war upon England.' ¹ A parish priest in a letter to the Cork Examiner hoped that measures would be introduced in parliament to improve the Irish economy and prevent Irishmen from becoming 'mercenary soldiers in foreign battles' but noted: 'One cynic writes — "send off the drunken, thriftless set; they are only fit to stop bullets in America."' ² Even the pro-Union extreme nationalist Irishman urged its countrymen to heed the advice of Archbishop Hughes of New York and John O'Mahony not to emigrate and not to make the civil war 'their quarrel.' The Irishman believed the Irish would follow the advice because of Meagher's resignation, the annulment of James Shields's appointment as brigadier-general, and the way the Irish Brigade was treated with ingratitude. However, it still supported the Union cause and cautioned:

Let it be well marked that this proceeding [Meagher's resignation] is not the work of the American republic, but of a mere section [the nativists and know-nothings]. It [the United States] has had and still has its prejudices, but it is free; it has had and still has its defects, but it is free!... The Irish in America...will remember, as they have remembered, that it is not for a section of men (be they part or all of the government) but for the great country of their adoption that they fight....They, while praying, will march to the battle for the freedom of the West and the honour of their race....Fighting for a noble cause, despite the malice of ignoble men, they will advance the banner of freedom to the utmost of their powers. ³

¹ Dublin Express, 8 Apr. 1863.
² Letter from Father Cornelius Corkran in Cork Examiner, 24 Nov. 1863.
³ Irishman, 6 June 1863.
The difference in attitude among Irish nationalists toward Union recruiting is pointed out in two letters to the Cork Examiner in April 1863 from Myles O'Reilly and O'Donovan Rossa. Major Myles O'Reilly, former commander of the Irish papal brigade and M.P. for county Longford, wrote that 'those who, though not being subjects of either of the contending states, voluntarily engage in the war, are of their own free will undertaking to kill their fellow-Irishmen who are on the other side.' He said that he received letters from Irishmen who had served with him in Italy and that they reported that the condition of the federal soldiers was 'generally wretched' for a number of reasons: 1) The pay is 'nominally large' but arrives months late after one has had to borrow from money lenders. 2) The food rations are poor. 3) Clothes fall to pieces almost immediately. 4) The hospitals are 'inadequate.' 5) There is 'useless and purposeless sacrifice of the soldiers' lives....' 

O'Donovan Rossa, one of the fenian leaders, attacked O'Reilly for being a landlord and attributing the increased emigration to Union recruiting and not to crop failures and evictions. However, while supporting the Union, Rossa did not endorse Irish enlistment in the Union army but merely disputed the British attempt to blame the United States for Irish emigration. He wrote to the editor of the Examiner:

1 Letter to the editor, Cork Examiner, 22 Apr. 1863.
It is evident that you, too, are "gulled" into believing this landlord, English lie. "That the fearful emigration from Ireland at present is attributable to the exertions of the American recruiting agent...". It is a lie, and a damned lie, circulated for two purposes. It is circulated by the landlord and English interest to blind the world to the patent fact that this emigration is solely attributable to the blighting effect upon our people of landlord and English rule. This rule, under existing circumstances, is terribly afraid of the reunion of the North Americans. It is giving its sympathy, active and otherwise, to perpetuate the division that now exists amongst them. The federals are crying out against this sympathy and "perfidy." As a pretext for justification the lie is invented, and the federals are told they derive corresponding advantage from "recruiting in Ireland...". The failure of the crops these years past, and eviction, with the threat and dread of it this year, together with the existing and the apprehended greater distress, may account for the terrible emigration going on at present.

Rossa had much interest in the civil war, for his two brothers and his sister were involved in it. His elder brother John served in the 69th Pennsylvania Infantry, and his younger brother Conn served on the U.S. warship Iroquois. The husband of his sister Mary, Walter Webb, served in the 69th Pennsylvania Cavalry. Many years after the war Rossa wrote to the U.S. secretary of state regarding his family's participation in the civil war: "...All the family were in the American war against England except myself. I was in the Irish war against England." Rossa spoke for the small number of extreme nationalists who half-heartedly defended and supported the Union cause insofar as it was anti-English. However, most of these Union supporters disapproved of Irish

1 Examiner, 25 Apr. 1863.

2 Jeremiah O'Donovan Rossa to James G. Blaine (rough draft), 17 Jan. 1891 (N.L.I., MS8648-2).
enlistment in the Union armed services and also disapproved of those Union activities that adversely affected the Irish.

The government at Dublin Castle believed Union recruiting was going on but generally not illegally. Under-Secretary Sir Thomas Larcom wired the Irish Office in London in March 1863: 'The recent reports on this subject have been received - nor indeed very definite at any time - only surmises as the objects of suspicious strangers.'¹ In April Larcom wrote to the under-secretary of state for the Home Office: 'From the practice....of paying the friends of the emigrants in the United States, instead of employing agents in this country, no proceedings can be taken under the Foreign Enlistment Act against any persons concerned.... The law advisor states that the militia men cannot be detained and have not broken the law.'² In a wire to Sir Robert Peel in June, Larcom summed up the government's attitude to Union recruiting: 'The government has no information that recruiting for the Federal States is directly carried on in Ireland - but there is reason to believe that large numbers of emigrants are enlisted as soon as they land at New York.'³

When the question of Union recruiting of Irishmen became an issue in Anglo-American relations in 1863, Charles Francis

¹ Wire of Larcom's, 25 Mar. 1863 (Larcom papers, N.L.I., MS 7585).
² Larcom to H. Waddington, 10 Apr. 1863 (ibid.).
³ Wire of Larcom's, 1 June 1863 (ibid.).
Adams, the U.S. minister at the Court of St. James, became involved in the controversy and as usual out-maneuvered Lord Russell. In a reply to a letter of Lord Russell's on Union recruiting, Adams wrote:

My Lord - I am very much obliged to you for the courtesy extended to me in the communication of the substance of a report which has been made to Her Majesty's government with regard to the number of persons who are now being shipped as emigrants from Queenstown. The fact that a great many people, especially in Ireland, have been anxious for some time past to find their way to the United States has been made known to me by the frequent applications to this legation for free passage. A considerable proportion of these contain offers to enlist in the service of the government. No doubt they are more or less influenced by the high bounties offered in America, accounts of which have been, from time to time, published in the newspapers here. To all such solicitations the answer given from here has been uniformly to the effect that no authority has been given by the government to listen to any proposals of the kind or to make any engagements whatever. Instructions have likewise been sent to the respective consuls, who have reported similar proposals to me, to make the same answer. I have no reason to believe that any American citizen in England, clothed with authority, has ventured to act in any other way. It is proper for me to add, in explanation of the emigration that is taking place, that a gentleman of influence in America, now in London, who is in a situation to know, has lately informed me that some of the great corporations for the extension of railroads in the western part of the United States, having experienced inconvenience from the liability of the labourers in their employ to be drafted for the war, and apprehending more, are making efforts to procure large supplies from other countries of aliens, who are from that circumstance exempted from the risk of being called into service. It may be that some of those who desire to get across the ocean, for the purpose of enlisting, expect to take advantage of the opportunity thus placed before them. In addition to this, there is no doubt of the fact of a scarcity of labourers in the United States. I learn from private sources that the rate of wages this season is very much advanced. I am led to believe that these causes, in addition to the alleged distress of the population of Ireland, may explain the phenomena of emigration
to which your lordship has been pleased to draw my attention. 1

Incidents involving enlistment of Irishmen were not limited to the Union army and navy. In June 1863 George Moore, the British consul at Richmond, was expelled by the confederate government, as a result of his intercession on behalf of two 'Irish compatriots' by the names of Maloney and Farrell, who were conscripted into confederate service, despite their claim to British citizenship. 2 However, since all Irish emigration to the States during the war was to Northern ports, almost all incidents involved the North.

In the first half of 1864, Union recruiting continued to be the chief topic of interest in Ireland, even more so than during 1863, for there were two incidents definitely involving Union enlisting of Irishmen that became controversial issues at Westminster, the Kearsage and Finney affairs.

After a visit to Queenstown, on 5 November 1863 the U.S. warship Kearsage set sail for Brest with sixteen Irishmen who had just embarked. Whether they enlisted or were stowaways became a matter of controversy. After the confederate commissioner James Mason, who was in Paris, received affidavits of witnesses who saw men being enlisted for the Kearsage, which

1 Adams to Russell, 18 Apr. 1863, in Dublin Evening Mail, 30 Apr. Also see Correspondence with Mr. Adams respecting enlistment of British subjects in the federal army, p. 3, LC.31/47J, H.C.1863, L.xxi. 495.
2 F. L. Owsley, King Cotton diplomacy, pp. 495-8.
were sworn before a justice of the peace at Cork and sent to Mason by Robert Dowling, the confederate commercial agent at Cork, Mason wrote to his friend the earl of Donoughmore and asked him to transmit the various affidavits to Lord Russell, which Donoughmore promptly did. Russell had already written Adams demanding to know what he 'could allege in extenuation of such culpable conduct on the part of U.S. officers of the navy, and the U.S. consul at Queenstown.' Adams evidently had contacted Captain Winslow of the Kearsage, for the ship returned to Queenstown and on 7 December 1863 landed the sixteen 'refugees.' Here was a concrete example of Union recruiting, and the confederate sympathizers tried to take advantage of it.\footnote{Russell to Adams, 20 Nov. 1863; Mason to Donoughmore, 23 Nov.; Donoughmore to Russell, 25 Nov.; Captain James Winslow to Admiral Sir Lewis Jones, Queenstown, 7 Dec.; and numerous other letters and documents (S.P.O., R.P.12,284). Also see Correspondence respecting the enlistment of British seamen at Queenstown, on board the United States' ship of war "Kearsage", [C. 3298], H.C.1564, lxii. 209.}

The ship's officers, however, had another story to tell. The executive officer wrote that while they were at anchor at Queenstown the ship was surrounded by boats filled with men desiring to enlist but the boats were not allowed alongside. In fact, he stated that before the Kearsage set sail the crew had to force off stowaways found 'in the hold, in the carpenter's lockers and elsewhere...' and that the accused men were only discovered after they had set sail. The captain
mentioned that the men had concealed themselves on board ship
and that since he had to watch the confederate ship Florida
at Brest, he was delayed returning them to Cork. He noted
that he had given instructions that no men were to be enlisted
at Cork. Captain Winslow also revealed that the main desire
of the recruits or stowaways was to get out of Ireland and to
America, no matter whether it was the North or the South; he
remarked that while at Brest he directed that the men be held
on board for fear that if they were turned ashore they would
join the confederate warship Florida.

Lord Russell, however, recommended that prosecution
against the recruits under the Foreign Enlistment Act 'should
be instituted as soon as sufficient evidence is collected to
sustain it.' Six of the sixteen men were indicted, and their
trial took place in Cork on 14 March 1864. The prisoners
pleaded guilty, were undefended, and 'wore the naval dress of
American sailors.' The attorney-general for Ireland did not
press for punishment but said that 'the law had been vindicated
in the first and only case in which it had been possible to
prove an infringement of the Foreign Enlistment Act in
Ireland...'. The notorious Mr. Justice Keogh who presided
used the occasion to warn other Irishmen against enlistment.

1 Lt. Comm. Jas. S. Thorton to Capt. J. A. Winslow,
7 Dec. 1863; and Winslow to Admiral Jones, 7 Dec. (ibid.).

2 E. Hammond, under secretary of state, Foreign
Office, to H. Waddington, under secretary, Home Office, 12 Dec.
1863 (ibid.).
The prisoners were ordered to provide twenty pounds recognizances each but were discharged. No American officer or official was prosecuted, although Adams promised that he would investigate the responsibility of subordinate officers on the ship. Adams, however, continued to maintain that the situation was extremely difficult for the officers, as he pointed out that 150 to 300 Irishmen had rowed out to the Kearsage 'eagerly seeking to be employed.'

Occurring simultaneously with the Kearsage affair was the Finney scandal. Patrick H. Finney, Feeny, or Phinney\(^2\) was an American recruiting agent in Ireland during January and February 1864. In January he was arrested in Loughrea, co. Galway for Union recruiting but released because of lack of evidence;\(^3\) and on 28 January in Dublin he was brought into court for not paying a debt but was acquitted. In court, a witness claimed that Pinney said he was recruiting for the U.S. army, but he produced letters and affidavits from various American companies introducing him as their recruiting agent.\(^4\)

1 Dublin Evening Mail, 16 Mar. 1864; Adams to Russell, 2 Apr. 1864 (Further correspondence respecting the enlistment of British seamen at Queenstown on board the United States' ship of war "Kearsage", c.p. 7, [C.3328], H.O.1864, Ixii. 369).

2 Finney will be used because it occurs most frequently.

3 Ballinasloe Western Star, quoted in Cork Examiner, 21 Jan. 1864.

Finney continued his recruiting, and the young men he hired signed a contract stating that they would work for Finney for twelve months 'either on the Charlestown [Massachusetts] Water Works...or the Webster and South Bridge Railroad...or on the Pacific Railroad, or for the Bear Valley Coal Company...or for the Franklin Coal Company [Pa.]...or otherwise or elsewhere, wheresoever labour may be needed...'. Sir Robert Peel wrote to the Home Office that the law officers of the Crown in Ireland were of the opinion 'that the evidence would not be sufficient to sustain a prosecution' against Finney for Union recruiting.

The superintendent of the Dublin Metropolitan Police reported that Finney recruited seventy men from Dublin and vicinity and a number from the Loughrea-Galway area. The Boston Courier reported that there were 102 young men in Finney's group on the Nova Scotia that arrived in Portland, Maine on 9 March 1864, principally 'fine stalwart fellows, young mechanics, all from the city of Dublin.' Eighty-six went on to Boston where they were informed that there was no work for them and were reportedly told by Finney's employer, a Mr. Kidder, that they could enlist in the Massachusetts 28th,

2 Peel to Waddington, 15 Feb. 1864 (S.P.O., R.P. 12,577).
3 Daniel Ryan to Comms. of Police, 16 Feb. 1864 (S.P.O., R.P. 12,615).
an Irish regiment which he recommended. 'Recruiting agents hovered round them, and in the course of the day, gobbled up several.' Seven had already enlisted at Portland.¹

When the Irish community in Boston heard of the incident, a relief committee was set up to assist the men; and a protest meeting was held. The chairman of the meeting said that 'from the facts, as they had been presented to him, he believed that the original intent of the parties who brought the men over was to make them part of the quota of Massachusetts.' Another speaker said that 'he had heard at Concord, N.H., long before these men arrived, that this same emigration agent, Mr. Finney, had been engaged last summer in bringing substitutes to New Hampshire and selling them. He became notorious as a substitute broker, and made money by it.'²

Not all of Finney's recruits were fortunate enough to escape the snares set for them. Thomas Tulley and six other Irishmen were enlisted shortly after they disembarked at Portland, but Tulley claimed in correspondence to Lord Lyons that they were imprisoned on trumped-up charges of drunkenness and refused freedom unless they enlisted in the 20th Maine Infantry. Throughout the spring, Lord Lyons pestered Seward about the case. In the meantime, the men had been sent to Virginia; and evidently one had been killed in battle. In

² Ibid.
June 1864, Seward half-admitted that the men were illegally recruited and had them returned to Portland for an investigation. On their way back to Portland, they reportedly were put in chains and maltreated. Portland officials denied any improper recruiting, and no further parliamentary papers were published on the final result. Here many Irishmen believed were concrete examples of the yankee maltreatment of Irishmen.¹

There were other first-hand reports. One of Finney's recruits wrote from Boston to his brother in Dublin: '...We were brought out here for to be made soldiers of, but the Irish people here has made up a subscription for us and treated us very kindly and formed societies for us and got work for us all the boys of us that came out here from Dublin...We can get 400 dollars each bounty here if we have a mind to take it, but thank God we can do better than that.'² The British consul at Boston wrote: 'The bounties both of the U.S. and of the several States added to local premiums amount to 700 dollars and even 825 dollars besides 15 to 25 to the bringer in of a recruit and as the poor Irish are generally made drunk and given at the outside 25 dollars, the sharks who prey on them collect the balance, and thus a cargo of 120 as in this

¹ Correspondence respecting the enlistment of British subjects in the United States' Army, passim, LC.33857, H.C.1864, ixii. 489; Further correspondence..., [0.3395], ibid., p. 561.

² John Connor to Thomas, 12 Mar. 1864 (S.P.O., R.P. 14,056).
During the first half of 1864 in parliament, confederate supporters made Union recruiting in Ireland an issue against the government. Those who cried out the loudest were the reactionary Irish landlords, the marquess of Clanricarde and the earl of Donoughmore, two of Mason's cronies. In a debate on 1 March in the house of lords, Clanricarde referred to the Kearsage recruits and remarked that 'the men were dismissed in the American uniform, and we had heard that American uniforms were to be seen in other parts of Ireland, even in Dublin.' He also said that 'he had no hesitation in saying that if the confederates had done one-tenth of what the federals had done it would have been put a stop to long ago.' Earl Russell in defence mentioned conscription of British subjects in the Confederacy for which there was no redress because the British consuls had been driven out.

In the same debate, the earl of Donoughmore laid the blame on the fenians - a misconception prevalent among a great many West Britons:

I allude to the society called the Fenian Brotherhood....The object of this society is to recruit for the American army in Ireland, and to promote a feeling of disaffection to the British Crown; and it holds out a vague hope to its members that, when the American war is finished, the federal army will turn its arms against this country....It is notorious that the

1 F. Lousada to Lord Russell, 15 Mar. 1864 (S.P.O., R.P. 14,058); and Correspondence respecting enlistment of British subjects, p. 1, [C.3385], loc.cit.

Fenian Brotherhood have enlisted a large number of the Irish people in the interest of America—that some of the members walk openly about the streets in the American uniform. It is, therefore, time for Her Majesty's government to act in the matter, and by a strong hand to suppress this ridiculous movement. If they do not take action in time they may, perhaps, in the end be driven to shed the blood of their own people.

In June, Clanricarde reiterated his charges in an address for the papers on the enlistment of Irish emigrants. Russell again replied against the charges, said that there was nothing illegal in the conduct of the Union, but added: 'Those papers, I think, tell a story very discreditable to the American republic.' He also warned Irishmen against the concocted labor schemes of bounty profiteers. However, in answering the hostile remarks of Clanricarde, he defended the government's policy of neutrality, stating: 'If, therefore, we have to complain of great injuries on the part of the Federal States, we have no less reason to complain of the conduct of the Confederate States; and if war is our only remedy we must go to war with both belligerents...'

In the house of commons, in a debate on 14 March 1864, John Roebuck, M.P. for Sheffield, while questioning Palmerston on Union recruiting in Ireland, attacked the government for being too pro-North. The wily prime minister justified the government's policy on the question, agilely straddling the fence of neutrality:

1 Ibid., pp. 1328-30.

2 Hansard, clxxv. 1439-54.
We are bound, for example, not to permit enlistments and organization of men, and also to prevent the equipment and armament of ships. The one is an easy thing to prevent. The armament and equipment of a ship is a notoriety. A ship is a tangible thing; you can see with your eyes the progress made in its construction and equipment; you can interfere at the proper moment, and lay your hand on it to prevent a breach of the law being committed. But with regard to the enlistment of men, you have not the same means. The hon. and learned gentleman says that great enlistments of men have been made in Ireland for the federals. That may be so or not, but in order to punish those who have been guilty of that breach of our laws, you must have proof — proof which is not easily obtained. I dare say, speaking only from common report, it is very likely there are in Ireland agents acting under the orders of the federal government to induce fighting men to go and enlist in the armies of the federals; but they are much too wise and cunning to make their enlistments in Ireland... I say, therefore, that though the statement of the hon. and learned gentleman may be substantially true, that inducements are held out in Ireland to people to go to the United States, with the intention that when they get there they shall be inveigled into the army, yet to found any legal prosecution on these transactions you must have proof, which we are, as yet, unable to get.

In the same debate, John Bright stated the attitude of the radicals. He angrily attacked Roebuck and criticized Palmerston's hypocritical concern for the Irish. Bright noted that in 1863 Palmerston 'approved very much of the emigration of a large number of people from Ireland to America. In fact, it is said that the noble lord at the head of the government generously contributed to assist not a few poor persons on his own estates to leave Ireland and cross the Atlantic.' Bright asked Roebuck:

How dare the hon. and learned gentleman with his logical mind — how dare he assume that a foreign government is breaking international law and breaking our municipal law to induce Irishmen to emigrate to America, when he must know perfectly

1 Hansard, clxxiii. 1916-23.
well that there are already overwhelming attractions, apart from the question of war, which would take Irishmen to America — and when he knows further that the bounty for enlistment is not, as the noble lord said, 100 dollars, but very much nearer £100?

