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The Tudor diocese of Dublin:

episcopal government, ecclesiastical politics and the enforcement of the reformation, c. 1534-1590

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The Tudor diocese of Dublin:

episcopal government, ecclesiastical politics and the enforcement of the reformation, c. 1534-1590

James Murray

Thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the University of Dublin, 1997.

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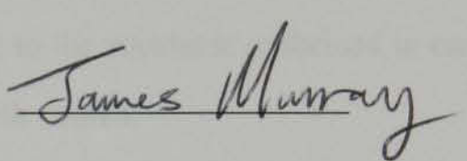
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I owe a great debt of gratitude to many people - too numerous to mention by name - for their help in the preparation of this study. The following historians merit special thanks for keeping my interest in the subject alive at different points during its lengthy gestation: Dr Steven Ellis, Dr Alan Ford, Dr Helga Hammerstein-Robinson, Mr Brian Jackson and Dr Colm Lennon.

My greatest debts are due to my supervisor, Ciaran Brady, whose sense of humour, intellectual guidance and friendship made the Ph.D. experience enjoyable and worthwhile; and, above all, to my wife Gaye whose patience and endurance throughout have been above and beyond the call of duty and love.

DECLARATION

This thesis has not been submitted previously as an exercise for a degree at this or any other university. It is entirely my own work. I agree that the Library may lend or copy this thesis on request.



SUMMARY

This thesis attempts the first systematic study of the diocese of Dublin in the sixteenth century and seeks thereby to make a contribution to the debate on the reformation in Ireland. It is organised into three parts. Part I examines the medieval inheritance of the diocese. In chapter 1 the inherited English character of the see's institutional structures is discussed and placed in the context of the Irish church as a whole. This theme is developed further in chapter 2, which looks at the English cultural ethos of the senior diocesan clergy, the majority of whom belonged to religious corporations. It contends that the group were proud upholders of the Anglo-Norman ecclesiastical tradition in Ireland, at the heart of which was the idea that the Englishry were historically responsible for civilizing the Gaelic Irish according to the standards enshrined in canon law and the uses and customs of the medieval English church.

Part II offers a narrative of the reformation and focuses upon the attempts of the archbishops of Dublin to enforce the various Tudor religious settlements. Chapter 3 deals with the episcopate of George Browne and contends that the archbishop met with little success in his reformist endeavours because his senior clergy consciously and successfully subverted them. The grounds on which the clergy maintained their protest were ideological: the reformation was deemed to be unacceptable because it threatened to destroy their traditional ethos. The effectiveness of their protest was due to the fact that they controlled the disciplinary machinery of the church through which the reformation was intended to be enforced. Yet the reformation still inflicted serious damage on the corporate culture and morale of the senior clergy, especially through the dissolution of the religious orders and St Patrick's cathedral. Chapter 4 explores how the clergy rebuilt their morale in the context of the Marian restoration of catholicism, and draws special attention to the crucial intervention of Archbishop Dowdall of Armagh, whose programme for reviving the old religion was predicated upon the notion of re-establishing traditional English Irish clerical values and the institutional structures, notably St Patrick's cathedral, which had sustained them. Chapter 5 concerns the

episcopacy of Hugh Curwen and describes how his administration implemented the Dowdall programme under Queen Mary and defended it against protestant attack in the opening decade of Elizabeth's reign. Chapter 6 deals with the episcopacy of Adam Loftus and the strategy which he and Lord Chancellor Weston devised to promote the protestant religious settlement of Elizabeth by counteracting the lingering influence of the Marian clergy. It contends that this strategy lost its momentum and failed to produce results because of the continuing subversiveness of the clergy and the death of Weston in 1573. It was finally deconstructed by Lord Deputy Sidney in 1577. Thereafter Loftus adopted the more coercive programme of enforcement favoured by Sidney and the government in London. The rigorous implementation of this programme in the late 1570s and early 1580s finally and irrevocably alienated the Pale community from the established church.

Part III discusses the structures through which the Dublin clergy effectively obstructed the progress of the reformation and defeated the reformers best intentions to reconstruct the church along 'godly' lines. Chapter 7 describes the system of parochial appropriation and how it prevented the reformers from creating a learned, expository ministry capable of evangelising the local community. Chapter 8 explores their ambivalent attitude towards St Patrick's cathedral, an ambivalence which led to a tortuous, time-consuming and ultimately damaging debate on whether it should be converted into a university. Chapter 9 looks at the history of Christ Church cathedral during the reformation and argues that the reformers were unable to invest it with an adequate and convincing role once it had ceased to operate as a medieval chantry.

Together these studies aim to show that the task of the reformation was a good deal more formidable than has been accepted and its failure considerably more complex than has been assumed.

ABBREVIATIONS

The bibliographical abbreviations used are those which are listed in the revised 'Rules for contributors' in *Irish Historical Studies*, supp. I (1968); in T.W. Moody, F.X. Martin and F.J. Byrne, eds., *New History of Ireland*, iii (Oxford, 1976); and in A. Cosgrove, ed., *New History of Ireland*, ii (Oxford, 1987), with the following additions:

D.C.A.	Dublin Corporation Archives
N.A.I.	National Archives of Ireland
Reg. Dioc. Dublinensis	N.B. White, ed., *'Registrum Diocesis Dublinensis'. A Sixteenth Century Dublin Precedent Book* (I.M.C., Dublin, 1959).

Introduction:
Clerical opposition and the failure of the reformation in the diocese of Dublin

I

This study of the diocese of Dublin was prompted by an important, but inconclusive, historiographical debate on the failure of the reformation in Tudor Ireland which took place in the 1970s. Prior to that exchange, virtually all studies of the subject were hopelessly symmetrical. Characterised by *partipris*, and afflicted by a deterministic vision, the bulk of them contended that the Tudor state failed immediately and irreversibly to win the allegiance of the indigenous population to its religious dictates, mainly because of the inherently conservative character of the island's inhabitants. The only significant differences between these studies were their opposing, confessional glosses. For catholic writers, the conservatism of the Irish signified a deep-seated and laudable attachment to the religion of their ancestors which ensured that they struggled heroically to preserve the true unsullied faith. Protestant writers, in contrast, represented native conservatism as a character defect, an unremitting force built upon an ingrained and wilful ignorance, against which the Church of Ireland and protestantism generally were unable to make any headway.[1]

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1 J. Murray, 'The Church of Ireland: a critical bibliography, 1536-1992. Part I: 1536-1603', in *I.H.S.*, xxviii (1993), pp 345-6; A. Ford, ' "Standing one's ground": religion, polemic and Irish history since the Reformation', in A. Ford, J. McGuire and K. Milne, eds., *As by law established: the Church of Ireland since the Reformation* (Dublin, 1995), pp 1-10. For some nineteenth and early twentieth century examples of these confessional histories see, on the catholic side, M.J. Brennan, *An ecclesiastical history of Ireland, from the introduction of christianity ... to the year MDCCCXXIX* (2 vols., Dublin, 1840), ii, pp 86-163; and the works of M. V. Ronan: *The Reformation in Dublin, 1536-58* (London, 1926); *The Reformation in Ireland under Elizabeth, 1558-1580* (London, 1930); 'The Reformation in Ireland', in E. Eyre, ed., *European Civilization: its origin and development* (7 vols., Oxford, 1934-9), iv, pp 561-629. On the protestant side see R. Mant, *History of the Church of Ireland* (2 vols., London, 1840), i, pp 1-106; W.D. Killen, *The ecclesiastical history of Ireland. From the earliest period to the present times* (2 vols., London, 1875).

In the late 1960s and 1970s this cycle of crude deterministic writing was broken by Brendan Bradshaw, whose pioneering work applied what was, in Irish terms, a fresh series of intellectual templates for the exploration of the reformation. Earlier attempts to do so - in the atmosphere of the modern 'scientific' school of historical writing - had been unsuccessful, largely because the perspectives that were used then were still heavily coloured by the confessional mode of writing, or because the authors themselves seemed unable to break free from the habits of thought associated with this kind of writing, despite the new directions suggested by their own source-based researches. The classic examples of this were Robin Dudley Edwards's *Church and State in Tudor Ireland* and Canon G.V. Jourdan's contributions on the reformation in the three volume *History of the Church of Ireland* commissioned by its General Synod.[2] Though Edwards's book was a considerable achievement, his concern to find a 'scientific' explanation for an already accepted fact - that the Irish people's 'struggle' to preserve catholicism in the sixteenth century contributed to the birth of the Irish national tradition - prevented him from exploring in a more nuanced fashion the complex responses of the Gaelic and English Irish to the reformation which his own researches had begun to uncover. Indeed, it compelled him to employ an emotional rhetoric to explain away discoveries which conflicted with his general thesis: witness his implied criticism of the Palesmen for failing to support 'the scheme of a Catholic and independent Ireland' during the Nine Years war. Canon Jourdan also employed the 'scientific' historical method in writing his very thorough analytical narrative of the reformation. Yet like Edwards, his work displayed strong links with earlier less scholarly writing. Jourdan perceived the seeds of the reformation's failure in the

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2 R.D. Edwards, *Church and State in Tudor Ireland: a history of the penal laws against Irish catholics, 1534-1603* (Dublin, 1935); W.A. Phillips, ed., *History of the Church of Ireland from the earliest times to the present day* (3 vols., Oxford, 1933-4), ii, pp 169-524.

unsuitability of the pre-existing 'uncivilised' Irish culture to comprehend and embrace its more advanced tenets. For him the crucial factor was the 'general ignorance of the Irish'.[3]

Bradshaw, in contrast, removed the subject out of this insular, polemical and necessarily constrictive setting by treating the reformation initiative seriously and by placing the movement firmly in its contemporary political and social contexts. Thus in studying the career of Dublin's first reformation archbishop, George Browne, he eschewed the traditional stereotypes of the archbishop as Catholic ogre and Protestant patriarch in favour of the more realistic assessment that he was a desultory royal functionary.[4] Similarly, he treated the enactment of, and reaction to, the legislation of the Irish reformation parliament of 1536-7 in the broader context of the major political concern of the day, the fallout from the failed Kildare rebellion; while the dissolution of the religious orders was explored as an administrative process with its own internal logic and, given the spiritual *ennui* that affected many late medieval religious houses, with some external justification too.[5] Most novel of all, the reformation in its entirety was examined not as a discrete, climactic spiritual conflict between incipient Irish and English nations, but, *a là* Geoffrey Elton, as an integrated element of a 'constitutional revolution' which the Tudor monarchy wished to impose in all its dominions, including not only Ireland, but also the outlying parts of England and the principality of Wales.[6]

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3 J. Murray, 'Historical revisit: R. Dudley Edwards, Church and state in Tudor Ireland (1935)', in *I.H.S.*, xxx (1996), pp 233-241; Edwards, *Church & state*, pp 301-2; Phillips, *Ch. of Ire.*, ii, pp 244-5; Ford, 'Standing one's ground', p 9.

4 B. Bradshaw, 'George Browne, first Reformation bishop of Dublin' (unpublished M.A. thesis, University College, Dublin, 1966); idem, 'George Browne, First Reformation Archbishop of Dublin, 1536-1554' in *Jn. Ecc. Hist.*, xxi (1970), pp 301-26.

5 B. Bradshaw,'The opposition to the ecclesiastical legislation in the Irish Reformation parliament', in *I.H.S.*, xvi (1969), pp 285-303; idem, *The Dissolution of the Religious Orders in Ireland under Henry VIII* (Cambridge, 1974).

6 B. Bradshaw, 'The beginnings of modern Ireland', in B. Farrell, ed., *The Irish parliamentary tradition* (Dublin, 1973), pp 68-97; idem, 'The Edwardian Reformation in Ireland, 1547-53', in *Archiv Hib.*, xxiv (1976-7) pp 83-99; idem, *The Irish constitutional revolution of the sixteenth century* (Cambridge,

The cumulative effect of this body of work was the development of a new conceptual framework and chronology for the failure of the reformation in Ireland. The new chronology fell into two phases. In the first, which covered the reigns of Henry VIII and Edward VI, Bradshaw contended that, contrary to the traditional assumption that the Irish people resisted the reformation from its inception, the political community of English Ireland willingly accepted the alterations in religious practice, especially the royal supremacy, albeit the advent of radical protestantism under Edward VI was greeted with less enthusiasm. The reasons for this generally favourable reception owed much to the linkage of the reformation with the conciliatory programme of political reform, the 'constitutional revolution', advanced by the crown during the viceroyalties of Sir Anthony St Leger. Indeed, this feature also ensured that the reformation secured some adherents in Gaelic Ireland. Thus, even at the end of Edward VI's reign, Bradshaw concluded that there was no definitive Irish response to state-sponsored religious reform.

The second phase of Bradshaw's new chronology, which began in the reign of Mary Tudor, was crucial for two reasons. In the first place, it witnessed the official restoration of catholicism which, Bradshaw argued, allowed the counter-reformation to gain a secure foothold in the important battleground of the English Pale and its satellite towns. By the 1570s, this foothold had hardened into a firm and convinced recusancy amongst the traditionally loyalist English Irish community. Second, it coincided with the related political alienation of this community which was a consequence of the growing loss of office and influence experienced by the reform-minded Palesmen to hardline English

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1979). For recent restatements of the theme see idem, 'The Reformation in the cities: Cork, Limerick and Galway, 1534-1603', in J. Bradley, ed., *Settlement and society in medieval Ireland* (Kilkenny, 1988), pp 445-76; idem, 'The Tudor Reformation and Revolution in Wales and Ireland: the Origins of the British Problem', in B. Bradshaw and J. Morrill, eds., *The British Problem, c. 1534-1707. State Formation in the Atlantic Archipelago* (Macmillan: Basingstoke and London, 1996), pp 39-65.

officials in the Dublin administration. The coercive political and religious policies advanced by the new generation of English officials were, Bradshaw argued, philosophically rooted in their pessimistic Calvinist faith, which contrasted sharply with the optimistic Erasmian humanism, and increasingly catholic bent, of the native reformers. This intellectual split, he concluded, was also important in practical terms as it was responsible for creating a debilitating division over the strategy to be employed by church and state in their combined effort to promote the reformation in Ireland.[7]

Bradshaw's revision of the traditional story of the Irish reformation, a story hitherto told in terms of the movement's rapid and absolute failure, was immensely stimulating and liberating for Irish historians.[8] Yet it did not receive unqualified acceptance. His pronouncements on the Elizabethan reformation, lacking the same force as his views on the more deeply-researched Henrician period, were the subject of some trenchant criticism from Nicholas Canny in his essay 'Why the Reformation failed in Ireland: *une question mal posée'*. This critique of the Bradshaw *oeuvre* provided a useful corrective to some of the latter's more exaggerated claims. In particular, he raised serious doubts about the ideas that the Pale reformers and their community deserted *en masse* from the established church in the decade or so after the enactment of the act of Uniformity in 1560, and that most English reformers in Ireland favoured compulsory rather than persuasive methods in furthering their cause.[9] Yet Canny's essay contained its own distracting exaggeration - that the dating of the failure of the reformation could be postponed indefinitely - a contention which was subsequently and decisively challenged by Karl Bottingheimer.[10]

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7 B. Bradshaw, 'Fr. Wolfe's Description of Limerick city, 1574', in *N. Munster Antiq. Jn.*, xvii (1975), pp 47-53; idem, 'Sword, word and strategy in the Reformation in Ireland', in *Hist. Jn.*, xxi (1978), pp 475-502.

8 K.S. Bottigheimer, 'The Reformation in Ireland Revisited', *Jn. Brit. Studies*, xv (1976), pp 140-9.

9 In *Jn. Ecc. Hist.*, xxx (1979), pp 423-50.

10 K. Bottigheimer, 'The failure of the Reformation in Ireland: *une question mal posée'*, in *Jn. Ecc. Hist.*,

Canny's most important contribution, however, was his identification of areas requiring further research, most notably, the Pale community's attachment to conservative religious practices. This was not, he argued, an attachment to counter-reformation norms, but the survival of traditional medieval catholic forms practised within the established church; an observation which enabled him to reformulate the key question concerning the fate of the reformation in Ireland. If, as the English reformation experience shows, survivalist catholicism or 'church-papism' was as liable to be converted into overt allegiance to the state church as into overt loyalty to the counter-reformation, its existence in Ireland throughout the 1560s, 1570s and 1580s meant that the fate of the reformation was far from settled as the sixteenth century drew to a close. The real question to be answered, therefore, was not why the reformation failed in Ireland, but, as Canny put it, why the movement failed to 'strike deeper roots when the opportunity to do so still existed down to the 1590s'.[11]

Overall, then, the Bradshaw-Canny debate gave rise to a more intellectually mature version of Ireland's reformation story. The sixteenth century is now generally recognised as a period of blurred and ambiguous religious allegiances on the island, until Queen Mary's reign in Bradshaw's case, until the 1590s according to Canny. However, these revisionist conclusions do not provide an easily assimilable and overarching vision of the past, nor have they encouraged more systematic investigation of the sources in an effort to provide such a vision. Instead two discrete fields of investigation have emerged in subsequent research.

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xxxvi (1985), pp 196-207.

11 Canny, 'Why the reformation failed', pp 432-5.

The first of these has concentrated upon the creation of an ideological attachment to the counter-reformation among the Englishry of Ireland. Following Bradshaw, most historians would accept that this was part of a wider process of alienation from the governing methods of the Tudor régime in Ireland, though disagreement persists about how the process occurred. Ciaran Brady's work on the government of Ireland in the period 1540-80 has cast into doubt Bradshaw's early dating of the Palesmen's alienation by moving forward in time the Tudor régime's adoption of an intrinsically violent and more expropriatory policy, and by questioning the whole notion of a preconceived policy of conquest. He has also provided an alternative explanation of how their political alienation influenced their religious concerns. For him their disaffection stemmed not from the régime's abandonment of their favoured policy of assimilating the Gaelic Irish, but from the great financial burden it imposed upon their community by the determined efforts of the Elizabethan viceroys to implement it in a more systematic manner. On the whole, however, their distaste for the administration did not lead directly to their abandonment of the state church in favour of the counter-reformation. While a number of border magnates did reappraise Ireland's relationship with what they saw as an unacceptably aggressive and protestant monarchy, and elected to rebel under the papal banner, it was the government's reaction to the revolts, rather than any widespread sympathy for the rebels' treasonable actions, which drove the Pale community into the hands of the counter-reformation.[12]

In broad terms, this analysis has been endorsed by Colm Lennon, whose original research has focused on the development of post-Tridentine catholic ideology in the urban setting of

12 C. Brady, 'Conservative subversives: the community of the Pale and the Dublin administration, 1556-86', in P.J. Corish, ed., *Radicals, rebels and establishments: Historical Studies XV* (Belfast, 1985), pp 11-32; idem, 'Court, Castle and Country: the Framework of Government in Tudor Ireland', in C. Brady and R. Gillespie, eds., *Native and Newcomers. The Making of Irish Colonial Society 1534-1641* (Dublin, 1986), pp 22-49; idem, *The Chief Governors. The rise and fall of reform government in Tudor Ireland*, 1536-1588 (Cambridge, 1994).

Dublin.[13] Adopting a lengthy time-span that charts the transition from nominally conformist and catholic survivalist religious positions to a fully articulated counter-reformation faith, his work both on the Stanihurst family and his subsequent monograph on the city patricians portrays a social grouping whose general religious attitude was one of uncommitted or nominal conformity to the Church of Ireland until the 1580s. Thereafter, in reaction to government policy, the community gradually disengaged itself from the state religion. This disengagement was completed in two stages: first, by the adoption of a recusant position during the 1580s and early 1590s - a 'mere dissent from official orthodoxy' - and then, during the later 1590s and the first decade of the seventeenth century, by its adoption of a 'more all-embracing catholicism'.[14]

The second area of research to emerge after the Bradshaw-Canny debate addresses the structural deficiencies of the Church of Ireland. In a closely crafted essay Aidan Clarke sought 'to recall attention to the existence of very practical reasons why the Church of Ireland should have evolved the way it did', all of which he showed were intimately connected with its 'prime dilemna': how best to proceed with making a protestant church a social reality given the facts of its statutory inheritance of catholic personnel, and of medieval institutional structures.[15] At the heart of Clarke's argument was his definition of these 'practical reasons' as insuperable problems of human and material resources; problems

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13 C. Lennon, 'Recusancy and the Dublin Stanihursts', in *Archiv. Hib.*, xxxiii (1975), pp 101-10; idem, *Richard Stanyhurst the Dubliner, 1547-1618* (Dublin, 1981); idem, *The lords of Dublin in the age of the Reformation* (Dublin, 1989); idem, 'The chantries in the Irish Reformation: the case of St Anne's Guild, Dublin, 1550-1630', in R.V. Comerford et al., eds., *Religion, conflict and coexistence in Ireland* (Dublin, 1990), pp 8-25.

14 The process is conveniently summarised in C. Lennon, 'The rise of recusancy among the Dublin patricians, 1580-1613', in W.J. Sheils and D. Wood, eds., *The Churches, Ireland and the Irish, Studies in Church History, xxv* (Oxford, 1989), pp 123-32.

15 A. Clarke, 'Varieties of uniformity: the first century of the Church of Ireland', in Sheils and Wood, eds., *The Churches, Ireland and the Irish,* pp 105-22. For another example, which looks at the problem from the diocesan perspective, see H. Coburn Walshe, 'Enforcing the Elizabethan settlement: the vicissitudes of Hugh Brady, bishop of Meath, 1563-84', in *I.H.S.,* xxvi (1989), pp 352-76.

which prevented it from adopting what most contemporaries saw as the solution to its central dilemma: the creation of a learned, preaching ministry through the provision of adequately remunerative livings. For Clarke, this proved to be an impossibility because of the legacy of the Church of Ireland's medieval past. This legacy, an interlocking of its structures and property with the local community - in particular, the lay impropriation of parochial tithes and the accompanying right to select parochial curates - gave its Catholic enemies proprietary rights over its resources and control over its personnel. Evangelical failure, then, stemmed from the ecclesiastical establishment's inability to act independently of the local community.

Clarke's broad overview was supported by Steven Ellis's 'Economic problems of the church: why the reformation failed in Ireland',[16] which provided a critical introduction to an important and hitherto neglected source: the Irish equivalent of the *valor ecclesiasticus*. Although Ellis's analysis also ranged widely - it included an interesting, though excursive, discussion on the limitations of Tudor government in border societies and how they affected the progress of the reformation - its main focus is on the Church of Ireland's resource problems. These are thrown into sharp relief by the welcome use of a statistical analysis of the clergy's finances, based on the *valor* and the Jacobean certificates on the wealth of benefices which survive in the State Papers. It complemented Clarke's suggestion in its analysis of the state of those livings over which the Church of Ireland did maintain autonomy and control. His conclusion - based on a quantitative comparison of the values of Irish and Welsh ecclesiastical livings, and the assumption that modern evaluations of the significance of Welsh clerical poverty are applicable to the Irish situation - is as dismal as Clarke's. For him poverty of Irish parochial livings was the central impediment to the reformation's progress.

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16 In *Jn. Ecc. Hist.*, xli (1990), pp 239-65.

Overall, then, the two fields of investigation undertaken in the wake of the Bradshaw-Canny debate have added considerably to our knowledge of the reformation process. Yet they have not provided any definitive answers to the central questions posed by it. Although the work of Clarke and Ellis has drawn our attention to the fact that the Church of Ireland faced serious structural problems which severely undermined its capacity to mount a proper campaign of evangelization, the ultimate failure of the reformation in Ireland cannot be attributed solely to these problems. Quite apart from the fact that recent research on the 'professionalization' of the English clergy has shown that the provision of a well-educated, protestant ministry was not dependent on the availability of well-endowed livings alone, but on the expansion of the universities and their ability to increase the supply of graduates coming on to the 'job' market;[17] their deterministic view of the fate of the reformation precludes the possibility that the indigenous religious culture of the English Pale played any significant part in the process, especially during the quiescent phase of the reformation identified by Nicholas Canny. Similarly, while Lennon and Brady have shown that the Pale community's alienation from the Tudor régime, and its adoption of a fully-fledged counter-reformation faith, did not occur until the end of the sixteenth and the beginning of the seventeenth centuries, the question of when, precisely, the reformation can be said to have failed still remains open, largely because the nature and strength of catholic survivalism in English Ireland in the early decades of Elizabeth's reign, and the manner in which it affected the progress of the reformation, has received comparatively little attention. It is with this fundamental question - the nature of the response of the English Irish community to the reformation throughout the duration of the sixteenth century - that this study will be primarily concerned.

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17 On the crucial role played by the provision of university education in the reformation of the ministry in England see R. O'Day, *The English Clergy. The Emergence and Consolidation of a Profession 1558-1642* (Leicester, 1979) pp 127-143; idem, 'The Anatomy of a Profession: the Clergy of the Church of England' in W. Prest, ed., *The Professions in Early Modern England* (London, 1987), pp 25-63.

II

The decision to explore the Englishry's response to the reformation by means of a diocesan history was influenced by developments in the historiography of the English reformation. At the same time that Brendan Bradshaw was reinvigorating the study of the Irish reformation, a new generation of English historians began to explore the practical implications of the movement at the grass roots level of English society. Conducted, generally, at diocesan or county level, and making use of previously ignored or underused records, such as visitation act books, consistory cause papers and churchwardens' accounts, these studies brought to light the fact that the rate of religious change in the localities, the speed with which the reformation was enforced and accepted, varied considerably from region to region. The main result of all this was that the traditional view of the English reformation - as a process in which crown policy, and a developing reformist allegiance amongst the people built upon the native Lollard heresy, an emerging Lutheran sect and popular anti-clericalism, combined to create a successful protestant reformation - was seriously undermined.[18] Although a number of historians have subsequently produced authoritative syntheses of the revisionist view of the English reformation,[19] it seemed

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18 The most scholarly exposition of the traditional view is A.G. Dickens, *The English Reformation* (London, 1964); its early development is surveyed by R. O'Day in *The Debate on the English Reformation* (London, 1986). The development of the revisionist review of the English reformation, and the part played in it by diocesan and local histories, is best approached through the series of essays edited by C. Haigh, *The English Reformation Revised* (Cambridge, 1987). For some examples of these diocesan and local studies see R.B. Manning, *Religion and Society in Elizabethan Sussex* (Leicester, 1969); C. Haigh, *Reformation and Resistance in Tudor Lancashire* (Cambridge, 1975); R. A. Houlbrooke, *Church courts and the people during the English Reformation, 1520-70* (Oxford, 1979) [based on evidence from Winchester and Norwich dioceses]; M. Bowker, *The Henrician Reformation in the Diocese of Lincoln under John Longland, 1521-47* (Cambridge, 1981); D. MacCulloch, *Suffolk and the Tudors* (Oxford, 1986); S. Brigden, *London and the Reformation* (Oxford, 1989); R. Whiting, *The Blind Devotion of the People: Popular Religion and the English reformation* (Cambridge, 1989) [covers the south west of England].

19 For some examples of these general 'revisionist' studies see J.J. Scarisbrick, *The Reformation and the English People* (Oxford, 1984); E. Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars. Traditional Religion in England 1400-1580* (Yale, 1992); R. Rex, *Henry VIII and the English Reformation* (Basingstoke and London,

reasonable to assume that the adoption of the methodological approach which opened up the subject for them in the first place - the particular, local study - would yield new and comparable insights into the problems and questions raised by Bradshaw and Canny *vis-a-vis* the English Pale. Proceeding on this basis, then, the diocese of Dublin, the region's central ecclesiastical unit, was selected as the most obvious candidate for such a study.

In practice, however, this methodological approach proved problematical. Although there are sufficient sources extant to reconstruct the basic structure and workings of the diocese of Dublin during the sixteenth century,[20] it soon became apparent that the documentation that was used by English historians to plot the rate of religious change in the localities was almost wholly lacking. Churchwardens' accounts, for example, exist for only one parish in the diocese - St Werburgh's in the city of Dublin - and even then the series is very incomplete. Crucially, there are no extant records for the period of most intensive religious change, 1534-1569, the period in which the surviving English churchwardens' accounts detail the alterations that were made (or not made as the case may be) to the fabric, fittings and decoration of parish churches consequent upon the introduction of the various Tudor

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1993); C. Haigh, *English Reformations. Religion, Politics, and Society under the Tudors* (Oxford, 1993).

20 Most of these are in print: C. MacNeill, ed., *Calendar of Archbishop Alen's register, c. 1172-1534* (R.S.A.I., Dublin, 1950); H. Wood, ed., *Court book of the Liberty of St Sepulchre within the jurisdiction of the archbishop of Dublin 1586-90* (Dublin, 1930); N.B. White, ed., *The 'Dignitas decani' of St Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin* (I.M.C., Dublin, 1957); idem, ed., 'The Reportorium Viride of John Alen, archbishop of Dublin, 1533', in *Anal. Hib.*, 10 (1941) pp 180-217; idem, ed., *'Registrum Diocesis Dublinensis'. A Sixteenth Century Dublin Precedent Book* (I.M.C., Dublin, 1959); idem, ed., *Extents of Irish Monastic Possessions, 1540-1, from manuscripts in the Public Record Office, London* (I.M.C., Dublin, 1941); H.F. Berry, ed., *Register of wills and inventories of the diocese of Dublin in the time of Archbishops Tregury and Walton* (Dublin, 1898); M.J. McEnery, ed., 'Calendar to Christ Church Deeds, 1174-1684', in *P.R.I. rep.K.*, 20 (1888), 23 (1891), 24 (1892), 27 (1895); J. C. Crosthwaite, ed., *The Book of Obits and Martyrology of the Cathedral Church of Holy Trinity* (Irish Archaeological Society, Dublin, 1844); Survey of the possessions of St Patrick's cathedral, 1547 (St Patrick's cathedral, Muniments, no 112, printed in W. Monck Mason, *The History and Antiquities of the Collegiate and Cathedral Church of St Patrick near Dublin* [Dublin, 1820] pp 28-99 *passim*); Chapter Act Book of Christ Church 1574-1634 (R.C.B., C.6.1.7 no. 1).

religious settlements.[21] The same is true of visitation records and the records of the church courts. Apart from one very unusual document from the episcopate of Archbishop Browne,[22] and some *acta* from an archiepiscopal visitation of St Patrick's cathedral dating from 1569-70,[23] visitation records from the diocese are entirely lacking for the duration of the Tudor reformation. Church court proceedings likewise are represented only by the surviving portion of a single act book from the archbishop's consistory, which covers the period 1596-99. Moreover, the bulk of the cases recorded in this act book are party *versus* party actions, and throw precious little light on the enforcement and progress of the Elizabethan reformation under Archbishop Loftus.[24]

The absence of the requisite documentation precluded then the possibility of undertaking the kind of close regional analysis of the progress of the reformation in Dublin and, indeed, elsewhere in Ireland, as has been undertaken in England. An increasing awareness of the impracticability of this approach - made more acute by the absence of the conventional ecclesiastical documentation - prompted an alternative line of enquiry. Although the paucity of the sources is in part an historical accident,[25] the extraordinary poverty of such material as has survived is in itself symptomatic of a deeper problem. The very

21 R.C.B., P 326/27/1/1-21 (Churchwardens' Accounts of St Werburgh's, 1481-1627); J. Robinson, 'Churchwardens' Accounts, 1484-1600, St Werburgh's Church, Dublin', in *R.S.A.I.Jn.*, 6th series, iv (1914), pp 132-42; R. Hutton, 'The local impact of the Tudor reformations', in Haigh, ed., *English reformation revised*, pp 114-138.

22 See below pp 126-7.

23 Below pp 233-41.

24 Marsh's Library, MS Z4.2.19, pp 1-126 *passim* (act book of the Dublin consistory court, Michaelmas 1596 to Michaelmas 1599).

25 The same historical accident has led to considerable variation - from diocese to diocese and from jurisdiction to jurisdiction - in the rate of survival of manuscripts in the English church. On this point see R. O'Day and F. Heal, eds., *Continuity and change. Personnel and administration of the church in England 1500-1642* (Leicester, 1976), pp 17-8; D.M. Owen, *The records of the established church in England* (Cambridge, 1970); idem, 'Handlist of ecclesiastical records: a supplement to records of the established church', in *Archives*, x (1971-2), pp 53-6.

preservation of documentation in England attests very strongly to the fact that the enforcement of the reformation, an administrative process engaged in jointly by the agencies of the church and state, was systematically undertaken, however uneven its results were at the outset. By the same token, the very pronounced absence of analagous documentation in Ireland suggests very strongly that that routine collaboration, which was necessary for the survival of such a continuous record, never occurred in Dublin.

This contention is borne out by other evidence. It has long been recognised that the local clergy were reluctant to lend their support to the reformation cause. Not only did they resist the imposition of the reformation legislation in the Irish parliament of 1536-7, but thereafter they actively subverted the efforts of reformers like Archbishop Browne of Dublin to enforce the provisions of this legislation amongst the local community.[26] What has not been generally appreciated, however, is the extent and significance of this clerical opposition. In exploring the structures of the diocese of Dublin, a necessary preliminary to the original idea of investigating the enforcement of reform in the parishes, it became apparent that this clerical opposition was both extremely powerful and highly motivated, because it possessed its own unique ethos and identity; and because it controlled, indeed it was actually embodied by, the institutional fabric of the local church. The implications of this for the study of the Irish reformation were striking. Because the Tudors chose to enforce their reformations through the pre-existing ecclesiastical structures, through the bishops, their officials and the traditional courts Christian - a feature which distinguished them markedly from their continental equivalents[27] - it became apparent that the clerical opposition possessed an inordinate capacity to negate the best efforts of the reformers to

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26 Edwards, *Church & state*, pp 9-10, 47-64; Bradshaw, 'George Browne', p 310.

27 O'Day and Heal, eds., *Continuity and change*, p 15; D. MacCulloch, *The later reformation in England 1547-1603* (Basingstoke and London, 1990), pp 32-3. On the construction of new institutional structures in the continental reformed churches during the sixteenth century see E. Cameron, *The European Reformation* (Oxford, 1991), pp 257-61.

secure indigenous allegiance to the Tudor religious settlements, because they, and they alone, controlled those structures through which this process was supposed to be effected. This lead to one other inescapable conclusion. The definitive nature of the English Irish community's response to the reformation would not be found, as was originally supposed, by charting the impact of a reform-led diocesan administration's efforts to enforce the reformation in the parishes of the diocese of Dublin. Rather, it would be found in the battle conducted within that administration itself, between reforming archbishops enjoined to use the conventional ecclesiastical structures for reformist purposes, and a conservative clergy who were equally determined to maintain their traditional stranglehold over those same structures and to use them for their own, essentially catholic, ideological ends. It was this struggle for power and control over local church structures, a struggle which was won by the conservative clerical opposition during the decisive years of change 1536-1569, which formed the essential drama in Dublin's reformation story and which comprises the main theme of this study.

This study is divided into three parts. Part I examines the diocese of Dublin's medieval inheritance, an inheritance which created the very unique set of circumstances in which local clerical opposition to the reformation would arise and from which it would draw its strength and effectiveness. The most important aspect of this inheritance was the cultural ethos of the see's clerical élite, the senior corporate clergy. Individually and collectively, this group were proud upholders of the Anglo-Norman ecclesiastical tradition. At the heart of this tradition was the notion that the Englishry were historically responsible for civilizing the Irishry along conventional canonical lines and according to the uses and standards of the medieval English church. This historical mission, a mission which was first elucidated in the papal bull *Laudabiliter*, was very dear to the corporate clerical élite, because it was they who had maintained - in their most perfect forms and in the face of the centuries old threat that the Gaelic Irish posed to their survival - the English ecclesiological and canonical

standards which lay at its heart. The significance of this was twofold. In the first place, because the traditional reforming mission was papally sanctioned, bound up with their English identity, and dedicated to extending roman canon law and to preserving English medieval ecclesiological norms, the corporate clergy were predisposed to siding for the old religion and against the reformation - a movement which carried the unmistakeable threat of destroying all aspects of their traditional ethos - when faced with the choice from the mid-1530s on. Further, because they had a long experience of defending this ethos against the threat of Gaelic Irish erosion, their willingness and capacity to fight effectively on behalf of their beliefs was very pronounced.

The second part of this study seeks to explain how the reformation movement, personified by Dublin's reforming archbishops, George Browne (1536-54) and Adam Loftus (1567-1605), attempted to enforce the reformation and how, in the face of indigenous clerical opposition, they ultimately failed in this endeavour. In large part, it is the story of a generation of clergymen based in St Patrick's cathedral who set out consciously to subvert the plans of the archbishops. At the heart of this strategy of subversion was their exploitation of their control over the administrative and judicial structures of the diocese, a controlling influence which enabled them either to prevent the imposition of reformist measures or to maintain proscribed catholic practices at the crucial times when new religious settlements were being implemented. In some respects, the conservative clergy held all the trump cards against their rather lonely and embattled reformist opponents. However, their ultimate success - measured in their community's continuing attachment to the old religion - was in no way guaranteed as a result, for contingencies such as Lord Deputy St Leger's unexpected dissolution of St Patrick's cathedral in 1547, and the clergy's loss of power over local ecclesiastical structures from the 1570s on, due to natural wastage and their removal from the restored cathedral at the hands of Archbishop Loftus, undermined the traditional basis of their power and influence. In this connection, the period

of the Marian restoration of catholicism and the episcopacy of Hugh Curwen (1555-67) was to prove hugely significant. Not only did it witness a full restoration of the old religion, a process which encompassed a full and self-conscious revival of traditional English-Irish clerical values orchestrated by the Pale clergy under the leadership of Archbishop Dowdall of Armagh; but, under the protective eye of Archbishop Curwen, it also saw the reinvigoration of the spirit, and the preservation of many of the practices, of the old religion in the opening decade of Elizabeth's reign.

The revival of the old religion, as engineered and preserved by Archbishops Dowdall and Curwen during the mid-Tudor period, was crucial in determining the ultimate survival of catholicism, and the ultimate failure of the reformation, in the diocese of Dublin and elsewhere in the English Pale. But it was not the only factor. At the outset of his episcopacy Archbishop Loftus identified indigenous clerical resistance, and the value system upon which it was built, as the main impediment to the progress of the reformation and took steps to counteract it. With the help and guidance of Lord Chancellor Weston, the reform-minded dean of St Patrick's, Loftus instituted a carefully modulated programme of ecclesiastical discipline in his diocese which sought to invest the Elizabethan settlement and its advocates with the same kind of legitimating canonical credentials that were possessed, in the eyes of the local community, by the old religion and the conservative clergy. Over time, it was hoped, this strategy would marginalize the old clerical élite and secure the trust and allegiance of their community for his own protestant ecclesiastical establishment. Initially, at any rate, there were signs that the Loftus-Weston programme might work, especially in the willingness of a younger generation of aspiring ecclesiastical lawyers to attach themselves to the new régime. However, the gradualist nature of the strategy itself, the loss of momentum that it suffered in the wake of Weston's untimely death in 1573, and, above all, the continuing subversiveness of the indigenous clergy - now realised in a series of overtly political plots designed to destabilize the Loftus-Weston régime - all ensured

that more tangible and impressive results were not obtained in the short term. This proved fatal for the archbishop's plans. Other reformers, notably Lord Deputy Sidney, viewed Loftus's plans with impatience or disdain and his strategy was finally deconstructed and abandoned at the deputy's behest in 1577. Thereafter, the archbishop was forced to adopt the more coercive programme of enforcement favoured by Sidney and the government in London. It was the rigorous implementation of this programme in the late 1570s and early 1580s which finally and irrevocably alienated the Pale community from the established church.

The opposition of the indigenous clergy, then, worked on a number of different levels. Not only was it instrumental in preserving the spirit and practices of the old religion in the opening decade of Elizabeth's reign, but thereafter it was consciously enmeshed within a web of ecclesiastical political intrigue that contributed to the destruction of those very measures which were instituted to combat it. Yet the strength and power of the indigenous clergy and their ethos also operated on a level far deeper than the direct actions they took during the episcopacies of Archbishops Browne, Curwen and Loftus. The very structures of the diocese of Dublin embodied the essentially medieval values of the indigenous clergy and, even after the generation who had fought the reformation had passed away or had become involved in the nascent counter-reformation movement in the Pale, would continue to haunt the reformers. The final part of this study looks at three such structures, and the manner in which they defeated the reformers best intentions to reconstruct them along more usefully 'godly' lines.

The first of these was the medieval system for financing the parochial clergy. Through the device of appropriation, the overwhelming bulk of parochial income in the diocese of Dublin had been diverted towards the support of the ecclesiastical corporations of the medieval English Pale. This system, which has been reconstructed exhaustively from the

exiguous sources, was inherited in a largely unreformed condition by the established church, and was one of the key factors which prevented it from transforming the largely stipendiary and inadequately educated clergy of the diocese into a learned, expository ministry capable of evangelising the local community.

In contrast to the parochial system, which was left unreformed largely by default, the cathedral of St Patrick was the focus of great attention from the reformers. As the nerve-centre of clerical conservatism in the English Pale, the cathedral earned the opprobrium of the most committed reformers in Tudor Ireland, many of whom wished to see it abolished permanently. Yet, as the holder of the most valuable livings in the diocese of Dublin, it was also perceived as a resource which could be exploited for a whole host of 'godly' reasons, from supplementing the incomes of protestant bishops to supporting protestant graduate preachers. This ambivalent attitude to the institution was seen to its greatest and, as far as protestantism was concerned, most damaging effect, in the debate that raged between the reformers over the issue of converting it into the much-needed university. Their inability to resolve this issue delayed the foundation of a university in Dublin for nearly half a century, a period in which the practice of educating the youth of the Pale in continental catholic universities grew apace.

The final institution which embodied the medieval values of the corporate clergy, and which haunted the reformers, was Christ Church cathedral. A regular institution at the outset of the reformation, whose primary and popular function was to act as a large chantry foundation, the cathedral never found a new role after the enactment of the Elizabethan settlement. Although it continued, as the only major religious foundation within the old city walls, to host state officials for divine service on a regular basis, its major preoccupation throughout the reign of Elizabeth was to shore up its creaking fabric, which had collapsed in 1562. To the clergy and officials who worshipped within its walls, the

creaking fabric must have appeared as a very striking, but depressing, metaphor for the ailing Church of Ireland, which had been brought to its knees by the old corporate clergy who had once served therein.

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After this, then, what can be said about those crucial issues raised by the Bradshaw-Canny debate is clear but hardly definitive. In relation to the primary dispute over chronology, there are very good grounds for arguing that by the time Adam Loftus took up his episcopacy - a man who was far more responsive to the religious sensibilites of the local community than he has sometimes been given credit for - the reformation had failed. The fact that Loftus identified the basis of conservative religious resistance in his diocese, developed a plausible strategy to overcome it but still failed to dislodge it, suggests very strongly that the revival of the old religion in the mid-Tudor period created an ideological force which was impervious to the theology, worship and ideas espoused by the reformers. Of this religious conservatism itself, its roots and strength were to be found not in the heroic spirit of the Irish nation, nor in the ideology of post-Tridentine catholicism, but in the values and reflexes of the corporate clergy, which had long sustained the identity of the old colonial community in a hostile world.

Part I

The medieval legacy

Chapter One
The diocese of Dublin: its contexts and character

The metropolitan see of Dublin was one of thirty-two territorial units through which the church in Ireland was administered during the sixteenth century.[1] Despite Armagh's traditional claim to the ecclesiastical primacy of all Ireland, Dublin was in reality the premier see on the island, surpassing the other dioceses both in terms of the financial resources and sophistication of its institutional fabric. Many aspects of this construct - including the political and social authority attached to the archbishop's office, the recruitment and training of his leading officials and the constitutional and liturgical forms adopted by his secular cathedral, St Patrick's - were, by the sixteenth century, long established expressions of the political and socio-cultural heritage of English Ireland; having originated and evolved through conscious imitation of English church structures, and their societal contexts, throughout the Middle Ages.[2] Thus, on the eve of the reformation, the ecclesiastical landscape of the heartland of the diocese would have presented a recognizable picture to those familiar with the pattern of ecclesiastical life in Tudor England and, as such, it is arguable that it fitted within the mainstream of the Western Church. Throughout most of Ireland, however, the church existed in a widely divergent political and socio-cultural environment - the Ireland of independent Gaelic and 'degenerate' English lordships - and, during the same period, it displayed marked

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1 On the ecclesiastical geography of Tudor Ireland see Ruth D. Edwards, *An Atlas of Irish History* (London, 1973), pp 117-22.

2 For the earliest phase of the anglicization or 'normanization' of the church in Dublin see M. Murphy, 'The Archbishops and Administration of the Diocese and Province of Dublin, 1181-1298' (Unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Dublin, 1988). On the medieval history of St Patrick's cathedral see W. Monck Mason, *The History and Antiquities of the Collegiate and Cathedral Church of St Patrick near Dublin* (Dublin, 1820), pp 1-146; G.J. Hand, 'The Medieval Chapter of St Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin', in *Rep. Novum*, 5 (1964), pp 229-48.

deviations from the norms of ecclesiastical life prevalent elsewhere in Europe. In this particular setting, Dublin's ecclesiastical pre-eminence was a reflection of the perceived inadequacies of the church in Gaelic and Gaelicized Ireland, rather than any uniquely meritorious qualities inherent within itself. Nevertheless, the contrast between the diocese, the central ecclesiastical unit in English Ireland, and the majority of Irish sees was important, for it provided a definite context through which contemporaries perceived and judged it as a functioning entity.

I

The most quantifiable element of Dublin's ecclesiastical pre-eminence was its superior wealth. One manifestation of this was the disparity in value between the archbishop's living and the benefices of the rest of the Irish episcopate. Worth some *IR*£534 15*s*. 2½*d*. net c. 1539, the see of Dublin was the most valuable in Ireland. Excepting Meath, which at *IR*£373 12*s*. 0½*d*. was the closest in value to Dublin, the Tudor archbishopric boasted a living at least 3 and up to 40 times greater than the remaining episcopal livings extended during the sixteenth century *(Table 1.1,* p 31). Its top-ranking position in the hierarchy of Irish ecclesiastical livings did not go unnoticed by informed contemporaries. Jean Du Bellay, the bishop of Bayonne and French ambassador in London, while notifying the Grand master of France of the promotion of John Alen (1528-34) to the chancellorship of Ireland and the see of Dublin, described it as 'a good archbishopric in the country' ('une bonne archevesché au pays'). As a seasoned careerist cleric there is little doubt that Du Bellay was referring to the archbishopric principally as a source of remuneration.[3]

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3 V.L. Bourilly and P. DeVaissière, eds., *Ambassades en Angletere de Jean Du Bellay. La Première Ambassade (Septembre 1527-Février 1529). Correspondance Diplomatique* (Paris, 1905), pp 461-2 (*L. & P. Hen. VIII*, iv [ii], no. 4942). For brief descriptions of DuBellay's career see Bourilly and DeVaissière's introduction, pp ix-x, and A. Baudrillart, R. Aubart *et al*, ed., *Dictionaire D'Histoire et de Géographie Ecclesiastiques* (21 vols, Paris, 1912-), xiv, pp 828-30.

Table 1.1 Sixteenth century valuations of Irish bishoprics[4]

Henrician Valuations, c. 1537-40

Bishopric	***Province***	***Net Value***
Dublin	Dublin	IR£534 15s. 2½d
Meath	Armagh	IR£373 12s. 0½d.
Armagh	Armagh	IR£183 12s. 5¼d.
Ferns	Dublin	IR£108 13s. 4d.
Waterford & Lismore	Cashel	IR£ 72 8s. 1d.
Kildare	Dublin	IR£ 69 11s. 4d.
Ossory	Dublin	IR£ 66 13s. 4d.
Cashel	Cashel	IR£ 66 13s. 4d.
Leighlin	Dublin	IR£ 50 0s. 0d.

Elizabethan Valuations c. 1584-91

Bishopric	***Province***	***Net Value***
Elphin	Tuam	IR£138 10s. 8d.
Clonfert	Tuam	IR£106 13s. 4d.
Tuam	Tuam	IR£ 66 13s. 4d.
Cork & Cloyne	Cashel	IR£ 54 13s. 4d.
Limerick	Cashel	IR£ 53 6s. 8d.
Emly	Cashel	IR£ 35 11s. 5d.
Killala	Tuam	IR£ 31 2s. 3d.
Kilmore	Armagh	IR£ 26 13s. 4d.
Ross	Cashel	IR£ 25 6s. 8d.
Kilmacduagh	Tuam	IR£ 17 15s. 7d.
Ardfert	Cashel	IR£ 16 17s. 9d.
Ardagh	Armagh	IR£ 14 13s. 4d.
Achonry	Tuam	IR£ 13 6s. 8d.