Bright concluded: 'The only marvel is that any Irishman who is not the owner of land, or a man of some capital, should remain in that blighted and unhappy country.'

Up until the end of the parliamentary session of 1864, protests against Union recruiting were registered in parliament. On 28 July in the commons, Lord Edward Howard, a son of the duke of Norfolk, M.P. for Arundel, and a champion of Roman Catholic rights, described how Irish emigrants were tricked into enlisting and enumerated a number of camouflaged incidents of recruiting in Ireland.

John Pope Hennesssey, M.P. for King's county, supported Lord Howard's charges and attributed the great departure to the intention of enlisting and representations of high bounties but claimed that the Irish in America were actually badly off. During 1864 the reaction of the Irish public to Union recruiting of Irishmen came to a head. The Irish people had as much as they could take and almost unanimously condemned the Union for its treatment of the Irish. The most interesting reaction was among the extreme nationalists, the fenians and

1 Ibid., pp. 1924-26.
2 Hansard, clxxvi. 2161-72.
3 Ibid., pp. 2175-7.
their sympathizers, where a division of opinion developed over the question of Union recruiting. In addition, the public controversy provided the fenians with a useful weapon. Most of the other factions reacted as would be expected.

The Dublin Castle government approved of emigration to improve the economic situation in Ireland but regretted the Union recruiting. In a speech at the annual lord mayor's banquet at the Mansion House, Dublin, on 4 February 1864, the lord lieutenant, the earl of Carlisle, thought emigration would help Ireland but regretted 'that Ireland should part with any of her hardy and generous sons merely to supply food for the vultures which hover over the Lethean plains of Virginia and Tennessee.' At the Dublin Cattle Show on 30 March, he mourned that 'the bone and marrow of the rising youth of Ireland, instead of being expended in wholesome labour upon their own fertile soil, should be allowed to rot and moulder on the far battle fields of America.'

For the liberal-minded West Britons, Sir William Wills Wilde, father of Oscar, in a lecture in 1864 expressed their regret that so many Celtic-Irishmen were 'shedding their blood for hire in an alien cause, in which they feel neither interest nor sympathy.' And Archbishop Paul Cullen of Dublin in a pastoral on 1 May 1864 expressed the sentiments of

1 The vice regal speeches...of the late earl of Carlisle, pp. 102, 209-10.

2 W. W. Wilde, Ireland, past and present; the land and the people (1864), p. 29.
the 'castle catholics' and most of the clergy in denouncing Irish enlistment in the Union army.¹

The attitude of the moderate nationalists toward Irish enlistment in the Union army was well summed up by the Cork Examiner:

The Northern Irishmen - the Irish-born American citizen - does a lawful and legitimate as well as a natural act in enlisting in the Northern army; but the Irishman who quits Ireland for the purpose of enlisting in the same ranks plays the part of a mere mercenary, who hires himself at so many dollars to kill and destroy so many innocent and unoffending people, or to conquer, subjugate and devastate a country whose citizens are fighting for their independence, and defending their homes and altars.²

Among the extreme nationalists, a rift developed over enlistment of Irishmen into the Union army. Here was an issue on which the fenians had to commit themselves, and they were forced into it by the United Irishman and Galway-American. This organ of the National Brotherhood of St. Patrick, a fenian front throughout the United Kingdom, was edited by an Irish-American, James Roche, formerly of the New York Phoenix. Apparently alone among nationalist newspapers, the United Irishman wholeheartedly encouraged Irish enlistment in the Union army. In commenting on the first news of the Kearsage affair, it remarked: 'We do not believe that any men were being shipped, but if they were, it only shows how eager the people are to escape from under the paternal government of

¹ Catholic Telegraph, 7 May 1864.
² Examiner, 9 Jan. 1864.
Palmerston and Carlisle, Her Majesty's pastoral philosopher for Ireland.' At the same time, it went on to attack those nationalists who discouraged emigration and recruiting:

Irish journals were bribed to write up the cause of the South. ...The Irish were warned in journals which they fondly, but falsely believed their friends, not to emigrate to America, and not to take part in a war which concerned them not. All this has been useless in the end, though it must be owned that immense evil has been done by those corrupted prints, and many of our easily duped countrymen have been fairly blinded by their sophistry. But all will be well. The real state of the case has been discovered, and the patriot no longer laments the departure of every shipload of emigrants...

The United Irishman, which was on especially good terms with the American consul, William West, gave publicity to Finney and commented after he left with a hundred men for Boston: '...Mr. Finney is expected to return soon again under better auspices, to bring out a large number of the youth of this impoverished country to become citizens of a more favored land...'.

All this was too much for the fenians, and their newly founded newspaper, the Irish People, attacked the United Irishman. The Irish People expressed scepticism about Finney's scheme from the beginning and a week after the United Irishman's editorial praising Finney, launched into an attack on the pro-North newspaper. The Irish People said that 'the

1 United Irishman and Galway-American, 14 Nov. 1863.
2 Ibid., 27 Feb. 1864.
3 Irish People, 23 Jan. 1864.
Irishman who can live at home, and who leaves Ireland now, deserts his motherland in the hour of her utmost need.' It condemned the United Irishman and those nationalists who encouraged emigration and enlisting and attempted to 'sneer at John O'Mahony, because he did not precipitate himself into this deplorable war...' It asked its countrymen to heed O'Mahony's advice at the beginning of the war: 'He told them that they were not citizens of the republic, and that consequently the quarrel was none of theirs. He told them that the 'soldier of fortune was but a mercenary, who sold his blood, and shed the blood of others for pay...'  

The United Irishman struck back. It said that 'the ultimate salvation of this island is centered in "Irish manhood out of Ireland."' It accused the Irish People of regarding Meagher as a mercenary and added: 'The Irish People also has placed the Irishman who has joined the American service on a level with... one who, "for a shilling a day, becomes a mercenary tool of English tyranny."

The Irish People was fostering 'hostility towards the United States' and creating 'a feeling of sympathy for the Southern rebels...'. Its attitude would 'only give aid to the enemy, and strengthen the arm that smites us.'

Actually, the enlistment of American fenians, principally in the Union army, was a cause of friction between John

1 Ibid., 5 Mar. 1864.
2 United Irishman, 12 Mar. 1864.
O'Mahony and James Stephens. O'Mahony stated that fifty branches of the brotherhood in America became extinct as a result of enlistments.¹ To the Irish fenians, Irish independence was more important than the forced restoration of the American Union and should take precedence, even among Northern Irish-born Americans. As for the Union enlistment of young men still in Ireland — potential or actual fenians — the I.R.B. believed it to be a crime to emigrate for that purpose.

Throughout the rest of 1864, the Irish People argued against emigration to the States and any Irish participation in the war. In an editorial entitled 'Deserters and traitors,' it said that emigration to America 'simply argues the blindest insanity of Irishmen to go there,' for there they would find appalling difficulties, if not ruin or death. The emigrants were traitors because their emigration from Ireland was 'a very good thing in the eyes of our English masters.'² The Irish People laid emphasis on the need of self-reliance and the real call of duty for all patriots in Ireland but expressed the hope that 'battle-trained exiles' would return with a vengeance. 'Let each man do his allotted work as if the fate of his country "were staked on him alone"...It is for us not to let the fields lie fallow. We look for help to our countrymen in America. But let us not forget that they look to us.'³

¹ D'Arcy, Fenian movement, pp. 21-2.
² Irish People, 6 Aug. 1864.
³ Ibid., 19 Nov. 1864.
Though the fenians deplored Union recruiting of Irishmen, some of them decided to take advantage of the controversy stirred up by confederate supporters over the alleged violation of the Foreign Enlistment Act. These fenians realized that rumors of the activities of American recruiters were creating a lot of excitement in Ireland and evidently felt that they could capitalize on it and camouflage their own designs. Thus, some of the fenians decided to assume the appearance of American agents while performing public services in behalf of the brotherhood.

One such incident occurred at a Rotunda meeting on 22 February 1864, organized by the Sullivanites to protest against the erection of a statue to Prince Albert in College Green, Dublin, and urge the erection of a statue to Henry Grattan instead. The fenians could not care less about what statue stood there and hoped to discredit the moderate nationalists by disrupting the meeting. A good number of fenians attended, some of whom wore federal American uniforms, and at a signal charged the platform, prevented Alexander Sullivan from speaking, and broke up the meeting. The fenians wore American uniforms to make their demonstration more dramatic and as a symbol of their belief in the use of armed force.¹

The Times in a leader on the meeting sneered at the whole affair: 'The Fenian Brotherhood have gained their first victory on the sacred soil of Ireland....That long-expected

American uniform appeared in Dublin, and if there were any powder in the Irish magazines now was the time for it to explode.... The fighters are said to be soldiers from the United States, sent over to drill the mechanics of the city of Dublin.¹

Another incident involved Patrick 'Pagan' O'Leary, one of the more colorful fenians.² A report in Saunders News-Letter from Athlone, dated 14 November 1864, stated that police had in custody a John Murphy 'an agent for the federal army' who attempted to recruit soldiers of the 25th Regiment in Athlone. O'Leary alias Murphy was reported as saying that since America was willing to assist Ireland in her struggle, he thought 'that Irishmen ought to aid his adopted country in the present war.' Interestingly, he had about twenty copies of the Irish People in his travelling bag.³

The Freeman's Journal in an editorial, however, had doubts about Murphy's purpose: 'He admits one thing - he did say the Irish were despised in the American as well as the British army. "They were called the dirty Irish all over the globe." A man in pursuit of Irish recruits would not enter

¹ The Times, 24 Feb. 1864.

² He lived in the States for a while, at first studying for the priesthood but leaving the seminary to fight in the Mexican war. He believed that Saint Patrick had demoralized the Irish by teaching them to forgive their enemies, and he attacked the 'Eyetalian' Church (Devoy, Recollections, pp. 133-4).

³ Quoted in Dublin Warder, 19 Nov. 1864.
on his mission by telling his dupes that their countrymen were despised in the American army. ¹

These doubts were confirmed, for a year later in a report of the police raid on the office of the Irish People it was stated that 'Pagan' O'Leary 'was convicted under the name of John Murphy and sentenced to penal servitude for seducing or trying to seduce soldiers from their allegiance....' ² Also, it appears that police reports in March 1864 of a man referred to as James Murphy, who wore an American uniform and posed as a federal recruiting agent in Dublin and Tipperary but probably was a 'humbug,' most likely refer again to O'Leary's efforts to recruit for the fenians. ³

It is impossible to say how often fenian recruiting was confused with federal recruiting; but it is evident that many Irishmen, including moderate nationalists and priests, thought the two synonymous. The fenians took advantage of the confusion.

Finally, it should be noted that the participation of the Irish in the civil war had its effect on the history of Irish nationalism after the war. First of all, it provided the Irish fenians with over 150 army officers of the Union and Confederacy for key positions in the organization throughout

¹ Freeman', 19 Nov. 1864.
² Ibid., 4 Oct. 1865.
³ Police reports, March 1864 (S.P.O., R.P. 13,062; 13,120; 13,325).
Ireland and Great Britain. In fact, from Devoy's Recollections it appears that an American officer was put in charge of almost every district in Ireland in the plans for the insurrection. However, in a more romantic way, the civil war had its effect on Irish traditions. It is interesting to note that one of the 'Manchester martyrs,' the three young Irishmen hanged for attempting the rescue of two fenian prisoners in Manchester in November 1867, during which a policeman was accidentally shot dead, was Captain Michael O'Brien, who had been a non-commissioned officer in the Union army. To commemorate the 'Manchester martyrs,' T. D. Sullivan wrote 'God save Ireland,' the Irish national anthem until the establishment of the Irish Republic and 'The soldier's song.' 'God save Ireland' was written to the air of 'Tramp, tramp, tramp, the boys are marching,' a famous civil war song brought back to Ireland by the American fenian officers. Indeed, after the bloodshed was forgotten, a romantic aura developed around the war and Irish participation in it. It proved to be another reservoir of Irish heroism from which the extreme nationalists could draw stories to inspire young men.

In conclusion, it is apparent that the great loss of Irish lives in the war and the manner in which the Irish were

1 Devoy, Recollections, p. 92.

2 Ibid., pp. 239-40, 244.

3 T. D. Sullivan, National songs, no. 3, p. 2; Devoy, op. cit., p. 39.
treated in the North, where they were principally concentrated, turned the Irish public against the war aims of the Union. The constabulary report on the state of Ireland in 1863 concluded that the politically disaffected and those who had relatives or friends in America sympathized with the federals but wished to see the struggle ended.\(^{1}\) This government report would have been more accurate had it stated that the above two groups sympathized with the federals in their disputes with Great Britain but that those who had a strong personal interest in the war desired peace at all costs like the 'copperheads' or Southern sympathizers in the North.

An excerpt from a contemporary poem addressed to the Irish fighting in the war sums up the sentiments of the Irish public on Irish participation in the war. It points out the justified debt of gratitude owed by Irish-Americans to the United States which had generously befriended them when they were in need. However, the author believes that Catholic Irishmen should oppose useless bloodshed and should save their sacrifices for the more pressing cause of Irish freedom:

\[ 
\text{'Enough! enough! Your blood was given,} \\
\text{As might beseem, a grateful band -} \\
\text{But mightier is the claim of heaven,} \\
\text{And urgent that of motherland.} \]^{2}

\(^{1}\) Sir H. J. Brownrigg, \textit{Report on the state of Ireland in the year 1863}, p. 46.

\(^{2}\) 'A voice from Ireland to the Irish' by 'The Kilkenny man,' in \textit{Nation}, 7 Sept. 1861.
CHAPTER VII

FACTORS INFLUENCING IRISH PUBLIC OPINION ON THE CIVIL WAR

1. Religious, p.311.
2. Economic, p.335.
1. Religious factors.

According to figures based on the census of 1861, religious professions of the population of Ireland were as follows: Roman catholic, 77.7%; Church of Ireland, 11.9%; presbyterian, 9%; and others (methodist, baptist, and quaker), less than 1% each. Catholics comprised 85% to 95% of the population of three provinces, Connaught, Leinster, and Munster; but in Ulster they had a bare majority of 50.5%. In two counties the presbyterians were the leading religious group, in Antrim with 53% and Down with 45%. Belfast was also a presbyterian stronghold. Outside of Ulster, the Church of Ireland was the largest protestant church.

In mid-Victorian Ireland, the catholic hierarchy and clergy were one of the most important groups in moulding public opinion. Their advice on all things was much respected by their flocks. The American civil war was no exception. In a leader on the peace address to Governor Horatio Seymour of New York in the autumn of 1864, sponsored by Mason and his confederate agents in the United Kingdom, urging the North to end the war and permit the South to depart in peace, The Times noted that of the 300,000 'good people' who had signed the address 'nearly half of the signatures are Irish, obtained through the influence of the Roman catholic priesthood...'. It then remarked:

There is a mystery, indeed, about the Irish signatures which we don't pretend to fathom, for the fact of 130,000 Irish peace-makers is hardly consistent with the evidently federal sympathy...
of Ireland, as seen in the extensive emigration to the North and actual enlistment in the federal cause. The priests, it is true, cannot wish to see their flocks scattered far away, or butchered in the desperate operations of war, specially assigned by the federal generals to raw recruits and hundred days' men, so we may reasonably suspect that the Irish priesthood take a more sensible view of the American war than the political agitators with whom they are otherwise ready to act. 1

The Scotsman also noted that 'a large number of the catholic clergy of Ireland' signed the peace address.

The American consul at Galway and Dublin, William West, wrote to Seward of the 'caustic abuse and sarcasm of us, a feeling which I would privately inform you, much and extensively prevails among the catholic priesthood of Ireland, who are chagrined at their people flying to our enlightened country, the freedom of which loosens the bonds of mental slavery by which their faith enthralls them in this land of ignorance and superstition'.

A confederate agent in Ireland, Father John Bannon, formerly a chaplain in the confederate army, reported that 'through the active sympathy and cooperation of the parish priests a great revolution has been accomplished in the sentiments of the Irish people on the American question...'.

1 The Times, 12 Oct., 1864. The Times like many West Britons confused Irish support for the United States in its relations with England with support for the Northern war effort.


3 West to Seward, 6 Oct., 1864 (N.A., Dublin dispatches vol. 4).

4 Bannon to J. P. Benjamin, 9 Mar., 1864 (Pickett papers, box N, no. 57).
At the end of the war, the secretary at the U.S. legation at Rome wrote regarding the impression of many that the Pope had sympathized with the South: 'At heart I do not think the Pope wished the Southern cause to succeed. The Irish priesthood in Ireland, brought a great lever to bear by saying we were using up the Irish in the war like dogs'.

The Confederacy also had the support of the most important leader in the Catholic Church in Ireland, Paul Cullen, archbishop of Dublin and apostolic delegate, who in 1866 became Ireland's first cardinal. Father Bannon reported that at a gathering of parish priests and bishops from various parts of Ireland in February 1864, Archbishop Cullen 'declared himself in favour of our cause and approved of my appeal, and the manner adopted for placing it before the people'. With the Archbishop's approval, two of Father Bannon's pro-South broadsheets were posted on the gates and doors of Roman Catholic churches in Dublin in March, 1864. In a pastoral letter on 1 May 1864, Archbishop Cullen expressed his sentiments on the war, while attacking the Fenians and federal enlistment of Irishmen:

1 J. C. Hooker to W. H. Seward, 1 Sept., 1865, quoted in United States ministers to the Papal States, instructions and despatches, 1848-1868, ed. Leo Stock, p. 347.
2 Bannon to Benjamin, 17 Feb., 1864 (Pickett papers, box N, no. 57).
3 The Times, 8 Mar., 1864.
Very probably also, the great projects proposed by the Fenian Brotherhood and their doings beyond the seas have no other object but to induce brave young men to go to America, there to fight the battles of the States, and to sacrifice their lives in the swamps of Virginia, or on the battlefields of Louisiana or Mississippi. At all events, it is evident that, as those whose aid we are promised to free us from oppression cannot terminate their own dissections, or reestablish the union of the country in which they live, we, who are separated from them by the waters of the vast ocean, across which it would be almost impossible to transport a large army, especially in the face of hostile and powerful fleets, I say, should hope for no good result from their promises or interference.

There were many reasons for the sympathy of the Irish catholic hierarchy and clergy for the Confederacy. In the realm of religious ideology, they were inclined toward conservatism. In May 1864, Father Bannon wrote that 'the clergy...all now sympathize with the South as with the friend of civil and religious liberty, and pray for her success as for the preservation of the only conservative political element in America...'. They, like Lord Acton, equated the Northern cause with the cause of the abolitionists and thus opposed it, while supporting the South, in their opinion the repository of conservatism, which resisted the dreadful doctrine of the Rights of Man. The abolitionists like the French Jacobins were hostile to the catholic spirit. The Irish catholic clergy also viewed the Northern cause in the light of nineteenth century continental liberalism, which was threatening the temporal power of the papacy. Many of the clergy in 1859

1 Catholic Telegraph, 7 May 1864.
2 Bannon to Benjamin, 22 May 1864 (loc.cit.).
3 Lionel Kochan, Acton on history, pp. 48-9. The Tablet, e.g. 8 Nov., 1862, also agreed with this line of reasoning.
were influential to a degree in giving the conservative party a majority of the Irish seats in parliament as a protest against Palmerston's support of Italian national unity. Cullen remained loyal to the liberal party, supported Acton, a liberal candidate in Carlow, but still had a fear of the revolutionary anti-clerical liberalism which he saw in Italy and thought he saw in the Northern States.

The Catholic clergy's opposition to the Union cause and the Republican party was also confirmed by the fact that the only prominent Irish-American to support the Lincoln administration and the Union (Republican) party in 1864 was Thomas Francis Meagher who had been denounced by members of the U.S. Catholic hierarchy as a 'red republican' and had expressed his sympathy for Mazzini and Kossuth. Meagher also attacked the excessive influence of the clergy on his fellow countrymen, denouncing 'the brainless ridiculous donkeys who bray and kick up the dust when poked with a crozier'.

The religious convictions of the Catholic clergy alienated them from the radicals, like Cairnes, who ardently supported Catholic rights, such as the disestablishment of the Church of Ireland, but opposed the Catholics' education policy, based on segregation of religions, and their blind support of the papacy. The radicals were the principal advocates of religious liberty,

1 James J. Auchtunty, 'Acton's election as an Irish member of parliament' in E.H.R., lxi. 394-405 (Sept. 1946).

2 Carl Wittke, The Irish in America, pp. 85-6; Meagher to Smith O'Brien, 8 Aug., 1856, (quoted in Athearn, Meagher, p. 35.)
but the catholic clergy were only interested in catholic rights. Ultramontanism was at its peak. O'Connell himself had been essentially a radical and a friend of Bright's and Cobden's. As has been seen, 'the liberator' was also the darling of the abolitionists. Though he had no great understanding of the complex nature of the slavery issue in the United States, he did realize the implications of the abolition of slavery on the battle for reform in the United Kingdom. The Irish catholic clergy during the civil war disliked slavery but thought that the abolitionists were the enemy of catholic rights. The clergy in Ireland adopted the temporizing tactics of the catholic clergy in the United States on the slavery issue before the war and maintained this attitude throughout the war. Professor Cairnes wrote 'that under the democratic institutions of America, religious liberty is enjoyed as it never was enjoyed elsewhere - as it is not enjoyed in this country...'. To the Irish catholic clergy, the United States was a symbol of the debasement of religious liberty where religion did not flourish and catholics were in danger of losing their faith and their rights. Though the clergy was reform-minded and had much in common with the radicals, the Irish clergy's religious ideology often prevented them from aligning with the radicals as it did on the questions of southern independence and support for American abolitionists.

1 Cairnes to Nesbitt, 9 Oct., 1862, (N.L.I., MS 8941-6).
The Irish Catholic clergy generally shared D'Arcy McGee's views on the United States where he had lived in exile before moving to Canada. He considered the American republic as 'but an experiment' and equated American democracy with know-nothingism or 'mobocracy'. Also, the Catholic church in the United States was, according to McGee, losing 60% of the children of Catholic parents. It is no wonder that the Irish Catholic clergy had little love for the American Union, which was controlled by the Republican party—composed of elements that had been traditionally inimical toward immigrants—and where Catholicism was an impediment to an immigrant's chances of success. It was too much for the Irish priesthood to stomach when those whom they considered to be the persecutors of the Irish-American Catholics pleaded with them to sacrifice their lives for the Union.

Letters from Irish emigrants strengthened the clergy's suspicions regarding the threat to Catholicism in the United States. An Irish Union soldier, stationed in Washington, D.C., wrote to his uncle in County Limerick: 'This is the most wicked place I ever saw for cursing, blasphemy and other immoral habits. They don't care for priests here nor never care about going to Mass or confession'. Later he wrote from Washington: 'It is a very little of the Irish women that keep themselves correct here. I don't see any class of people here so foolish as the Irish. When

1 Nation, 24 Mar., 1855, The Irish migration to North America in the second half of the nineteenth century quoted in p. 342.
they get paid they get drunk and lose their place... You were speaking about I going to Mass and confession. That is a thing that very many in the government employment can't do. I did not see a priest's face here but once. I don't expect to go to Mass until Christmas day. I must attend to the forage house on Sunday as well as week days.

Another factor turning the catholic clergy against the Union cause was the encouragement given the fenians by many northern politicians. As has been seen in his pastoral of May 1864, Dr. Cullen associated the fenians with Union recruiting in Ireland and denounced their expectations of assistance from the United States in gaining Irish independence. He considered the fenians to be anti-catholic and of the same type as the Italian revolutionaries. He wrote: 'If ever an attempt is made to abridge the rights and liberties of the catholic church in Ireland, it will not be by the English government, nor by a "No Popery" cry in England, but by the revolutionary and irreligious nationalists of Ireland'. Archbishop Manning shared Cullen's opinion and said: 'Show me an Irishman who has lost the faith and I will show you a fenian'. In the view of many of the catholic bishops and priests, the North was fomenting an anti-clerical revolutionary spirit in Ireland.

1 Maurice Wolfe to his uncle, 25 Sept., and 19 Nov., 1863 (Wolfe letters, Irish Folklore Commission, Dublin).

2 Quoted in E. S. Purcell, Life of Cardinal Manning, ii. 610.

3 Ibid.
Two other factors influenced the Catholic clergy in siding with the Confederate cause, the pro-Union speeches in Ireland and later the apparent change of heart of Archbishop Hughes of New York and the letter from Pope Pius IX to Jefferson Davis. Archbishop Hughes had been an ardent champion of the Union. In 1861 and 1862 he travelled to Ireland and the continent, advocating the Union cause. On his way to Rome with Thurlow Weed, chairman of the Republican party, Hughes passed through Ireland in November 1861. The Nation, quoted the New York Irish-American, stating that the purpose of his visit was 'to obtain a sufficient number of Catholic clergymen to afford a chaplain to each of the Union regiments requiring one' and 'to correct the erroneous ideas now prevalent there in regard to the Southern rebellion'. His principal visit, however, occurred upon returning from the continent for the laying of the cornerstone of the Catholic University of Ireland in July, 1862. In public speeches he presented the Union cause in a favourable light and encouraged emigration.

Unfortunately, like many Irish-Americans returning to Ireland, Hughes made an unintentional political faux pas. He received a delegation from the extreme nationalist organization, the National Brotherhood of St. Patrick, and delivered an address sympathizing with their revolutionary aims. The Irish hierarchy reacted,

1 Quoted in Nation, 23 Nov., 1861.
3 Nation, 26 July 1863, and Works of Hughes, II. 528.
and Hughes, as he was leaving, retracted his remarks, claiming that they were not for public consumption and that he was misquoted. Controversy raged over his speech throughout the rest of 1862. He offended the Irish hierarchy and alienated the extreme nationalists with his retraction. Hughes claimed he dreaded secret societies and maintained that he was tricked by the extreme nationalists, in a letter to Archbishop Cullen in December 1862. Contrary to what R. J. Purcell writes in Hughes's biographical sketch in the Dictionary of American biography, that his visit to Ireland was influential in strengthening Irish opinion, which was strongly pro-Northern despite the anti-American propaganda of the ascendancy press, the visit had little effect in influencing Irish public opinion the way the U.S. government had hoped. Evidently, the Lincoln administration believed Hughes's mission was a success and intimated to the Holy See that it would be pleased to see Hughes given the Red Hat.

In the summer of 1863, Hughes's attitude toward the war changed, as reported in the newspapers, and he appeared to be converted to the Irish point of view. This change of mind occurred at about the same time that Hughes received a letter from Pius IX

1 Nation, 16 and 23 Aug., 27 Dec., 1862.


4 Hassard, op. cit., p. 485.
encouraging him to endeavor 'to restore forthwith the desired tranquillity and peace by which the happiness of both the Christian and civil republic is principally maintained'. In a sermon on 21 June 1863, before the draft riots, Hughes said that he was in favor 'of a happy termination of the present difficulties, even though it should be attended by the division of a great people'.

Hughes thus placed himself in the ranks of the 'copperheads' - calling for peace, even at the cost of disunion. This change of heart was another factor strengthening the pro-South sympathies of the Irish.

On 13 November 1863, Dudley Mann, the confederate commissioner to the Holy See, visited Pius IX and informed him that were it not for European recruits, chiefly Irish, the Lincoln administration would have been compelled to abandon the war. The Pope was presented with a letter from Jefferson Davis, expressing his desire for peace and asking for the Pope's intervention. The Pope promised Mann that he would write a letter to Davis which could be published. The letter was addressed to the 'Illustrious and Honourable Jefferson Davis, President of the Confederate States of America'. The Pope expressed his desire for peace and told Davis: '...You and your people are animated by the same desire for peace and tranquility...'. The Pontiff remarked further: 'Oh that the other people also of the States and their rulers,

1 Duplicate of letter to Hughes, dated 18 Oct., 1862 but only received 'a few weeks ago' in Nation, 15 Aug., 1863.
2 Report in The Times, 6 July and carried in Nation, 11 July 1863.
3 Owsley, Dáilémac, pp. 521-4.
Considering seriously how cruel and how deplorable is this internecine war, would receive and embrace the counsels of peace and tranquillity. Actually, the Pope did not commit himself to any course of action, but the letter gave the impression that he sympathized with those who desired peace at all costs.

Father Bannon, the confederate agent in Ireland, reported that he distributed a copy of the Pope’s letter to Davis, together with his own comments interpreting the letter, to every parish priest (2976) in Ireland. On 11 March 1864 Dudley Mann reported that ‘under the auspices of the letter of Pio Nono to the president, formidable demonstrations have been made in Ireland against the efforts of Lincoln and company to secure additional immigrants from that portion of the British realm’.

In conjunction with the question of religious factors influencing Irish public opinion, it should be noted that the confederate agents in Ireland used the religious approach to influence public opinion. In his letter instructing Lieutenant James L. Capston for his campaign in Ireland, the confederate secretary of state, Judah P. Benjamin, wrote:

Contrast the policy of the Federal and Confederate States in former times in their treatment of foreigners, in order to satisfy Irishmen where true sympathy in their favour was found in periods

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1 Printed on a Bannon circular (Pickett papers, box N, no. 57).


3 Mann to J. P. Benjamin, quoted in Owsley, op.cit., p. 526.
of trial. At the North the know-nothing party, based on hatred to foreigners and especially to catholics, was triumphant in its career. In the South it was crushed, Virginia taking the lead in trampling it under foot. In this war such has been the hatred of the New England puritans to Irishmen and catholics, that in several instances the chapels and places of worship of the Irish catholics have been burnt or shamefully desecrated by the regiments of volunteers from New England.

A circular Capston distributed throughout Ireland contained the following warnings:

CAUTION TO EMIGRANTS
persecution of catholics in America.
The tabernacle overthrown.
The Blessed Host scattered on the ground;
Benediction veil made a horse cover off;
All the sacred vessels carried off;
The monuments of the dead defaced;
The priest imprisoned, and afterwards exposed on an island to alligators and snakes;
His house robbed of everything;
Let Irishmen remember the know-nothing party that orangeism gave birth to, the latter now prevailing all over the United States, some years ago when they entered the convents and insulted the nuns at their devotions; The same party openly and publicly avowing their intention to disfranchise all foreigners, and wipe out catholicism.

Most of the confederate propaganda in Ireland was more cleverly constructed than Capston's. By far the most influential of the confederate agents was Irish-born Father John Bannon, who had been a chaplain in the confederate army in Missouri. His job was to influence the catholic clergy and through them their flocks.

1 Benjamin to Capston, 3 July 1863, in 'Capston's special mission,' Southern Historical Society Papers (1896), xxiv. 203.

2 Accompanying Capston's letter of 9 Nov., 1863 (Pickett papers, box N. no. 56).
This he very successfully did, with letters to parish priests, broadsides posted on church doors, and letters to various newspapers under the pen name 'Sacerdos'. Typical of his successful approach was his letter sent to all the parish priests of Ireland:

Rev. Sir, - Presuming on the interest which every catholic priest feels in the welfare of the catholic church throughout the world, and specially relying on your interest in the well-being of the Irish catholic emigrant in America, I send you the accompanying letters for perusal. 

The statements therein advanced concerning the relations of the dominant Northern party and catholicity in the United States are matters of past history. The incidents narrated regarding the unredressed and unanswered outrages perpetrated against the catholic church, her priests and people, by the Northern soldiers, are only a summary of the catalogue, which may be verified in detail by reference to the files of the New York Freeman's Journal, or Metropolitan Record, the only concise text and reliable catholic journal in the United States.

That no such atrocities have been perpetrated by the authorities of the Confederacy, that no catholic church has been wantonly desecrated or destroyed, I assert not only on my own responsibility and experience of two years with the army in the field, but also on the evidence of a Southern prelate who made the statement in his regular report to the cardinal prefect of propaganda, which letter I had the honor to convey out of the Confederacy, and transmit to Rome at the same time as the letter from President Davis was transmitted to his Holiness.

Should your reverence coincide with me in my desire to counteract the malign influence of the Yankee agents for some time engaged in misinforming, deceiving, and luring the enthusiastic and too credulous youth of Ireland into the Yankee army to fight against their fellow-countrymen in the Southern ranks, and subjugate the foreigner's friends and the defender's of civil and religious liberty in America, you would contribute much to frustrate such an object by having the accompanying circular posted in the neighbourhood of your churches for perusal by the people on next Sunday.

Should you think well to explain the statements of the circular to your people, and discredit and discountenance the

1 - broadsides containing letters of the Pope to Davis and Archbishop Hughes; letters of Mitchel, O'Brien, and Martin; letters of 'Sacerdos'; and cuttings from the Freeman's Journal.
agents of the dominant yankee (or American Orange) party, by giving the weight of your influence and voice in behalf of the South, and against the fanatics of the North, you would thereby help to second the "most"earnest desires" of the Holy Father, rejoice the hearts of the vast majority of the body of the hierarchy, and people of the American catholic church, and by your co-operation oblige,

Reverend Sir,

your obedient Servant,

In another letter on a broadside entitled 'Sacerdos to the young men of Ireland', Father Bannon used religious arguments to discourage enlisting in the Union army. He quoted St. Alphonsus Ligouri that a foreigner "cannot take part in any war unless he be first sure that it is a just war." Bannon also wrote: 'It is only before europe that the yankees profess to war against slavery. In America they profess to war for the re-establishment of the Union, by force of arms'. He pleaded with the young men: '... For your own conscience only, and for the fair fame of Ireland, sell not your swords, stake not your lives and salvation, by partaking in an unjust, cruel, and barbarous war'.

Religious motives were an important factor in determining the editorial policy of many catholic newspapers, whether nationalist or 'castle catholic'. This was apparent in many editorials. The Tablet equated the Northern-republican administration with the liberalism treated in Pius IX's Syllabus of errors:

1 Printed letter of Father John Bannon's to the clergy of Ireland, Dublin, January 1864 (Bannon letters, loc.cit.).

2 'Sacerdos to the young men of Ireland', (Bannon letters, loc.cit.).

3 Ibid.

4 Ibid.
The truth is, that the prevalence of liberalism diminishes the freedom of a country... It is evident enough, even to the whigs and their followers, that liberal principles have been made odious by the president of the Federal States and his ministers. ...Pure democracy is not so pleasant in practice as it is in theory, when you have old institutions to pull down... If Mr. Lincoln had not shown signs of hostility to England, his manner of governing the country might have escaped censure from his friends here. The Manchester school defends him still; but then, they have interests like his, and Mr. Cobden has not yet made himself master of the state. In America the army of the North is made up of foreigners, liberal refugees, who, flying from what they call tyranny at home, exult in becoming the slaves of a most odious tyranny on the other side of the Atlantic. 1

The Tablet so hated 'liberal' abolitionists that it said 'we rejoice to know' that the catholics in the U.S. oppose the abolition of slavery. 2

The letter of the pope to Jefferson Davis provided the Cork Examiner with a justification for its editorial policy of peace at all costs:

...Irish catholics at least - who profess and indeed feel such devotion to the Holy See - should imitate the example set them by the Holy Father, who in his letter to President Davis - whom he treats with singular respect and consideration, and almost affection - expresses the most fervent hopes of a speedy and happy cessation of that dreadful struggle which every christian man despairs. The Pope feels and expresses himself, not in the language of a partisan - but in the true catholic spirit. 3

Many nationalist newspapers gave examples of how catholics were better treated in the South than North. The moderate nationalist Kilkenny Journal in July 1862 remarked: '...We believe the

1 Tablet, 8 Nov., 1862.
2 Ibid., 15 Nov., 1862.
3 Examiner, 9 Jan., 1864.
Church was always more free and unfettered in the South than in the North... Even lately, a movement was made by the methodists and protestant chaplains claiming higher salary than the catholic chaplains, but the confederate government would not listen..."
Religious factors were also important in determining the public opinion of Irish protestants, especially among presbyterians and quakers. Religious tenets seem to have been relatively unimportant in influencing the attitude of the members of the Church of Ireland. It was quite reactionary at this time, principally because it was fighting disestablishment which was to take place in 1869. Thus, it was very much a political church associated generally with the conservatives and the right-wing whigs, who were opposing reform. The Church of Ireland was more influenced by, than influencing, the political leaders of the Irish ascendancy.

Richard Whately, protestant archbishop of Dublin, published in early 1863 a letter to Harriet Beecher Stowe summing up public opinion on the war in the United Kingdom at that time. The letter tended to be anti-slavery but pro-South. Professor Cairnes denounced it as 'servile drivel'. It appears that the hierarchy and clergy of the Church of Ireland, like that of the Church of England, generally sympathized with the Confederacy.

Also, it is interesting to note that Sir Hughes Cairnes, M.P. for Belfast and one of the principal champions of the confederate cause, in the latter part of the decade bitterly opposed the disestablishment of the Church of Ireland.

2 Cairnes to Nesbitt, 23 Jan., 1863 (N.L.I., MS 8941-7). See Whately to Cairnes, 9 June 1862 (N.L.I., MS 8944-11), wherein Whately proposes gradual emancipation.
3 See Jordan and Pratt, Europe and civil war, passim.
One of the Church of Ireland newspapers, dedicated to the conversion of Irish Roman Catholics, the *Achill Missionary Herald* and *Western Witness*, supported Southern independence and viewed events in an anti-Roman catholic light. In commenting on the Trent Affair, it remarked: 'The principal instigators of this anti-British feeling were the Irish Roman Catholics settled in America — men who had been taught in our National Schools, and who are directed by priests, educated in a college supported by the money of protestant England. Thus our own wickedness reproves us; but we refuse to receive instruction'.

The Irish presbyterians were much more influenced by their religious convictions than the members of the Church of Ireland. Undoubtedly, the presbyterians comprised the majority of the small body of pro-abolitionist Northern supporters in Ireland. This is not to say that a majority of Irish presbyterians supported the North. The minutes of the meetings of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland present a different picture. United the presbyterians were in opposition to slavery, but a majority sympathized with the South and favored peace.

The two pro-North meetings held in Belfast in the first half of 1863 were organized by a group of presbyterians. Speeches at these meetings reveal the pro-South sentiments of Irish presbyterians. Said Dr. James McCosh, professor at Queen's College,

1 — a reference to the government grant to Maynooth Seminary.

2 *Achill Missionary Herald and Western Witness*, 21 Jan., 1863; see also 21 Oct., 1862 and 21 July 1863.
Belfast and later president of Princeton: 'I have not always agreed with the prayers I have heard in the church to which I belong - that there might be peace at any price. I would have peace, but not the peace which would be signed over the trammels of the slave, and I would feel horrified after all the blood that has been shed in the cause if the accursed thing should not be banished out of the American land'. The Rev. Dr. Bryce, uncle of James Bryce, said that he 'regretted that there were so few ministers of his own and other denominations present when the holy cause of freedom was advocated'. However, this small group of presbyterian Northern supporters were concerned principally with the abolition of slavery and supported the North on those grounds. As Dr. McCosh said, they were little concerned with the restoration of the American Union but were only interested in the triumph of the North which would mean an end to slavery.

The minutes of the general assembly reveal no support for the Union cause but support for the peace movement in America, even though the presbyterians opposed slavery. In July 1862 the address from the moderator 'in the name of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland' and 'to the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America' stated:

1 Northern Whig, 18 Feb., 1863.
2 Quoted in chapter on 'Southern independence', p. 150.
In our public assembly, in our several congregations, and also, we feel assured, in the closets of the great body of our people, earnest prayer has been made to Him who ruleth over the nations of the world, and who hath the hearts of all men in his hands, that it may please Him, in his infinite mercy, speedily to turn the minds of the contending parties to thoughts of peace, that the effusion of blood may be stayed, and tranquillity restored to your distracted country. 1

The Banner of Ulster and the Belfast Northern Whig were the two principal Irish presbyterian papers. The Banner was strongly opposed to slavery but yet for political and humanitarian reasons supported Southern independence, as did most Irish presbyterians. The Northern Whig like the other radicals viewed the war in the light of slavery and the advancement of democracy and was staunchly pro-North.

It is clear, even in the editorials of the Banner, that most Irish presbyterians did not believe the war was waged for the abolition of slavery. Thus, their only reason for supporting the North was removed. Only the radicals among them saw implications in the war on reform in the United Kingdom. Also, except for the radicals who were friends of the New England yankees, the Scotch-Irish or Ulster Scotch presbyterians, unlike the Celtic-Irish catholics, had less interest in the States at that time and were more British than American-oriented.