The inequality in wealth which existed between the Tudor prelates of Dublin and their fellow Irish bishops was a function of various factors, rooted both in the ancient past and in the present. The most decisive was the uneven pattern of episcopal endowment, which was established before and in the immediate aftermath of the final settlement of the territorial

4 T.C.D., MS 567, ff 1-22r; *Valor beneficiorum ecclesiasticorum in Hibernia* (Dublin, 1741), pp 1-26; N.L.I., MS 474 (includes a copy of the printed *valor* with handwritten corrections by John Lodge, deputy keeper of the rolls [1754-74]); 'A book of the proceedings against the clergy of Ireland upon certain informations in the exchequer there' under the titles 'A note of such bishops ... as are sued ... in her majesty's exchequer in Ireland' and 'Brevis collectio quorundam arreragiorum primorum fructuum domine regine debitis ex diversis dignitatibus ac promocionibus spiritualibus ...' (P.R.O., SP 63/127, no. 18). For a critical introduction to the surviving versions of the Irish *valor* see Ellis, 'Economic problems of the church', pp 245-8.

episcopate in the mid-twelfth century, though substantially completed by the coming of the Normans in the latter part of that century.[5] Although there is still room for more research on the pattern of medieval Irish ecclesiastical land-holding as a whole, there is little doubt that the patrimony inherited by the Tudor archbishops of Dublin, from the period of their see's early history, far exceeded the endowments of the majority of the Irish episcopate.[6] This was evident even within the province of Dublin itself. Thus in the diocesan heartland, an area roughly coterminous with the modern county of Dublin, the Tudor archbishops inherited and possessed about one-quarter of the total available land, over 50,000 acres in extent.[7] Their suffragan bishops of Kildare, Ossory, and Ferns, in contrast, only held land covering areas of less than 8,000 and c. 24,000 and 28,000 acres respectively.[8]

Dublin's advantage did not stop with the extent of its patrimony. It was also evident in the more favourable location of its lands. Virtually all of the archbishop's property in the modern county of Dublin was located in the Pale Maghery, the 'land of peace', an area defined by the network of defences - fortified bridges, dykes and tower houses - that insulated it from the depredation caused by Gaelic raiding in the outlying areas of the Pale. Thus it was notable for its tranquility and a deeply-rooted English socio-cultural

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5 J. Otway-Ruthven, 'The Medieval Church Lands of County Dublin', in J.A. Watt, J.B. Morrill and F.X. Martin, eds., *Medieval Studies presented to Aubrey Gwynn S.J.* (Dublin, 1961), p 56; idem, *A history of medieval Ireland* (London, 1968), p 128.

6 Otway-Ruthven ('Medieval Church Lands', p 56) posited the view that the proportion of land held by the church in its various guises - bishops, cathedrals and monastic corporations - was much higher in the Dublin area than elsewhere in Ireland at the end of the Middle Ages.

7 W. Reeves, *Analysis of the United Dioceses of Dublin and Glendalough* (Dublin, 1869), pp 2-5; Otway-Ruthven, 'Medieval Church Lands', p 56.

8 The figure for Kildare was calculated from an extent of the see lands returned into the Irish Exchequer in 1549 after the death of Bishop William Miagh, and edited by Matthew Devitt as 'The See Lands of Kildare', in *Kildare. Arch. Soc. Jn.*, ix (1920), pp 360-62. Estimates for land denominations which are not now identifiable have been calculated by multiplying the sixteenth-century acreage by 2½ (J. Otway-Ruthven, 'The Organisation of Anglo-Irish Agriculture in the Middle Ages', in *R.S.A.I. Jn.*, lxxxi [1951], p 3). I would like to thank Mr Brian Donovan and Mr David Edwards of Trinity College Dublin for supplying me with figures for Ferns and Ossory.

organisation, in which conditions approximated reasonably closely to those obtaining in lowland England. Further, about half of these Co. Dublin lands - the manors of Swords, Lusk, Portrane, Clonmethan and Finglas - lay on the Fingal plain to the north of the river Liffey which was part of the central lowlands, the most fertile region on the island. This feature, and the fact that all of these lands formed a substantial proportion of the immediate hinterland of the chief and most populous urban centre in Ireland, the city of Dublin, ensured that they were geared towards producing a grain surplus to feed the city's inhabitants.[9] Overall, then, they were quite attractive to prospective tenants, which determined that the Tudor incumbents of the see were not only the chief landlords in the Dublin region, with all of the attendant prestige and social authority that this entailed, but also assured of receiving what was by Irish standards a lucrative financial return, even allowing for the profligate letting policies of their fifteenth-century predecessors.[10]

Such advantages were not shared by the majority of the Irish episcopate. Apart from the bishops of Meath, whose lands were located within the Pale and the fertile central lowlands and, like Dublin, were also organized on the English manorial model, most Irish bishops

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9 S.G. Ellis, *Tudor Ireland. Crown, community and the conflict of cultures 1470-1603* (London, 1985), pp 34-5, 56-7; idem, *Reform and Revival. English government in Ireland, 1470-1534* (Woodbridge, 1986), pp 50-2; A.K. Davin, 'Tower Houses of the Pale', (Unpublished M. Litt. thesis, University of Dublin, 1982), pp 174-6; E. Estyn Evans, *The Personality of Ireland: Habitat, Heritage and History* (Belfast, 1981), pp 23, 26; F.H.A. Aalen, 'The Origin of Enclosures in Eastern Ireland', in N. Stephens and R.E. Glasscock, eds., *Irish geographical studies in honour of E. Estyn Evans* (Belfast, 1970), pp 209-10; idem, *Man and the Landscape in Ireland* (London, 1978), pp 10-4, 117-21, 137, 171; R. Stanyhurst, *Holinshed's Irish Chronicle*, ed. L. Miller and E. Power (Dublin, 1979), p 13; Lennon, *Lords of Dublin,* pp 23-4; G. MacNiocaill, 'Socio-Economic Problems of the Late Medieval Irish Town', in D. W. Harkness and M. O'Dowd, eds., *The Town in Ireland: Historical Studies XIII* (Belfast, 1981), p 19; E. Hogan, ed., *The description of Ireland ... in anno 1598* (London, 1878), p 43; Otway-Ruthven, 'Anglo-Irish agriculture', pp 1-13; K. Down, 'Colonial society and economy in the high middle ages', in *New hist. Ire.*, ii, pp 453-7, 459-62, 467-72, 480-1; below chapter 2.

10 For a general study of the social authority enjoyed by the Tudor episcopate by virtue of their landed estates see F. Heal, *Of Prelates and Princes. A study of the Economic and Social Position of the Tudor Episcopate* (Cambridge, 1980), pp 20-49; on the letting policies of the fifteenth century archbishops see J. Murray, 'Archbishop Alen, Tudor Reform and the Kildare Rebellion', in *R.I.A. Proc.*, 89, C (1989), pp 4-5.

functioned as possessioners in a society where the prevailing cultural and socio-economic climate was not conducive to the exploitation of ecclesiastical property. Many bishops in the north and west of Ireland, for instance, had to contend with the customary Gaelic system of ecclesiastical land stewardship - a system which had its roots in the exclusively monastic organization of the early Irish church - whereby church lands were invested in quasi-clerical and hereditary clans, who elected a coarb or erenagh from among their number to oversee them. In return the latter paid a very low fixed rent to the bishop and were obliged to provide annual entertainment or 'noxials', at least once and up to four times a year, when the bishop and his train went on progress. Though the 'noxials' might be commuted for cash or provisions which exceeded the annual rent, it is probable that further research will reveal that the coarb and erenagh families benefitted to a greater extent from their interest in ecclesiastical property than the bishops.[11]

Of much greater significance as a contributory factor to the poverty of Irish bishoprics, however, was the under-developed nature of the economy of Gaelic and Gaelicized Ireland. Ireland, in contrast to the rest of Europe, which was then undergoing a demographic upsurge, was greatly under-populated throughout the sixteenth century, a feature particularly evident in the independent lordships beyond the more densely settled English Pale. Land as a result was chronically under-utilized, a situation which gave rise to a predominant, though not exclusive, bias towards pastoral farming among their inhabitants, as well as the associated practice of transhumance.[12] The combination of low utilization of

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11 K.W. Nicholls, *Gaelic and Gaelicised Ireland in the Middle Ages* (Dublin, 1972), pp 111-13; C. Mooney, *The Church in Gaelic Ireland: Thirteenth to Fifteenth Centuries* (Dublin, 1969), pp 10-15; C. Lennon, *Sixteenth-Century Ireland: The Incomplete Conquest* (Dublin, 1994), p 127.

12 K.W. Nicholls, *Land, law and society in sixteenth century Ireland* (O'Donnell Lecture, Dublin, 1976), p 9; idem, 'Gaelic society and economy in the high middle ages', in *New hist. Ire.*, ii, pp 410-14; D. B. Quinn and K.W. Nicholls, 'Ireland in 1534', in ibid., iii, p 4; K. Simms, 'Nomadry in Medieval Ireland: the Origins of the Creaght or *Caoraigheacht*', in *Peritia,* 5 (1986), pp 379-91; Lennon, *Sixteenth-Century Ireland*, pp 44-7.

land and transient settlement meant, of course, that the bishops were unable to capitalize on whatever assets they possessed: neither the demand for land nor tithe yields - the bishops in the north and west of Ireland were entitled to the third or fourth part of all parochial tithes in their dioceses[13] - would have been very high. It is likely, then, that some bishops in Gaelic and Gaelicized Ireland functioned as economic beings in much the same way as secular Gaelic lords, maintaining herds of cattle in pasture, rather than as rentier landlords after the manner of English bishops, the model to which the Tudor archbishops of Dublin conformed. In this connection the comments of the clerical annalist Thady Dowling concerning Nicholas Maguire, bishop of Leighlin (1490-1512), seem indicative. Dowling commended him for his 'hospitality and the number of cows that he grazed without loss (so well was he beloved) upon the woods and mountains of Knockbrannen, Cumnabally, Aghcarew, Ballycarew, and Moilglas'.[14]

Dowling's comments are instructive also in that they hint at another basic feature of Gaelic society which eroded the economic well-being of the Irish episcopate. Bishop Nicholas, affectionately known as 'Mac Syr Moris', was well respected in his diocese, partly because he was a native of the area and partly on account of his reputation as a learned pastor. He was thus allowed to graze his herd free from the troublesome cattle raiding so widely and endemically practised in Gaelic Ireland.[15] Other bishops would not have been so fortunate. Cattle raiding, in fact, was only one of a number of manifestations of a general disorder which gripped Tudor Ireland, a disorder occasioned by the political fragmentation of the

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13 K.W. Nicholls, 'Rectory, Vicarage and Parish in the Western Irish Dioceses', in *R.S.A.I. Jn.*, ci (1971), p 65.

14 *The annals of Ireland by Friar John Clyn and Thady Dowling, together with the Annals of Ross*, ed. R. Butler (Dublin, 1849), p 32. Dowling was a canon of Leighlin cathedral in the late sixteenth century.

15 Ibid., p 32; H.F. Hore and J. Graves, *The social state of the southern and eastern counties of Ireland in the sixteenth century* (Annuary of the Royal Historical and Archaelogical Association of Ireland for 1868-9), p 144. On cattle raiding and its adverse effects upon the Tudor Irish economy see Nicholls, 'Gaelic society and economy', pp 414-5.

island, and one which was particularly telling for the church in the independent lordships. Other aspects included violent disputes between rival clans or rival factions within the same clans and, as the century progressed, the conflict engendered by the attempt of successive English viceroys to impose their reform policies on the lordships.[16] For most of the century, however, it was the internal fragmentation of Gaelic and Gaelicized society which made the greatest impact upon the ecclesiastical economy. In a society where so many petty lordships jostled with each other to maintain or acquire power, military retaining was an inherent characteristic and it was supported by the oppressive billetting of the lord's soldiers upon the territories under his jurisdiction and the levying of a range of exorbitant exactions. The system, known as 'coign and livery' among English observers, was damaging to the economy in so far as it discouraged agricultural improvement, and church lands were not exempt from its effects. Thus the author of an early sixteenth century treatise advocating political reform in Ireland noted that 'the noble folk of Ireland oppresseth, spoileth the prelates of the church of Christ of their possessions and liberties; and therefore they have no fortune, ne grace, in prosperity of body ne soul'. We know, for example, that among the noble folk who levied 'coign' on the ecclesiastical properties in their territories were the earls of Desmond in Munster and the O'Neills in Ulster.[17]

The political disorder of Tudor Ireland could lead to a more direct form of depredation upon episcopal estates. Many Irish dioceses, including all of the dioceses which comprised the territories that made up the English Pale, straddled areas within the ambit of both Gaelic

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16 Quinn and Nicholls, 'Ireland in 1534', p 4. On the political fragmentation of the island generally see the map in ibid., pp 2-3, and the contemporary description printed in *S. P. Hen. VIII*, ii, pp 1-31. For the causes of internal disorder within the independent lordships see Nicholls, *Gaelic and Gaelicized Ireland,* chapter 2. For the contexts, development and implementation of the reform policies of the English viceroys see Brady, 'Court, Castle and Country', pp 22-49; idem, *Chief Governors*.

17 *S.P. Hen VIII*, ii, p 10; K. Simms, 'The archbishops of Armagh and the O'Neills 1347-71', in *I.H.S.*, xxix (1974-5), p 52; C. A. Empey and K. Simms, 'The ordinances of the White Earl and the problem of coign in the later Middle Ages', in *R.I.A. Proc.*, lxxv C, pp 180-1.

and crown influence. English-allied prelates possessing titles to property within the Gaelic areas of their sees were often prevented from levying their rents, as their rights to these estates were not recognized and sometimes forcibly usurped by militarily powerful and independent local Gaelic clans. The diocese of Armagh is perhaps the best known example of this. For long periods during its medieval history, the see lands in the parts 'inter hibernicos' were overrun by the O'Neills. It was an even greater problem, however, for one of Dublin's suffragan sees, the diocese of Kildare. In 1523 the earl of Kildare informed Cardinal Wolsey that the 'substance' of the bishop's living lay 'in the Irishry, and will not be lightly had but by temporal power'. An inquisition taken in December 1549 after the death of Bishop William Miagh reveals that the see's difficulties did not recede as the century progressed. The return noted that he had not been seised of certain lands pertaining to the see before his death. It is likely that these unnamed properties were located in that part of the diocese situated in the territory of Laois, which was firmly and exclusively under the control of the O'Mores.[18]

But the see of Dublin also suffered from Ireland's political fragmentation. Outside its Maghery heartland, large tracts of the diocese - about two-thirds of its total territorial extent - were situated in the Pale marches and in a number of independent Gaelic lordships which were ruled by the chiefs of the various branches of the O'Toole and O'Byrne clans.[19]

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18 Simms, 'Archbishops of Armagh and the O'Neills', p 41; J. Watt, 'Ecclesia inter Anglicos et inter Hibernicos: confrontation and coexistence in the medieval diocese and province of Armagh' in J.F. Lydon, ed., *The English in Medieval Ireland* (Dublin, 1984), pp 52-3; *S.P. Hen. VIII,* ii, pp 98-9; Devitt, 'See lands of Kildare', p 361.

19 The Gaelic and marcher districts extended over the most southerly parishes of modern Co. Dublin, most of modern Co. Wicklow and the southern and eastern portions of Co. Kildare. Overall they were characterized by variously gradated departures from the norms of English political and socio-cultural life established in the Pale Maghery. In the marches this manifested itself in a widespread disruption of the desired English socio-economic order, a disruption occasioned by the depredation of the Gaelic clans and the adoption of Gaelic practices, such as coign and livery, by hardy and degenerate English marcher families to stave off this threat. In the Gaelic lordships themselves it manifested itself in the virtually complete absence of English political control and legal jurisdiction, and the full-scale observance of Gaelic social codes and cultural mores. The marcher and Gaelic areas of the diocese formed the bulk of the territory that comprised the archdeaconry of Glendalough which, prior to its

And, as in Kildare and Armagh, see property was withheld from the medieval archbishops within the borderlands and Gaelic enclaves, while their ordinary jurisdiction was often disregarded.[20] In contrast to Kildare and Armagh, however, the stability and economic well-being of Dublin's Maghery heartland enabled it to sustain a degree of wealth and institutional sophistication which ensured that the diocese outshone all the remaining Irish sees, given that many of the latter were subject to a more all-encompassing and thoroughgoing poverty and turbulence. This contrast was particularly evident in relation to the see's secular cathedral, St Patrick's.

The 'four-square' secular cathedral, which consisted of a chapter presided over by the four dignitaries of dean, precentor, chancellor and treasurer and supplemented by a fixed number of canons holding endowed prebends, was a Norman innovation in Ireland. It was most successfully implanted in those areas where their settlements had made a lasting impact: namely, the south and east of Ireland or the ecclesiastical provinces of Dublin and Cashel.[21] The livings of Irish secular canons were financed almost exclusively by parochial tithe revenues and the favourable agricultural conditions which obtained within the environs of Dublin city ensured that there was a greater volume of tithable produce there than was common elsewhere in Ireland. These conditions enabled the medieval archbishops of Dublin to construct the richest chapter on the island, endowing it 'with notable livings and

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unification with Dublin in 1216, had existed as a separate diocese. For a general description of the state of these areas at the outset of our period see Quinn and Nicholls, 'Ireland in 1534', pp 4-7. On the unification of Dublin and Glendalough see M.V. Ronan, 'The union of the dioceses of Glendaloch and Dublin in 1216', in *R.S.A.I.Jn.*, lx (1930), pp 56-72; Murphy, 'Archbishops and administration of Dublin', p 336.

20 See below pp 77-81.

21 K.W. Nicholls, 'Medieval Irish Cathedral Chapters', in *Archiv. Hib.*, xxxi (1973), pp 103-4. On the 'four-square' secular cathedral generally see K. Edwards, *The English Secular Cathedrals in the Middle Ages* (Manchester, 2nd. edn., 1967).

diverse fat benefices'.[22] In the Tudor era, the combined net value of the livings of the chapter of St Patrick's cathedral was 2½ to 38 times greater than the combined values of the livings of the remaining cathedral chapters in the provinces of Dublin and Cashel *(Table 1.2)*.

Table 1.2 Combined values of cathedral chapter livings in the provinces of Dublin and Cashel c. 1537-40, 1584-91[23]

Chapter	*Province*	*Net Value*
Dublin	Dublin	IR£667 15s. 3d.
Ferns	Dublin	IR£249 1s. 11d.
Ossory	Dublin	IR£131 3s. 4d.
Lismore	Cashel	IR£130 2s. 8d.
Kildare	Dublin	IR£ 86 15s. 6d
Limerick	Cashel	IR£ 83 14s. 4d
Waterford	Cashel	IR£ 70 17s. 0d.
Cashel	Cashel	IR£ 67 13s. 4d.
Cork	Cashel	IR£ 57 13s. 4d
Cloyne	Cashel	IR£ 56 3s. 1d.
Leighlin	Dublin	IR£ 29 6s. 8d.
Ross	Cashel	IR£ 22 16s. 0d.
Emly	Cashel	IR£ 20 11s. 7d
Ardfert	Cashel	IR£ 18 0s. 0d.

Apart from the wealth of its chapter, St Patrick's was also the most imposing cathedral institution both in terms of its physical and constitutional structure. Physically, it was the largest single ecclesiastical building in Ireland, measuring some 300 feet in length.[24] It also had the largest chapter membership, numbering twenty-seven canons in all (twenty-eight if the archbishop's honorary prebendal stall is included) as against figures for Cork of seventeen; Lismore and Limerick, sixteen each; Ferns and Cloyne, fifteen each; Waterford, fourteen; Killaloe, thirteen; Ossory, twelve; Emly, eleven; Cashel, ten; Leighlin, Kildare,

22 Stanyhurst, *Holinshed's Irish Chronicle*, p 44.

23 Sources as in note 4 above (p 31).

24 E.C. Rae, 'Architecture and sculpture, 1169-1603', in *New. hist. Ire.*, ii, p 749.

and Ross, eight each; and Ardfert, six.[25] Its college of vicars choral, numbering sixteen members in all, greatly surpassed the average membership of the other Irish vicars' colleges which, if they existed at all, was generally set at four.[26] Finally, St Patrick's was the only cathedral in Ireland which possessed a college of petty or minor canons.[27]

II

The elaborate constitutional structure and superior size of St Patrick's was not due solely to the greater availability of resources. It was also a distinctive element in the shaping and maintenance of Dublin's anglicized ecclesiastical identity throughout the medieval period, a process which went hand in hand with the establishment and preservation of the English crown's lordship in Ireland. From the beginning, Dublin and its environs, on account of the geo-physical advantages of the region, attracted heavy Anglo-Norman settlement and emerged as the focal point of the colony; containing in the city of Dublin the administrative and judicial centre of the same.[28] The politicization of the local church swiftly followed

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25 *Alen's reg.*, p 297; E. Bolster, *A history of the diocese of Cork from the earliest times to the reformation* (Shannon, 1972), pp 226-33, 235; *Valor beneficiorum*, pp 10-1, 13, 14, 17-20; G.J. Hand, 'The Medieval Chapter of St Mary's Limerick', in *Med. Studies presented to A. Gwynn*, p 76; J.B. Leslie, *Ferns clergy and parishes* (Dublin, 1936); D.F. Gleeson, *A History of the Diocese of Killaloe* (Dublin, 1962), pp 525-32; J.B. Leslie, *Ossory Clergy and Parishes* (Enniskillen, 1933), pp 53-161; St J.D. Seymour, *The Diocese of Emly* (Dublin, 1913), pp 157-69; idem, *The succession of parochial clergy in the united diocese of Cashel and Emly* (Dublin, 1908), pp 23-31; J.B. Leslie, *Ardfert and Aghadoe Clergy and Parishes* (Dundalk, 1940), pp 15-48.

26 Nicholls, 'Medieval Irish Cathedral Chapters', p 105. Strictly speaking there were 17 vicars choral, but the prebendaries of Kilmactalway and Tipper shared a vicar in common. Thus, there were only 16 vicars' stalls and only 16 actual appointees: R.C.B., Dublin Diocesan Registry, MS 3, f 150v (*Alen's reg.*, pp 297-8); Call book of 1610 metropolitan visitation (T.C.D., MS 566, f 31r).

27 Nicholls, 'Medieval Irish Cathedral Chapters', p 105 and below p 44.

28 The region possessed a low-lying topography, comprised of largely fertile soils. Anglo-Norman settlement at the time of the Conquest was confined to relatively fertile lands below the 400 foot contour line, so it had inevitably emerged as the centre of the heaviest and most concentrated English colonization during the Middle Ages. Although Gaelic migration into the Pale Maghery was not unknown after the Conquest, its peasant stock remained largely English in origin, descendents of the original Anglo-Norman settlers, throughout the Tudor period (Ellis, *Tudor Ire.*, pp 34-5; below chapter 2).

the arrival of the Anglo-Normans. From 1181, with the appointment of John Comyn (1181-1212) under the aegis of Henry II, until the end of our period all the archbishops of Dublin were natives of England with the exception of one, Walter Fitzsimon (1484-1511), and he was a scion of an old Anglo-Norman family deeply loyal to the crown's interest in Ireland. The majority of them were royal nominees and were appointed either as a reward for service in the royal administration in England, or with a view to further service in a civil capacity in Ireland. By the Tudor era the latter feature was the norm: the archbishops being resident civil servants with *ex officio* membership of the Irish council and holders, generally, of high secular office, especially the chancellorship of Ireland.[29] The English origin of Dublin's medieval archbishops was an important factor in the formation of the character of the diocese, as it gave rise to a successful restructuring of the old Norse see according to the model of the Anglo-Norman church in England.

The cathedral of St Patrick emerged as the most potent symbol of the newly-anglicized church. Before the Normans arrived Dublin already possessed a cathedral church, the priory of Holy Trinity, commonly known as Christ Church cathedral, a regular institution staffed by Austin canons of the order of Arrouaise. It is not absolutely certain whether the founders of St Patrick's, Archbishops John Comyn and Henry of London (1213-1228),[30] intended it to supersede Christ Church. However, there is little doubt that they would have preferred a cathedral on the secular model, then fashionable in England on account of its

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29 J. Watt, *The Church in Medieval Ireland* (Dublin, 1972), pp 116-7; A. Gwynn, *Anglo-Irish church life: fourteenth and fifteenth centuries* (Dublin and Melbourne, 1968), p 70; J. D'Alton, *The memoirs of the archbishops of Dublin* (Dublin, 1838); J.R. O'Flanagan, *The lives of the lord chancellors and keepers of the Great Seal of Ireland, from the earliest times to the reign of Queen Victoria* (2 vols, London, 1870), i, *passim*; J.G. Crawford, *Anglicizing the Government of Ireland. The Irish Privy Council and the Expansion of Tudor Rule, 1556-1578* (Dublin, 1993), p 42.

30 Comyn began the process of foundation by erecting a college of secular canons on the site of the ancient church of St Patrick c. 1192; Henry of London completed it by granting St Patrick's cathedral status c. 1219-20.

prebendal system which enabled the diocesan to finance his administrative staff and household clerks, and because it was generally perceived to be more compliant to his will.[31] Thus, although Christ Church did not entirely succumb to St Patrick's - a situation which gave rise to the anomaly whereby the diocese contained two cathedrals in very close proximity, one regular, the other secular - and although it too underwent the process of anglicization, the elder cathedral was gradually displaced from the centre of diocesan power by its secular rival, its role in the administrative machine being reduced to purely formal and honorific functions.[32] St Patrick's, by contrast, soon formed part of an administrative complex with the adjacent palace of St Sepulchre, the archbishop's main Dublin residence, in the southern suburbs of the city. It was from here, the effective nerve-centre of the diocese, demarcated by the stretch of city wall between St Nicholas's Gate and the Pole Gate and the three medieval streets of St Bride, St Kevin and St Patrick, that the archbishop's spiritual and secular jurisidictions were supervised and executed.[33] St Patrick's administrative role was concerned exclusively with the execution of the archbishop's ordinary jurisdiction, the process of spiritual government, its main function being to provide financial support for his officials in the form of prebendal livings. To this

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31 G.J. Hand, 'The rivalry of the cathedral chapters in medieval Dublin' in *R.S.A.I. Jn.*, xcii (1962), pp 195-8; idem, 'Medieval chapter of St. Patrick's', p 231; idem, *The Church in the English lordship, 1216-1307* (Dublin and Sydney, 1968), pp 9-10; Edwards, *English Secular Cathedrals*, pp 6-8, 21; H.J. Lawlor, *The Fasti of St Patrick's, Dublin* (Dundalk, 1930), pp 9-10. On the strained relationship between monastic cathedrals and their bishops in the medieval period see C.H. Lawrence, *Medieval Monasticism. Forms of religious life in Western Europe in the Middle Ages* (London and New York, 1984), pp 121-3.