The Irish quakers or friends were very involved in the anti-slavery movement but were also by their religion, pacifists. At

1 Minutes of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, Belfast; Banner of Ulster Office, 1861-XIII. 295-6; also see pp. 137, 149, 289, 295, 403, 541 and 563-5.
their yearly meeting in May 1861, they expressed their disapproval of slavery but also their "heartfelt desire that, if consistent with the divine will, the sword may be stayed, and the horrors of civil war be averted, - and a peaceful solution of the present difficulties be effected'. 1 At the pro-North workers meeting in Dublin in October 1864, James Haughton, a leading Irish friend and abolitionist, who had broken with the Young Irelanders in 1847 because of their non-committal attitude on slavery, disapproved of Northern attempts to defeat the South on the battlefield. He 'condemned the use of the sword in any circumstances', thus disagreeing with the chairman of the meeting and P. J. Smyth who also spoke. 2

In the crisis over the Trent affair the Irish friends were naturally strongly opposed to an Anglo-American war. Jonathan Pim, one of their leaders, was active in the efforts of friends in the United Kingdom to persuade Palmerston to avoid an Anglo-American war.

Though the friends opposed the Northern war effort, they did more constructive good for Americans than any other Irish group, through charitable works. In Ireland in 1861 the friends numbered only 3,695, yet they collected large sums for emancipated slaves.

1 Minutes of the Irish Friends' yearly meeting, 1861, minute no. 37 (Friends House, Dublin).
2 Nation, 8 Oct. 1864.
3 David Large, 'Friends and the American civil war' in The Journal of the Friends' Historical Society, xlviii, 163-7 (Autumn 1957); see also Large, 'An Irish Friend and the civil war' in The Bulletin of Friends Historical Association, xlvi, 20-29.
and impoverished friends in North Carolina. In 1864-5 they raised £1,454 to help emancipated negroes and in 1865-6, £2,195. In 1865-6, they collected £1,588 to aid friends in North Carolina.

However, even among Irish friends, one discovers considerations other than religious ones influencing their attitude on the war. Jonathan Pim, a prominent Dublin merchant who was elected M.P. in 1865, regarded the North and South as two different nations and as an humanitarian hated to see the North subjugate the South. Surprisingly, although approving of Palmerston's action during the Trent crisis, Pim wondered whether war then and there might not have been preferable:

On the principle of non-intervention in the affairs of other nations, I think our government acted rightly; but as a worldly policy, for a nation that relies on armed force to maintain its power and position in the world, I think it would have been wiser to have taken one side or the other decidedly... Now we have both for bitter and I fear implacable enemies. If we had taken the Northern side, they would only have expected us (that is our government) to have called the Southern rebels, and refused to hold any communication with them, or to allow British subjects to supply them with any munitions of war. To take the other side would probably have involved a war, but in that war we should have had a powerful ally, and now I fear we shall have to fight both parties united.

Religious factors were very influential in determining Irish public opinion on the war - to a greater extent among Roman catholics, to a lesser, among members of the established church.

1 Minutes of the Irish friends' yearly meeting, 1865, minute no. 24; 1866, minutes no. 23 and 27 (loc.cit.).

2 Pim to a 'Friend', 31 Dec., 1864 (Pim letters, Friends House, Dublin).

3 Pim to John Hodgkin, 30 June 1862 (Pim letters, loc.cit.).
However, there were conflicting religious factors involved. Humanitarians were appalled not only by slavery but also by the horrible bloodshed. They asked themselves whether the end justified the means. If the end be the abolition of slavery, 'yes' answered some presbyterians but almost none of the rest. If the end be the restoration of the Union apart from the abolition of slavery, 'no' answered all the protestants and most of the catholics with the exception of a few extreme nationalists who viewed the war as having all political and no moral implications. The moral influence of all the churches in Ireland was behind a movement for peace giving the Confederacy its independence, since they believed that abolition of slavery would follow no matter what the result of the war. It was the catholic church that made the biggest impact on the peace movement in Ireland because of its size, its influence on its members in all matters, and its vested interest, i.e. the welfare of its flock, which it believed to be directly threatened by Union recruiting agents - a threat that did not hang over the other more affluent religious congregations.

1 From table in appendix, Ireland and ecumenical relations, p. 107.
2 Examiner, in June 1861.
2. Economic factors.

The principal economic factor influencing the attitude of the Irish people on the civil war was the decrease in remittances from their relatives in the States. The wretched condition of the impoverished peasants and laborers was made more bearable by the money sent them by their relations in the United States. However, when war broke out, Irish-Americans, like others at the bottom of the economic scale, suffered the most from the financial troubles and had less money to send back to Ireland. Simultaneously with the decrease in remittances, there was occurring in Ireland the depression of 1860 to 1863. Available statistics reveal that the remittances of the years 1861 to 1864 were the smallest yearly sums of money sent from North America to the United Kingdom in the period 1848 to 1887. These remittances fell from 534,000 pounds in 1860 to 374,000 in 1861 and eventually to 332,000 in 1864. The civil war certainly accounted for this decrease.

Various Irish editorial comments and reports reveal that the Irish people were concerned about the decrease in remittances, which was one of the reasons for their desire for peace above all else. The Cork Examiner stated that the poor in Ireland missed the 'annual tributes' and that 'those who were generous are themselves in want'. The Catholic Telegraph commented on the decrease

1 From table in Schrier, Ireland and American emigration, p. 167.

2 Examiner, 10 June 1861.
How much Ireland is affected by every important event in America may be seen by the depression which the civil conflict between the Northern and Southern States has produced in every class, but amongst none as much as our farming and labouring population. Instead of receiving large and frequent remittances from their friends in America, many of the latter stand in need of assistance themselves, and return to their native shores almost as impoverished as when they left them. So that during the present year, when famine and destitution are again visiting us, the want of that succour which so often came to the struggling family in the hour of need can no longer be expected.

The constabulary report for 1862 remarked that two of the reasons for the general wish throughout Ireland for a termination of the war were that it precluded emigration and put a stop to "those remittances which successful relatives had been in the habit of sending to their poorer friends in this country".

Another possible economic factor that influenced Irish opinion was resentment at the extensive American assistance given to the Lancashire cotton operatives and comparative neglect of the more impoverished Irish peasants. The American consul at Galway wrote:

It is a matter of remark and comment here, that so little is done by us to help poor Ireland, whose sons have shed rivers of blood to sustain our honor and restore our priceless Union; whilst wealthy England has had her beef-eating cotton-spinners relieved by us, the actually starving Irish are left to perish and no aid given them, either by their own or our govt.

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1 Catholic Telegraph, 7 Dec., 1861.
2 Brownrigg, Report on the condition of Ireland in 1862, p. 54.
3 W. E. West to Seward, 18 Apr., 1863 (N.A., Galway, vol. 1).
This resentment probably made the Irish nationalists less sympathetic toward the Union war effort. The Lancashire distress received all the publicity, and money and food poured into Lancashire from the rest of the United Kingdom, the United States, and many parts of the world. As was seen in the introductory chapter, according to available evidence, the peasants in the south and west of Ireland suffered much more than the unemployed cotton operatives in Lancashire. The Cork Examiner expressed in moderate terms the generally held nationalist opinion that although in Lancashire the 'working people have had to undergo an amount of suffering such as has been for a long time unknown in England, ... their poverty would be considered affluence by half, or at least a third, of the Irish nation...'. It would appear that many Irish nationalists became disgruntled over the way the Irish distress was overlooked by most people and felt that the American war did Ireland more harm than good.

In the standard interpretation of the Lancashire distress during the civil war, one reads that the unemployed cotton operatives in Lancashire bravely bore their suffering and supported the Northern cause, despite the fact that it was in their economic interest to call for breaking the Northern blockade of Southern ports. Information on the unemployed workers in the cotton

1 W. O. Henderson, <i>Lancashire cotton famine</i>, passim.

2 <i>Cork Examiner</i>, 12 Sept. 1862.
industries in the north of Ireland provides an interesting parallel. It is impossible to say whether any of these workers received immediate employment in the Ulster linen industries, during their boom beginning in 1862. However, in 1863 the Northern Whig commented: 'On the cotton operatives of the north of Ireland the effect of the crisis was individually more severe, though of course, the distress was of far less extensive area [than that in Lancashire]. The Banner of Ulster quoted impressive statistics demonstrating that 'the county of Down cotton weaver in full work has less to live on than the Manchester operative, unemployed, obtains in the shape of relief from one local institution'. The Banner also pointed out 'how much poverty and privation was silently born about our own doors during the first reaction of the Ulster cotton trade'. One thing seems certain: the Ulster cotton weavers did not remain silent out of devotion to the Union cause. There was no organized support among them for the Union. Instead, their poor economic status probably tended to make them, even more so than the Lancashire operatives, strong advocates of peace between the States at any price, which might improve conditions in the cotton industries. However, it is to be doubted that the vast majority of Lancashire's operatives shared Bright's pro-Union view of the war. Most likely, many of them also desired peace at all

1 Undoubtedly, many were eventually absorbed into the linen industries (see Green, Lagan valley, p. 110).

2 Northern Whig, 27 July 1863.

3 Banner of Ulster, 19 Oct. 1862.

4 One could argue that since almost all of the aid from America for the Lisburn cotton weavers came from the Northern States ([H. McCall], Cotton famine of 1862-63, p. 102), this would have influenced them to support the North.

5 See bibliographical essay.
costs. It appears that the cotton operatives in both Ulster and Lancashire inclined more toward Gladstone's view of the war, which was anti-slavery but pro-peace and Southern independence. However, there is not really sufficient evidence to determine definitely the reaction of the Ulster cotton weavers to the civil war.

Economic factors, of course, were most important in determining the opinion of the business community. But it must be remembered that there were often conflicting factors to be considered and that economic factors, even among business men, were often subordinated to political considerations.

The linen industry in Ulster, as was mentioned, profited tremendously from the war because of the increased demand for linen goods during the cotton famine. The linen boom in Ireland occurred from 1862 to 1867 when it collapsed disastrously. 1861 was a bad year for linen merchants in Ulster, for whereas their exports to the United States for the previous five years averaged 41% of their total exports, in 1861 their exports to America formed only 18% of the total. An advertisement that appeared in the Irish Times in December 1861 reveals the pessimistic reaction of some of the linen manufacturers to the civil war and Morrill protective tariff: 'Large and extensive sale of the stock of an old established and well known firm engaged for years in the manufacture of linens at Belfast, who are about to dissolve

1 Belfast Linen Trade Circular, 6 Jan., 1862.
partnership, owing to the depression of the linen trade, caused by the Morrell [sic] tariff and war in America...  

However, the production and trade in linen increased tremendously during 1862, and the exports in linen from the United Kingdom to the United States was three and one-half times that of 1861. Also, it should be noted that during the years 1863 and 1864, Ireland had the largest amount of flax cultivation up to that time, predominantly in Ulster. Flax had become the 'sheet-anchor of the Ulster farmer...'.

Just how this economic good fortune affected the attitude of the Irish linen manufacturers and flax farmers is apparent in one respect and can be surmised in another. The United States was one of their best customers. Thus, they did not want an Anglo-American war. During the Trent crisis, the Belfast Linen Trade Circular editorialized: 'If, happily, peace between this country and the United States be maintained, the prospects for the trade in the coming year are not discouraging'. However, it is apparent from their newspapers that their sympathies lay

1 Irish Times, 7 Dec., 1861.
2 Banner of Ulster, 14 Jan., 1863.
3 Linen Trade Circular, 11 Jan., 1864 and 9 Jan., 1865.
4 Banner of Ulster, 14 Jan., 1863.
5 There is no evidence of any opinion expressed by workers in the Ulster linen industries on the war, during the linen boom. They formed no pro-North or pro-South organization.
6 Linen Trade Circular, 6 Jan., 1862.
with the South, because of its free trade policy and the obvious
economic advantage to be derived for them in having two weak
nations, thus ensuring freer trade. Their economic interests led
them to support the pro-South neutrality of the Palmerston ad-
ministration.

Most of the 20,000 Irish cotton weavers and 80,000 Irishmen
engaged in embroidering muslin worked for Glasgow cotton manu-
facturers. Undoubtedly, the few Irish cotton manufacturers were
in a similar position to those in Lancashire and Scotland. Con-
sequently, they would generally tend to support the South, their
principal supplier of cotton. However, in 1860 they became over-
stocked with the raw material and the supply of cotton goods was
greater than the demand. Thus, although the civil war made the
raw material scarce, it also made the supplies of cotton goods
on hand much dearer; and the cotton manufacturers generally pro-
fited during the first two years of the war, and cotton from
India and Egypt gradually provided a partial substitute for
Southern cotton, as the war dragged on. There is much truth in
an editorial of the Cork Examiner's on the cotton distress. It
sympathized with the workers in the cotton industry but remarked:
'The mill-owners have made a good thing of it, because having
rushed for two or three years into the most frantic over-trading,
the war in America, which cut off the supply of the raw material,
not only saved them from bankruptcy, but absolutely converted
their blunder into a fortune'.

1 W. O. Henderson, Lancashire cotton famine, p. 120.

2 Cork Examiner, 12 Sept., 1862.
The Irish merchants overwhelmingly sympathized with the South. At first they disapproved of Southern secession for they wondered "how can trade proceed in its old course when secession is the order of the day...". However, when the republican-dominated congress passed the protective Morrill tariff in February 1861, the Irish merchants came to view the South as the champion of free trade. Furthermore, the British merchant marine grew tremendously by supplanting their decimated American rival. Also, the Trent affair demonstrated the Northern threat to Britain's rule of the seas. Contemporary testimony confirms the Southern sympathies of the Irish merchants and their primary concern over their economic interests. The U.S. Consul at Queenstown, the principal Irish port, reported that the merchants there were 'all in favor of the Southern cause...'. During the Trent crisis, the Freeman's Journal reported that among commercial circles at the Dublin Chamber of Commerce the general feeling 'was quite as warlike as that of Liverpool and London has been reported to be - merchants naturally feeling indignant that the "flag" which they were taught to look upon as the refugium peccatorum, as well as the palladium mercatorum, should be insulted, and its sanctity violated...'

1 Belfast News-Letter, 1 Jan., 1861.
2 Irish Times, 18 Mar., 1861.
3 Edwin Eastman to W. H. Seward, 4 May and also 22 June 1864 (N.A., Cork dispatches, vol. 6)
4 Freeman's, 29 Nov., 1861.
Economic considerations were of great importance in the formation of the opinion of the Irish Republican Brotherhood. A revolutionary organization is greatly concerned about raising funds for its activities, and the Irish fenians were relying heavily on financial assistance from their American brothers, which was not forthcoming during the war. It is debatable whether the American fenians had much money to send to Ireland during the war. If they did, it was not sent. John O'Leary believed that John O'Mahony possibly spent too much of the American organization's money on volunteering fenians for the U.S. army. James Stephens wrote to O'Mahony: '...The money given here has been far beyond the donations at your side... Much more money has been devoted to business by the home partners, even considering their numbers, than by those abroad. And surely the contrary should be the case'. There is little doubt that the Irish fenians believed that the civil war from an overall financial viewpoint weakened their organization and were extremely anxious for a peaceful settlement.

In conclusion, it can be said that economic factors were influential in the formation of both Irish and English opinion on the war. In England, the predominance of Southern sympathies was modified by the general unwillingness to intervene in the war, encur many risks and end the neutrality from which the country

1 John O'Leary, Recollections of fenians and fenianism, i. 196.

2 W. Hamilton [Stephens] to 'Brother' [O'Mahony], 1 Mar., 1865 (C.U.A., Fenian papers, box 1).
as a whole profited. The one group badly affected, the Lancashire operatives, was well provided for with charitable funds. An editorial of an Irish nationalist newspaper on the economic effect of the war on England accurately remarked: 'A class has suffered, but the total prosperity of the country has increased because of the American war'. In the same vein, a West British newspaper predicted the English prosperity and the triumph of economic interests in the formation of English policy on the war:

The longer the war continues, the less probability is there that America will ever rival England as a maritime power. We are rapidly becoming independent of America even for cotton... India promises in another year to produce enough for all the mills in England... The longer the civil war lasts the better for India. No one can accuse England now of risking war for the purchase of a few bales of cotton. The danger is - and it is imminent - lest friendly nations should begin to believe that we hesitate to join with them in recognizing the South for the selfish purpose of reducing the power of America. 2

In Ireland, among the Anglo-Irish merchants and generally throughout Ulster, there was support for Palmerston's wait-and-see policy on the same economic grounds. However, in the south and west there was greater support for European intervention in the war because of the decrease in remittances, coupled with the distress. But it would seem that socio-humanitarian considerations took precedence over economic ones in creating the great amount of Irish support for the pro-confederate peace movement during the

1 Cork Examiner, 28 Oct. 1863.

summer and autumn of 1864, in contrast to the less enthusiastic response in England. In an editorial on the peace petition, the **Irish Times** summed up the Irish attitude:

> we have far greater reason to desire that peace should prevail in America than England has. She is rapidly obtaining material for her staple manufacture from many lands; if one branch of trade to the Southern States has suffered, a dozen other branches prosper, but there are, or were, three million of the Irish race settled in America. The soil of Virginia and Mississippi, and Georgia absolutely streams with Irish blood. 1

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Ireland in the 1860s had a class-ridden society, in which the Anglo-Irish ascendancy was extremely class-conscious. Consequently, social factors were important in the formation of Irish public opinion at that time.

The Anglo-Irish aristocracy was doubly prejudiced in favor of the South. The Confederacy was ruled by an aristocracy with which they had much in common. Also, the United States represented all they despised.

Thomas Colley Grattan of Clayton Lodge, co. Kildare, was one of the 'outstanding propagandists' for the South in the United Kingdom. He had been British consul in Boston from 1839 to 1846. He shared the prejudices of the reactionary Irish aristocracy in despising Americans as dishonest, immoral and boastful. In his pamphlet supporting the Confederacy in 1861 entitled *England and the disrupted States of America* has summed up the attitude of the Anglo-Irish gentry: 'It is impossible for anyone who has mixed with the inhabitants of both sections of the country not to prefer the Southern gentlemen to the sordid speculators of the North.'

The Irish war correspondent William Howard Russell, a more liberal product of the Irish gentry than Grattan, also found many admirable qualities in the Southern gentlemen, though he

1 Owsley, *King Cotton diplomacy*, p. 186.
3 *England and the disrupted States of America*, p. 34.
hated slavery. He likened them to tory Irish gentlemen before the Act of Union. In describing an after-dinner conversation on a plantation in South Carolina on 22 April 1861, he wrote: 'The conversation had altogether very much the tone which would have probably characterized the talk of a group of tory Irish gentlemen over their wine some sixty years ago, and very pleasant it was. Not a man - no, not one - will ever join the Union again!'

The ascendancy's support for the South was due not only to their admiration of the 'sterling' qualities of Southern gentlemen in contrast to the crude mannerisms of the yankees, but also to their hatred and fear of all that America stood for and a consequent desire to see the downfall of the republic. In a lecture in Dublin in 1864 a liberal Briton, William L. Barrington, brother of the then lord mayor of Dublin, said:

It is impossible for any intelligent observer of passing events not to perceive the aversion with which American affairs are viewed by the majority of what are termed the better classes of society in this country. It would seem as if we were apprehensive that every whiff of yankee news conveyed with it the contagion of innovation; that we feared the levelling influences of American principles might possibly impair the stability of our position by awakening in the lower orders a spirit of inquiry into the weakness of theirs...

The earl of Clancarty expressed the view of the protestant lords of Ireland when he wrote: 'It matters little whether it

1 W. H. Russell, My civil war diary, p. 71. See also his reports to The Times.

2 W. L. Barrington, The true origin of the American rebellion; being a lecture delivered in the Friends Institute, Dublin, 26 Nov., 1864, p. 3.
acts in blind submission to sacerdotal authority, or be misled by wild revolutionary views, the influence of Rome or of America are alike adverse to the well-being of Ireland.  

The American consul in Dublin in a report to Seward in 1864 commented on the attitude of the landlords in Ireland:

The higher classes of landowners, etc., who hate us most cordially, dread the consequences of your immigration bill (which the govt. dare not counteract) as it would deprive them of tenants and serfs on whose labor and poverty they "fare sumptuously every day" ... It is indeed sad and vexatious to see their unaccountable malevolence and hatred of us. Slavery or hell itself seems in their estimation, preferable to our glorious republic, and it would nerve the arms of our soldiers if they only knew how the aristocracy of this country revelled in our defeat and burned for our humiliation.

We have seen how as the war wore on the Irish people became sympathetic toward the Confederacy because of the way Irish-Americans were treated in the North and the belief that the South had been the friend of the Irish immigrant. However, in retrospect, it is evident that most Southern slaveowners had no love for the Irish immigrant laborer. Although John Mitchel and others believed that the slave was materially much better off than the Irish peasant, which is probably true, they were short-sighted in foreseeing the effect of slavery on the white laboring man. Professor Nassau William Senior reported a conversation with John Slidell, the confederate commissioner in France, in March 1862, in which Slidell discussed the attitude of the Southern

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1 Earl of Clancarty, Ireland: her present condition, and what it might be (1864), pp. 10-11.

slaveowner toward the Irish-American laborer: 'To dig a drain up to the knees in water, under a nearly tropical sun, is a work to which no planter would set his own negroes. He contracts with an Irishman, who puts a hundred of his countrymen in it, fills them with whiskey, loses ten per cent of them and makes a handsome profit.'

Furthermore, the confederate agents in the United Kingdom were closely associated with the reactionary elements opposing reform in Ireland. The Index, the confederate propaganda organ in London, edited by Henry Hotze, a personal agent of Judah P. Benjamin's, commented on the lack of prosperity in Ireland in the autumn of 1864:

Irish lawlessness accounts for Irish poverty, and its concomitants of emigration, starvation, disaffection and rioting. At present the fate of Ireland is clearly in Irish hands, and obedience to law is all that is needed to make Ireland rich. Benefits are ready to pour in upon her as soon as she ceases to shoot her benefactors. Meanwhile we can hardly help asking whether, with Tipperary before our eyes, novelists need have gone to Ballarat and Bendigo to be scandalised by the spectacle of unpunished murder and dominant rowdyism; and whether the Lynch-law, which is the reaction of respectability against rowdyism, is very much worse than that undisputed reign of rowdyism over respectability which has so long prevailed throughout a large part of Ireland.

The confederate cause in its social aspect attracted some of the most reactionary Irish lords and gentry as its champions.

1 Conversations with distinguished persons during the second empire from 1860 to 1863 by the late Nassau William Senior, ed. M. C. M. Simpson, ii. 79.

2 Index, 22 Sept., 1864.
The marquis of Clanricarde, a good friend of James Mason and co-chairman of the delegation that waited on Palmerston in July 1864 urging him to intervene in the war and bring about peace and confederate independence, was one of the most notorious of Irish lords. As landlords, the Clanricardes were among the worst. As a person, he was apparently despicable. In 1855 he was involved in a law suit, which revealed that he was the father of an illegitimate son and that evidently he was responsible for the breakup of a marriage. In 1857, a parliamentary commission had reported that bribery was used to secure the election of Clanricarde's son, Lord Dunkellin, as an M.P. for Galway. In 1858 Palmerston defied public opinion by appointing Clanricarde lord privy seal, which greatly contributed to the fall of the whig government.

William Robert Seymour Vesey FitzGerald, a leading member of the conservative party, supported the Confederacy. He was the bastard son of Lord FitzGerald and Vesey of Clare and Inchicronan, who was defeated by Daniel O'Connell in the crucial Clare election of 1828. As has been seen, the conservative earl of Donoughmore was an

1 See [Anonymous], An inquiry into the truth of the accusations made against the marquis of Clanricarde in the case of Handcock v. Delacour lately heard in the Irish Court of Chancery, London, 1855.


3 G.E.C., Peerage, iii. 237 fn.


5 G.E.C., Peerage, V. 405 fn. and 406 fn.
active champion of the confederate cause. These men undoubtedly supported the Confederacy because of their desire for the downfall of democracy and not for nationalistic or humanitarian reasons.

As we have seen, there appeared to have been only two small pro-Union meetings of laborers held in Ireland during the civil war. Organizers of both, however, saw the issue of democracy involved in the war. In a speech at the meeting of the Brotherhood of St. Patrick in Dublin in May 1863, which adopted an address of sympathy to be sent to President Lincoln, James Roche, editor of the Galway-American, praised the American republic and remarked: '...Persons after leaving the highest position (president) were but plain Tom or Bill, for they had no first or third class there, and one man could sit beside another without any objection being made thereto.' In an address adopted at a small meeting of workingmen in the Mechanics Institute, Dublin in October 1864, the Irish laborers urged Irish-Americans to reelect Lincoln, for his administration had 'boldly accepted the war forced upon the country by the arrogant Southern aristocracy, with whom you, as thoroughly honest democrats, can possibly have no sympathy.' The address further noted that in the great cities of the North there was a

...strong moneyed interest sharing the profits of slavery, and heedless of its iniquity... These men are cleverly exploiting you for their own uses... Besides its profits, they love slavery for itself from that hatred of freedom. They would make you, too, slaves, if they could. To call them Democrats [the party], is a bitter mockery... The advanced guard of the pro-slavery advocates

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...unblushingly maintain that the proper and natural relationship between capital and labor is that Capital Shall Be Lord and Labor Slave - white labor and black labor alike be slave.  

John Blake Dillon, although refusing to attend this meeting, did send a letter to be read in which he said that all laboring men should admire the great American republic with no social distinctions 'but, above all others, the Irish workingman is interested in the safety of a government which is, to so large an extent, the only hope and inheritance of his race.' Thus, some of the Irish laborers, viewed the civil war from the point of view of its effect on social reform in Ireland. However, there was only minute support for the Union on these grounds. Social factors were not nearly as influential in the formation of the opinion of the masses as in the attitude of the aristocracy.

The Irish radicals were more interested in social reform than any other group and viewed the civil war in this light. Professor Cairnes was concerned with land reform in Ireland and wrote: 'I have no faith in any tenant right but that which excludes landlord right...' With regard to the civil war, Cairnes believed that among the upper class in the United Kingdom there was a 'real liking for the social system of the South' and that 'they prefer a society based on slavery to one based on the principle of democracy.'

1 Dublin Irishman, 8 Oct. and Boston Liberator, 4 Nov. 1864.
2 Irishman, 8 Oct. 1864.
3 Cairnes to Nesbitt, 22 Nov. 1863 (N.L.I., MS 8941-8).
4 Cairnes to Nesbitt, 9 Oct. 1862 (N.L.I., MS 8941-6).
Professor Goldwin Smith of Oxford, a leading Northern supporter, eloquently related the social system in Ireland to the issues involved in the American civil war. In a letter to the London Daily News on the controversy over federal recruiting in Ireland, Smith said that emigration was due to the terrible lot of the peasant and not to federal recruiting. He specifically singled out for criticism the marquess of Clanricarde who was one of those shouting the loudest in parliament about Union agents in Ireland, yet was one of the most unenlightened of Irish landlords. Sarcastically, Smith wrote regarding those young Irishmen who were emigrating for the purpose of enlisting:

No doubt these youths are acting under a lamentable delusion. When we consider how full of happiness and dignity is the lot of the Irish peasant, how abounding in comfort and in plenty is the cabin which he shares with swine, how secure is the tenure of the land by which alone he can subsist, how bright a vista of hope always opens itself before him - and when we consider that he is throwing up all this for a service in which he will be very highly paid, be supplied in a way which the correspondents of our Southern journals denounce as prodigal, and stand a very good chance perhaps, of being shot, but also a good chance, with valour and talent, of rising to high rank - we shall not be surprised to see tears run down the cheeks of the friends of humanity among the Irish landlords. They will mingle with the tears of persons of quality and their journalists at the effusion of blood in the cause of a republic and with the tears of the slaveowners at the cruel emancipation of the happy and contented slave.

Nor is the Irish soldier in the American service a mercenary ... But the Irish, on entering the American service, adopt America as their country. And in truth it is the only country of the Irish race. England evicts them: America receives them in a kind, just, and prosperous home. 1

Reprinted in Cork Examiner, 15 June 1864.
In conclusion, one can say that social factors at first predisposed the Irish nation, the peasants and laborers, to favor the Union cause. The United States was the mecca of the poor of Ireland, and almost every Irish peasant family had close relatives in the States. But as the bloodshed grew worse and worse and thousands of relatives were killed and political and religious reasons were presented for supporting the South, the necessity of preserving the 'land of the free' intact became unimportant to the Irish nation and the need to end the war at all costs paramount. However, had there been a leader of the Irish people primarily interested in their welfare, in social reform—one not completely consumed by the spirit of nineteenth century romantic nationalism to the detriment of all other interests—a Daniel O'Connell, who could see in the civil war, issues affecting democracy and reform in Ireland, public opinion could have taken a different shape; but there was no such leader. The Irish middle class supported the South for political and economic reasons, generally overlooking the social implications. The ascendency had no hesitation in supporting the aristocratic South and denouncing democracy in the North. These Irish aristocrats were intelligent enough to realize the social implications, but their brash denunciations of American democracy were to prove embarrassing after the defeat of the Confederacy, when movements for social reform gained new impetus in the United Kingdom.
4. Political factors.

The underlying political factor influencing the opinion of West Britons was the welfare of the empire. They generally believed it was in the best interest of Britain to have the United States split into two independent nations. However, among the West British factions there were differences of opinion according to the individual's political philosophy. The issue of reform in the United Kingdom was uppermost in the minds of all. The more reactionary, the Irish conservatives and whig-wing of the liberal party, opposed further reform and believed the civil war demonstrated the futility of democracy. These Irishmen, if anything, were more reactionary than the English members of their parties.

An American consul in a report to Seward wrote that in comparison to The Times, the Irish Times, a conservative paper, "cut Herod's Herod" in its ribald abuse and calumnies of us... This paper is the organ of the Irish aristocracy, and admired for its hatred of us. The Irish radicals, however, seized upon the statements of the reactionaries and claimed that the success or failure of democracy throughout the world and more especially in the United Kingdom depended on the outcome of the civil war. Also, argued the radicals, the British empire would have more to fear from an independent Confederacy, an aggressive slave power. Between the West British reactionaries and radicals were those who sat on the

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fulcrum of the see-saw of public opinion, the Gladstonian liberals or the middle-of-the-road liberals. They believed in the freedom of nationalities, and since, as Gladstone remarked, Jefferson Davis had formed a nation, they supported Southern independence. Like Lord Acton, M.P. for Carlow city and Gladstone’s friend, they supported Southern states’ rights believing that ‘liberty depends on the division of power’.

The bulk of the Gladstonian liberals in Ireland were ‘castle catholics’—many of whom were converts from moderate nationalism (or a policy of independent opposition and non-alignment in parliament) because of despair or political opportunism. These catholic liberals were principally concerned with catholic interests, such as the disestablishment of the Church of Ireland and separate catholic schools. Logically, the Irish catholic middle-class should have been moderate nationalists, but they felt that more was to be gained by alignment with the British liberals. The ‘castle catholics’ supported Southern independence but neglected Irish home rule. It was opportune to do the one and not the other. When the wind of Irish nationalism began to blow into a furious storm stirred up by Parnell, they revised their views accordingly. Their opinions on the war were confused, and they straddled many fences. Yet as the wind of public sentiment in Britain began to blow in a Southerly direction, Irish catholic liberal opinion

1 Correspondence of Acton, ed. Figgis and Laurence, p. xii.
followed in the same direction.

The borderline between the moderate nationalists and the catholic liberals was a very thin one. Both essentially were in agreement with Gladstone's and Acton's political philosophy of state's rights, though it was not popularized until two decades later. However, during the civil war years, while the catholic liberals played the part of humanitarians and abhored the coercion policy of the Union but underplayed the nationalistic aspects of the Southern secession, the leading moderate nationalists unabashedly portrayed the South's struggle for freedom in the light of nineteenth century romantic nationalism. They viewed the Confederacy as a young nation fighting for its life, after it had legally and legislatively repealed an unsatisfactory act of union, the Constitution. They believed that the Southerns were fighting a defensive war and that the Northerners were aggressive imperialists. The moderate nationalists felt that they could not call for the repeal of a union on one side of the Atlantic and the restoration of the American Union on the other.

The extreme nationalists differed from the moderates in advocating the use of armed force to sever all ties with Great Britain and establish an independent Irish republic. Naturally, the extremists cared less for abstract ideals than did the moderates. The fenians and their sympathizers were concerned only with winning complete independence for Ireland, and all else was subordinated to this aim. They were obsessed with power politics. Many of
them believed at first that the restoration of the American Union was needed to win Irish independence, although some argued the other way. However, as the war dragged on, the fenians realized that the Northern attempt to coerce the South only sapped strength from the American fenian organization; and the need to establish peace at all costs was uppermost in their minds. They failed to see any great issues at stake in the war, except a possible diminution of British power. They criticized any nationalist who felt strongly about the war one way or the other and believed that all Irish nationalists should concern themselves only with the preparation for an insurrection to drive the British out of Ireland.

The fenians attempted to selfishly pursue their own aim, taking advantage of whatever suited them. Thus, when they broke up the Rotunda meeting of 22 February 1864 organized by moderate nationalists to oppose the erection of a statue to Prince Albert in College Green, Dublin, the fenians wore federal American uniforms, presumably to demonstrate their belief in armed force and hope for aid from America. Yet at the same time, they were condemning those Irishmen who emigrated in order to enlist in the Union army as unpatriotic mercenaries, and attacking one of the two really pro-Union and pro-fenian newspapers, the United Irishman and Galway-American, for encouraging emigration, enlisting, and Irish involvement in the 'deplorable war'.

1 Irish People, 5 Mar., 1864.
James Stephens's letters to John O'Mahony during the war reveal some of the political factors influencing the Fenian attitude toward the war. Stephens was only interested in keeping the American Fenian organization strong and receiving more aid from it. He wrote, that in late 1863 and early 1864 the Irish Fenians 'had been driven to utter disbelief in the American organization' because of the small amount of aid received from it.

In January 1865, Stephens wrote:

Think what good right the friends here have to be dissatisfied and critical. Some are dissatisfied, knowing the weakness of the house yonder. These, though few, are very important. But the large number are dissatisfied because, while believing the house strong, they see me without the aid I need so much... Men's minds are now in such a state, that any serious disappointment to their expectation would be fatal.

It is clear that the Irish Fenians believed that the long drawn-out war policy of the North weakened the Fenian 'house yonder' and thus most of them came to sympathize with those desiring peace at any price. Stephens and the Irish Republican Brotherhood viewed the civil war in a purely pragmatic way. Their attitude on the civil war corresponded to their policy on the Irish question, which was short-sighted, lacked a social program, and was confused and uncoordinated.

1 'J. Hamilton' [Stephens] to 'Brother' [O'Mahony], 11 Dec., 1864 (C.U.A., Fenian papers, box 1).

2 'J. Hamilton' [Stephens] to 'My dear Nephew' [O'Mahony], 18 Jan., 1865 (ibid).
CHAPTER VIII

CONCLUSION
In 1875, Father Thaddeus O'Malley, who had supported the Union cause during the civil war, publicly opposed the election of John Mitchel as M.P. for Tipperary because he had supported the 'debasing system of slavery'. Generally, however, opinions expressed by Irishmen during the war were quickly forgotten after the war. Just as in England after the defeat of the South, government leaders were intent on forgetting their friendliness shown toward the Confederacy, so in Ireland the nationalist leaders were quick to gloss over their Southern sympathies. In fact, their task was made easier by the outstanding fact of the great number of Irishmen who fought for the Union. Northern Americans were appreciative of this also. The Irish role in the Union armies, especially the Irish Brigade's, was romanticized. The 'disgrace' of Ireland's sympathy with the South was covered over, as Meagher had hoped it would be, by the heroism of her many sons who fought for the Union. Thus in a poem written forty years after the civil war, commemorating Irish heroism in the Spanish-American war of 1898, the author could write:


2 See Sheldon Van Auken, English sympathy for the Southern Confederacy: the glittering illusion, passim.

Also see bibliographical essay.
In the ranks there was Irish blood galore,
As it ever is sure to be
When the Union flag is flung to the fore,
And the fight is to make men free.¹

However, Irish public opinion on the war is important in a number of ways. It foreshadowed the renewed battle between reform and reaction beginning with the debate over the reform bill of 1867. Professor E. D. Adams wrote that '...there existed for Great Britain a great issue in the outcome of the civil war - the issue of the adoption of democratic institutions. It affected at every turn British public attitude, creating an intensity and bitterness of tone, on both sides, unexampled in the expressions of a neutral people...'. Adams concluded: 'The reform bill of 1867 changed Great Britain from a government by aristocracy to one by democracy. A new nation came into being. The friends of the North had triumphed'.² Van Auken is probably more accurate in denying the existence of any substantial amount of pro-North support in England during the war but stating that the final 'balance of bayonets' possibly had an effect on the advancement of democracy in England.³

¹ J. I. C. Clarke, 'Rough Rider O'Neill', in The golden treasury of Irish songs and lyrics, ed. Charles Welsh, i. 146-7. It was first recited in 1905 at the annual dinner of the Friendly Sons of St. Patrick of New York, at which President Theodore Roosevelt was a guest.
² E. D. Adams, Great Britain and the American civil war, ii. 303.
³ S. Van Auken, English sympathy, p. 115.
The same is true of Ireland. There was even less support for the pro-North radicals in Ireland. The issue of democracy was not generally considered to be at stake in the war. However, those aristocrats, who openly supported the South, not through the humanitarian or state's rights motives of the Gladstonian liberals, but through a hatred of democracy and desire to see the destruction of the republic, were acutely embarrassed by the outcome of the war. Events on the battlefield probably gave impetus to a movement for reform in Ireland and won more support after the war for measures advocated by the radicals. If one believes that the result of the war influenced the passage of the reform bill of 1867, he should logically conclude that the Northern triumph also contributed to the disestablishment of the Church of Ireland in 1869 and strengthened the movement for land reform in Ireland.

Consequently, radical opinion which was relatively unimportant during the war became much more influential after the restoration of the Union. G. W. Curtis, in a letter to Professor Cairnes the day after Appomattox, expressed thanks for Cairnes's services in defense of the United States and the hope that the rightful result of the war would advance democracy in Europe:

In this glad and glorious hour for all faithful Americans, you may be very sure that our steady friends in Europe are not forgotten: and your own great service to the
cause of liberty and civil order is most gratefully remembered. We cannot help hoping that our success may make your liberal movements in Europe more practicable... 1

Irish public opinion on issues of the war is possibly important in another way. There is the curious parallel between the attitude toward Southern independence and the policy on Irish home rule of many of the pro-Union radicals. A Union sympathizer, the Rev. Dr. Dill, former moderator of the general assembly of the presbyterian church in Ireland, in a lecture in Belfast in 1863, declared:

The true way, however, to realize what the Americans mean by Union is to consider what that word means at home, represented, symbolised, cemented, gloriously illustrated by the crown and sceptre of our own peerless Queen. We often smile at what seems to us the extravagant enthusiasm of an American for "The Stars and Stripes", but that banner is to him what the royal standard is to us, the symbol of national unity - at home, the guarantee of liberty, order, peace, protection, and equal laws; abroad it represents the moral and material power which foreign potentates are compelled to respect. 2

It is interesting to note that F. H. Hill, pro-Union editor of the Northern Whig, and later editor of the London Daily News, was dismissed by the proprietors of the News in 1886 because he declined to accept Gladstone’s

1 Curtis to Cairnes, 10 Apr. 1865 (N.L.I., MS 8948).

2 Quoted in Northern Whig, 22 Apr. 1863.
home-rule policy. Also the two leading politicians in
the United Kingdom who supported the Union during the war, refused to support Gladstone on home rule. John Bright in 1886 refused to follow Gladstone, and William E. Forster, who served under Gladstone as chief secretary for Ireland from 1880 to 1882, opposed Gladstone's home rule proposals. Thus, these three nonconformists who fervently advocated most of Gladstone's reforms refused to accept home rule and sympathized with the aims of the 'liberal' unionists.

As has been pointed out, Gladstone disagreed with the radicals during the civil war on the issue of Southern independence and supported the Southern secession on the grounds that Jefferson Davis had formed a nation. Home rule for Ireland followed logically from Gladstone's and Acton's political philosophy of state's rights. Analyzing the election of 1886 in a pamphlet, Gladstone wrote:

...There are, within the United Kingdom, no less than four nationalities. Of these four nationalities, three have spoken for Irish autonomy in a tone yet more decided than

1 D.N.B., 1901-11, ii. 263.


3 T. Wemyss Reid, Life of the Right Honourable William Edward Forster, ii. 543.

4 See Appendix II: 'The American civil war and home rule for Ireland: the unionist view'.

5 Also see bibliographical essay: 'Gladstone and the civil war: the key to British opinion'.
the tone in which the fourth [England] has forbidden it... This is not, then, a partnership of three kingdoms, or of four nationalities, upon equal terms. The vast preponderance in strength of one among them enables her to overbear the other three, and to reverse their combined judgment.  

This statement is very much in the tradition of the state's rights philosophy promulgated by John C. Calhoun. Consequently, it is perhaps not just speculation to state that the political aspect of the public debate in Ireland and Great Britain during the civil war on the right of Southern secession foreshadowed the home rule controversy of the 1880s.