32 One manifestation of the anglicization of Christ Church was the reconstruction of the cathedral's fabric in the Early Gothic style under the direction of a master mason who hailed from the Severn Valley (R.A. Stalley, *Architecture and Sculpture in Ireland 1150-1350* [Dublin, 1971], pp 20-3, 58-68; idem, 'Irish Gothic and English Fashion', in Lydon, *English in Med. Ire.*, pp 72-3). On Christ Church's administrative role see below chapter 9.

33 Ordnance Survey, *Dublin c. 840-c. 1540: the medieval town in the modern city* (Dublin, 1978). On the archbishop's secular jurisdiction see C. McNeill, 'The secular jurisdiction of the early archbishops of Dublin', in *R.S.A.I. Jn.*, xlv, ii (1915), pp 81-108; Wood, ed., *Court book of the Liberty of St Sepulchre,* pp vii-xiii. For the palace of St Sepulchre generally see V. Jackson, 'The Palace of St Sepulchre', in *Dublin Hist. Rec.*, xxviii (1974-5), pp 82-92.

end, Dublin's medieval archbishops had ensured that St Patrick's, rather than Christ Church, was the greater beneficiary of their largesse, being ever-ready to enhance its standing by continued and liberal endowment of its constituent parts with valuable rectorial tithes.[34] In addition, St Patrick's was also the site of the archbishop's consistory court. Sessions were held *in loco consistorii* by the west wall of the north aisle during term time.[35]

This policy of locating and financing the diocesan administration within the new secular cathedral was animated by the desire to imitate the practices prevalent in the English church, especially the English secular cathedral. One of its major effects was that it bolstered the English identity of the diocese. A similar effect was achieved by introducing English liturgical forms into the cathedral. The performance of a daily cycle of masses and the divine offices, the Opus Dei, was the primary function of the majority of clergy in a secular cathedral. In St Patrick's, the liturgical practices of Salisbury cathedral, 'the Sarum Use', were adopted for this purpose, a process which began at the inception of the institution when Archbishop Comyn granted its canons those privileges enjoyed by their counterparts in the English foundation.[36] Thereafter, the way was open for the adoption of the full Sarum consuetude, and this was achieved by degrees throughout the thirteenth century.[37]

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34 Otway-Ruthven, 'Medieval Church Lands', p 54. The tithe endowments are recorded in *Dignitus decani, passim.*

35 *Alen's reg.*, p 297; 'Incipiunt statuta consistorii Dublinensis a Johanne Alano septimo ... archiepiscopo anno Christi 1530', R.C.B., Dublin Diocesan Registry collection, MS 4, pp 36-40 (*Alen's Reg.*, pp 274-5); Marsh's Library, MS Z4.2.19, pp 1-126 *passim* (act book of the Dublin consistory court, Michaelmas 1596 to Michaelmas 1599); V. Jackson, *The Monuments in St. Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin* (Dublin, 1987), p 2.

36 Edwards, *English Secular Cathedrals,* pp 56-9; S.E. Lehmberg, *The Reformation of Cathedrals. Cathedrals in English Society, 1485-1603* (Princeton, 1988); pp 9-12; *Dignitus decani*, p 41.

37 Ibid., pp 5-7, 12-16, 27-9, 38-9, 97-8; G.J. Hand, 'Cambridge University Additional MS. 710', in *Rep. Novum*, 2 (1958), pp 17-32; W. Hawkes, 'The Liturgy in Dublin, 1200-1500; Manuscript Sources' in ibid., 2 (1958), pp 33-8.

Imitative construction was also apparent in the last innovation affecting the cathedral's constitution before the reformation - the erection of a college of petty canons - a development which clearly demonstrates the influence of the English backgrounds of Dublin's medieval archbishops upon the institutional evolution of their diocese. The college was erected in the 1430s under the aegis of Archbishop Richard Talbot. And it was his experience of ecclesiastical life in England which provided the precedent for his action: he served as precentor of Hereford, one of only two English secular cathedrals where minor or petty canons served in the choir during the Middle Ages.[38] Like the dean and chapter and vicars choral before them, the English identity of the college of petty canons was further enhanced when, nearly a hundred years later in 1519, Henry VIII granted them royal letters of incorporation.[39]

The elaborate structure of Dublin's secular cathedral contrasted most strikingly with the cathedral system operating in the predominantly Gaelic provinces of Tuam and Armagh, in the west and north of Ireland respectively. In the western province the 'four-square' pattern had been adopted in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, but it underwent a general regression in the fifteenth century to a very simple pattern. This was due perhaps to a reduction in contact between the Gaelic west and England east of Ireland, though the more likely explanation is that it resulted from the relative poverty of the individual cathedrals. During the Tudor period, then, the common pattern of cathedral organisation in Tuam was that of a chapter consisting of a dean, archdeacon and sacrist and an unfixed number of canons - the latter feature being the most pronounced departure from the standard English model - though there was a fixed number of prebendal endowments. The endowments,

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38 *Dignitus decani*, pp 44-6; Lawlor, *Fasti of St Patrick's*, pp 32-4; J.H. Bernard, 'Richard Talbot, Archbishop and Chancellor', in *R.I.A. Proc.*, xxxv, C (1919), pp 224-6; Hand, 'Cambridge University Additional MS. 710', pp 31-2; Edwards, *English Secular Cathedrals,* pp 258-9.

39 *Dignitus decani*, pp 171-2.

themselves, did not consist of full rectories but very small portions of parochial livings which, individually, would not have supported a single canon. From time to time they were arranged in different combinations, a single canon holding more than one, which meant that the number of canons making up the chapter varied accordingly. In the northern province of Armagh, the most remote from English political and ecclesiastical influence, the 'four-square' secular cathedral, consisting of secular canons with definite and fixed prebends, had made even less impact. In fact, there was a sizeable number of completely unendowed chapters in the northern province - Clogher, Derry, Raphoe and Ardagh - and even Meath, the diocese which in most other respects resembled Dublin, especially in regard to its wealth and anglicized ethos, possessed no cathedral foundation at all.[40]

The capitular and institutional simplicity of the cathedrals in the independent lordships of Ireland were also mirrored in the physical condition of the same, many of which would have been indistinguishable from the average English parish church. This was partly a legacy of the celto-monastic organization of the early Irish church which had given rise to the formation of a disproportionate number of dioceses relative to the size of the island. As a result the internal resources available in each diocese for the construction of cathedrals had been correspondingly restricted.[41] Furthermore, by the sixteenth century a number of these ecclesiastical sites had lost their original importance as settlement locations, and retained nothing more than their ancient religious associations.[42] The great Gothic cathedrals of England and the continent, of which Dublin's two cathedrals provided modest examples - both of them fit neatly into the pattern of early English gothic - were associated with relatively large urban environments which contained sufficient concentrations of wealth and

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40 Nicholls, 'Medieval Irish Cathedral Chapters', pp 105-11.

41 Stalley, *Architecture and Sculpture in Ireland*, p 58; idem, 'Irish Gothic and English Fashion', p 67; T.B. Barry, *The Archaeology of Medieval Ireland* (London, 1987), p 143.

42 Nicholls, 'Gaelic society and economy', pp 399, 403.

patronage for their construction and maintenance.[43] While much remains to be unearthed concerning the nature of Gaelic settlement in the medieval and Tudor periods, it is clear that permanent and recognisably urban settlements were not a prominent feature of the Gaelic landscape. Settlement was transient, in line with the pastoral-nomadic bent of Gaelic agriculture, and the church therein was predominantly rural in character.[44]

To contemporary travellers, imbued with the mores of mainstream European urban civilisation, this was the most obvious feature distinguishing Dublin and its environs from the Gaelic world. It is nicely illustrated in the observations of the Italian cleric, Francisco de Chierigatus, who visited Ireland while serving as a papal nuncio in England during 1515-16. Writing to Lady Isabella D'Este Gonzaga in August 1517, his letter reveals that he was sufficiently impressed by the marks of civility he encountered in the cathedral city of Dublin to think it worthy of its metropolitan status; commenting favourably upon its populousness, busy trading activity and the honourable entertainment afforded to him by the archbishop of Dublin, William Rokeby (1512-21). His impression of Armagh, a Gaelic metropolitan city, was altogether different however. He noted that although it was the seat of the primate of all Ireland, it was apart from a house of regular canons 'very deserted' ('assai deserta') and inhabited by 'beastly people' ('gente bestiale'). Chierigatus perceived an absence of civility in Armagh - manifested in a general absence of recognisable forms of human settlement and the lack of social graces in its inhabitants - which for him detracted from its primatial and metropolitan ecclesiastical status.[45] While his comments are laden

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43 Stalley, *Architecture and Sculpture in Ireland*, pp 58-71; idem, 'Irish Gothic and English Fashion', pp 65, 71-3; idem, 'The medieval sculpture of Christ Church cathedral, Dublin', in H.B. Clarke, ed., *Medieval Dublin: the making of a metropolis* (Blackrock, 1990), pp 202-26; E.C.Rae, 'The medieval fabric of the cathedral church of St Patrick in Dublin', in *R.S.A.I.Jn.*, cix (1979), pp 29-73.

44 Ellis, *Tudor Ire.*, pp 186, 188; Nicholls, 'Gaelic society and economy', pp 403-4.

45 A. Portioli, ed., *Quattro Documenti D'Inghilterr ed uno di Spagna Dell' Archivio di Mantova* (Mantova, 1868), pp 20-1; J.P. Mahaffy, 'Two early tours in Ireland', in *Hermathena*, xvii, no. 40 (1914), p 10.

with ethnocentric bias, they do highlight aspects of the differing social environments of Gaelic and English Ireland which contributed to the distinctive characters of their respective churches.

III

There were, however, more fundamental differences between the English Irish and Gaelic Irish ecclesiastical polities than the absence in the latter of much of the outward structural paraphernalia and splendour associated with local churches in more prosperous areas of Europe. It is clear that in Gaelic Ireland, as elsewhere throughout the Celtic fringes of Europe, Christianity had failed historically to supplant certain aspects of the Gaelic pre-Christian social system. One implication of this was that the church in Gaelic Ireland waived important areas of the canon law of Western Christendom, albeit with the tacit approval of Rome, in favour of its own traditional social codes, a feature particularly evident in the areas of marriage and sexuality.[46] This, in turn, gave rise to further divergences from the norms of European ecclesiastical practice and organisation, and is most strikingly illustrated in the hereditary nature of the clerical profession. Concubinage among the clergy was a widely accepted practice in a society where sexual expression was uninhibited. Many priests' sons followed their fathers into holy orders and many succeeded directly to their fathers' benefices, obtaining the necessary dispensations from Rome.[47] The problem with this system was that it often led to a lessened sense of vocation in the

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46 Nicholls, *Gaelic and Gaelicized Ireland*, pp 73-7: A. Cosgrove, 'Marriage in Medieval Ireland', in idem, ed., *Marriage in Ireland* (Dublin, 1985), pp 28-34.

47 Nicholls, *Gaelic and Gaelicized Ireland*, pp 92-8; Watt, *Church in Medieval Ireland*, pp 185-7; Ellis, *Tudor Ire.*, p 187; K. Simms, 'Women in Gaelic Society during the Age of Transition', in M. MacCurtain and M. O'Dowd, eds., *Women in Early Modern Ireland* (Dublin, 1991), pp 36-8; Lennon, *Sixteenth-Century Ireland*, pp 126-7; A. Cosgrove, 'Ireland beyond the Pale, 1399-1460', in *New hist. Ire.*, ii, pp 587-8.

profession, and a deep-rooted secularization of the church in which the cure of souls was neglected.

Secularization was the most pronounced characteristic of the church in Gaelic and Gaelicized Ireland during the late medieval and reformation periods. At the parochial level it was apparent in the activity of unscrupulous benefice seekers at the Roman curia, an activity which could cause immense problems when the papal court entertained the claims of manifestly unsuitable candidates for preferment.[48] At the level of the diocese it revealed itself where locally-powerful clans controlled the nomination and admission of prelates to their sees.[49] The most damaging aspect of the phenomenon occured where clerics, including bishops, shaking off the moral constraints and spiritual requirements of their offices, acted in the capacity of lay, warlord chieftains, an excess which could and did lead to ecclesiastical chaos and which certainly required some degree of reform. Early sixteenth century Ardagh, as portrayed in the report presented by Henry VIII's proctors at the Roman curia in 1517 to further the suit of his chosen candidate for the vacant bishopric, is the best known, thought not unique, example of this. The king's witnesses deposed that the cathedral city lay in the mountains in the midst of woods, containing only four timber huts and few inhabitants on account of the 'continual enmities and quarrels' which prevailed there. The disorder was occasioned by the efforts of the late bishop, William O'Farrell (1479-1516), chief of the O'Farrells of Annaly, to exercise temporal lordship over the neighbouring peoples and brought ecclesiastical life to a virtual standstill. The cathedral itself was in ruins, containing only one altar under an open sky. It had no sacristy, bells, nor bell-tower and barely enough liturgical accoutrements to celebrate a single mass. Only one

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48 Nicholls, *Gaelic and Gaelicized Ireland*, pp 102-5; Watt, *Church in Medieval Ireland*, pp 188-92; Ellis, *Tudor Ire.*, p 191.

49 On the deleterious effects that this entailed for one diocese, Elphin, see F.X. Martin, 'Confusion abounding: Bernard O'Higgin, O.S.A., bishop of Elphin', in A. Cosgrove and D. McCartney, eds., *Studies in Irish History presented to R. Dudley Edwards* (Dublin, 1979), pp 38-44.

priest celebrated there, and then very seldom. Even allowing for hyperbole the report reveals that the ecclesiastical condition of Ardagh was particularly wretched. The extent of the secularization of the local church is apparent in the record of Bishop William's obit in the Annals of Connacht. He is described therein as the bishop of Annaly, the O'Farrells' lordship, and not Ardagh.[50]

Set against the poverty-stricken, disordered and, at times, chaotic character of the church in the independent lordships of Gaelic and Gaelicized Ireland, the maintenance of basic standards in Dublin made it appear as the very apogee of ecclesiastical order and sophistication. The metropolitan cathedral of St Patrick in the suburbs of the city of Dublin offered a startling contrast to Ardagh. This was especially apparent in the care taken over the performance of the liturgy and the maintenance of the church fabric, as revealed by the annual administration of the revenues attached to the common fund or economy of the cathedral, which was overseen by its proctor.[51] Until the introduction of the English vernacular liturgy of the Elizabethan settlement of 1560, the traditional liturgy employed there was a daily series of latin masses and divine offices, sung and performed according to the age-old and elaborate Sarum use.[52] The stalls in the cathedral choir were normally occupied by some nine to thirteen residentiary canons (out of a total of twenty-seven), four

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50 A. Theiner, *Vetera monumenta Hibernorum et Scotorum* (Rome, 1864), p 521; A. Gwynn, *The medieval province of Armagh 1470-1545* (Dundalk, 1946), pp 154-7; A. Martin Freeman, *Annala Connacht,...A.D. 1224-1544,* (Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, 1944), pp 632-3. For similarly dismal accounts of the state of Tuam and Clonmacnoise cathedrals in the Tudor era see respectively the papal nuncio David Wolfe's report to Rome in 1561 (P.F. Moran, *History of the catholic archbishops of Dublin since the reformation* [Dublin, 1864], pp 86, 418) and Theiner, *op. cit.*, p 518.

51 On this see the account of Sir John Andowe, canon of St Patrick's cathedral and prebendary of Timothan, general proctor of the economy, from 24 June 1509 to 24 June 1510, printed in Mason, *History of St Patrick's*, App. XVI, pp xxvii-xxxi.

52 The vernacular Edwardian Prayer Book services were never used in St Patrick's because the cathedral was suppressed for the duration of the reign. For a bibliography of printed versions of the Sarum liturgical texts used in St Patrick's see Hand, 'Cambridge University Additional MS. 710', pp 19-20.

petty canons, sixteen vicars choral and six boy choristers.[53] An organist was hired to accompany them and paid at the rate of £3 6*s*. 9*d*. per annum. The boy choristers were trained by their master - one of the canons or petty canons - in the art of prick and part song, the latter receiving a stipend of four marks annually.[54] Money was also spent to keep the choir's hymn books in repair or to make new ones. In Proctor Andowe's account of 1509-10 it is recorded that Sir William Growe, one of the petty canons, was paid a fee of 6*s*. 8*d*. for writing and making the musical notation in the same, as well as four pence to buy two ounces of vermillion to make the 'short notes' ('notulas'). A beadle or usher was employed to give the liturgy added solemnity. He acted as a kind of master of ceremonies - his duties including leading the dean and his clergy in the elaborate processions associated with the Sarum liturgy - and was paid at the rate of £4 per year.[55]

Another important officer was the sacristan who was in charge of the church plate and vestments, and who received an annual fee of four marks. A high premium was put on maintaining the church plate and clerical garb. In the year June 1509 to June 1510, for instance, a Dublin goldsmith was paid 4*s*. 7*d*. for gold and his labour in the gilding of the chalices and paten of the high altar, and one Margery Warde received 14*s*. for repairing twenty-one hoods belonging to the clergy.[56] Concern was also shown to create a fitting ambience for worship. The proctor's account of 1509-10 reveals that a new image of the

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53 *Alen's reg.*, pp 297-8; Lawlor, *Fasti of St Patrick's*, pp 32-3, 36. Very little information on the residence of the canons now survives. The figures supplied above are based on headcounts of the canons, derived from the signatures appended to the following leases granted by the dean and chapter: lease of the tithes of Malahide to Robert Yans, 1538 (Bodl., MS Talbot b. 49/10); lease of the manor of Deansrath to Finian Basnet, 1546, lease of a house in St Patrick's Street to Patrick Dowdall, 1562 (St Patrick's cathedral, Muniments, bundle 116).

54 Mason, *History of St Patrick's*, p xxviii.

55 Ibid., pp xxviii, xxx: Roger Browne, beadle at the time of Andowe's account, was paid 40*s*. for the half year from Christmas to the feast of the nativity of St John the Baptist. On the Sarum processions generally see T. Bailey, *The Processions of the Sarum Rite and the Western Church* (Toronto, 1971).

56 Mason, *History of St Patrick's*, pp xxviii, xxxi.

crucifix had been recently set up in the rood loft, that steps were taken to prevent pigeons entering the cathedral, and that £12 5*s*. 2*d*. was laid out upon 388¼ pounds of wax to light the church during the year.[57] The proctor would also employ a host of tradesmen, including carpenters, tilers and masons, to carry out the more basic repairs upon the cathedral from year to year. Altogether some £139 7*s*. 10*d*. in tithe and land rents was set aside annually to meet these liturgical and maintenance expenses, as well as casual revenues, which included receipts from the oblation boxes and church pardoners, worth £7 19*s*. 5½ d. and £10 13*s*. 4*d*. respectively in 1509-10.[58]

While all of this was unremarkable in the context of the church in Europe as a whole, and in Tudor England in particular, it is worth dwelling upon to emphasize the fact that Dublin shared in this ecclesiastical conventionality and, in doing so, existed in a different ecclesiastical world from that obtaining in many of the independent lordships. In the course of the Middle Ages this conventionality - representing a conscious adherence to the standards of medieval English ecclesiastical practice rooted in the political and socio-cultural heritage of the English Pale - came to be enshrined as a symbolic element within the English ethos of the local community. It was an inevitable process as the local church had long been permeated with those attitudes which formed that ethos: anglophile sentiment, royalist sympathy and an aversion to the politics, social organization, law and church life of Gaelic Ireland. By the early decades of the sixteenth century, this symbolic identification of church and communal ethos was evident in the formal links operating between Dublin's ecclesiastical establishment and the institutions of crown government in the lordship, in the espousal by the same of populistic royalism, and in the elitist and

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57 Ibid., pp xxviii, xxix, xxx.

58 Ibid., pp xxvii-xxviii.

exclusivist attitudes it exhibited towards the Gaelic Irish, all of which were exemplified by Dublin's two cathedrals.

Christ Church cathedral had a long-standing association with the political and judicial institutions of English Ireland. Parliaments and councils, for example, were often held within its precincts, while each year at the conclusion of the Michaelmas and Hilary terms the prior and his conventual brethren would close proceedings in the courts of Chancery, Exchequer and the two benches with the singing of hymns and antiphons. The cathedral also provided a focus for the expression of loyalty to the crown. When queens of England successfully bore royal progeny it was the custom of the people of Dublin to proceed to Christ Church where the *Te Deum Laudamus* would be sung 'to the laud and praise of God and honour of our said princes and princesses'.[59] The less attractive face of the English Irish communal ethos was evident in the bias shown against the Gaelic Irish within the statutes of her sister cathedral, St Patrick's. In January 1515, for instance, in an agreement drawn up between Archbishop Rokeby and the cathedral chapter concerning the dean's jurisdiction and capitular discipline, it was enacted that the old custom denying membership of the cathedral to anyone 'of the Irish nation, manners and blood' should be specially approved.[60]

The symbolic identification of church and communal mentality could also be expressed in a more explicit manner. The tensions that were engendered by aspects of the Henrician reformation - including, for example, the government's attempt to override the chapter of St Patrick's privilege to freely elect their dean in 1537, and its plan to suppress Christ Church cathedral in the early 1540s - forced the local community into formulating a more

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59 H.G. Richardson and G.O. Sayles, *The Irish parliament in the middle ages* (London, 1952), pp 190-1; Vice-treasurer Brabazon's account 1534-7 (P.R.O., SP 65/1, no. 2, f 22v [*L. &. P. Hen. VIII*, xii (ii), no. 1310]); *S.P. Hen. VIII*, ii, p 545.

60 *Alen's Reg.*, pp 262-3; Mason, *History of St Patrick's*, pp 143-4. On the thinking behind this custom see chapter 2 below.

direct articulation of the idea, as they endeavoured to protect the interests of the local church.[61] The defence of St Patrick's privilege was propounded in a letter to Thomas Cromwell by six members of the cathedral chapter - Henry Parker, James Humphrey, Simon Jeffrey, Bartholomew Fitzsimon, John Wogan and Robert Fiablis (or Fiable) - all of whom were of English Irish extraction, 'of this land's birth' according to Lord Deputy Grey and the Irish council, and otherwise confirmed by the Anglo-Norman and English provenance of their surnames. The prebendaries began by informing Cromwell of the historic links existing between their cathedral and the English monarchy; stressing, with indigant pride, the crown's ancient patronage - 'our church is of the king's foundation' - and that their right to elect a dean was firmly rooted in the series of 'liberties, statutes and establishments commendable' granted by Henry VIII and his progenitors. These privileges had ensured that good, grave and learned men were appointed to the office whereby 'God hath been well served' and, most importantly, 'the king daily prayed for'. If such men had not been appointed, they continued, the king's grants for the 'maintenance of good order' would not have been executed and

> this his grace's church should or long since have been in such case as is the churches in Irishry which churches digressing from the king's grants and privileges do take unlearned, simpler and unmeet persons contrary their gifts and privileges wherby not God is honoured neither the church ne kings prayed for nor yet any good service done to his grace as it appeareth many ways to them that hath here experience.[62]

The basic contention of the prebendaries, then, was that the church in Dublin, as manifested by St Patrick's cathedral, stood for the maintenance of good ecclesiastical order because it existed, voluntarily and contentedly, within a stable temporal polity under the jurisdiction

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61 S.T.B. Percival, 'The Basnetts during the 16th and 17th centuries', in *Chester Archaeological Society Journal*, xlix (1962), pp 3-4; *S. P. Hen. VIII*, ii, 544-5, Lord Deputy Grey to Cromwell, 19 January 1540 (misplaced in 1538); *ibid.*, 545-6, the mayor and aldermen of Dublin to Cromwell, 23 January 1540 (misplaced in 1538); *ibid.*, iii, 130-1, 414-6, 468, 484, 489-90.