In this concluding chapter, it should also be noted that while Irish opinion on the civil war can be logically divided into various categories, there were opinions expressed that were uniquely individual. Such were those of a West British liberal, the young Trinity College graduate and budding historian, W. E. H. Lecky. He disapproved of the Southern rebellion and hoped to see 'the North not only triumphant but compelled to remain a great naval power. It is so very Irish that its influence might act beneficially on European politics'. He considered slavery 'an undoubted evil' but thought that it should be abolished 'only very gradually'. He enumerated his reasons for opposing abolition in a letter to his cousin:

1 W. E. Gladstone, The Irish question (1886), pp. 33-4.
I don’t feel as strongly as you do about slavery because I have convinced myself, first, that it is simply murder to make anyone but negroes (with whom the climate does not at all agree) work in the cotton fields; secondly, that free negro labour seems never to have succeeded owing to the extreme constitutional laziness of the race; thirdly, that the presence of four million free negroes, besides ruining the whites in a pecuniary point of view, would be most dangerous to the tranquillity of the country, and considering their utter incapacity to take care of themselves would be productive of the greatest misery to themselves; fourthly, that the national prosperity of the negroes is much greater in their present condition than if they were free, and greater than that of free labourers in almost any country; and fifthly, which as the most important, I am inclined to think, and so far I think this war has fully justified this opinion, that they are quite contented with their position.

Lecky questioned whether the abolition of slavery could be accomplished ‘without producing evils which if not really greater [than slavery] would at least be much more acutely felt’. However, he believed that the action of the Southerners had been ‘so grossly unpatriotic’ that the Northerners would be ‘quite justified in inflicting’ the ‘evil’ of abolition on the South. These opinions demonstrate how varied could be the views of a critical Irishman on the complex issues of the civil war.

The many factions in Ireland during the war expressed cogent and contradictory opinions on the principal issues. A study of their opinions is fascinating but also frustrating, for public opinion generally is fluid and cannot be analyzed.

with absolute scientific accuracy, and Irish public opinion at that time especially so. Nevertheless, the opinions of each faction were sifted, and certain influential opinions emerged which made a synthesis possible.

Among the West Britons, the protestant whig-liberals fully supported the cautious approach of Palmerston on the issue of Southern independence. They were fully in sympathy with the South but did not want to risk war with the North unless absolutely necessary. War would be justifiable only if Britain's vital interests were involved, such as in the defense of Canada or in the protection of Britain's maritime rights. But even in these cases, peaceful accommodation without sacrifice of prestige would be preferable. The protestant liberals, at least until Gettysburg, believed that confederate independence was virtually established in that the North could not subjugate the South. They thought it more prudent to postpone recognition until events on the battlefield had established confederate independence beyond doubt. They favored the abolition of slavery but divorced this moral question from the political question of Southern independence. Though, like many other members of the liberal party, they supported the freedom of nationalities - a cardinal principle of the political theory of Gladstonian liberals - the Irish
protestant liberals were primarily concerned with the practical consequences of the war. Undoubtedly, some few of them could be considered Gladstonian liberals, but most during the civil war should be classified as 'Palmerstonian whig' liberals.

The opinions of the Irish tories were similar to those of the protestant whigs. Though professing to hate slavery, the conservatives were less pretentious than the whigs about supporting the abolition of slavery. The conservatives were even more interested in maintaining the prestige of 'John Bull' and thus were more belligerent during the Trent crisis. They were equally anxious for the break-up of the American republic but were annoyed by the delaying tactics of Palmerston in postponing recognition of the Confederacy, and continually pressured the government for action. On civil war issues, the Irish conservatives were essentially a very loyal opposition, occasionally opposing the whig-liberal coalition on tactics but not on issues, and smugly supporting the almost bi-partizan government of Palmerston.

Most of the Gladstonian liberals in Ireland were 'castle catholics'. Their support for the South was based on motives different from those of the pragmatic protestant liberals. The catholic liberals hated to see the South coerced back into the Union and were inclined to support
state's rights. Of course, they generally avoided the nationalistic aspects of the Southern rebellion, which the moderate nationalists stressed. The catholic liberals were more anxious than their protestant counterparts for recognition on humanitarian grounds in order that the terrible bloodshed might be ended. The catholic liberals were also even more firmly opposed to an Anglo-American war. They disliked slavery but denounced physical coercion even more. Their opinions were a cross between those of the protestant liberals and the predominantly catholic nationalists.

The radicals believed that the result of the civil war would affect the advancement of democracy in the United Kingdom. Thus, they were principally concerned with the abolition of slavery and the triumph of democracy embodied in the Northern cause. The Irish radicals consisted of the more advanced, idealistic protestant liberals, and included a good many Ulster presbyterians but only a distinct minority of them. The radicals received relatively little support in Ireland during the war; but afterwards, as the reform movements gained impetus, many of the opportunistic protestant liberals were converted to the reform measures advocated by the radicals. The radicals were primarily interested in abolishing specific evils and believed that the great issues such as slavery, extension
of the franchise, and disestablishment of the Church of Ireland had moral implications. For them all political questions were moral questions, which, on the issue of an independent Confederacy, pinpoints the distinction between them and the Gladstonian liberals, who, though disapproving of slavery, viewed Southern independence primarily as a political question dissociated from the moral issue of slavery. Admittedly, Gladstone as prime minister was to steal the radicals' thunder and enact many of their reforms. However, another political question, home rule, was to split them apart. The radicals were not only moralists but rationalists, which made them and their causes suspect in Roman Catholic circles and which also hampered the radicals' understanding of the emotional aspects of nationalism. To them any justification of the Southern secession on the grounds of state's rights or romantic nationalism was incomprehensible because the cornerstone of the Confederacy was slavery, which made Southern secession immoral and any sympathy with the South equally immoral.

The moderate nationalists clearly supported Southern independence and opposed the immediate abolition of slavery. Their views were related to those of the Catholic liberals in a way similar to the relationship of the views of the radicals and the Protestant liberals. The moderate nationalists were essentially more idealistic; the Catholic
liberals more opportunistic. Unlike the catholic liberals, the moderate nationalists did not hesitate to support the Southern secession enthusiastically on nationalistic grounds. The catholic liberals generally spoke of the North’s coercing the South, whereas the moderate nationalists went further and pictured the Confederacy as an established nation struggling against an unsatisfactory deed of union. When an Anglo-American war seemed likely in December 1861, many moderate nationalists were cheered by the possibility, in contrast to the catholic liberals. Yet on the civil war issues the two groups had much more in common than not, and between them comprised the great majority of the catholic clergy and the Irish people.

The distinction between the opinion of the moderate and extreme nationalists on the civil war is not easy to define. The extreme nationalists shared many of the opinions of the moderates. They both opposed the emancipation policy of the abolitionists, and both supported the United States in disputes with Great Britain. However, from a purely practical point of view, many extremists or fenians were inclined to desire the restoration of the Union as a counterbalance to British power. Yet a great many of the extreme nationalists wanted a quick armistice and sympathized with the 'copperhead' movement calling for peace at any price. In addition, some fully supported the Confederacy. The extreme nationalists were far from
united and vacillated on the important issues so as not to offend any segment of Irish-American opinion. The war was frustrating to them in that it sapped strength from the American fenian organization and distracted Irish-Americans and even many nationalists in Ireland from the pending contest between the Anglo-Saxon and the Irish-Celt.

The abstract desire of many extreme nationalists for the preservation of the Union, yet opposition to the key policies of the North, had little effect on Irish public opinion except to win support for the more coherent attitude of the moderate nationalists who urged the people to oppose 'manacled' unions on both sides of the Atlantic. The attitude of the Connaught Patriot, which sympathized with the aims of the fenians, reveals the incoherent and contradictory opinions of the extreme nationalists. The Patriot believed that the Emancipation Proclamation was 'only pouring oil on the flame' and after the Northern defeat at Fredericksburg urged European intervention ensuring confederate independence. However, in November 1863, it advised Irish nationalists to avoid discussion of the war and thus prevent disputes among themselves. It claimed that many of the 'warmest nationalists' sided with Mitchel and Martin who wholeheartedly supported the Confederacy but that 'the

great majority' of the nationalists shared O'Donoghue’s sentiments. Even if this statement is true, it ought to be pointed out that while The O'Donoghue hoped for the restoration of the Union he did not care if this were accomplished by the South's conquering the North. The Patriot and most fenians and their sympathizers had a very ambivalent attitude. As the war continued through 1864, the Patriot further clarified its pro-South predilection but pro-Union position: 'Though our natural sympathies are with the South, because of their chivalry and their admitted respect for Irishmen, still our wish – the result of principle – has been in favor of the North; and if for no other cause than that England seeks the disruption of the Union – the cause is legitimate'. Near the end of the war it concluded: 'The Union, the whole Union, and nothing but the Union can give hope to us of ever witnessing an independent and free Ireland... We are, therefore, convinced that even a selfish, if no higher, motive ought to make us wish success to the federal cause'. This 'selfish' motive influencing many fenians, i.e. that the most anti-English course was to support the Union, did little to persuade the Irish people to support the Union.

1 Ibid., 28 Nov. 1863.
2 Ibid., 14 May 1864.
3 Ibid., 1 Oct. 1864.
More convincing were the arguments used to urge support for the South: the thousands of Irishmen dying in the Union armies and the South's struggle for independence.

In the last chapter, various religious, economic, and social factors influencing the crossovers of Irish political opinion were presented. However, as was mentioned in the introduction, there is a geographical consideration that illustrates an important division in Irish opinion: the difference between the attitude of East Ulster (Antrim, Down, and Belfast) and the rest of the country. This difference was especially pronounced on certain issues. East Ulster supported England during the Trent crisis and other disputes in Anglo-American relations. Predominantly protestant and presbyterian East Ulster greatly admired the American abolitionists and shared their fear of popery. The majority of the small body of radical Union supporters in Ireland were probably Ulster presbyterians. But on the question of Southern independence the division was blurred. Radicalism was weak in Ulster during the war. East Ulster like the rest of Ireland favored the recognition of the Confederacy, though for different reasons such as concern for trade and the practical considerations of diplomacy.

The influence of Irish-American opinion on nationalist opinion in Ireland has been evident on such issues as slavery and Anglo-American relations but not generally on the issue of Southern independence. One fallacy has
been noted: the belief that since the majority of Irish-Americans lived in the Northern States and so many thousands of Irishmen fought for the Union - probably over four times as many as fought for the Confederacy, their relatives and friends in Ireland must have sympathized with the Union cause. We have seen how this factor worked in reverse and made the Irish people anxious for peace. But the physical and emotional chasm between Irish-Americans and their relations in Ireland should also be pointed out. The Irish-Americans thought of themselves as patriotic Americans and were very devoted to the United States. Two poems by Irish-born Americans commemorating the Irish role in the war emphasize this fact. Charles G. Halpine (Miles O'Reilly) wrote of Irish immigrants:

 Welcomed they were with generous hand;  
 And to that welcome nobly true,  
 When war's dread tocsin filled the land,  
 With sinewy arm and swinging brand,  
 These exiles to the rescue flew.  

John Savage expressed it thus: 'They found cease mille [sic] failthe here - they'll give it to the foe'. The relatives in Ireland could not understand this attachment to the Union and wondered how Irishmen could be willing to kill fellow Irishmen merely for the sake of restoring the Union. It

1 Halpine, 'On raising a monument to the Irish Legion' in The poetry and song of Ireland, ed. J. B. O'Reilly, pp. 875-6.

2 Savage, 'The muster of the North', ibid., pp. 802-5.
was the Irish aspect of the war that attracted the most attention in Ireland, whereas Irishmen living in the Northern States viewed their countrymen in the South primarily as rebels and not Irishmen.

Irish public opinion on the civil war provides a fascinating insight into the study of American and Irish history. The Irish people often viewed the war through green-lensed spectacles, and thus many American historians will find the Irish view completely out of focus, magnifying out of proportion insignificant incidents affecting Irishmen and Ireland. However, Americans should find the Irish view an interesting slant on the war which poses questions, sheds light on problems in American history, and provides a valuable link in the triangle of Anglo-Irish-American affairs.

Most of all, this study suggests intriguing insights into the history of Irish nationalism. The contrast between the nationalism of O'Connell and that of Young Ireland and the fenians is continually evident in the opinions expressed on slavery and Southern independence. The former was essentially rational; the latter emotional. O'Connell primarily wanted reforms; Young Ireland, nationhood. O'Connell was principally concerned with moral issues - reforms of specific abuses in the interest of the Irish people and mankind in general. The Young
Irish people, subordinated reform to repeal. To O'Connell, slavery was a moral issue, and there could be no compromise with it either in accepting donations from slave-owners or in eating slave-grown produce. To Young Ireland, slavery was an entirely peripheral issue which did not concern them and should not be discussed.

During the civil war, the Young Ireland view was predominant. For most Irish nationalists the issue was the restoration of the Union versus the formation of a new nation. The majority of nationalists came to view Washington as they did Westminster. The federal government was attempting to subjugate the Southern States in the same way as the British parliament passed coercion acts for Ireland in order to preserve the Act of Union. The Irish peasants and laborers did not identify themselves with the negroes in bondage but rather with the Irish-Americans 'used' by the 'fanatical' abolitionists in order to enforce the abolition of slavery against the wishes of white Southerners. In Ireland the Confederacy was not stigmatized for having slavery as its cornerstone. The Confederacy was not viewed as an aggressive slave power but as a young nation struggling to be free from the domination of the 'New English' yankees, waging a
defensive war, and desiring peace.

If Irish public opinion on the civil war must be classified simply as pro-North or pro-South, it would, without doubt, fall into the latter category. However, the Southern sympathies of the Irish people were composed of many conflicting motivating factors. They ranged from the conservative and whig hatred of American democracy to the catholic liberal dislike of the coercion policy of the North, and the nationalist desire for self-determination. But the most influential factor was a very human one – the people's desire for peace. The Kilkenny Journal in an editorial in October 1862, praising Gladstone's pro-South speech at Newcastle and calling for recognition of the Confederacy, stressed Ireland's desire for peace: 'So that it [recognition] put an end to this horrible war, let us hope that it will soon take place for the sake of humanity and Ireland'.

APPENDICES
APPENDIX I

The Irish in Lancashire

In November 1862, in an editorial on the Lancashire distress, the Cork Examiner remarked: 'Two years ago this district was the El Dorado of our countrymen....Every village, town and city of that most important district was crammed with them. They shared in the general prosperity, and now alas, they partake of the widespread misery and distress.'¹

In 1861, 8.5% of the total population and 13% of the population over twenty years of age of Lancashire were Irish-born, and 11% of the total.17% of the population over twenty of the city of Manchester.² Of every 1,000 Irishmen in England and Wales, 361 lived in Lancashire.³

But, more importantly, these Irishmen were at the very bottom of the economic ladder. W. O. Henderson, an authority on the Lancashire cotton famine, wrote: 'A gloomy picture of the state of the cotton operatives would be obtained if the gruesome description - by observers like J. P. Kay...and P. Engels - of Manchester's "Little Ireland" were regarded as typical of all Lancashire. But it was not typical.'⁴

¹ Examiner, 25 Nov. 1862.
² Based on Census of England and Wales for the year 1861, passim.
³ Census of the British Empire, 1861, part ii. 157.
⁴ W. O. Henderson, Lancashire cotton famine, p. 3.
Henderson also quoted a contemporary writer who described 'the little Ireland of Wigan' as 'one of these ash-pits of human life which may be found in almost any great town.' Consequently, with the coming of the cotton famine, the Irish in Lancashire were among the worst affected.

The most serious riot in Lancashire, which occurred at Staleybridge and neighboring towns in March 1863, was largely of Irish origin. Twenty-eight of the twenty-nine rioters committed for trial were Irishmen. The Annual Register stated: 'The majority of these disturbers of the peace were believed to be persons who never worked in the mills, but were unskilled labourers of the place, a large proportion of them being natives of Ireland.' Letters from Irishmen in Lancashire, complaining of the discrimination against Irish catholics in the distribution of relief, appeared in the Nation.

Much more research needs to be done on the Lancashire distress. It has been generally accepted that the Lancashire cotton operatives suffered severely and accepted their hard lot because of their support for the Northern cause. But Henderson points out the great amount of aid sent from many parts of Britain and the world to aid the operatives. It seems more than likely that had the operatives been suffering terribly, they would have rioted like some of the worse off Irishmen in Lancashire.

1 Ibid., p. 96.
2 Annual Register, 1863, pp. 142-4; Henderson, Lancashire cotton famine, p. 110.
3 Nation, 3 and 10 Jan. 1863.
APPENDIX II

The American civil war and home rule for Ireland: the unionist view.

In the conclusion it was pointed out how some of the prominent Union supporters in the United Kingdom during the civil war, such as Bright and Forster, opposed home rule for Ireland in the 1880s, whereas Gladstone, who supported the Confederacy on state's rights principles, called for Irish home rule on the same grounds. Although the connection between the issues in the civil war and the home rule debate of the 1880s would appear very tenuous, the 'liberal unionists' used the war to buttress their arguments against home rule.

The state's rights issue of the civil war was very much in the forefront of the home rule controversy in the 1880s. Liberal opponents asserted that Irish home rule would lead eventually to the complete separation of Ireland from Great Britain just as state's rights enabled the confederate states to secede from the Union. On that very day, 24 June 1886, that a letter from John Bright appeared in The Times announcing that on the question of Gladstone's home rule policy Bright supported those who 'refuse to surrender judgement and conscience to the demands or the sudden changes of their political leader,' there was also published a very interesting letter to the editor signed 'A student of history.' The author compared the United Kingdom in 1886 to the United
States at the outbreak of the civil war and American support for Irish home rule to British support, especially Gladstone's, for the South during the civil war:

Every plea that has been advanced in behalf of our disintegration [the United Kingdom's] came with redoubled force to men [in the United States] who from time immemorial had belonged to the "States Rights Party," who knew that every state of the Union had originally come into it as an "independent and sovereign state," who were asked whether they would not aid those who only demanded their ancient right to govern themselves. From the other side of the Atlantic, from old England, and through the mouth of Mr. Gladstone himself, then, as now, the advocate of disintegration, came just such pleas as are now reaching us from America.¹

E. L. Godkin in an article entitled 'American home rule' published in the Handbook of home rule in 1887 points out how 'liberal unionists' used the civil war as an argument against Irish home rule:

Many of the opponents of home rule, too, point to the vigour with which the United States government put down the attempt made by the South to break up the Union as an example of the American love of "imperial unity," and of the spirit in which England should now meet the Irish demands for local autonomy.²

Godkin, an Irishman who lived in the North during the war and was a prominent abolitionist, also compared the outlook of certain radical republicans on home rule for the South during the reconstruction period with the basic attitude of liberal opponents of Irish home rule:

¹ The Times, 24 June 1886.
I am very familiar with the controversy with the radical anti-South republicans, for I have taken some part in it ever since the passage of the reconstruction acts, and I know very well how they felt, and am sometimes greatly impressed by the similarity between their arguments and those of the opponents of Irish home rule. One of their fixed beliefs for many years, though it is now extinct, was that Southerners were so bent on rebelling again, and were generally so prone to rebellion, that the awful consequences of their last attempt in the loss of life and property, had made absolutely no impression on them. The Southerner was, in fact, in their eyes, what Mr. Gladstone says the Irishman is in the eyes of some Englishmen: "A lusus naturae: that justice, common sense, moderation, national prosperity had no meaning for him; that all he could appreciate was strife and perpetual dissension."

The question of the preservation of imperial unity was especially important to the whiggish 'liberal unionists.' The duke of Argyll, a leading Hartington whig, believed that an Irish parliament would mean the danger of total separation or civil war. It is interesting to note that during the civil war Argyll said that he supported the Union for not admitting "what is called the right of secession. I think we ought to admit, in fairness to the Americans, that there are some things worth fighting for, and that national existence is a matter of conscience that not on the grounds of imperial

\[\text{\textsuperscript{1}}\text{Ibid., p. 22. See also other articles in the Handbook: Lord Thring, 'Home rule and imperial unity,' pp. 55-79; Godkin, 'A lawyer's objections to home rule,' pp. 129-54; R. B. O'Brien, 'The "Unionist" case for home rule,' pp. 154-94. Godkin and O'Brien criticize the arguments of W. E. H. Lecky, Goldwin Smith, A.K. Dicey, and The Spectator against home rule -- all four of whom supported the Northern cause during the civil war. However, James Bryce, who evidently supported the North on anti-slavery grounds, favored Irish home rule.}\]

\[\text{\textsuperscript{2}}\text{See G. D. Campbell, duke of Argyll, Irish nationalism: an appeal to history (1893).}\]
one of them.¹ W. E. H. Lecky, more liberal than Argyll but not a radical, as he wrote, 'like Mr. Bright or Mr. Disraeli,'² believed that Irish home rule would plant 'in the very heart of the British Empire the seeds of triumphant and contagious anarchy, and perhaps even of civil war.'³ This stand on home rule or state's rights exemplifies the conversion of many educated 'old' liberals to conservatism. They believed that the American civil war 'had illustrated the power which rested in the hands of the modern state...,' and that the only safeguard against the capricious power of an unchecked majority, such as the catholic nationalists in Ireland, was a strong constitution like that of the United States.⁴ These 'old,' whiggish liberals indicted the 'new' Gladstonian liberals for underestimating the role of force in human affairs. Old liberalism took shape as liberal unionism which was linked with imperialism.⁵

However, many of the liberal unionists opposed home rule on moral grounds. Like Bright, they opposed home rule as a matter of conscience and not on the grounds of imperialism.

¹ Quoted in D.N.B., Suppl., i. 387.
³ Lecky, An Irish historian on home rule for Ireland (1889), p. 7.
⁵ Ibid.
Professor Goldwin Smith, a disciple of Bright, expressed some of their opinions. Smith wrote to the American journalist, G. W. Curtis, in 1886: 'You fought for your Union against slavery; we are fighting for ours against savagery and superstition.' In opposing home rule, Professor Smith discussed the history of Irish-Americans and concluded that Celtic-Irishmen were unfit for self-government. He specifically singled out the attitude of Irish-Americans toward the negro and referred to the New York draft riots:

No pen, I believe, has been used with more hearty good-will than mine in doing justice to the graces of the Irish character. But there is no use in denying that the Irishman, like other Celts, is by nature politically weak, and apt to fall under the leadership of evil men. American politics, in the cities especially, are a mournful proof of the fact. As a labourer, the Irishman in the United States has been invaluable; as a voter, he has been the unhappy tool of knavery and corruption. He became the vassal supporter of slavery, and was the most cruel enemy of the negro. Nor is there any use in denying the fact that when people applaud assassination, stand by in a crowd while a poor boy has his brains beaten out before his mother's eyes for obeying his lawful master, drag the husband into his wife's presence to be shot, kill one woman, boycott another in childbirth from receiving medical aid, go out by hundreds to hoot a widow on her return from viewing the body of her murdered husband, cut off the udders of cows, and at New York set fire to a negro orphan asylum, increase of self-government is by no means sure to be an unmixed boon. These are not pleasant things to recall, but recalled they must be when it is proposed to take a momentous and irrevocable step on the assumption that British connection being ended, all will be well. British connection is not the cause of Irish crime and disorder, or of the killing of negroes and Chinese on the other side of the Atlantic.

1 Smith to Curtis, 11 Feb. 1886, quoted in Elisabeth Wallace, Goldwin Smith: Victorian liberal, p. 92.
After concluding that Irish-Americans and the Celtic-Irish in Ireland were irrational, Professor Smith claimed that American history provided one lesson for Great Britain: "The Americans, people of British blood, nobly resolved to make any sacrifice rather than submit to the disruption of their Union. This is the only pertinent lesson which the American continent sends to England at this hour."

It was Joseph Chamberlain who combined the moral principles and reform-mindedness of the radicals with the imperialism of the whigs to form the basic character of liberal unionism. He too made use of the lesson of the civil war and expressed his opposition to home rule in Lincolnseque language:

I say to Ireland what the liberals or republicans of the North said to the Southern States of America: "The Union must be preserved." Within these limits there is nothing which you may not ask and hope to obtain. Equal laws, equal justice, equal opportunities, equal prosperity—these shall be freely accorded to you. Your wishes shall be our guide, your prejudices shall be by us respected, your interests shall be our interests, but nature and your position have forged indissoluble links which cannot be sundered without being fraught with consequences of misery and ruin to both our countries, and which, therefore, we shall use all the resources of the Empire to keep intact.

The liberal unionist attitude toward home rule and earlier, radical opinion on the civil war were basically the same, being founded on moral convictions. On both great questions, the

1 Ibid., p. 28.

difference between nonconformist radical opinion and Irish catholic opinion is continually evident. As was seen, the radicals considered the slavery issue a moral question with no compromise possible; and the catholic nationalists, an undoubted evil but primarily a political issue with the possibility of compromise. It is interesting to note that catholics, though dogmatic on religious issues, were generally much more open to compromise in the realm of political affairs, whereas the radical reformers had fewer doubts about the application of religious principles to political events.

An important fact to be recalled is the often irrational anti-catholicism of the New England yankees and British radicals during the nineteenth century. This naturally led to an estrangement between them and Irish catholics on both sides of the Atlantic. In New England this anti-catholicism fostered the spirit of know-nothingism and native-Americanism, while in the United Kingdom it bolstered opposition to Irish home rule to safeguard the interests of Irish protestants and prevent the reign of the catholic priesthood in Ireland which, according to liberal unionists, stood 'with the encyclical and syllabus in its hand, to be executed wherever and whenever it has the power."

In conclusion, it must be emphasized that there is a limit to which the parallel between Irish nationalism and

Southern state's rights can be drawn. Few historians today would suggest that the radicals were wrong in seeing a great moral issue in the civil war, the abolition of slavery; but few would agree with the view of the liberal unionists, that there was a similar moral issue in opposition to home rule for Ireland. On the contrary, in the view of many critics, state's rights embodied in the cause of Irish nationalism was purified by centuries of persecution and made more attractive, while, as Lord Acton, a great philosopher of state's rights, pointed out, the foul blot of slavery greatly contributed to the failure of the Confederacy and the discrediting of Southern state's rights.

1 See 'Gladstone and the civil war: the key to British opinion' in the bibliographical essay.

It is helpful to have some knowledge of British opinion on the American civil war in order to keep Irish public opinion in perspective. Unfortunately, the standard interpretation of British opinion is greatly oversimplified, though some revision has taken place in recent years. The basis for this interpretation, especially of E. H. C. Scott’s Great Britain and the American civil war (1925) and Jordan and Pratt’s Surveys BIBLIOGRAPHICAL ESSAY (1931), with its largest section devoted to Gladstone, remains little altered, and in his introduction to Jordan and Pratt’s ESSAY, even the standard interpretation of Gladstone’s position on the United Kingdom did not recognize that he had changed his public opinion.

2. Gladstone and the civil war: the key to British opinion, p. 401.

3. Ireland and the civil war, p. 405.


Horlase asserts that in general public opinion the issues became sufficiently clear to Irish public opinion to be carried by the Constitution. He believes in the non-slavery people all the open or covert principles of the Revolution and the abolition of slavery and on the other, the all the belief in democracy, in the republican idea, and in the dignity of labor. In Horlase then points out how the two sides attempt to revive the ‘legend’ that England sympathized with the Confederacy. There is no further evidence in American history that England...

It is helpful to have some knowledge of British opinion on the American civil war in order to keep Irish public opinion in perspective. Unfortunately the standard interpretation of English opinion is greatly oversimplified, though some revision has taken place in recent years. The basis for this interpretation consists of E. D. Adam's *Great Britain and the American civil war* (1925) and Jordan and Pratt's *Europe and the American civil war* (1931), with its largest section devoted to England. Samuel Eliot Morison, in his introduction to Jordan and Pratt, sums up the standard interpretation. He states that the United Kingdom did not recognize the Confederacy because 'Lords Palmerston and Russell desired not flout the English nonconformist conscience.'

Morison asserts that in European public opinion the issues became sufficiently clear to divide public opinion clean-cut into pro-Union and pro-Southern; to array as the Comte de Montalembert said "on the side of the pro-slavery people all the open or secret partisans of the fanaticism and absolutism of Europe - the open or secret enemies of liberty," and on the other, all who believed in democracy, in the republican idea, and in the dignity of labor.

Morison then points out how the two books attempt to reverse the 'legend' that England sympathized with the Confederacy: 'There is a curious legend in American history that England

1 Jordan and Pratt, *op. cit.*, p. xi.
2 Ibid., pp. xi-xii.
as a whole was hostile, positively and mischievously so, to the Union. Professor Ephraim D. Adams has already proved this to be unfounded on the diplomatic side; Professor Jordan shows that it has little foundation in public opinion.¹

Survey histories such as Thomas A. Bailey's *A diplomatic history of the American people* accept Adams's and Jordan's conclusions. Bailey writes:

Unquestionably the Emancipation Proclamation was a cardinal stroke in Northern diplomacy. It robbed the South of its moral cause and elevated the conflict into a holy crusade against human bondage. It helped nerve the British workman to withstand the famine; it demonstrated that the masses in England would be loath to stand behind the government in intervention.²

However, there has been recent revision. The author of an unpublished thesis at Oxford in 1957, which was an essay on revision of the standard interpretation entitled *English sympathy for the Southern Confederacy: the glittering illusion*, wrote:

There is a difference between the wartime accounts and the postwar ones; there is a decided difference. How is it to be explained? There is, of course, a natural wish to be on the winning side. Men tend to keep quiet about the causes they favoured when those causes are defeated...Matthew Arnold, speaking of the middle classes and the war, said that they were "full of coldness, slights, and sermons" for the federals, and, as soon as the federals were victorious, dis-

¹ Ibid.
² Bailey, *Diplomatic history*, p. 370.
covered that they had always wished them well....

For I cannot escape the impression that there has been a persistent minimizing of the sympathy for the South, a tendency to accept uncritically such contemporary accounts as suggest sympathy for the North and to discount or ignore those which give a different impression. I have come to believe that English sympathy for the South can only be compared, in intensity and identification with its object, to English sympathy for Greece and Italy in their struggles for freedom; and yet in the general histories it is, if mentioned at all, scarcely so portrayed. If I am right about the passion and enthusiasm of this sympathy, its comparative neglect can only be attributed to the fact that it led to nothing: the North won; more important, democracy won.

Unfortunately, Van Auken's revisionist essay has not been published. However, a recently published work takes some note of a trend toward revision. Frank Thistlethwaite in The Anglo-American connection in the early nineteenth century (1959) remarks:

The alignment of British opinion towards the American civil war was more complex than was once supposed. It is difficult to find any positive affinity among the ruling classes for the plantocracy, let alone for slavery itself; the sentiment in favour of Southern independence, deriving from a sense of liberty and self-determination as well as from hostility and fear towards Yankee freedom, was by no means confined to the establishment, but included elements among the middle, and even the working, class. At no time was the government prepared to risk war with the North by mediation which would involve recognition of Southern independence. Yet with all these qualifications, it would still appear that the convictions held about slavery by middle, and working classes, and especially their non-conformist element, were a powerful determinant of opinion. Those convictions only became fully explicit after the Emancipation Proclamation had given earnest [sic] that the war was against not only planters but slavery itself; but both political parties had to reckon with them from 1861 onwards. Finally, these convictions were a consistent and deep-seated response on the

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1 Sheldon Van Auken, English sympathy for the Southern Confederacy, pp. iv-v.
part of those who had been educated to regard slavery as the enemy of American democracy, and American democracy as the ally of, and example to, reform in Britain. And in so far as Lancashire cotton operatives took the lead in upholding the Union blockade, though this meant the bitter hardships of a cotton famine, it could be said that the crisis revealed the elements of a genuine Atlantic connection, transcending the economic self-interest of the United Kingdom.

Thistlethwaite's remarks provide some revision but not enough. My interpretation of British opinion on the war, based on a composite of articles, books, and unpublished theses, is as follows:

1) The question of freedom of nationalities or self-determination for the Confederacy was an important factor in creating British support for the South, as Thistlethwaite rightly points out. This theme will be treated below in my discussion of the development of Gladstone's opinion as the key to British opinion on the war.

2) Hatred of democracy more than affinity with the Southern aristocracy was the motive for the reactionaries' sympathy with the South. However, as Thistlethwaite states, it would be unfair to say that this was the motive of the majority of the ruling class. However, the reactionary element was extremely vociferous in its denunciations of democracy during the war and gave the radicals an issue which they used successfully to discredit the opponents of parliamentary reform.

1 Thistlethwaite, Anglo-American connection, pp. 119-20.
3) However unpalatable the fact may be, it must be admitted that the reason Britain did not recognize the Confederacy was due to the caution of Lord Palmerston, who certainly was no admirer of American democracy. As Max Beloff states in an article that inspired Van Auken's thesis: 'Lord Palmerston had mastered the situation and was firmly in control. It was a case of traditional diplomacy, unheroic and unmoved by sentiment. The veteran prime minister was a better defender of British interests and of peace, the most vital of them, than the demagogues on either side....'¹

4) The belief that the Emancipation Proclamation effected a great change in British public opinion appears to be totally fallacious. To most Englishmen after the war, including Gladstone, the abolition of slavery was the great achievement of the war. Consequently, historians of the war have laid great stress on the writings of Bright, the Adamses, and the abolitionists and give the impression that there was a much larger body of Union supporters in Great Britain during the war than there actually was. It should be remembered that there were sincere abolitionists, such as Lord Brougham, who supported the South. Moreover, not all the abolitionists shared Bright's attitude toward the preservation of the Union. Some, even late in the war, were willing to allow Southern secession, believing that the abolition of slavery must follow.

¹ Max Beloff, 'Historical revision no. cxviii, Great Britain and the American civil war,' in History, xxxvii. 47 (Feb. 1952).
In addition, though by the 1860s there was no support for slavery in England, Englishmen during the war did not believe slavery was the issue at stake. Even Bishop Wilberforce supported the South, and Van Auken points out that the organizers of abolition meetings at Exeter Hall in 1863, after the Proclamation, did not identify the cause of abolition with the cause of the North.\(^1\) Louis Blanc wrote, describing Henry Ward Beecher's tour of Great Britain in 1863, that he 'was all but spurned at Edinburgh, all but cursed at Glasgow' and that at Liverpool, the most Southern of cities, 'he would have died, if one could die of such things, under a shower of groans and hisses.'\(^2\)

5) Much more research needs to be done on the attitude of the English workingmen toward the civil war. There has been an attempt to minimize any support for the South among workingmen. Typical of this is a footnote in a book, written in 1927, on English labor during the civil war period. The author discounts labor support for the South as follows:

'One writer states that only in London, Liverpool, and Glasgow were workingmen divided - in London because never united, in Liverpool because of close touch with the South, in Glasgow because of blockade runners (R. J. Hinton, English radical

\(^1\) Van Auken, op. cit., pp. 87-8.

leaders, New York, 1875, p. 63). 1

Thistlethwaite writes regarding British laborers:

In Britain, workingmen listened to tales of returning travellers which contrasted unfavorably their own condition with that of the slaves, and were suspicious of abolitionists like Harriet Beecher Stowe who hobnobbed with aristocratic landowners and ascribed the poverty of workingmen to drink; and some of the agrarian radicals carried their distrust of industrial capitalism so far that, during the American civil war, they sympathized with the agricultural, though slave-holding, South. 2

Even a pamphlet published in conjunction with the Trades Union Congress in 1952 points out the substantial amount of support for the South among British workingmen and among the labor press, such as The Beehive, Reynolds Weekly, and The British Miner. However, the author claims that the older generation of labor leaders, who controlled the press, favoured the South, but that the new generation who were gradually gaining control favored the North. 3 In addition, in Scotland, Alexander MacDonald, the head of the Scottish miners; Alexander Campbell, the organizer of the Glasgow Trades Council; and the Glasgow Sentinel, the Scottish labor newspaper, were strongly in favor of British recognition of the Confederacy. 4

2 Thistlethwaite, op. cit., p. 152.
4 Robert Botsford, Scotland and the American civil war, pp. 337-8, 425.
From the available evidence one can say that a great many British workingmen, and possibly a majority, shared Gladstone's anti-slavery, pro-South view of the war. It would appear that it was not until after the Northern triumph that Bright's view was overwhelmingly acclaimed by the laboring class who were converted like Gladstone by events on the battlefield to the anti-slavery, pro-democracy interpretation of the war.

6) On the question of the Lancashire cotton operatives' attitude to the war, Van Auken quotes a contemporary author: 'They certainly did not demand war to reopen the mills of Lancashire: but the orderly behaviour, and the absence of agitation among the working classes, are the only facts from which their sympathy with the federal cause can be said to be deduced, and these may have been due to other causes.'

My own research suggests that there were many people in the United Kingdom much worse off than the Lancashire operatives. The Times, late in the war, pointed out the excellent work of the relief committees and associations and remarked: 'The complete success of all these means is proved by the fact that not one person is known to have died by hunger in all Lancashire during the whole period of the cotton famine.'

W. O. Henderson recounts an incident in Manchester in

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1 J. H. Kenneyway, On Sherman's track, or, the South after the war (London, 1867), p. 266, quoted in Van Auken, op. cit., p. 89.

2 The Times, 12 Oct. 1864.
March 1863, when Lancashire was supposedly united behind Bright, that probably reveals the true sentiments of the really impoverished operatives:

The first disturbance worth noticing somewhat marred the distribution of food sent from America. It was announced in Manchester that in honour of the marriage of the Prince of Wales on March 10, 1863, a meeting of operatives was to be held in Stevenson's Square....It was intended that the operatives should march to Kersal Moor where 15,000 2-lb. loaves would be distributed. Two boats drawn by lorries were to take part in the procession: one, flying the Stars and Stripes, to represent the relief ships, the other - a black vessel destined to be burned on the moor - to represent the Alabama. The meeting took place, but the operatives declined to allow political capital to be made out of their distress: no procession was formed, and the loaves were seized from the lorries in the square.

Van Auken sums up the attitude of British workingmen and Lancashiremen in particular: 'There seems to be little evidence to support the assertion that, either before or after the Emancipation Proclamation, there was any solid or vigorous support of the Union cause among the working men....In so far as Lancashiremen had opinions on the war, they were probably fairly well divided, the North having—just—an edge.'

This is, of course, just an opinion, as is the standard interpretation, relying almost entirely on Bright's testimony. A special study of Lancashire opinion is needed to determine whether it was the same during the war as after Appomattox.

1 W. O. Henderson, Lancashire cotton famine, p. 110.
2 Van Auken, op.cit., p. 90.
2. Gladstone and the civil war: the key to British opinion.

In my opinion the key to the interpretation of British public opinion on the civil war is W. E. Gladstone. John Morley wrote that Gladstone 'like the majority of his countrymen, failed to take the true measure' in that he 'applied ordinary political maxims to what was not merely a political contest, but a social revolution.'\(^1\) In his famous speech at Newcastle-on-Tyne on 7 October 1862 Gladstone summed up his attitude on the civil war:

We know quite well that the people of the Northern States have not yet drunk of the cup - they are still trying to hold it far from their lips - which all the rest of the world see they nevertheless must drink of. We may have our own opinions about slavery; we may be for or against the South; but there is no doubt that Jefferson Davis and other leaders of the South have made an army; they are making, it appears, a navy; and they have made what is more than either, they have made a nation.\(^2\)

In his final public speech on the war on 30 June 1863 he was distressed at the horrible bloodshed in the war and said that British public opinion was unanimous that the restoration of the Union by force was impossible.\(^3\)

In a letter to Robert E. Lee a year after the war, Lord Acton mentioned his friendship with Gladstone, Gladstone's support for the Confederacy, and the belief in state's rights shared by both Acton and Gladstone:

\(^1\) Morley, The life of William Ewart Gladstone, ii. 70.

\(^2\) Ibid., p. 79.

\(^3\) Ibid., pp. 85-6.
I have been requested to furnish private counsel in American affairs for the guidance of the editors of a weekly review which is to begin at the new year, and which will be conducted by men who are followers of Mr. Gladstone. You are aware, no doubt, that Mr. Gladstone was in the minority of Lord Palmerston's cabinet who wished to accept the French emperor's proposal to mediate in the American war.

...I saw in state rights the only avail ing check upon the absolutism of the sovereign will, and secession filled me with hope, not as the destruction but as the redemption of democracy. The institutions of your republic have not exercised on the old world the salutary and liberating influence which ought to have belonged to them, by reason of those defects and abuses of principle which the confederate constitution was expressly and wisely calculated to remedy. I believed that the example of that great reform would have blessed all the races of mankind by establishing true freedom purged of the native dangers and disorders of republics.

Therefore I deemed that you were fighting the battles of our liberty, our progress, and our civilisation; and I mourn for the stake which was lost at Richmond more deeply than I rejoice over that which was saved at Waterloo.

Gladstone supported the recognition of the Confederacy on the same principle of state's rights or freedom of nationalities, though he could hardly be said to be as enthusiastic over the Southern secession as was his friend Lord Acton.