62 Prebendaries of St Patrick's to Cromwell, 20 Feb 1537 (P.R.O., SP 60/4, no. 10).

and protection of the English crown: the fountainhead of order and civility. The participation of their church as a corporate entity within the crown's lordship had been actively pursued: St Patrick's cathedral had upheld with unremitting devotion those privileges - 'our old commendable grants' - bestowed by the crown in the centuries following the Anglo-Norman incursion into Ireland. Indeed these privileges formed the cornerstone of the church and had ensured that it was preserved free from the disorder and chaos which contaminated the 'churches in Irishry', whose habits and customs were perceived to be aberrant digressions from the civilising influence of royal ecclesiastical privilege. Thus, like their peers in the lay community - the nobility, gentry, and citizenry of the inner Pale and coastal towns of eastern Ireland - the canons of St Patrick's posed as protectors of English civility, in this case English ecclesiastical civility, on an island where all around them the disorder of Gaelic custom and practice held sway and threatened to swamp it.[63] In developing and presenting this argument they displayed a cleary defined sense of their own English identity, their loyalty to the crown and its lordship over Ireland, and a sense of superiority to the Gaelic Irish whose church, they argued, fulfilled no proper function and whose clergy they derided as 'unlearned, simpler and unmeet persons'. To override their liberties, therefore, would not only be an unjustified attack on the cathedral, but an affront also to everything that it represented. Ultimately, it would undermine the condition and health of English Irish society, for their cathedral church, as a symbol of English civility, was an important bastion of the same.

A similar argument was also advanced by the defenders of Christ Church cathedral, the mayor and citizens of Dublin.[64] The core of their defence was based on the contention that Christ Church cathedral represented an important focus for the expression of civic pride and

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63 On the Palesmen's views of the Gaelic Irish see N. Canny, *The Formation of the Old English Elite in Ireland* (O'Donnell lecture, Dublin, 1975), pp 10-2.

64 *S. P. Hen. VIII*, ii, pp 545-6.

that its destruction 'would be a great desolation and foul waste and deformity of the said city'. Underpinning their argument, however, was the notion that the existence of the cathedral within the city - it was the only major religious foundation within the old city walls - not only contributed to the formation of a corporate civic spirit, but was an indispensable element in the maintenance of a specifically English civic spirit. Thus they related how Christ Church stood 'in the midst of the said city and chamber in like manner as Paul's church is in London', a parallel which conveyed a sense of mutual participation by Dublin and London in a common English civic heritage. On one level, then, the mayor and citizens were arguing that the suppression of Christ Church cathedral would have the same demoralising effect upon the citizens of Dublin as the destruction of St Paul's would have upon the London citizenry. However, it was also being argued implicitly that the disappearance of the cathedral would have a denuding effect upon the Englishness of the city, for the cathedral was a key element in the ordered civic landscape, a landscape which in turn formed an important layer in the composition of the fabric of English Irish society as a whole. To supress the cathedral, then, would be to assault that fabric, an inference explicitly drawn by the mayor and citizens who warned that such an act would be 'a great comfort and encouraging of our sovereign lord's the king's Irish enemies'. Thus, like the prebendaries of St Patrick's, the mayor and citizens drew attention to their community's vision of the local church as an important bulwark in the maintenance of their English identity. Above all it was a symbol of order and civility and, as such, it offered a symbolic resistance to the perceived disorders and incivilities which obtained in the independent lordships wherein dwelt 'the king's Irish enemies'.

The indigenous perception of the institutional church in Dublin, as a symbol of the English political and socio-cultural mentality of the Pale, and the accompanying belief that its ecclesiastical structures and societal contexts were superior to their Gaelic Irish equivalents, had been reciprocated and championed by Dublin's English-born archbishops throughout

the Middle Ages. Their attitudes in this regard were most evident in the stand they adopted in their age-old dispute with the archbishops of Armagh concerning primatial titles and functions in the Irish church.[65] At base this dispute was about ecclesiastical jurisdiction and, of course, its fiscal implications: the archbishops of Dublin were loathe to admit the validity of ecclesiastical titles which might entail jurisdictional subjection to another Irish ecclesiastical authority and the loss of precious judicial business and fees.[66] It also encompassed the archbishops' concern to maintain their 'honour' as spiritual noblemen in a feudal world: they were adamant, for instance, that no ecclesiastic from outside the province of Dublin, saving the pope's envoys, should display the symbols and tokens which signified the dignity and authority of their offices within the archbishop's own domain. To this end they accumulated royal and papal grants forbidding other bishops, including Armagh, to have their crosses borne before them in Dublin.[67]

Underpinning all of this, however, was the politico-cultural dimension. Dublin's medieval archbishops refused to acknowledge the claim of Armagh to the primacy because it would have meant effectively that the political and cultural centre of Anglo-Norman Ireland was of inferior ecclesiastical status to an entity dominated by a pervasive Gaelic culture; for, despite the fact that the see of Armagh came into the possession of English archbishops in the later Middle Ages, virtually the entire province remained beyond the ambit of crown influence until the beginning of the seventeenth century.[68] Indeed Armagh's traditional

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65 The best accounts of the primatial dispute are J. Watt, 'The disputed primacy of the medieval Irish Church' in P. Linehan ed., *Proceedings of the 7th International Congress of Medieval Canon Law, Cambridge, 1984* (Vatican City, 1988; Monumenta Iuris Canonici, series C, Subsidia, viii), pp 373-83; P. Talbot, *Primatus Dubliniensis, or the primacy of the see of Dublin*, ed. W.E. Kenny (Dublin, 1947), pp lvii-lxii. See also *Dictionaire D'Histoire et de Géographie Ecclesiastiques,* xiv, pp 926-30.

66 J. Watt, *The Church and the Two Nations in Medieval Ireland* (Cambridge, 1970), pp 109-10; idem, 'Disputed primacy', p 376; *Alen's Reg.*, p 43.

67 Ibid., pp 43, 207-8.

68 John Watt has cautioned against explaining the primacy dispute solely in terms of ethnic rivalries. He does concede, however, that Dublin's acquisition of primatial status may have been an 'aggrandisement'

seniority in the Irish church and its claim to primatial status was intimately connected with its Gaelic heritage. The claim was based on the see's association with St Patrick and had been enshrined in the ancient celto-monastic organization of the church: the archbishop of Armagh being primate because he was deemed to be the coarb or successor of Ireland's apostle.[69] To counteract this claim Dublin's early Anglo-Norman archbishops had secured papal privileges which made their diocese exempt from any assertion of a superior ecclesiastical jurisdiction. These grants - the first of which occurred in 1182 during the episcopacy of Dublin's first Anglo-Norman archbishop, John Comyn - were quite new in the context of previous papal grants to the see and, as such, undoubtedly represented politically motivated and precautionary measures aimed at denying Armagh the opportunity of exercising its traditional primacy in Dublin at a time when it was held by Gaelic bishops. Their advent also signalled the first step in Dublin's pursuit of primatial status for itself.[70]

Primatial status was 'quietly annexed' by the see of Dublin in the fourteenth century, an action which was legitimated by Edward III's proposal that the feuding prelates should adopt the compromise formula that he had sucessfully brokered beween the archbishops of Canterbury and York in England. In this settlement, Dublin was to acquire the title 'primate of Ireland' and Armagh 'primate of all Ireland'. Dublin's archbishops adopted their title and, by the fifteenth century, it was in habitual use. The archbishops of Armagh, however, were unwilling to compromise and the dispute between the sees raged on throughout the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries and even into the seventeenth century where it survived both within

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related to its growth 'into the colonial capital'. This clearly did have political-cultural connotations, and these were seized upon by Archbishops Alen and Browne in the sixteenth century when promoting or reflecting upon Dublin's primatial claims (Watt, 'Disputed primacy', pp 376, 380; below pp 58-60, 154).

69 Simms, 'Archbishops of Armagh and the O'Neills', pp 42-3; J. Watt, 'Gaelic polity and cultural identity', in *New hist. Ire.*, ii, p 341; idem, *Church and the Two Nations*, p 108.

70 Ibid., pp 109-12.

the post-reformation Catholic church and the protestant Church of Ireland.[71] In the sixteenth century the initiation of political and ecclesiastical reform policies in Ireland under the aegis of the Tudor régime gave the dispute added impetus. Despite the emergence of these new contexts, however, the Tudor archbishops of Dublin thought about the primacy in much the same way as their predecessors had done, either defending their own primatial style or casting covetous eyes upon Armagh's in order to maintain or magnify the identity and dignity of their anglicized see. One instance of the dispute from the period shows the traditional basis of their preoccupations and reveals how enduring it was.

Archbishop John Alen's concern with the primatial question was influenced by his involvement in Cardinal Thomas Wolsey's efforts to extend his legatine jurisdiction throughout Ireland in the 1520s. Objections had been raised against the constitutional proprieties of the cardinal's efforts - the bulls pertaining to his legacy contained no reference as to their validity in Ireland - and the resistance which this provoked, in conjunction with the restricted influence of crown authority in the lordship, an authority which Wolsey himself represented as the king's chief minister, determined they had met with little success for most of the decade.[72] In what was to prove his final and most determined bid to enforce his legacy in the lordship, the cardinal sent his trusted and pugnacious servant Alen to Ireland in February 1529, and designated him his vice-legate. As conceived by Wolsey and Alen, this title conferred on the latter a theoretical suzerainty over the Irish church through which, it was hoped, some form of centralized and anglicized ecclesiastical administration would be effected in the same. However, only six months after Alen's arrival in Dublin the cardinal fell from grace having failed to secure Henry VIII's divorce from Catherine of Aragon and, in his wake, Alen's vice-legateship fell into

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71 Watt, 'Disputed primacy', pp 379-82; *Primatus Dubliniensis*, pp lx-lxxi.

72 Murray, 'Archbishop Alen and reform', p 8; P. Gwyn, *The King's Cardinal. The Rise and Fall of Thomas Wolsey* (London, 1990), pp 252-3.

abeyance. The interesting thing is that the archbishop still hankered after some form of overall leadership in the Irish church, a position which his vice-legateship had entailed and one which was implicit in the archbishop of Armagh's primatial style. Thus, in a terse note appended to a thirteenth-century deed transcribed into his register in which one of his predecessors in the see of Dublin was addressed as 'primate of all Ireland', Alen observed wistfully that this was a 'wonderful title' ('mirabilis ... titulus'). Like many of the medieval archbishops of Dublin, then, Alen desired Armagh's primatial title, for it would have conferred upon him and his see a full and unambiguous suzerainty over the Irish church.[73] While his view reflected a newly-emerging confidence and expansionist outlook which was to characterise the new breed of English administrator in Tudor Ireland, his reasoning as to why Dublin should hold this position was firmly grounded in tradition.

It is clear from his writings elsewhere that Alen based his belief in the efficacy of Dublin acquiring the title of 'primate of all Ireland' upon the traditionally English politico-cultural orientation of the diocese. He spoke, for example, of his metropolitan see as the 'handmaid' ('ancilla') of the English church and proudly enunciated that his secular cathedral of St Patrick was a 'notable follower' ('insignis pediseque') of the church of Sarum in England. Inherent within these descriptions there were connotations of the see's Englishness and its adoption of English ecclesiastical mores. The archbishop also perceived his own primatial title in bold politico-cultural terms. Writing to Thomas Cromwell in March 1532 he casually referred to himself as 'primate of his [the king's] church in Ireland', a description which indicates that he and others conceived his archiepiscopal dignity, and accompanying primatial title, as conferring upon him an *ex officio* leadership of that part of the Irish church which, in political terms, showed allegiance to the English crown. Again, this conception was founded upon the Englishness and royalism of his see and, like the

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73 Murray, 'Archbishop Alen and reform', p 9.

argument of the prebendaries of St Patrick's cathedral, it contained an inherent and laudatory avowal of the see's preservation of ecclesiastical liberty through its participation in the beneficent English secular constitution, qualities which Alen believed the entire Irish church should aspire to.[74] The political realities which prevailed in Alen's lifetime - royal influence in Ireland was confined to a small area around Dublin - determined that his thoughts and desires concerning the promotion of an anglicized disposition throughout the church in Ireland, under Dublin's natural leadership, remained nothing more than a pipedream. Nevertheless, if he was unable to bring about any expansion in the area of English ecclesiastical influence he did fight vigorously to maintain and defend the dignity and status of his own diocese, a diocese in which that same influence still retained a noteworthy vitality. Thus, in regard to the question of the primacy, he was careful to ensure that there would be no admission of Armagh's dignity in his own province and, to this end, he engaged in a dispute with Archbishop Cromer in 1533 over rights of precedence in the seating arrangements for the parliament of that year held at Dublin.[75]

IV

The value of exploring those views which were formulated and advanced in the 1530s by Archbishop Alen, the mayor and citizens of Dublin and the canons of St Patrick's cathedral, lies in the fact that they depict the then predominant perception of the diocese of Dublin as an institutional entity. Taken together, they delineate the composite elements which formed the see's contemporary and definitively English character during the same period, a character forged in and inherited from its medieval past. This character was historically significant because it proved to be an enduring and potent manifestation of the political and

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74 Ibid., p 10; *S. P. Hen. VIII*, ii, p 159; *Alen's Reg.*, pp 281, 289.

75 Ibid., p 300.

religious culture of the Anglo-Norman colony in Ireland. With the initiation of state-sponsored religious reform in the sixteenth century, however, it was to take on an even greater significance, for it appeared to provide the Tudor administration in Ireland with a genuine and exploitable asset in its appointed task of implementing and enforcing the crown's religious innovations.

Dublin's character, and all that it encompassed, was advantageous to the Tudor régime in a variety of ways. In the first instance, the régime could expect that the oft-professed loyalty of the local ecclesiastical establishment to the English crown, so much in contrast to the attitudes of the ecclesiastical élites of Gaelic and Gaelicized Ireland, would facilitate the acceptance of the new religious dispensation amongst the local community, especially those aspects touching the royal prerogative, namely the crown's assumption of supremacy over the Irish church. Secondly, the fact that the local ecclesiastical establishment and the royal administration were deeply intertwined in the person of the archbishop of Dublin, traditionally a royal appointee and an integral figure in the political community of English Ireland, meant that well-established points of contact between the two were in existence at the outset of the reformation. Thus the archbishop was well placed, being a royal servant, a figure of political and social power, and the superior ecclesiastical authority in English Ireland, to assume the mantle of leadership in introducing and enforcing the crown's new religious policies. More importantly, the latter's prospects of success in this regard were considerably enhanced by the cultural traditions and institutional strength of his diocese. The fact that many of its inhabitants saw themselves as English and spoke the English language was a very important feature, given that many of the major innovations associated with the reformation either concerned the introduction of vernacular forms of the liturgy or were expected to be propagated or disseminated by preaching in the vernacular. Similarly, because the Tudors chose to implement reform through the pre-existing ecclesiastical

structures, Dublin's superior wealth and its relatively sophisticated institutional fabric were additional advantages.

These points are well exemplified in the opinion expressed by Sir Henry Sidney, one of the most committed reformers amongst the Elizabethan viceroys in Ireland, on the occasion of the translation of Adam Loftus (1567-1605) from the see of Armagh to Dublin. Although Loftus was moving from the primatial see to Dublin, Sidney perceived his translation as a promotion to higher things, because it brought with it increased benefits and a much greater wealth. 'You shall find yourself advanced in honour or living', he wrote Loftus. More significantly, Sidney noted that Dublin was the centre of English Ireland - 'the city of Dublin is the chief place within this realm' - and he believed it to be, on account of its central position in the English body politic in Ireland, and its English culture, a culture which rendered it capable of receiving the tenets of reformed religion as conveyed in the English vernacular, the 'most open for any good example, so it will grow (by your good and careful order) to reformation in religion'.[76] Because of its politico-cultural traditions, then, Dublin was deemed to be the most fertile ground in Ireland for receiving the reformation, as transmitted from England. Once this was done it would also provide the best foundation from which to launch a more general religious reformation throughout the island as a whole. As Loftus put it himself in the year prior to his translation: 'thereof will the rest in a manner depend'.[77] All of this, of course, was in marked contrast to what Loftus might have expected in other Irish sees and to what he had actually encountered in Ireland's other primatial see, Armagh. Before his appointment to Dublin, he had petitioned Sir William Cecil to allow him to resign from the archbishopric of Armagh because 'neither is it worth anything to me, nor I able to do any good in it, for that altogether it lieth among the Irish'.[78]

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76 Shirley, *Ch. in Ire.*, 1547-1567, p 294.

77 Ibid., pp 274-6.

78 Ibid., pp 278-80.

Perceptions of the see of Dublin's cultural, structural and strategic advantages, and the favourable environment that they appeared to provide for the introduction, reception and enforcement of the crown's religious policies in Ireland, remained in being for the duration of the sixteenth century. Throughout, the English régime in Ireland, in the person of the archbishop of Dublin, hoped to capitalize on those inherent qualities which formed the see's medieval character to further the reformation on the island. The logic and the assumptions which underlay such hopes were deeply compelling to contemporaries, a feature evident, even as late as 1567, in Lord Deputy Sidney's evaluation of the significance of Adam Loftus's appointment as archbishop of Dublin. Yet for all this they were also fatally flawed. Although there is no doubt that the see of Dublin was quintessentially English, this Englishness could not be reduced to purely abstract notions of political and cultural loyalty that were there to be exploited at will by successive régimes to promote the perennially changing religious ideologies of the Tudor monarchs. This was so for one very important reason. The Englishness of the diocese of Dublin also had a very pronounced, longstanding, deeply ingrained and inseparable religious dimension. In essence, this religious dimension was catholic, and catholic in a very distinct way. One group in particular, both within the diocese of Dublin itself and elsewhere throughout the English Pale, espoused and embodied this identity of catholic Englishness: the senior corporate clergy. It is to this group that we must now turn.

Chapter Two

Faithful catholics of the English nation: patriotism, canon law and the corporate clergy

> I commit my sinful soul to the grace and mercy of Jesus, my maker and redeemer, ... to His mother, the most blessed Virgin Mary, and to all the saints; my body [to be buried] in ... [St Patrick's] cathedral before the feet of the image of St Patrick... I give and leave one messuage with appurtenances, that I have in Duleek ... for the use and support of the poor and infirm in the house which I built lately in St Kevin's street, Dublin. I give and leave one messuage, which I had from David Begge of Duleek ... with appurtenances in Duleek and Kernanstown, and all my messuages ... in Thornton in the parish of Skreen, for the use of the poor in the said house, for the continual reparation of the same house and to buy clothes and other necessaries for the poor ... Not any poor whatsoever, but faithful catholics of good repute, honest conversation and of the English nation, especially of the nation of the Aleyns, Barrets, Beggs, Hills, Dillons and Rodiers living in the dioceses of Meath and Dublin ... I will ... moreover that the .. .admission ... and also the removal ... of the poor in this ... house should be made diligently by the dean and chapter of the said cathedral church for the time being; however, no exaction or receipt of money ... should be made for the ... admission or institution of any of the poor in this house, ... but ... should be made altogether gratis, for the love of God and in respect of charity...
> - Extract from the will of John Aleyn, dean of St Patrick's cathedral, 12 December 1505[1]

I

The will of John Aleyn seems relatively innocuous on first sight. Although the document is of some historical interest - it supplies one of the few surviving testimonies of the spiritual world inhabited by a senior Dublin cleric at the end of the Middle Ages - its content is deeply conventional. In essence, it is a portrayal of the traditional religious culture which predominated in England and English Ireland on the eve of the reformation, a culture which was ubiquitous at all social levels and which comprised the liturgy, devotions, iconography

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1 A near contemporary copy of the will survives in Archbishop Alen's register: R.C.B., Dublin Diocesan Registry, MS 3, f 133r (calendared in *Alen's Reg.*, pp 258-9). The full latin text is printed in Mason, *History of St Patrick's*, App. XII, pp xiv-xv. Dean Aleyn died on 2 January 1506 (Crosthwaite, ed., *Book of Obits*, p 5).

and theology of medieval catholicism.[2] Thus, apart from the observation that Aleyn was an active participant in this culture, it appears that nothing of any real import can be said based on an analysis of the will; nothing, that is, that would help explain why the Tudor reformation failed to make its expected impact in the diocese of Dublin.

Yet the will is more complex and informative than is apparent from an initial perusal. As befitting the educational and occupational backgrounds of it author - Aleyn was an Oxford graduate in canon law, a professional cleric and a royal and seigneurial official[3] - it is an articulate evocation of one man's understanding of traditional religion, and the meaning which it gave to the world around him. Full of personal and local nuance, the document defines much of the religious identity which animated Aleyn and the professional grouping to which he belonged, the corporate clerical élite of Dublin and the English Pale. This identity, which was both catholic and English to the core, is important, for it is arguable that it was decisive in shaping the overall response of the Englishry to the Tudors' religious innovations during the sixteenth century.

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2 The definitive study of traditional religion in England is Duffy, *Stripping of the Altars.* Nothing comparable has been written for Ireland yet, but some of the themes dealt with by Duffy - the significance of the mass and other liturgical devotions, *pro anima* bequests, prayers and offerings for the dead, the cultus of the saints, religious drama, and the expression of corporate christianity through the structures of parish and guild - can be approached through the following printed works and sources, all of which are of particular relevance to the see of Dublin: *Register of wills*, ed. Berry; M Murphy, 'The high cost of dying: an analysis of pro anima bequests in medieval Dublin', in W.J. Sheils and D. Wood, eds., *The Church and Wealth,* Studies in Church History xxiv (Oxford, 1987), pp 111-22; Robinson, 'Churchwardens' Accounts, St Werburgh's', pp 132-42; M.V. Ronan, 'Religious life in old Dublin' in *D.H.R.*, ii (1939-40), pp 46-55, 106-11; idem, 'Religious customs of Dublin medieval guilds', in *I.E.R.*, 5th series, xxvi (1925), pp 225-47, 364-85; Lennon, 'St Anne's Guild, Dublin, 1550-1660', pp 6-25.

3 Aleyn was granted a licence of non-residence for four years in June 1464 to undertake his studies. He was elected dean of St Patrick's in 1467. In August 1494, already a royal chaplain, he was appointed a master of the Irish chancery and one of Henry VII's Irish council. Between c. 1495 and 1504 he served as steward and general receiver to the earl of Ormond in the counties of Dublin and Meath (*Stat. Ire., 1-12 Edw. IV*, pp 373-5; A.B. Emden, *A biographical register of the university of Oxford to A.D. 1500* [Oxford, 3 vols., 1957-9, hereafter *B.R.U.O. 1500*], i, pp 22-3; Lawlor, *Fasti of St Patrick's*, p 43; *Cal. pat. rolls, 1485-94,* p 473; P.R.O., SP 46/183, ff 112, 137; *Ormond deeds, 1509-*47, pp 321-2, 342, 349-52, 355-6, 358-9).

The most striking aspect of John Aleyn's will was his attitude to the poor. Like many late medieval catholics, the old dean believed that at his death he would be judged by Christ on his treatment of the poor in this life, rather than on any outward declaration of his Christian faith, no matter how devout and pious such a declaration may have been. This belief usually found expression in a desire to perform one or more of the seven corporal works of mercy and, as Aleyn approached the end of his life, he was determined that he would not be an exception to the rule.[4] Thus in the year prior to the making of his will he was responsible for building an almshouse in St Kevin's street in the suburbs of Dublin for the indigent and destitute. The will itself was intended to be the culmination of the endeavour, as it was stipulated therein that 'Christ's poor', especially the denizens of his almshouse, would be his sole heirs and beneficiaries.[5] Yet Aleyn's attitude to the poor was ambivalent. In his will, he made a distinction between what he considered to be a deserving and undeserving poor. For him, the poor to be received and preferred in his almshouse were not to be 'any poor whatsoever, but faithful catholics of good repute, honest conversation and of the English nation'.[6] It is a proviso which begs a number of important and far-reaching questions.

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4 On the works of mercy and their significance see Duffy, *Stripping of the Altars*, pp 357-62; for the practice among Dubliners generally see Murphy, 'High cost of dying', pp 121-2; for an interesting example see the will of Patrick Hegley, merchant of Dublin, concerning the disposition of his English goods and chattels in 1493. Hegley left 6s. 8d. in bread to each of the four London prisons, 6s.8d. to be distributed 'among the poor people at Bethlehem without Bishopsgate', and 10s. for distribution to the poor in the parish of St Martin within Ludgate. He also stipulated that the money which he had set aside in a previous will for his burial in Ireland was to be 'distributed and disposed in alms, deeds and in other good works and charity' (P.R.O., PROB 11/10, ff 51v-52r).

5 *Alen's Reg.*, pp 78, 254-5, 258-9.

6 'Non tamen quoscunque pauperes, sed fideles catholicos, bone fame, honeste conversacionis et Anglice nationis' (Mason, *History of St Patrick's*, App. XII, p xv).

The first of these questions is what exactly John Aleyn intended when he penned the proviso. Ostensibly, he wished to create a ring-fenced refuge in St Kevin's street for natives of the English Pale who had English forebears and who had fallen on hard times, an intention otherwise confirmed by the additional clause he affixed to the proviso: that a certain group of named families - all of whom were of English origin and hailed from the predominantly English dioceses of Dublin and Meath - should receive preferential treatment when it came to choosing the inmates of the almshouse. But this was not his sole intent. Aleyn also stipulated that the dean and chapter of St Patrick's cathedral should have full control over the admission and removal of the residents of the house. The cathedral, it will be remembered, had long upheld a ban on anyone of the Irish nation, manners and blood becoming a member.[7] Thus we need not doubt that the proviso - when viewed in the light of that institution's traditional antipathy towards the Gaelic Irish, and Aleyn's own longstanding leadership of the same - was also designed to place a positive embargo on the entrance of poor men of the Irish nation. Aleyn, we can assume, not only harboured warm feelings towards his own people, the Englishry of Ireland, but also a marked hostility towards the Irishry, a sentiment which jars dramatically with the charitableness and concern for the poor evinced elsewhere in his will.