As we have seen, Gladstone expressed his attitude toward state's rights even more clearly during the home rule debate of 1886. In a memoir in July 1896 Gladstone described his Newcastle speech as 'an undoubted error, the most singular and palpable, I may add the least excusable of them all...', denied that it was due to any partizanship for the South, stressed that the fortunes of the South were 'at their zenith' at the time, and noted that 'Lord Palmerston desired the severance of the Union as a diminution of a dangerous power,

1 Acton to Lee, 4 Nov. 1866, quoted in D. S. Freeman, R. E. Lee: a biography, iv. 515-17.
but prudently held his tongue.¹ However there is no doubt that Gladstone believed at the time that the South was becoming an independent nation and that 'the unexpected victory of the Northern States had an important effect upon Gladstone's outlook.'² Indeed the civil war could be said to be a link in the course of events leading to Gladstone's conversion to belief in parliamentary reform.³ Gladstone was a Janus in politics, and if one face was Lord Acton, the other was John Bright.

John Bright had faith in Gladstone and converted him to support for parliamentary reform and eventually to a pro-North view of the war. In a famous speech to the commons on 11 May 1864 Gladstone declared 'that every man, who is not presumably incapacitated by some consideration of personal unfitness or of political danger, is morally entitled to come within the pale of the constitution...'⁴ Gladstone's 'moral' view of parliamentary reform led to his defeat when he stood for Oxford in July 1865 but aided in his capture of a seat for industrial South Lancashire during the same month. Thus, in addition to circumstances on the battlefield, a change of constituency coupled with conversion to parliamentary reform

¹ Quoted in Morley, op. cit., ii. 81-2.
² Philip Magnus, Gladstone: a biography, p. 154.
³ Asa Briggs, The age of improvement, p. 494.
⁴ W. E. Williams, The rise of Gladstone to the leadership of the liberal party 1859 to 1868, pp. 88-9.
caused Gladstone to share Bright's view that the outcome of the civil war hinged on the moral issue of slavery. In a speech to the house of commons on 27 April 1866 Gladstone referred to the conduct of the Lancashire operatives during the civil war and reveals how, after the war, Britain adopted Bright's view of the war which she was afraid to accept during the war. In reference to the laboring classes in Lancashire, Gladstone said:

They knew that the source of their distress lay in the war, yet they never uttered nor entertained the wish that any effort should be made to put an end to it, as they held it to be a war of justice and for freedom. Could any man have believed that a conviction so still, so calm, so firm, so energetic, could have planted itself in the minds of a population without becoming a known patent fact throughout the whole country? But we knew nothing of it. And yet when the day of trial came we saw that noble sympathy on their part with the people of the North; that determination that, be their sufferings what they might, no word should proceed from them that would hurt a cause which they so firmly believed to be just. On one side there was a magnificent spectacle; on the other side was there not also a great lesson to us all, to teach us that in those little tutored, but yet reflective minds, by a process of quiet instillation, opinions and sentiments gradually form themselves of which we for a long time remain unaware, but which, when at last they make their appearance, are found to be deep-rooted, mature and ineradicable?

The development of Gladstone's opinion on the war probably reflects the evolution of British opinion from support for Jefferson Davis's nation struggling to be free, during the peak period of Southern success on the battlefield, to sympathy with the Union and the sudden realization that slavery after all

1 Ibid., p. 107.
was the issue in the war, following the triumph of the Northern arms and the assassination of Lincoln. It would even appear that 'those little tutored' minds did not really reflect on the implications of the American contest until after the war. When one becomes aware of all these facts, he can make the necessary differentiation between British opinion during and after the war.

Virtually nothing has been written on the topic of this thesis except for a few brief comments or footnotes, often inaccurate, in books or articles on English or Irish-American opinion on the war. Apparently, the only attempt to treat the subject is contained in an article by R. J. Purcell, 'Ireland and the American civil war,' in Catholic World, cxv. 72-84 (Apr. 1922). Though it contains some interesting remarks on O'Connell and slavery, it is almost totally erroneous on Irish opinion during the civil war and assumes that Ireland of the 'sixties had the same attitude toward the United States as Ireland of the O'Connell era. In addition to his inaccuracies on the Irish attitude toward the slavery issue, the author classifies Smith O'Brien as 'intensely

1 See footnote in the chapter, 'Abolition of slavery,' p. 77.
pro-Northern', F. G.[sic] Maguire (see Cork Examiner) as 'of more pronounced Northern adherence', and The O'Donoghue as one in whom 'the States had no partisan more vigorous.' The author even states that the Nation and the Irish People agreed on American affairs and supported the North. Evidently he mistakenly equated opinion on Anglo-American relations with opinion on Southern independence, though it is difficult to be certain, because no sources are cited. In two footnotes I cited comments of Purcell on O'Connell and slavery, which may have been unwise to do, when considering the author's inaccurate statements on Ireland during the civil war.\(^1\)

Although there has been no scholarly study of Irish public opinion on the civil war, there is a lingering impression that Ireland must have supported the North because most Irish-Americans were concentrated there and because during the Trent crisis Irish nationalists sympathized with the United States in its dispute with Great Britain. This impression is based on confusion of the issues and ignorance of the facts.

One factor that made research for this thesis difficult

\(^1\) Richard J. Purcell was Professor of American History at the Catholic University of America. He received his Ph.D. from Yale, held a Guggenheim fellowship for the study of Irish immigration, was historiographer of the American-Irish Historical Society, and contributed 175 articles to the Dictionary of American Biography (Death notice in Amer. Hist. Rev., lv. 781-2 [Apr. 1950]).
was the lack of any modern investigation of this period of
Irish history. On the period between J. H. Whyte's *The
independent Irish party 1850-9* and David Thornley's thesis
*Isaac Butt and the creation of an Irish parliamentary party
1868-79* very little has been written and is mostly contained
in contemporary memoirs. The years 1860-5 formed a
transitional period in the history of Irish nationalism; and
although the surface was calm, there were many stresses and
strains and much factionalism. The attempt to acquire a
moderately detailed knowledge of such a complex period of
Irish history to form a background for this thesis was not
easy.

Neither was it easy to obtain much information on the
opinions and activities of Irish-Americans during the war.
Some research has been done on their attitude toward slavery
and state's rights, but there is not an even partially com-
prehensive study of their record on the battlefield. Much of
what is available on Irish-American participation in the war
consists of romanticized reminiscences which could hardly be
relied on. Furthermore, their attitude during the war, which
could be generally described as 'war democrat', is not well
treated and barely understood in most studies of the war.

It is important for the reader to realize that the

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1 An article recently appeared that touches on
certain aspects of the period, principally from late 1864
onwards. I only read it after completing the thesis. See
Rev. Patrick J. Corish, 'Cardinal Cullen and the National
Association of Ireland' in *Reportorium Novum*, iii. 13-61 (1962)
political classification of newspapers and individuals is based on their opinions during the civil war years. An extreme nationalist like The O'Donoghue could later abandon the nationalist movement and then be reconverted during the rebirth of the home rule movement. J. F. Maguire apparently became a catholic liberal during the height of the disestablishment controversy of 1868-9 but then quickly returned to the nationalist ranks. The 'castle catholic' Freeman's Journal and Galway Vindicator were later to become moderate nationalist. Irish political opinion was very fluid.

Assessing the relative value of opinions on the war was difficult. The major newspapers for each faction were investigated and their editorial opinions weighed. With some exceptions, it was easier to make generalizations about the opinion of a faction than the opinion of Ireland as a whole. The opinion of the extreme nationalists was especially difficult to untangle. In assessing Ulster presbyterian opinion there were the conflicting editorials of the Banner of Ulster and the Northern Whig. Both opposed slavery, but the Banner supported the Confederacy and the Northern Whig, the Union. However, the editor of the Northern Whig during the war was an English unitarian, F. H. Hill, whose views were more advanced than those of most Ulster presbyterians. The Banner was more closely affiliated with the Irish presbyterian church, and its pragmatic Palmerstonian attitude toward Southern independence would appear to be more representative of Ulster presbyterian opinion during the war.
In making an overall assessment of Irish opinion, editorials of such newspapers as the Nation, possibly the Irish People, and especially the Freeman’s Journal, which was widely read by the catholic clergy, were important. But, perhaps, the most important were those of the daily Cork Examiner, a very influential paper in Munster with a large circulation.\textsuperscript{1} Its proprietor, John Francis Maguire, was one of the most important politicians in Ireland at the time. He was lord mayor of Cork from 1862 to 1864 and as an M.P. supported the principle of independent opposition in parliament. He was also a champion of catholic rights and, though a moderate nationalist, on good terms with the 'castle catholics.' He was interested in American affairs,\textsuperscript{2} and the many editorials in the Examiner on the war reflect this interest. The Cork Examiner was also very influential, as J. H. Whyte points out, because it was 'the most interesting and most attractively produced of all the Irish provincial papers' and because Maguire was 'meticulously honourable,' 'always managed to keep the argument above the level of personalities,' and seemed to have been 'the only leader of the independent opposition who went through his political career without making an enemy.'\textsuperscript{3} In addition, the Cork

\textsuperscript{1} See P. D’A. Newton, The newspaper gazetteer, an annual register of newspapers (1860).

\textsuperscript{2} E.g., his book published in 1868, The Irish in America.

\textsuperscript{3} J. H. Whyte, The independent Irish party 1850-9, p. 140.
Examiner gave a very comprehensive coverage of events in the war and Irish, English, and American editorial opinion on the war. The Examiner also saw eye-to-eye with the Nation on most issues. Consequently, the Cork Examiner has been a basic source and a valuable measuring-stick in estimating Irish public opinion in general.

Of course, the various shades of Irish opinion are more important than a few generalizations which, however necessary, are inadequate for a description of the Irish attitudes toward the complex issues of slavery, Southern independence, and Anglo-American relations. Thus, in order to obtain as clear a picture as possible, and to supplement and amplify the editorials in the principal newspapers and journals, many of the smaller provincial papers were investigated. It is hoped that the attempt to fill in all the shades of opinion by tracing logically and clearly the development of the public opinion of each faction has been successful.

4. Notes on sources.

The source materials for this thesis are many, varied, and scattered. The principal sources are contemporary Irish newspapers and periodicals, most of which are available at the National Library of Ireland, although some of the rarer provincial papers are only available at the British Museum. In
addition, The Times was searched with reference to Irish affairs, and The Tablet and Dublin Review, although published in London during the war, could be considered as a segment of Irish opinion, especially Irish Roman catholic opinion.

To give extra depth to the study, American papers were searched for references to Irish public opinion. The New York Irish-American, which was investigated at the Library of Congress, was helpful as a guide in assessing public opinion in Ireland. The abolitionist Boston Liberator and The Index, a confederate propaganda organ in London, were also read at the Library of Congress. There were of course many editorials and reports from American and English newspapers relating to Irish opinion that were reprinted in the Irish press.

Probably the most important manuscript sources are the U.S. consular dispatches from Belfast, Dublin, Cork, and Galway at the National Archives in Washington and the reports from confederate agents in Ireland in the Pickett papers (Confederate State Department Records) at the Library of Congress. The comments in these reports were very revealing.

Other valuable manuscript sources include the letters of prominent Irishmen containing comments on the civil war that are scattered through numerous collections of private papers at the National Library of Ireland. The police reports and the letters from magistrates, militia officers, and private citizens in both the Sir Thomas Larcom papers (N.L.I.) and
the Registered Papers (1861-5) at the State Paper Office, Dublin Castle, were valuable, especially for the Irish reaction to Union recruiting of Irishmen. The State Paper Office also contains the government correspondence between Dublin Castle and the Irish Office, Home Office, and Foreign Office in London on the question of Irish participation in the war. The Friends House, Dublin has some useful information on the Irish quakers during the war. The Public Record Office and Linen Hall Library, Belfast have nothing directly relevant to this thesis, which could not be obtained elsewhere. The same is true of the Gladstone papers at the British Museum.¹ Of course, there are many collections of private papers on both sides of the Atlantic that might have fringe references for this thesis, but it is very doubtful that they would shed any new light on the topic.

The most interesting collection of papers I searched are those of John Elliott Cairnes at the National Library of Ireland. There are about 450 to 500 letters for my period, about one-half from correspondents and the other half from Cairnes. Many deal with the abolitionist movement in the United Kingdom during the civil war and more especially, the publication of The slave power. About 100 letters from Cairnes to Professor William Nesbitt contain much valuable information on Cairnes's view of the war. The letters of

¹ See British Museum catalogue of additions to the manuscripts: the Gladstone papers (1953).
F. H. Hill, editor of the *Northern Whig*, in the Cairnes collection proved useful. There are also many interesting letters from leading intellectuals in the United Kingdom and America, such as Harriet Martineau, G. W. Curtis, H. B. Adams, Thomas Hughes, Epes Sargent, Goldwin Smith, Walter Bagehot, Josiah Quincy, H. W. Beecher, C. F. Adams, John Morley, and extracts of letters from J. S. Mill. Naturally, only a fraction of the manuscripts in Cairnes's collection could be related directly to my thesis. Many more are concerned with the United Kingdom as a whole during the civil war and the actual war.

Finally, it should be stressed that I investigated all the sources with the specific subject of this thesis in mind. I was not concerned with eye-witness accounts of battles in letters from Irish-American soldiers published in the newspapers. That subject could be a thesis in itself, and there is already a proliferation of published memoirs of that nature. Also, I did not permit myself to get too involved with specific incidents that belong more especially to the history of the war itself or Irish history of the period. I did not attempt to fill in the relevant facts for a vacuum period of Irish history. More importantly, I attempted to delve deeply into the Irish reaction to the important issues involved in the civil war.
BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. National newspapers and periodicals
2. Other sources consulted

SYNOPSIS

I. Government publications and printed government correspondence

1. Irish and British
   A. Sources

I. Manuscripts

In Dublin

1. National Library of Ireland
2. State Paper Office
3. Friends House
4. Irish Folklore Commission

In Washington, D.C.

1. Library of Congress
2. National Archives
3. Catholic University of America Archives

In Belfast

1. Public Record Office of Northern Ireland
II. Newspapers and periodicals
   1. Principal newspapers and periodicals
   2. Others consulted

III. Government publications and printed government correspondence
   1. Irish and British
   2. American

IV. Works of reference

V. Published memoirs, journals, autobiographies, letters, and speeches

VI. Contemporary publications: books, pamphlets, biographies, histories, and official records
   1. On the civil war, slavery, and the United States
   2. On Ireland and Irishmen
   3. Records and minutes
   4. Biographies

B. SECONDARY WORKS
I. General histories
II. Biographies
III. Theses
IV. Special studies

V. Bibliographical guides

A. SOURCES

MS 955: 3 letters to Cairnes from Thomas R. Leslie, 1863, with 5 copies of letters from Cairnes to Leslie, 1862-3.

I. Manuscripts

MS 955: 16 letters from Sarah G. Shaw to Cairnes, 1860-6.

In Dublin

1. National Library of Ireland

a) John Elliott Cairnes Papers, MSS 8940-86. Especially valuable were letters on the civil war contained in the following:

MS 941: 393 letters of Professor Cairnes to Professor William Nesbitt, 1857-75.

MS 944: 135 letters to Cairnes from various correspondents, 1852-75.

b) Sir Thomas Alcock Lecce Papers, MSS 7943-7956, especially 45-52. This collection contains letters to and from Cairnes from various people, 1856-73.

MS 942: 20 letters of Cairnes to various people, 1856-73.

MS 944: 135 letters to Cairnes from various correspondents, 1852-75.

MS 947: 8 letters to Cairnes from Professor George L. Craik, 1861-3.

MS 948: 14 letters to Cairnes from G.W. Curtis, 1862-74.

MS 949: 7 letters to Cairnes from the Emancipation Society, 1863-4.

MS8955: 3 letters to Cairnes from Thomas E. Leslie, 1863, with 5 copies of letters from Cairnes to Leslie, 1862-3.

MS8957: 3 letters to Cairnes from Harriet Martineau, 1862-3.

MS8965: 18 letters from Sarah B. Shaw to Cairnes, 1862-8.

b) Sir Thomas Alskeew Larecom Papers, MSS 7453-7792: especially, MSS 7585-7 and 7608.

c) Thomas Clarke Luby Papers, MSS 331-3: MS of 'Synopsis of early fenian events in Ireland and America'.

d) William Smith O'Brien Papers, MSS 426-52. This collection contains a letter from Secretary Seward, letters from P.J. Smyth, and correspondence on the Rotunda meeting and O'Donoghue-Peel 'duel' during the Trent crisis.

e) James Stephens Papers, MSS 10,491-2: This contains a few fringe references.

f) Other collections containing a few useful items:

MSS 3225-6, Hickey Collection:
typescript copies of letters of Mitchel and Meagher and
MS biography of John Mitchel, Jr. by Michael Cavanagh (1899).

MS 3885, Myles Walter Keogh
Letters.

MS 8047, folder 1, letters from
John Martin to O'Neill Daunt, 1861-6.

MS 8347: photo-copies of about 60
emigrant letters, 1850-1900, collected by Arnold Schrier for
his study Ireland and the American emigration, 1850-1900.

MS 8648, O'Donovan Rossa Papers
MS 8669, W.H. and Jonathan Pim
Papers.

MS 9728: MS memoir of T.F. Meagher
with diary, correspondence, and speeches, ed. Frederick
Kearney (New York, 1869).

MS-Po. 3849: Patrick F. Murray,
Calendar of the overseas missionary correspondence of All
Hallows College, Dublin, 1842-77. This was a thesis appro-
ved for an M.A. degree at University College, Dublin in
1956. It contains summaries and some interesting extracts
of letters from American bishops to the superior of All
Hallows during the civil war.

2. State Paper Office, Dublin Castle

a) Registered Papers: There are about
12,000 entries per year. I investigated the years 1861 to
1865. The individual items are haphazardly entered in the registers under Home Office, Foreign Office, police reports, constabulary reports, etc., and there is no guarantee that the recorded document can be found. Many items concerning one topic are gathered up and placed under one number. Two examples are the papers relating to the Kearsage incident, placed under # 12,284 (1863), and those concerning the recruiting activities of Finney, grouped under # 16,765 (1864). Many of the police reports, letters from private individuals, and government reports referred to in the chapter on 'Irish participation' were discovered by themselves or grouped with two or three other items. See 'Irish participation in the war' for the principal items among the Registered Papers that were relevant to this thesis. Many other items scattered throughout the Registered Papers provided background information.

James La Conner

3. Friends House

a) Minutes of the Irish Friends yearly meetings, 1861-6.

b) Jonathan Pim Letters; There are about 50 letters on the civil war, including letters from Jonathan Pim to other quakers, letters from Joshua Todhunter and W.H. Pim in the U.S., and several letters from W.H. Gregory. Some have been published (see under David Large in the bibliography).
In Washington, D.C.

1. Library of Congress


Box H, no. 23-5; letters of Bishop Patrick N. Lynagh, to all Confederate in America.

Box N, no. 55; reports of Robert Dowling.

Box N, no. 56; reports of Lieut. James L. Capston.

b) Cathal. Box H, no. 57; reports of the Rev. Father John Bannon.

c) James F. Lalor. Letter from Capt. James F. Lalor. Reference for all topics. They appear to have been deposited there by Father William D'Arcy, who used them for his study.

b) James Mason Papers, 3 vols. There is considerable correspondence between Mason and the earl of Donoughmore and marquis of Clanricarde, which establishes their close working relationship. The collection contains...
c) Henry Hotze Papers, 3 vols. There is a letter-book containing letters of Hotze, the editor of The Index (London), to confederate agents in Ireland.

2. National Archives

a) U.S. consular dispatches (1861-5) from Ireland:
   - Belfast, vols. 3 and 4.
   - Dublin, vols. 3 and 4. The dispatch of W.S. West to W.H. Seward, 15 Oct. 1864 in vol. 4 contains a MS by James Roche entitled 'The United States against the world: an address to all Irishmen in America'.
   - Cork, vols. 4, 5, and 6.
   - Galway, vol. 1.
   - Londonderry, vols. 2 and 3.

3. Catholic University of America Archives

a) Fenian Papers, 4 boxes. These only provided fringe references for my topic. They appear to have been deposited there by Father William D'Arcy, who used them for his study, The Fenian movement in the United States: 1858-1886. There are about 15 letters from James Stephens and letters from John Mitchel, Charles Kickham, John O'Mahony, and O'Donovan Rossa. The collection contains
much information on the Fenian movement in Ireland which Father D'Arcy did not use.

In Belfast

1. Public Record Office of Northern Ireland:

There is nothing directly relevant to my research there but only a few letters from emigrants and soldiers in the United States during the civil war (see D.556-621, D.732, D.885, D.893, T.1475, and T.1585).

II. Newspapers and periodicals

1. Principal newspapers and periodicals

- Banner of Ulster
- Belfast Linen Trade Circular
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