Why, then, did he uphold such attitudes? It is arguable that their formation was rooted in two distinct, but related, life experiences, the first of which is hinted at in the list of families whom he singled out to receive special treatment in the admission policy of his almshouse. All of these families, including the Aleyns, came from the farming communities of north Co. Dublin and east Co. Meath in the heart of the Pale Maghery. Of relatively humble stock, what marked these and so many similar families out was their pride in their English origins, which many of them claimed stretched back to the earliest Anglo-Norman

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7 Above, p 52.

settlement of the region when, in the words of Richard Stanyhurst, 'diverse of the conquerors planted themselves near to Dublin and the confines thereto adjoining'. The most evocative and telling piece of evidence concerning the English identity of these people is to be found in Stanyhurst's well-known description of Fingal in north Co. Dublin, a district which some of Aleyn's favoured families lived in and which flowed seamlessly into the bordering baronies of east Meath where the remainder dwelt.[8]

Fingal, in marked contrast to the outlying areas of the Pale, had enjoyed an unusual degree of peace and tranquility in the centuries following the Anglo-Norman Conquest, largely because it was so well ensconced within the Maghery. Apart from the unusual circumstances of the Kildare rebellion in the mid-1530s, it was, according to Stanyhurst, 'not before acquainted with the recourse of the Irish enemies'.[9] Untroubled by the Irish, the district was able to sustain its English culture and social organization without hindrance. This was done to such an extent that by the sixteenth century the term Fingal had become totally synonymous with its English inhabitants:

> the word Fingal countervaileth in English, the race or sept of the English or strangers, for that they were solely seized of that part of the island, gripping with their tallants so firmly that warm nest, that from the conquest to this day, the Irish enemy could never rouse them from thence.[10]

This identification of land, people and culture was also enshrined in the nomenclature of the local townlands. The townlands which the Fingalians and their neighbours farmed bore their names, which would have been assigned by the early settlers. Thus, among Aleyn's

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8 Stanyhurst, *Holinshed's Irish Chonicle*, p 13. Although Stanyhurst wrote over fifty years after Dean Aleyn died, his description of the region highlighted the historical continuity in its social conditions and cultural traditions, all of which stretched back to the time of the Conquest. It is thus equally applicable to John Aleyn's time.

9 Ibid., p 267.

10 Ibid., p 13.

group of favoured families, the Hill family was commemorated in at least three townlands in north Co. Dublin and east Co. Meath,[11] and the Beggs in two;[12] while the Aleyns certainly and the Rodiers possibly were each recalled in a single townland, both in Co. Meath.[13]

In practical terms the Fingalians' maintenance of an English culture meant two things: the preservation of the English tongue and the continued usage of the medieval strip farming practices which had been brought over from England at the time of the Conquest. As far as language was concerned, Stanyhurst noted that they spoke 'the dregs of the old ancient Chaucer English',[14] an archaic dialect which suggests that the cultural strength of the community stemmed from its ability to hold on to and maintain the attributes of earlier generations of settlers, rather than subsequent innovation and change. Such conservatism, in fact, was also implicit in their attachment to the farming life, an attachment which was wont to draw from the more sophisticated Stanyhurst and his fellow urbanites in Dublin a gentle chiding. 'Fingal especially', he wrote, 'from time to time hath been so addicted to all the points of husbandry, as that they are nicknamed by their neighbours, for their continual

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11 'Hylton' (1547) now Hilltown, parish of Swords, north Co. Dublin; 'Hilton' (1540) now Hilltown Great and Hilltown Little, parish of Duleek, Co. Meath; 'Hylton' (1540) now Hilltown, parish of Piercetown, Co. Meath (St Patrick's cathedral, Muniments, no 112: survey of possessions 1547 [Mason, *History of St Patrick's*, pp 78-9]; *Extents Ir. Mon. possessions*, pp 106, 314).

12 'Begeston' (1540) now Beggstown, parish of Ratoath, Co Meath; 'Beggeston' (1540) now Beggstown, parish of Dunboyne , Co. Meath (G. MacNiocaill, ed., *Crown Surveys of Lands with the Kildare Rental begun in 1518* [I.M.C., Dublin, 1992], p 60; *Extents Ir. Mon. possessions*, pp 288-9).

13 'Aleyston' (1541), 'Alenston' (1560) now Allenstown Demesne, parish of Martry (*Extents Ir. Mon. possessions*, p 115; *Fiants Ire., Eliz.*, no. 206); 'Ridder' (1530s), 'Rydder alias Rodder' (1558), now Rudder, parish of Duleek Abbey (*Extents Ir. Mon. possessions,* p 317; *Fiants Ire., Mary*, no. 252).

14 Stanyhurst, *Holinshed's Irish Chronicle*, p 14.

drudgery, Collonnes of the Latin worde, *Coloni*, whereunto the clipt Englishe word, Clown, seemeth to be answerable'.[15]

It was precisely these 'clowns', these upright, hard-working yeomen and husbandmen - men of 'good repute, honest conversation and of the English nation' - whom John Aleyn had in mind when he established his almshouse in St Kevin street. These were his people and he wanted to show charity and good neighbourliness to those among them who had fallen, or would fall, into straitened circumstances. Thus the proviso in his will was an expression of local patriotism, and a form of social bonding in which he endeavoured to show his solidarity with a community which for centuries had upheld a way of life that he felt a part of, and of which he was deeply proud. This sense of patriotism also goes some way towards explaining Aleyn's antipathy towards the Gaelic Irish. We know that in the early sixteenth century the people of Fingal and east Meath would have felt that their traditional way of life was under threat to a degree which they had never previously experienced. This was not just because of the continuing contraction of the English lordship in Ireland in the face of Gaelic political resurgence. This after all had been going on for well nigh two centuries. Rather, it was because the Pale Maghery itself was beginning to feel the winds of unwelcome social change, most evident in the replacement of English husbandmen by Gaelic peasants on the lands of the English Irish aristocracy, especially, and most worryingly of all, in the lordship of the most powerful magnate in Ireland, the earl of Kildare. The departure from Kildare of English farmers who were unwilling to labour under the burden of the Fitzgeralds' exaction of 'coign and livery', and the infiltration of this once inviolably English district by cheap Irish-speaking labour, would have signalled to Aleyn and his people the fearful prospect that social, cultural and economic degeneration, on a scale similar to that which had occurred in the outlying areas

15 Ibid., p 13.

of the English lordship, was now an emerging reality in the hitherto sacrosanct Maghery.[16] Seen in this light, the dean's embargo on poor Irishmen entering his almshouse seems entirely explicable. It was yet another in a long line of measures stretching back to the mid-fourteenth century Statutes of Kilkenny through which embattled English colonials endeavoured to protect and preserve their social and cultural mores by eliminating all forms of intercourse with the Gaelic Irish.

But this is not the whole story. Aleyn's proviso cannot simply be reduced to nor classified as an expression of English patriotism or English discrimination against the Gaelic Irish. While it certainly contained these ideas, the proviso also included another, arguably more important, concept which was encapsulated in Aleyn's phrase 'faithful catholics'. It was 'faithful catholics', in fact, who Aleyn really wanted to inhabit his poorhouse. The other requirements - reputation, honesty and Englishness - merely defined the characteristics of faithful catholicism or, more precisely, identified who faithful catholics were in the Irish context. For John Aleyn, a man steeped in the laws and traditions of the medieval catholic church, this was a straightforward matter. Faithful catholics were civil Englishmen like the farmers of north Co. Dublin and east Co. Meath. They would also have included the citizens of the 'regal city' of Dublin, of which Aleyn himself had been made a freeman in October 1471; or their near neighbours, the English farmers of the 'king's land', a district which lay to the south-west of the city, centred on the ancient royal manors of Crumlin, Esker, Newcastle Lyons and Saggart.[17] To Dean Aleyn, all of these groups would have been classifiable as law-abiding, trustworthy, hardworking and god-fearing Christians: faithful catholics of the English nation. By way of contrast, faithful catholics most definitely did not comprehend the Gaelic Irish clans or degenerate English marchers, groups

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16 Canny, *Old English Elite,* pp 7-9; Hore & Graves, *Southern & eastern counties*, pp 152-3.

17 Stanyhurst, *Holinshed's Irish Chronicle*, pp 13, 39, 51; D.C.A., Fr/Roll/2, m. 4.

whose lawless behaviour and corrupt social mores ensured that they were absolutely excluded from this category. There is little doubt that Aleyn had confidence in this judgement, so much so in fact that he was prepared to go to his grave upholding it. Indeed, he was even prepared to integrate it into the final spiritual act of his life, an act whereby he gave all his worldly possessions to the poor - the poor of the faithful catholic variety - in return for eternal life. To understand why he had this conviction, to understand more fully why he classified the different inhabitants of Ireland as faithful or non-faithful catholics - the classification upon which he based his exclusion of the Irishry from his almshouse - it is necessary to turn to the second of those life experiences which formed his attitudes. Here we encounter the John Aleyn who emerged from the farming community of east Meath to become a canon lawyer and senior official of the church in Dublin.

II

Practitioners of canon law - those who had enough knowledge of the romano-canonical disciplines to participate in the workings of the many tribunals that administered ecclesiastical justice or issued ecclesiastical licences in the later Middle Ages - occupied a prominent position in the Irish church. An anonymous political reformer writing from the Pale about 1515 complained that 'the church of this land use not to learn any other science, but the law of canon'.[18] Although the surviving sources do not allow us to quantify the numbers involved, there is little doubt that he was reporting on an objective fact. This was evident, for example, in the contemporary demand for formal tuition in the canon and civil laws amongst aspiring clerics from the English Pale. Thus, at the University of Oxford there were at least two, and perhaps as many as four, halls - Aristotle and Eagle being the

18 *S. P. Hen. VIII*, ii, p 16. On the *ius commune* and the symbiotic relationship between canon and civil law see J.A. Brundage, *Medieval Canon Law* (London and New York, 1995), pp 60-1, 176-7; A. García Y García, 'The Faculties of Law', in H. De Ridder Symoens, ed., *A History of the University in Europe: Volume I: Universities in the Middle Ages* (Cambridge, 1992) pp 388-406.

most prominent - which catered specifically for Irish legists at different times in the fifteenth century. The same demand was also reflected in the efforts of Archbishop Walter Fitzsimon of Dublin, a man with a very strong background in canon law, to establish a new university in his diocese at the end of the century.[19]

Yet while there is no doubting the proliferation and preponderance of canonists at this time, nor indeed their genuine need and desire for training and tuition, it would be wrong to assume that they represented the existence of a genuinely intellectual or academic movement in the Irish church, at least not in the sense in which we normally understand such terms. On the contrary, the failure of Archbishop Fitzsimon's university scheme,[20] the apparent reluctance of Irish graduates in canon and civil law to continue their studies to doctorate level[21] and the almost complete absence of indigenous writing on canonical jurisprudence[22] all suggest that the canonists were motivated by more basic concerns than the expansion of their knowledge of the philosophical and judicial principles which underpinned the law of the Western Church. This was certainly the view of the anonymous

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19 T.H. Aston, 'Oxford's Medieval Alumni', in *Past & Present*, no. 74 (1977), pp 23-4; Gwynn, *Anglo-Irish church life,* pp 73-5*; Alen's Reg.*, p 260. Fitzsimon held a baccalaureate in canon law, possibly from Oxford, and had served as vicar-general and official principal of Dublin before his elevation to the episcopate in 1484 (*B.R.U.O.*, iii, pp 2175-6). Given his own canonical background and the fact that he promoted the idea of the university through the Dublin provincial council - a clerical body which was primarily responsible for enacting local canon law - it is reasonable to assume that he conceived his proposal with the aim of meeting the training needs of indigenous canonists. For a survey of the canon law passed by the Dublin provincial council in the later Middle ages see Gwynn, *Anglo-Irish church life*, pp 38-51; for the legislation itself see idem, ed., 'Provincial and diocesan decrees of the diocese of Dublin during the Anglo-Norman period', in *Archiv. Hib.*, xi (1944), pp 31-117.

20 The reason for the scheme's failure is unknown, but as it was hoped to raise funds for the faculty lectors by taxing the clergy of the province of Dublin over a seven year period, it is possible that it foundered because of clerical reluctance to pay the yearly assessment (*Alen's Reg.*, p 260). The proposed annual tax on the clergy of each diocese was as follows: Dublin (£10); Ossory (£5); Ferns (£5); Leighlin (5 marks); and Kildare (5 marks).

21 I have found no evidence of any Pale cleric holding a doctorate in canon or civil law in the half century or so before the reformation.

22 Gwynn, *Anglo-Irish church life*, pp 32-8.

reformer of 1515. He attributed the predominance of canonists to nothing more than clerical greed, 'covetousness of lucre transitory'.[23]

On first sight this contention seems plausible. Even when we make allowances for the fact that it belonged to a tradition of moralistic writing that castigated all canonists as a cadre of avaricious and unscrupulous careerists,[24] there is a persuasive body of evidence available to support it. The career of Dean Aleyn of St Patrick's is a case in point. His incumbency of the deanery was dominated by a lengthy series of litigious disputes with his archbishop, John Walton (1472-84). These concerned the jurisdictional and financial rights of the deanery and, in terms of the bitterness they generated and the derogatory effect they had on day to day religious practice in the diocese, reflected poorly on the profession of canonists as a whole. The disputes began in the mid-1470s when Archbishop Walton annulled on appeal a sentence of excommunication that Aleyn had pronounced on one Thomas Browne, a Dublin notary. Thereafter they grew to encompass a variety of accusations and counter-claims, including Aleyn's charge that the archbishop had illegally dispossessed him of tithes in the decanal prebends of Tallaght and Clondalkin. They also led at one point to Aleyn's formal deprivation, although the sentence was never given effect. The most striking aspect of the disputes, however, was not the substantive points at issue between the parties, but the impact that they made on life in the close of St Patrick's cathedral. According to Aleyn and his fellow canons the 'wrongful and unjust process' of the archbishop and his allies actually interrupted and curtailed divine service in their church; including, on the vigil of the feast of St Patrick 1474, the complete omission of vespers, an event described in an act of the Irish parliament as 'a most piteous thing for any man to hear who is a native of this land'.[25]

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23 *S. P. Hen. VIII*, ii, p 16.

24 On this tradition see Brundage, *Medieval Canon Law*, pp 179-80.

25 *Stat. Ire., 12-22 Edw. IV*, pp 195-203; *Cal. papal letters, 1471-84*, pp 453-4, 462-3; *Cal. papal letters, 1484-92*, pp 267-8. The last notice of the Aleyn-Walton feud came as late as December 1489 when, five years after Walton had actually retired from the archbishopric, Aleyn attempted to secure his

It is little wonder, then, that moralists like the anonymous writer of 1515 could hold such a disparaging view of the canonists. For him, the fact that their litigious instincts could sow such scandalous discord between the clergy, even between the two most senior clerics in the best appointed diocese in the Irish lordship,[26] was indicative of a much greater and more widespread malaise effected by them throughout the church at large. Contentious suits like the Aleyn-Walton litigation - suits which were often used as a device to secure ecclesiastical livings for the plaintiffs, and commenced by the procurement of papal bulls appointing judges-delegate to hear the issues in dispute - were very common on the eve of the reformation and extremely disruptive of the church's pastoral and administrative functions.[27]

Yet, for all its persuasive simplicity, the moralist's belief that the canonists were motivated merely by ambition and greed fails to explain satisfactorily the full significance and complexity of their activities on the eve of the reformation. John Aleyn's decision, for example, to endow an almshouse and to make 'Christ's poor' the sole beneficiaries of his will alerts us to the dangers of labelling him, and by extension other active canonists, as a purely selfish and materialistic breed of clergyman, even when we take into account his litigation with Archbishop Walton. More significantly, the dean himself believed that when he undertook this litigation there was a much more profound principle at stake than the personal gain of a single ecclesiastic. This principle was, in fact, nothing less than the

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appearance before papal delegates for a final hearing and determination of his causes concerning the 'molestations, vexations, damages, losses, expenses, sums of money and other goods' that he alledgedly suffered and lost at the hands of the former archbishop.

26 The Aleyn-Walton dispute was not effectively settled until 1515 when their successors, Archbishop Rokeby and Dean Rochfort, agreed new statutes on their respective jurisdictions over St Patrick's cathedral (*Alen's Reg.*, pp 262-3; Mason, *History of St Patrick's*, pp 143-4; *Dignitus decani*, pp 56-64).

27 Cosgrove, 'Ireland beyond the Pale, 1399-1460', pp 587-8; W.N. Osborough, 'Ecclesiastical law and the reformation in Ireland', in R. Helmholz, ed., *Canon law in protestant lands* (Berlin, 1992), p 227.

defence of the liberties of the English-Irish ecclesiastical establishment, liberties which were perceived by that establishment as being an integral and indispensable part of their community's historic role in Ireland: the reformation of Gaelic Irish society along conventional canonical lines according to the uses of the English church.[28] It was this role, in fact, or at least the contemporary interpretation, which motivated Aleyn's actions as a canon lawyer and which informed his attitude towards the Irishry. Ultimately, it would shape the response of his community to the Tudor reformation.

The reforming mission of the Englishry in Ireland, and its canonical parameters, were first delineated in the mid-twelfth century, in Pope Adrian VII's infamous bull *Laudabiliter*, a document which granted lordship over Ireland to the English crown.[29] 'You have indeed indicated to us ...', wrote Pope Adrian to King Henry II:

> that you wish to enter the island of Ireland to make that people obedient to the laws, and to root out from there the weeds of vices. We therefore support your pious and praiseworthy intention with the favour which it deserves and ... we regard it as pleasing and acceptable to us that you should enter that island for the purpose of enlarging the boundaries of the church, checking the descent into wickedness, correcting morals and implanting virtues, and encouraging the growth of the faith of Christ ...[30]

For Dean Aleyn and the chapter of St Patrick's cathedral - the leaders of an institution which had been founded under the auspices of the Anglo-Norman monarchy to give this mission practical effect - such words were particularly resonant. Not only did they explain

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28 On the growth of the English Irish community's sense of its historic role in Ireland in the Middle Ages see R. Frame, *The political development of the British Isles* (Oxford, 1990), pp 179-87, especially at p 187.

29 F.X. Martin, 'Diarmait Mac Murchada and the coming of the Anglo-Normans', in *New hist. Ire.*, ii, pp 56-61; M. Richter, 'The first century of Anglo-Norman relations', in *History*, 59 (1974), pp 195-210.

30 The full latin text of *Laudabiliter*, with an English translation, is printed in Giraldus Cambrensis, *Expugnatio Hibernica: the conquest of Ireland*, ed. A.B. Scott and F.X. Martin (Dublin, 1978), pp 144-7. For discussions of its authenticity see M.P. Sheehy, 'The bull *Laudabiliter*: a problem in medieval diplomatique and history', in *Galway Arch. Soc. Jn.*, xxix (1961), pp 45-71; M. Richter, 'Giraldiana', in *I.H.S.*, xxi (1979), pp 430-1.

and justify historically the English presence in Ireland and the existence of their own church and corporation; but, despite their age, they remained the benchmark against which the cathedral defined its contemporary *raison d'être* and set its current aspirations.[31] By the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, however, the aspirations of the cathedral clergy had changed subtly from those which had existed at the time of the Anglo-Norman Conquest. The incomplete nature of the Conquest, the subsequent resurgence of the Gaelic lordships, the contraction of the English colony and the gaelicisation of areas formerly under English rule, had all combined to create a situation in which the canonical standards of religious life and practice required by *Laudabiliter* were confined largely to the four shires of the English Pale. Indeed, the possibility that the Irishry might make further advances, whether through direct military action or the corrosive effects of gaelicisation, threatened to undermine these standards even within this circumscribed area. In these circumstances, the clergy of St Patrick's, and of English Ireland generally, were less concerned with the outward-looking, evangelical dimension of their traditional reforming role. Rather, their aim was simply to defend and preserve intact its most tangible remnant, the ecclesiastical inheritance of the English Pale.

The threat that the Irishry posed to this inheritance was not imaginary, but a tangible, everyday reality. The conditions which prevailed within the borderlands and the areas *inter hibernicos* of every single Pale diocese demonstrated beyond all doubt that they remained committed - perversely in English Irish eyes - to customs and practices which contravened some of the most fundamental principles and theories associated with the

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31 The continuing hold of *Laudabiliter* over the minds of senior English Irish clergy like the dean and chapter of St Patrick's was tacitly acknowledged and exploited by the English crown as late as 1467, when Lord Lieutenant Tiptoft secured the passage of an act of parliament enjoining all prelates to order their subjects to give due obedience to King Edward IV. This call for renewed loyalty was justified on the grounds of the original papal grant of dominion over Ireland to the English crown, a justification which the king promised to renew by seeking a papal endorsement of the contents of the act (*Stat. Ire., 1-12 Edw. IV*, pp 437-9; J. Watt, 'Laudabiliter in medieval diplomacy and propaganda', in *I.E.R.*, lxxxvii, pp 430-1).

canon law and which, should they spread any further, would bring about the final and irrevocable ruin of all that *Laudabiliter* had achieved and stood for in Ireland. The most important of these principles was the notion of the rule of law itself, the idea that no secular ruler, however powerful, could ever be above the existing laws.[32] In the diocese of Dublin this notion was openly flouted by the chiefs and petty captains who reigned over the Gaelic enclaves and marcher borderlands, enclaves and borderlands which formed the bulk of the territory that comprised the archdeaconry of Glendalough.[33] In essence, Glendalough was a zone of war and brigandage in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. Here, the force of arms, rather than spiritual influence or canonical dictate, was the only effective way of asserting and legitimizing any claim to authority. For the archbishop and his officials based in Dublin, this had very serious repercussions. It prevented them from maintaining a permanent presence and visibility in the region with the result that their ordinary jurisdictions ceased to have any foundation in reality. Thus in 1468 it was reported of the visitation of St Patrick's cathedral by Archbishop Michael Tregury (1449-1471) that 'all the prebends of the said church were visited except the prebends ... situated in the Irish parts and also in the marches, which he had not dared to visit on account of the disturbances of the wars'. Tregury's fears were well founded, for some time before 1462 he had been captured by Geoffrey Harold, the captain of a Gaelicized marcher family in south-east Dublin, who imprisoned him 'and inflicted other great affronts and injuries upon him'.[34] Although few details of this incident have survived, it indicates what little respect was afforded to the Dublin diocesan administration amongst the inhabitants of the see 'in partibus hibernicanis et marchialibus'. So insidious and so complete was this disposition, in

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32 On the development of this notion see Brundage, *Medieval Canon Law*, pp 104-5, 110-1.

33 The only important exception to this was the deanery of Leixlip which formed a detached portion of the archdeaconry lying in the Pale Maghery (Reeves, *Analysis of the United Dioceses of Dublin and Glendalough*).

34 *Register of wills*, ed. Berry, pp 173-4; *Alen's reg.*, p 242.

fact, that it lead to the complete collapse of archidiaconal jurisidiction[35] and the virtual collapse of archiepiscopal jurisdiction in the late fifteenth century, the latter feature being evident in the fact that a partially successful attempt was made, on the part of the Gaelic Irish clans, to fill the void by reviving an independent see of Glendalough.[36]

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35 The ineffectualness of the archdeacon's office was symbolized in the fact that the prebendal living which supported it for much of the fifteenth century, and which lay within the boundaries of the archdeaconry, the parsonage of Wicklow, was replaced in 1468 by a living within the Maghery, Newcastle Lyons. Officially, this was because English appointees to the office were unable to derive an adequate income from the parish, in what was effectively a foreign, hostile and economically dislocated area. Unofficially, it was due to the fact that the location of the archidiaconal prebend among the Irishry meant that it was frequently provided with Gaelic incumbents by the papal court. While the relocation of the living ensured that the archbishop of Dublin regained full control over the appointment of the archdeacons of Glendalough, such appointees remained incapable of asserting their jurisdiction, with the result that the office's development was greatly retarded. One manifestation of this was that the medieval archbishops had to employ commissaries from time to time, usually local chaplains, to fill the administrative vacuum in the two deaneries within the archdeaconry where any English ecclesiastical influence was admitted, Omurthy and Leixlip. The situation did not improve in the sixteenth century. Evidence of only one instance of the direct exercise of archidiaconal jurisdiction by an archdeacon of Glendalough exists for the entire sixteenth century. In the late 1530s, Christopher St Laurence, visited the deanery of Leixlip, the only fully accessible part of his jurisdiction, receiving proxies of 13s.4d. from the canons of St Thomas abbey in lieu of refection for his visitation of their appropriated churches. Even this visitation appears to have been exceptional however. That this was so may be inferred from the fact that proxy payments to the archdeacon do not figure in the Tudor common fund accounts of Christ Church cathedral for their Glendalough appropriations, and that the office was generally granted either to the official principal, to provide him with a valuable prebend in St Patrick's cathedral, or to absentee careerists such as those presented by Archbishop Curwen in the mid-Tudor period: John Standish, a Lancashire born, academic theologian, and John Vulp, the Hungarian born lay physician of Lord Lieutenant Sussex (*Alen's reg.*, p 244; *Stat. Ire., 1-12 Edw. IV*, pp 477-81; N. Donnelly, 'Incumbents of Killadreenan and archdeacons of Glendalough in the fifteenth century, with extracts from the Roman archives', in *R.S.A.I.Jn.*, iii, 5th series [1893], pp 123-39; 'Christ Church deeds', no. 376; *Register of wills*, ed. Berry, pp 36-7; *Extents Ir. Mon. possessions,* p 47; R.C.B., C.6.1.26, Proctors' accounts 1541-1688 [accounts of John Mos, 1542, Laurence Bryan, 1589, Robert Richardson 1588, 1594, and William Heydon, 1597]; Lawlor, *Fasti of St Patrick's*, pp 88-9; *B.R.U.O., 1501-40*, pp 533-4; *Fiants Ire. Eliz.*, nos. 129, 192, 445; Haigh, *Reformation and Resistance in Tudor Lancashire*, p 116; below pp 235, 273-4).

36 A. Coleman, ed., 'Obligationes pro annatis diocesis Dublinensis, 1421-1520', in *Archiv. Hib.*, ii (1913), appendix, pp 28-30 Some improvement upon this position was effected in the sixteenth century as a result of the extension of English political influence in the march and among the Irishry under the governmental system of the reforming viceroys, especially in the lordship of the Críoch Branach branch of the O'Byrnes in north east Wicklow (J. Murray, 'The sources of clerical income in the Tudor diocese of Dublin, c. 1530-1600', in *Archiv. Hib.*, xlvi (1991-2), pp 147-50). Nevertheless, there was a broad continuity in the disordered and lawless conditions that had prevailed during the fifteenth century, which ensured that theTudor archbishops and their officials were subject to the same fears, and to the same restrictions upon their authority, as their medieval predescessors had been. For the Tudor archbishops' fears about the dangers that lay in these areas see Archbishop Alen to Cromwell, 19 March 1532 (*S.P. Hen. VIII*, ii, pp 158-9); Archbishop Browne to Cromwell, 16 February 1539 (*S.P. Hen. VIII*, iii, pp 122-4); Archbishop Loftus to Sir Henry Sidney, 11 May 1573 (P.R.O., SP 63/40, no. 36).

The Irishry's disregard for the rule of law had other derogatory ramifications for the ecclesiastical establishment in Dublin. It underpinned, for example, their rejection of another basic canonical principle: the sacrosanct nature of ecclesiastical property. One effect of this was that the economic standing of the archbishop of Dublin was consistently eroded in the marcher and Irish districts of his diocese in the late medieval period. In the mid-1530s, for example, 89% of the temporal revenues of the archbishopric were derived from property situated within the archdeaconry of Dublin in the Pale Maghery, while only 11% was derived from archiepiscopal manors located in the archdeaconry of Glendalough.[37] This imbalance was due to the fact that much of the property which had accrued to the archbishopric after the unification of the sees of Dublin and Glendalough in 1216 had been overrun by the Gaelic Irish clans in the succeeding centuries, including the ancient and once lucrative manor of Castlekevin in north Co. Wicklow. Worth almost £90 per annum in the late thirteenth century, Castlekevin was lost to the O'Tooles in the fourteenth century and never again came into archiepiscopal hands. In fact, the crown formally recognised the O'Toole claim to the property in 1541, while endeavouring to woo the clan towards submission to royal authority.[38] Moving out of the Gaelic enclaves and

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37 P.R.O., SP 65/1, no. 2, f 14v; Reeves, *Analysis of the United Dioceses of Dublin and Glendalough*, pp 2-5. The manors located in the archdeaconry of Glendalough were Ballymore, Shankill and Dalkey.

38 Pipe roll 7 Edward I (*Appendix* to *P.R.I. rep. D.K*, 36 [Dublin, 1904], p 42); H. Nicolas, ed., *Proceedings and ordinances of the privy council of England, VII, 1540-2* (London, 1837), pp 92-3; B. Bradshaw, 'George Browne, first Reformation bishop of Dublin' (M.A. thesis, National University of Ireland, 1966), pp 72, 374. From the later fifteenth century until their rebellion in the mid-1530s, the Fitzgeralds of Kildare assumed the overlordship of the Castlekevin district. They allowed the O'Tooles to retain possession of the lands in return for tributes, but did not recognize the archbishop of Dublin's prior claim (ibid., p 376; Murray, 'Sources of clerical income', pp 148-9). Other archiepiscopal property controlled by the Irishry included the old mensal lands of Glendalough, which were situated in the vale of Glendalough. In the 1470s these were administered, in opposition to the archbishop's will, by a Gaelic coarb who appears to have been under the tutelage of the MacMurrough Kavanaghs. It seems that Gaelic control of this property continued thereafter, for there is no mention of the levying of any rents in a record of the receipts of the archiepiscopal temporalities for the period 1534-5. It is likely that the first effective archiepiscopal lease to be issued on the property was only granted in the 1590s - to one Nicholas Walsh in December 1596 - and then only after Queen Elizabeth's English army had wrested the lands from the control of the Irishry (*Alen's reg.*, p 245; *Cal. Carew MSS, Book of Howth*, p 399; P.R.O., SP 65/1, no. 2, f 14v; R.C.B., C.6.1.7 no. 1 [Chapter Act Book of Christ

into the marches proper, the archbishop's property remained, nominally at least, within his own possession. However, the persistent depredation it suffered at the hands of the Irishry in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries determined that much of it was wasted, depopulated and almost completely valueless; a feature particularly evident in relation to the manor of Ballymore, which lay on the border of Kildare and north west Wicklow. Writing to the king in 1537, Dublin's first reformation archbishop, George Browne, drew a sorry picture of this medieval inheritance, lamenting the fact that the 'lands thereunto appertaining' had been 'almost made waste' due to their proximity to the O'Tooles, O'Byrnes and the Kavanaghs, and that the rent of assize there was 'not leviable above £20 sterling where in times past it was 340 marks yearly, which we cannot study ne compass to have'.[39]

The aberrant and uncanonical behaviour of the Irishry, characteristics which the ecclesiastical establishment in Dublin experienced in the lawlessness of the O'Toole and the O'Byrne clans, and which had made such a dire impact on its economic standing and administrative capacity in the Gaelic enclaves and borderlands of the see, were also evident in the sexually active lifestyles of its clergy. The eradication of this abuse, an abuse referred to as 'Nicolaitism' by the Gregorian reformers of the eleventh century and which was deemed to comprehend all sexual activity, whether in marital, concubinary or casual

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Church 1574-1634], f 49r).

39 Lamb. MS 602, f 54v (*Cal. Carew MSS, 1515-74*, p 161). There was no noticeable improvement in the conditions obtaining in Ballymore thereafter. In a poem written by the Gaelic Irish bard Fear gan Ainm MacEochadha, entitled 'Ag So Caithréim Aodha Mhic Seaáin Ón Bhfear Gcéadna', the continuing problems experienced by the manor are thrown into sharp relief. The 'Caithréim' or battle-roll, an encomium of the military prowess of Aodh Mac Seán O'Byrne, chief of the Gabh Raghnaill branch of the clan from the mid-sixteenth century until his death in 1579, gives details of the latter's attacks on Ballymore and its constituent townlands - Dunlavin, Rathsallagh, Tornant and Barretstown - throughout this period. That this was no idle boast is otherwise confirmed by the records of the archbishop's own manorial court. In 1587 and 1590 the jurors declared that various properties known as 'the wastes of Ballymore', covering 446 customary acres, were let to various tenants free of rent; a result, no doubt, of their depressed condition following the attacks of the O'Byrnes and other Irish chiefs throughout the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries (Seán Mac Airt, ed., *Leabhar Branach. The Book of the O'Byrnes* [Dublin, 1944], p 69 [lines 1793-1816]; Wood, ed., *Court book of the Liberty of St Sepulchre,* pp 41, 74).

relationships, had lain at the heart of the Anglo-Norman reform mission at the time of the Conquest.[40] Despite its centrality, however, little of practical consequence had been achieved, largely because of the decline of English rule in Ireland and the accompanying reduction of English influence in the Irish church. Thus, as late as the latter end of the fifteenth and the beginning of the sixteenth centuries, clerical concubinage was a common, and socially acceptable, practice in Gaelic Ireland, especially in the provinces of Armagh and Tuam where it was an integral part of an ecclesiastical culture which upheld the markedly uncanonical principles of priestly succession to, and dynastic control of, every kind of ecclesiastical benefice.[41] It is not known how prevalent clerical concubinage was in the marcher and Irish areas of the diocese of Dublin at this time, as the lack of authority that the archbishop and his officials exercised in these districts precluded them from investigating it. Yet if the diocesan administration had little personal experience of dealing with the problem, they would certainly have been aware of its existence in the Gaelic enclaves of other Pale dioceses, at the very least through the tales of ecclesiastical officials from dioceses like Armagh *inter Anglos*.

There is little doubt, then, that the Irishry were perceived to constitute a real and live danger to the entire English Irish ecclesiastical order on the eve of the reformation. The fundamental lawlessness and inherent canonical deviancy of Gaelic Irish politics and society - both of which had been experienced with increasing vividness by the English colony as the area under under crown rule receded in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries - seemed to threaten the existence or, at the very least, the corruption, of the one part of

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40 Martin, 'Diarmait Mac Murchada and the coming of the Anglo-Normans', pp 58-9. On Nicolaitism generally see Brundage, *Medieval Canon Law*, pp 35-7.

41 Nicholls, *Gaelic and Gaelicized Ireland*, pp 92-8; Watt, *Church in Medieval Ireland*, pp 185-7; Ellis, *Tudor Ire.*, p 187; Simms, 'Women in Gaelic Society during the Age of Transition', pp 36-8; Lennon, *Sixteenth-Century Ireland*, pp 126-7; Cosgrove, 'Ireland beyond the Pale, 1399-1460', in *New hist. Ire.*, ii, pp 587-8; Watt, 'Confrontation and co-existence in Armagh', pp 55-6.

Ireland where the standards of religious life required by *Laudabiliter* were still reasonably intact. This threat was most keenly felt by the senior corporate clergy of the Pale, a group, who in their guises as diocesan officials, as judges of their own peculiars, or as papal judges delegates, were traditionally responsible for administering canon law and upholding English Irish ecclesiastical mores. At the forefront of this group was the dean and chapter of St Patrick's cathedral, a corporation which, through its maintenance of ecclesiological and canonical customs that dated back to the time of the Conquest, embodied the English Irish ecclesiastical order in its purest form.[42] Thus it was they who had the fullest appreciation of the extent to which the Irish deviated from the standards of *Laudabiliter* and the actual and potential damage it could unleash upon the Pale. Led by canonically literate men like John Aleyn, it was they who knew and sought to enforce the decretals and other canons which the Irish clergy flouted when they took their concubines or attacked archiepiscopal manors. It was they who were prevented from exercising the ordinary jurisdiction of their bishops, as well as their own peculiar jurisdictions, in the borderlands and *in partibus hibernicos* because Gaelic and Gaelicized clans had turned them into bandit country. It was they who had lost valuable revenues and property rights because those same militarily powerful clans had elected to usurp or destroy ancient ecclesiastical endowments. It was they who, in opposition to all of this, had embodied for centuries the Gregorian standards of canonical correctness that Pope Adrian and King Henry II had wished to implant amongst the Irishry. It is no real surprise, then, that it was they who felt the strongest impulse to defend and preserve English ecclesiastical order and canonical rectitude where it still had some lifeblood. In fine, the medieval experience of the English colony had transformed the

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42 Above pp 41-44. This was particularly manifest in the cathedral's active involvement in diocesan administration, an involvement which contrasted markedly with the other major Pale dioceses, where cathedrals played a peripheral role. In Meath there was no cathedral at all, while in Armagh the cathedral lay among the Irish and was part of a distinct administrative structure which oversaw the diocese *inter hibernicos*, but which made no contribution to the government of the diocese *inter Anglos* (Cosgrove, 'Ireland beyond the Pale, 1399-1460', in *New hist. Ire.*, ii, p 584; Watt, 'Confrontation and co-existence in Armagh', pp 47-50).

dean and chapter of St Patrick's, and the corporate clercial élite of the Pale generally, from being missionaries of the *Laudabiliter* settlement into being its most committed guardians.

It was in this role of guardianship over the *Laudabiliter* settlement that Dean Aleyn of St Patrick's cathedral was moved to classify the Irishry as unfaithful catholics in December 1505, and to exclude them from his almshouse. As a legist, a patriotic Palesmen and someone who had seen up close the harm wrought by the Irishry on the English ecclesiastical order in Ireland, Aleyn perceived them as a people who ignored or rejected at every turn the basic Christian standards of behaviour enshrined in canon law - hence their classification as unfaithful catholics - and who corrupted all whom they came into contact with. By the late fifteenth century it seemed that the only group left to be corrupted in this way were 'the faithful catholics ... of the English nation' in the Pale, the last repository of the virtuous Christian values that had been brought into Ireland at the time of the Conquest. It was largely on this basis, therefore, the desire to preserve the *Laudabiliter*-inspired and intrinsically English version of catholicism free from Gaelic Irish corruption, that the dean chose to maintain his almshouse as an exclusively English domain.

Yet it was in this context too that Aleyn undertook his lengthy litigation with the English born archbishop of Dublin, John Walton. For Aleyn and his colleagues in St Patrick's, Walton's attack on his decanal jurisdiction and property rights was as great an affront to the English-Irish ecclesiastical order - indeed it was directly comparable - as anything that the deviant Irishry had done or would do. This was so for one simple reason. These jurisdictional and property rights had been granted, with royal and papal approval, at the time of the cathedral's foundation in the early days of the Conquest, and were regarded thus as a fundamental, *ab initio* component of the original *Laudabiliter* settlement. That the dean and chapter thought in this way is evident from an act passed by the Irish parliament in 1474 at the height of the controversy. This act was actually procured by Dean Aleyn and

his colleagues as a legal device to be employed directly in the battle against their archbishop. At the time, Aleyn had a sentence of deprivation hanging over him from Walton, against which he was in the process of appealing at the Roman curia. To ensure that this sentence would not be given effect, he not only placed his benefice under the protection of the pope pending the appeal, but also got the Irish parliament to place it under the protection of King Edward IV. In addition, the same act also confirmed and approved the foundation and liberties of the cathedral; and made it a statutory offence, punishable by a £20 fine, to act contrary to them.[43] The most interesting aspect of the act, however, is the justification that was given for these actions. It was stressed repeatedly that the cathedral was of the king's foundation and that its 'liberties, statutes, ordinances, constitutions and lawful customs, and especially the constitution "dignitas decani et omnium canonicorum"' dated back to the time of the Conquest, having being 'granted first by ...King John when he was Earl of Morton and Lord of Ireland'. Furthermore, it was also stressed that these consitutions had been 'confirmed, ordained and established by the Holy Fathers Innocent and Nicholas, Popes, at the court of Rome'. All of this, of course, was shorthand for a message that would have been instantly recognisable to an English Irish audience. In essence, the act was contending that the liberties of St Patrick's cathedral had been granted by the same authorities that had sanctioned and undertaken the Conquest, and not simply by coincidence, but as an integral part of that hallowed enterprise. For this reason, they were regarded as an indispensable part of English Irish political and ecclesiastical culture generally, and would have to be defended stoutly, not only by the dean and chapter of St Patrick's themelves, but by the entire English Irish community assembled in parliament.

That what was essentially a matter of competing ecclesiastical jurisdictions could take on, in the context of the late medieval Irish lordship, this wider cultural meaning is confirmed

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43 *Stat. Ire., 12-22 Edw. IV*, pp 197-203.

in another related act passed by the same parliament in 1474. It is evident from this that Dean Aleyn and the chapter of St Patrick's believed that Archbishop Walton had commenced his 'unjust and wrongful process' against them after receiving counsel from one Marcellus de Roma, a doctor of laws, who appears to have been operating as a freelance jurisconsult in the English Pale at the time.[44] Worse, 'Doctor Marcel' was also reckoned to have 'caused ... great variance', 'by deceitful promises, perjury and false administration of the law of Holy Church', amongst other Irish clergy 'especially in the counties of Uriel, Meath, Dublin and Kildare'. Apart from the Aleyn-Walton feud, he was held responsible for a dispute between Archbishop Bole of Armagh and Bishop Sherwood of Meath 'which by his means and false counsel had very nearly utterly destroyed the clergy of Meath and Uriel', and another fracas involving Dean Aleyn and one Thomas Clinton, a fellow canon of St Patrick's.[45] For Aleyn, the cathedral clergy of St Patrick's and other senior ecclesiastics in the Pale, Marcellus's actions were worrying in the extreme. It had become clear that his innovatory and sharp legal practices, a legal ingenuity which had obviously impressed and appealed to many of the clergy when he first arrived in Ireland, was capable of doing irreparable damage to the English Irish ecclesiastical polity. Not only did they threaten to destroy the rights and liberties upon which this polity was built, but they even threatened to undermine the solidarity and unity of purpose that had traditionally characterised the clergy of the Pale. Without this solidarity, *Laudabiliter* and all that it stood for would become a

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44 Ibid, pp 195-7. According to the statute, Marcellus came 'from a strange country without any evidence of virtuous conversation and without any letters of commendation of his virtuous disposition in his own land'. This precludes the possibility that he held an official position in the church such as a papal collectorship. His qualification as a legist, his advancement of 'false counsel' in certain ecclesiastical causes and the fact that he received 'all manner of fees and pensions heretofore', strongly indicates that individual clerics and ecclesiastical corporations retained him as a jurisconsult.

45 Ibid. On the dispute between Aleyn and Clinton see *Cal. papal letters, 1458-71,* pp 294-5; *Cal. papal letters, 1471-84,* pp 312-3. The dispute arose out of a legal challenge made by Clinton before Archbishop Tregury, and later the Roman curia, over the validity of Aleyn's election to the deanery of St Patrick's. It was conducted on the grounds that Aleyn was 'unworthy' of such a living; and that Clinton himself, by reason of a legal technicality - he claimed he had been elected by way of scrutiny by the 'better part' of the cathedral chapter - was the rightful dean. On scrutiny and the other means of canonically electing the dean see Lawlor, *Fasti of St Patrick's*, pp 22-8.

dead letter, a situation which demanded from them firm leadership and the strongest of defensive actions to neutralise the danger. Thus, with the help of the laity, it was enacted in parliament 'that proclamation be made that the said Doctor for his manifest falsity shall quit this land of Ireland within one month after the said proclamation made ... and never to return to this said land'. Failure to do so on his part would make it lawful 'for anyone to take him as an enemy or traitor to the king'.[46]

The actions taken in parliament in 1474 over the Aleyn-Walton feud were very significant. They showed, for example, the depth of commitment of the dean and chapter of St Patrick's to maintaining their *Laudabiliter*-based ethos, and how sensitive they could be in recognising and identifying any force or individual which threatened to undermine it. They also showed, in the closing of clerical ranks against 'Doctor Marcel', that this ethos was embraced by the senior clergy elsewhere in the Pale, and that it was respected and upheld by the English Irish community generally. Above all, however, the parliamentary actions showed how deeply conservative this ethos was, and how resistant it would be to any form of innovation or change, whether such change resulted from the actions of the deviant Irishry, a foreign jurisconsult or, as would happen in the next generation, an English monarch intent on revolutionizing the relationship between church and state. Given all this, it is worth exploring the nature and basis of these conservative clerical instincts in more detail; for it clear - even from the impact they made on church life in the late medieval lordship - that they would play a crucial part in the formulation of the Englishry's response to state-sponsored religious reform in the sixteenth century.

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46 *Stat. Ire., 12-22 Edw. IV*, pp 195-7.

III

The origins of the conservative ethos of the senior Pale clergy lay, as we have seen, in the events and thinking that surrounded the Anglo-Norman Conquest of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Thereafter it was moulded and refined by the largely negative experiences of the English colony in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Yet the feature which really sustained it, and which gave it an enduring strength and tenacity that would last right through to the eve of the reformation, was its institutional character. The *Laudabiliter* settlement lived on in the hearts and minds of the Pale clergy not simply because they believed in and supported the values which it contained, but because those same values were embodied in the ecclesiastical institutions over which they presided, and implicit in many of their activities; and because the institutions themselves managed to retain the respect and support of the English Irish community throughout the Middle Ages.

The institutional embodiment of the *Laudabiliter* settlement, and its continuing attractiveness for the English Irish community, was a subtle and complex phenomenon, which manifested itself in a variety of ways. On one level it was purely symbolic. For the Englishry, the reforming mission ennunciated in *Laudabiliter* was perceived both as the harbinger of English civility in Ireland and the underlying motive behind the foundation of many of the religious corporations of the Pale. Thus these corporations - whether they were original Anglo-Norman foundations or 'normanized' versions of those which had existed before their coming - stood out as monuments of English civility and, as such, were a source of communal pride. One of the most striking instances of this perception was evinced in the attitude of the citizenry of Dublin to the proposed dissolution of Christ Church cathedral in the late 1530s and early 1540s. The Dubliners argued against this proposal and defended the cathedral on the grounds that its loss would have a denuding

effect on the Englishness of their city, that it would undermine the fabric of English Irish society as a whole and that ultimately it would encourage 'the king's Irish enemies'.[47]

The clergy, for their part, were keenly aware of the symbolic link between their churches and the heritage of the English Pale, and did their utmost to sustain and cultivate it. This was evident, for example, in the efforts of bodies like St Patrick's cathedral to preserve the status and standing of their churches in a manner which approximated to, or fabricated, their condition at the time of their foundation. Thus in 1468 Archbishop Tregury and Dean Aleyn united the safe and lucrative Maghery churches of Lusk and Newcastle Lyons to the livings of the precentor, treasurer and archdeacon of Glendalough in St Patrick's cathedral because their prebends in the marches and amongst the Irishry had 'fallen in decay' on account of 'the continual war had in this land of Ireland by Irish enemies and English rebels'. At least part of the reason for this action would have been the need to maintain St Patrick's standing as the one, truly impressive example of the English 'four-square' secular cathedral which had been introduced by the Anglo-Normans at the time of the Conquest. And there is little doubt that the action had the desired effect. As late as the reign of Elizabeth, Richard Stanyhurst, in his description of the churches of Dublin, commented explicitly on its rich endowment, an endowment which he attributed to the 'liberality of King John'.[48] The same desire to maintain this symbolic link with the past was evident in other actions taken by the cathedral at this time. In the parliament of 1467-8, for example, the dean and his clergy also secured the passage of a statute which gave new chapter acts concerning the extension of divine service and hospitality the same force as if they had been

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47 Above pp 54-5.

48 *Alen's reg.*, p 244; *Stat. Ire., 1-12 Edw. IV*, pp 477-81; Stanyhurst, *Holinshed's Irish Chronicle*, p 44.

'made, ordained and established, by authority of the king at the first foundation of the said church'.[49]

But more was expected of the religious corporations of the Pale than simply reminding the English Irish community of its past glories. They also had wide-ranging and contemporary social and political roles, roles which were dedicated to keeping English civility alive in Ireland in the present. One of the most important of these roles was the education of the young, as was attested to by a letter of the Irish council to the London government on the eve of the dissolution of the monasteries. The council requested that six houses should be let stand - including, in the province of Dublin, Christ Church cathedral, St Mary's abbey, the Nunnery of Grace Dieu and the priory of Connall - because 'in them young men and childer, both gentlemen childer and other, both of man kind and women kind, be brought up in virtue, learning and in the English tongue and behaviour'.[50] Nor did this list represent the full extent of the corporate clergy's involvement in the education of the youth of the Pale. One important omission, because it was not threatened with suppression at the time, was St Patrick's cathedral. The cathedral had its own choir school which had been established in the early fifteenth century and which looked after the education of the six boy choristers who sang daily in the choir. In addition, individual dignitaries in the cathedral are known to have taken young boys into their households and provided for their schooling. Amongst those educated in this way was John Browne, a member of a freeholding family from Clondalkin, who as a boy was a member of the household of Dean Aleyn. Thereafter, he served Deans Rochfort, Ricard, Sutton and Darcy; and eventually took orders, after which he secured a prebend in St Patrick's himself. They also included John Plunket of Dunsoghly, who as a boy was educated in the household of Robert Fitzsimon, the precentor

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49 *Stat. Ire., 1-12 Edw. IV*, pp 639-41,

50 *S.P. Hen. VIII*, iii, pp 130-1.

of St Patrick's (1508-c.1542). Plunket later went on to the Inns of court in London, and became chief justice of the Queen's Bench in Elizabeth's reign.[51]

The religious corporations' dedication to keeping English civility alive in Ireland was also evinced in their active participation in the government and administration of the Pale. The clergy of St Patrick's, for example, armed with their training in, and experience of administering, the romano-canonical law, often served in the Irish court of chancery. In the first two decades of the sixteenth century, three deans - Thomas Rochfort, John Ricard and Thomas Darcy - served as keeper of the rolls of chancery; while another, John Aleyn, took up a mastership in chancery in the mid-1490s, as did the aforementioned Robert Fitzsimon in the 1530s.[52] As well as providing personnel for the political and judicial institutions of English Ireland, the corporate clergy also provided facilities for the conduct of their business. Christ Church cathedral, as we have seen, was the main site for the holding of parliaments and councils, while St Mary's abbey was the 'common resort of all such of reputation, as hath repaired hither out of England'. In addition, the religious corporations were regular and reliable contributors to the hostings against the Irishry in the later Middle Ages, finding 'on their proper costs ... many men of war as they are appointed by the king's deputy and council for the same'. They also supported the defence of the Pale through the clerical subsidy levied by parliament.[53]

Perhaps the most striking aspect of the corporate clergy's participation in the government and administration of the Pale was their contribution - through their representatives, the

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51 *Dignitus decani*, pp 44-6, 123-4; *Lawlor, Fasti of St Patrick's*, p 36; F.E. Ball, *The judges in Ireland, 1221-1921* (2 vols., London, 1926), ii, p 208.

52 Ellis, *Reform and Revival*, p 220; Lawlor, *Fasti of St Patrick's*, pp 43, 56; P.R.O., SP 65/1, f 19r; *Cal. pat. rolls, 1485-94*, p 473.

53 *S.P. Hen. VIII*, iii, p 130; Ellis, *Reform and Revival*, pp 69-72; Richardson & Sayles, *Ir. parl. in middle ages*, pp 185, 234-43.

lords spiritual[54] and clerical proctors[55] - to the work of the Irish parliament; a body which in the late medieval period dealt almost exclusively with matters of local concern to the Pale community.[56] Although precise details are lacking, their very active involvement in the parliament's deliberations is evident from the fact that a large number of ordinances were passed - no doubt as a result of their own lobbying - which confirmed, or granted anew, their own corporate rights and privileges. These ranged, for example, from Thomas Court abbey's right of possession of the priory of St Katherine at Leixlip, through the abbot of St Mary's right to present to the vicarage of Skreen in Co. Meath, to the exemption of the prior and convent of All Hallows from paying taxes on their lands.[57]

More significantly, the parliament also acted as useful forum for upholding, and reinforcing amongst the community at large, the corporate clergy's own *Laudabiliter*-inspired ethos. This was evident, for example, in the acts secured by the dean and chapter of St Patrick's cathedral concerning the Aleyn-Walton dispute in 1474, or in provisions like the act from the 1494-5 parliament which stipulated that no person should be made prior of the Knight's Hospitallers at Kilmainham 'but of the English blood'.[58] Above all, however, it was evident

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54 Evidence for the summoning and attendance of spiritual peers is scanty for the fifteenth century. However, those who regularly attended from the diocese of Dublin included the heads of the Cistercian abbey of St Mary by Dublin, the priory of the Knight's Hospitallers at Kilmainham, and the regular canons of Thomas Court abbey (Richardson & Sayles, *Ir. parl. in middle ages*, p 127).

55 The clerical proctors represented the interests of the cathedral chapters and diocesan clergy of about thirteen dioceses in the fifteenth century, including proctors for St Patrick's cathedral, Christ Church cathedral and the lower clergy of the diocese of Dublin. It is difficult to quantify the numbers that actually attended individual parliaments, but it is reasonable to assume that the four Pale dioceses - Dublin, Kildare, Armagh *inter Anglicos* and Meath - were regularly represented (Richardson & Sayles, *Ir. parl. in middle ages*, pp 183-6).

56 On the late medieval Irish parliament generally see S.G. Ellis, 'Parliament and community in Yorkist and Tudor Ireland', in A. Cosgrove and J.I. McGuire, eds., *Parliament and Community, Hist. Studies xiv* (Belfast, 1983), pp 43-68; Richardson & Sayles, *Ir. parl. in middle ages*, pp 174-281.

57 *Stat. Ire., 1-12 Edw. IV*, pp 451-5, 727-9; D.B. Quinn, ed., 'The bills and statutes of the Irish parliaments of Henry VII and Henry VIII', in *Anal. Hib.*, x (1941), p 85.

58 Quinn, 'Bills and statutes', p 92; A. Conway, *Henry VII's relations with Scotland and Ireland, 1485-98* (Cambridge, 1932), p 210.

in the parliament's attempts to curb the ill-effects of the Irishry's propensity towards 'Rome-running'. 'Rome-running' - the initiation of ecclesiastical causes at the Roman curia, usually for the purpose of securing or retaining for the plaintiffs titles to ecclesiastical benefices - was a very common practice in Gaelic Ireland, probably because there was no effective judicial infrastructure in place to deal with the causes locally.[59] It was thus a painful reminder to the Pale clergy of the failure of the *Laudabiliter* reform mission to establish in Gaelic Ireland the English system of courts christian that had been put in place in the heartland of the colony at the time of the Conquest, and, as such, was particularly despised. In reality, there was little the Pale clergy could do to improve this situation generally, but they were certainly determined to prevent the practice spreading to, or harming the inhabitants of the Pale. Thus, at their behest, the Irish parliament attempted on a number occasions in the late fifteenth century to control the situation by outlawing, under the fourteenth century Statutes of Provisors, all papal delegates and their substitutes, especially 'Irish prelates, beneficers and clerks not obedient to the commands of the king nor to his laws', who presided over any ecclesiastical cause that injured or troubled 'the king's subjects'.[60]

There is little doubt, then, that the corporate clergy played a very full and active part in the political, cultural and social life of the English Pale in the later Middle Ages. Nor is there any doubt that in doing so they were able to promote, integrate and maintain their own conservative, *Laudabiliter*-inspired ethos as a permanent and unquestioned fixture in the

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59 Cosgrove, 'Ireland beyond the Pale, 1399-1460', pp 587-8; W.N. Osborough, 'Ecclesiastical law and the reformation in Ireland', in R. Helmholz, ed., *Canon law in protestant lands* (Berlin, 1992), p 227. Very little evidence survives on the existence and activities of the Gaelic Irish church courts in the later Middle Ages (Osborough, *op.cit.*, pp 228-30). However, the fact that litigants resorted to Rome so frequently suggests that if the such courts were in operation on a consistent basis, their rulings were to a large extent ineffective.

60 *Stat. Ire., 1-12 Edw. IV*, p 767; *Stat. Ire., 12-22 Edw. IV*, pp 541-5.

thought and culture of the local community. This was hugely significant, for it gave the senior corporate clergy almost total freedom to express this ethos in the workings of their own corporate bodies without any fear of outside interference; and, intermittently, when external forces did threaten it, it ensured that they were able to secure the backing of the Pale community, in the shape of organs of the Dublin administration, to fend them off. Yet the unquestioned support of their community was not the only factor which helped sustain the conservative ethos of the senior Pale clergy. Equally important, was the attitude of English-born bishops in Ireland, the one group who in theory would have had the capacity to alter, however subtly, the institutional basis of the Pale clergy's ethos. Generally, however, they adopted a policy of non-interference, a policy which was particularly evident in relation to Dublin's late medieval archbishops, all of whom, with the exception of Archbishop Fitzsimon, were natives of England.

The capacity of Dublin's English-born archbishops to alter the institutional basis of the local clergy's value system was centred around the recruitment of the chapter of St Patrick's cathedral and, more particularly, the recruitment of their diocesan officials from within this body. It was the archbishop who held the right of advowson in the vast bulk of the cathedral canonries, 24 out of a total of 27,[61] and thus whenever any of these livings became vacant - whether a major cathedral dignitary, an administratively important benefice like the archdeaconry of Dublin,[62] or an ordinary prebend - he could present the

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61 Two prebends, Yago and Maynooth, were in the gift of the earl of Kildare, while the deanery was an elective dignity (*Alen's Reg.*, pp 279-80, 297-8; N. B. White, ed., 'The Reportorium Viride of John Alen, archbishop of Dublin, 1533', in *Anal. Hib.*, 10 [1941] pp 180-217 *passim*).

62 The archdeacon was the most ancient of the permanently established diocesan officials, having originated as a member of the early medieval episcopal *familia*. His particular role was pithily summarized in the well-known contemporary epithet 'the eye of the bishop' (*occulus episcopi*), which meant that he was charged with the tasks of correcting moral delinquency and dereliction of ecclesiastical duty among the laity, as well as exercising a general supervision over the clergy to ensure that they performed their pastoral resposibilites adequately, all within the boundaries of his own archdeaconry. On the duties and role of the archdeacon generally see Murphy, 'Archbishops and administration of Dublin', pp 199-213; A. H. Thompson, 'Diocesan Organisation in the Middle Ages: Archdeacons and Rural Deans', *Proceedings of the British Academy*, xxix (1943); idem, *The English*

cleric of his choice, including clerical associates from his own land. In addition, he also had the right to bestow the other key administrative post, the diocesan chancellorship or official generalship, upon anyone from within this group of cathedral presentees, including once again natives of England.[63] The latter possibility, however, was rarely utilised by the archbishops. Although English appointees to cathedral prebends were not unknown in the later Middle Ages, the vast majority of those presented in the period were natives of the Pale, while those who went on to secure appointment as diocesan officials were exclusively so.[64] The probable reasons for this course of action - lack of interest on the part of

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Clergy and their Organisation in the Later Middle Ages (Oxford, 1947) pp 57-63.

63 The chancellorship was a combination of two distinct offices, the vicar generalship and official principalship. As vicar general, the chancellor was empowered to perform virtually all episcopal *acta* throughout the length and breadth of the diocese, including the conduct of episcopal visitations; admitting priests to, and receiving their resignation from, parochial benefices; the granting of licences of dispensation; the granting of letters dismissory for clerks proceeding to ordination in another diocese; and, prior to the reformation, receiving the vows of religious and sanctioning the election of their heads. As official principal, the chancellor presided over the archbishop's consistory court where he judged cases brought at the instance of plaintiffs on a wide-range of issues, including matrimonial and testamentary matters, and causes relating to the payment of ecclesiastical dues, benefices, defamation, and breach of trust; *ex officio* cases, or disciplinary proceedings, which were brought against canonical offenders detected by the church authorities themselves; and appeals from the courts of the suffragan sees ('Christ Church deeds', no. 1034; Thompson, *English Clergy*, pp 46-56).

64 This is evident, for example, in the backgrounds of the five men who held the diocesan chancellorship during the period 1482-1534. The first of these, John Waren, was a Dubliner by birth and was admitted to the franchise of the city in 1481, as were his kinsfolk Alice (in 1472); Walter, a merchant's apprentice (in 1481) and another John, a pointmaker (in 1482). He was succeeded by Geoffrey Fyche in the early 1490s, who hailed from a leaseholding farming family based to the north of the city of Dublin in Glasnevin. It was through their landlords, Christ Church cathedral, that this family established its links with the local church; links revealed in the fact that the obits of seven members of the family, including Geoffrey, were kept by the cathedral clergy until Elizabeth's reign. Robert FitzSimon succeeded Fyche as chancellor early in the new century and was a scion of a merchant and patrician family from the city of Dublin which had moved out into the north Co. Dublin countryside. His brother Thomas, of Corduff, served Archbishops Inge and Alen as the lay seneschal of their manorial courts and was recorder of the city of Dublin c. 1530-54. The last two men who held the chancellorship of the see prior to the reformation were born outside the diocese - Thomas Darcy and Walter Cusack - but were both very much part of the Pale community, being younger sons of gentle families based within the Maghery in Co. Meath. Darcy held the position in the second decade of the sixteenth century and perhaps even longer. He was probably the third son of John Darcy IV of Platten and brother of Sir William Darcy, who was undertreasurer in the Irish administration for a period in the 1520s. Cusack was the second son of Christopher Cusack of Tara and served as chancellor under Archbishop Alen in the early 1530s until his death in 1534 (D.C.A., Fr/Roll/2, mm. 5, 12-13, 21d; 'Christ church deeds', nos. 359-360, 366-7, 386, 422, 956, 1003, 1034; Crosthwaite, ed., *Book of Obits*, pp 7, 8, 15, 19, 23, 29; *Alen's reg.*, p 253; P.R.O., SP 65/1, f 19r; H. F. Berry, ed.,'Calendar of deeds of the gild of S. Anne in S. Audoen's Church', in *R.I.A. Proc.*, xxv, C [1904-5], p 50; R.C.B., Dublin

English clergymen in following careers in the Irish church, the archbishops' concern to win the support of their flocks by ensuring that episcopal rule was brought to bear upon them through their own representatives - are less important than the impact it had upon the course of episcopal government and diocesan administration. In effect, it gave the local clergy a complete stranglehold over the entire process, a stranglehold which was exploited from generation to generation to maintain a canonical culture dedicated to sustaining their own *Laudabiliter*-inspired ethos.

The dean and chapter's controlling influence over the process of church government, and the manner in which they exploited it to promote their own ideological interests, is easily identifiable, being particularly evident in the content of local canonical ordinances. In 1515, for example, Dean Rochfort and his chapter secured a new agreement with their archbishop, William Rokeby, which formally renewed the dean's ancient jurisdictional rights over the chapter of St Patrick's. Significantly, as if to underline the *Laudabiliter*-inspired origins of this agreement, the new statute also confirmed the ancient custom which denied membership of the cathedral to anyone of the Irish nation, manners and blood, and was later given approval by Pope Leo X.[65] Again, in 1518, through the Dublin provincial council - the body which was responsible for making local canon law and which was comprised of the archbishop, his suffragan bishops, and representatives of the religious and cathedral chapters of the province - they reaffirmed their longstanding commitment to preventing the worst excesses of the Irish clergy's canonical deviancy taking a hold in the parishes of Dublin and its suffragan sees. The council enacted that priests from Ulster and

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Diocesan Registry, MS 113, no. 2 ['An abstract of inquisitions taken in Henry VIII's reign, relating to the archbishopric of Dublin']; *Cal. pat. rolls Ire., Hen. VIII-Eliz*, pp 326-7; Lennon, *Lords of Dublin*, pp 14, 59, 73; *Ormond deeds, 1509*-47, p 23; P.R.O.N.I., D 430, nos. 59, 60 [Will of William Hoggison, late mayor of Dublin, 1519]; S.B. Barnewall, 'Darcy of Platten, Co. Meath', in *Ir. Gen.*, vi, no. 4 (1983), pp 408-9; H.B. Gallwey, 'The Cusack family of Counties Meath and Dublin. Pt V: Cusack of Gerardstown', in *Ir. Gen.*, vi, no. 2 (1981), p 134).

65 *Alen's Reg.*, pp 262-3; Mason, *History of St Patrick's*, pp 143-4; *Dignitus decani*, p 56-64.

Connacht were not to be admitted unless, in the judgement of the ordinary, they were found to be fit pastors, a stipulation which would have demanded from them the unquestioned acceptance of the principle of priestly celibacy.[66] Yet while the cathedral clergy's continuing commitment to sustaining and promoting their traditional notions of English canonical rectitude is obvious, less so was the mechanism through which they transmitted these ideas from one generation to the next. Here too, however, the process was 'institutionalised', being centred around the training of prospective canon lawyers for the Dublin and other Pale diocesan administrations.

In each generation, a handful of Pale clergymen acquired degrees in canon or civil law from the University of Oxford, some of whom went on to take up senior positions in the diocesan administrations in the Pale. These included Robert Fitzsimon and Walter Cusack who served as chancellors of the diocese of Dublin in the early decades of the sixteenth century.[67] The degree courses which these men studied, however, were largely theoretical in scope and did not really equip them with the skills or experience that were needed to preside over the courts christian and other aspects of conventional diocesan administration. Indeed, the acquisition of a degree was not even thought to be necessary for prospective ecclesiastical lawyers and judges in the church courts, even in England.[68] Nor, more

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66 'Presbyteri Conactenses et Ultoniensis non admittantur, nisi judicio ordinarii inveniantur idonei' (D. Wilkins, ed., *Concilia Magnae Britaniae et Hiberniae* [4 vols., London, 1737], iii, p 660, calendared in H.J. Lawlor, ed., 'Calendar of the Liber Ruber of the diocese of Ossory', in *R.I.A.Proc.*, xxvii [1908-9], C, no. 5, p 165).

67 Of the five men who occupied the chancellorship of Dublin in the period 1482 to 1534 - John Waryng, Geoffrey Fyche, Robert Fitzsimon, Thomas Darcy and Walter Cusack - only two of them, Fitzsimon (Bachelor of Civil Law) and Cusack (Bachelor of Canon Law), are known with certainty to have held degrees in law, although Thomas Darcy studied at Oxford and acquired an MA. Similarly, Walter Cusack was the only formally qualified canonist amongst the five men who held the archdeaconry of Dublin in this period (A. B. Emden, *A biographical register of the university of Oxford A.D. 1501 to 1540* [Oxford, 1974, hereafter *B.R.U.O. 1501-40*], pp 157, 160; *B.R.U.O.*, i, pp 544, ii, p 695; Lawlor, *Fasti of St Patrick's*, pp 78-9).

68 J.L. Barton, 'The legal faculties of late medieval Oxford', in J.I. Catto and R. Evans, eds., *The History of the University of Oxford. Volume II: Later Medieval Oxford* (Oxford, 1992), pp 307-8.

importantly, would the degree courses in Oxford have instilled in them the ideological mores that were associated with the practice of canon law in their own land. From the perspective of the Pale clergy, then, what was required, and what was actually provided by them to make good these deficiencies, was a less formal, indigenous, more broadly-based and more vocationally-oriented system of education to train and form prospective Pale canonists in their own image. The medium through which this was achieved was the family.

Although sparsely documented, there is little doubt that there existed a very strong, family-based and markedly practical tradition of legists in Dublin in the later Middle Ages. Amongst these clerical, canonical dynasties, for example, were the Warens. Three different Warens served in the Dublin diocesan administration throughout the latter half of the fifteenth century, comprising Robert, who served as official principal of Dublin, and Thomas, who served as commissary of the dean of St Patrick's, both in the 1460s; and John, who served as diocesan chancellor (1482-c. 1492).[69] John Waren's successor as chancellor, Geoffrey Fyche, came from a very similar family. Before he succeeded to this office in the 1490s, a probable kinsman and formally trained canonist, Richard Fyche, served as official-principal of Dublin in the 1470s. In addition, one Thomas Fyche, probably Geoffrey's elder brother, was sub-prior of Christ Church cathedral from the 1480s until his death in 1518.[70] Fyche's successor as chancellor was Robert Fitzsimon. The Fitzsimon family too, in all its various branches, was very prominent in the local church, and notable for a strong legist bent. One of their number, Walter, was the only native of Ireland to hold the archbishopric of Dublin in the centuries following the Anglo-Norman incursion into Ireland. His elevation to the episcopate, in fact, followed an earlier career as a diocesan administrator,

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69 'Christ Church deeds', nos. 298, 1034; D.C.A., Fr/Roll/2, m. 21d.

70 'Christ Church deeds', nos. 308, 342, 359; *Register of wills*, ed. Berry, pp 13-196 *passim*; *D.N.B.*, sub nomine 'Thomas Fyche'; *B.R.U.O.*, ii, p 735; Crosthwaite, ed., *Book of obits*, p 7.

which included a stint as official principal of the diocese in the 1470s. Connections with the canon law and the local institutions which administered it were also evident in Robert's more immediate family. His brother Richard, like Robert himself, attended Oxford, where he supplicated for a degree in canon law in 1526. Thereafter he was appointed, under archiepiscopal patronage, to the valuable vicarage of Swords and it was probably only his premature death in 1534 which prevented him from succeeding to a senior administrative post. In addition, one other probable kinsman, Bartholomew, was a fellow canon in St Patrick's cathedral.[71]

It is reasonable to assume that this family-based tradition of practising legists had a very strong formative effect on the young canon lawyers of Dublin and the Pale. For some, it would have provided the sole source of their education. There is no record, for example, that Geoffrey Fyche attended university or that he held a formal qualification in either canon or civil law. Thus it is likely that he gained his training and knowledge of ecclesiastical law from his kinsman Richard, perhaps through a combination of access to a family library and observation of the elder Fyche presiding over the consistory court in St Patrick's cathedral.[72] For those who did attend university, the tradition would have provided a spur to seek out practical experience of the church courts, with a view to fleshing out the more academic knowldege of the decretals which they acquired from their lectures and reading. It is noticeable, for example, that two graduates who went on to practice in the Dublin church courts in the early sixteenth century, Robert Fitzsimon and Thomas Darcy, took on the positions of principals in their academic halls. As principals, both men would have been utilized by the University as agents in the preservation of

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71 'Christ Church deeds', no. 386; *B.R.U.O.*, iii, pp 2175-6; *Register of wills*, ed. Berry, p 27; *B.R.U.O., 1501-40,* p 206; *B.R.U.O.*, ii, p 695; N.A.I., RC 9/2, pp 194-200; *Cal. pat. rolls Ire., Hen. VIII-Eliz*, pp 21, 28; *Fiants Ire., Edw. VI,* no. 77.

72 For a later example of this 'observational' mode of training in the ecclesiastical law in Dublin see the case of Thady Dowling discussed below pp 254-5.

discipline among the students who lodged in their halls, a role would have involved both FitzSimon and Darcy liaising with the University chancellor's court in the prosecution of office cases against delinquent scholars.[73] It also gave Fitzsimon practical experience of such matters as the probate and administration of wills, for he was chosen by fellow students resident at Beke's Inn to administer their goods after their decease.[74]

The most important legacy of the dynastic tradition of canon law in Dublin, however, was its role in the preservation of the *Laudabiliter*-based ethos of the senior Pale clergy. Given the canonical basis of this ethos, and the known facts that the local canonists upheld it and that it survived right through to the eve of the reformation, it is difficult to conceive that the legist families were not instrumental in preserving and transmitting it down the generations. Their involvement in this process would also help explain the non-intellectual basis of the local canon law tradition. For historical reasons - above all, because of the contraction of the English colony in medieval Ireland - the legist families would have been primarily concerned with defending the remnants of the old Anglo-Norman ecclesiastical settlement in Ireland, a settlement which was most perfectly realised in bodies like St Patrick's cathedral and which of itself was thought to embody all the finest aspects of canon law. Thus, although an occasional interest was shown in establishing a university in the Pale to provide easier access to formal training in the romano-canonical laws and other disciplines - as in the parliamentary plan of 1465 to found one at Drogheda,[75] or Archbishop Fitzsimon's plans for a similar body in Dublin - there was no real impetus for such innovation and

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73 Fitzsimon was admitted principal of Beke's Inn in June 1502, while Darcy was admitted to two successive principalships - St Mildred's Hall and Beam Hall - in June and December 1505 respectively (*B.R.U.O.*, i, p 544; ii, p 695; W.T Mitchell, ed., *Registrum Cancellarii 1498-1506* [Oxford Historical Society, New Series, xxvii, Oxford, 1980], pp 70, 84, 144, 229-30). On the disciplinary role of the principal see A. B. Cobban, *The Medieval English Universities: Oxford and Cambridge to c. 1500* (Scolar Press: Aldershot, 1988), pp 146-8.

74 Mitchell, ed., *Registrum Cancellarii*, pp 70, 229-30.

75 *Stat. Ire., 1-12 Edw. IV*, p 369.

change. Rather, the aim of the legist families and their peers was simply to maintain the status quo, including, above all, the preservation of their ideology and its ecclesiological basis. This was an aim, as experience had shown, which could be easily realised by invoking the tried and trusted methods of training canon lawyers.

Once trained, and once they had fully absorbed the ideological mores of previous generations of Pale canonists, the new diocesan officials and their colleagues in St Patrick's cathedral played a very full part in transmitting their *Laudabiliter*-based ethos to the other corporate clergy of the diocese and, ultimately, to the clergy and laity of the diocese as a whole. The main media used for transmitting their ethos amongst the religious would have been formal bodies like the Dublin provincial council and the Irish parliament, bodies which as we have seen were frequently used to give it practical effect through a wide variety of acts and ordinances. However the canonists also had available to them less formal means of inculcating the same ethos . As the acknowledged experts in canon law in the diocese, and in the English Pale generally, the clergy of St Patrick's were called upon to act as jurisconsults, a service which was no doubt provided complete with the full *Laudabiliter* gloss. Thus, in the early 1520s, Robert Fitzsimon, the precentor of St Patrick's and a former official principal of Dublin, was retained by All Hallows priory and Thomas Court abbey to advise on the canonical modes for electing their heads. While ostensibly such advise would have dealt solely with the technical details of electing a monastic head by scrutiny, compromise or inspiration, we may also assume that more local concerns, such as the confinement of the candidates to those born of English blood, were also raised or, at the very least, tacitly understood.[76] The same understanding and acceptance of the Pale clergy's ethos would also have underpinned Dean Aleyn's decision on the eve of his death to donate his books on canon law - the Repertorium of Peter bishop of Brescia, and

76 B.L. Add. Charters, nos 7043, 7044. On the canonical modes of election generally see Lawlor, *Fasti of St Patrick's*, pp 22-8.

Panormitanus's commentary on the decretals - to Christ Church cathedral; or the decision of Richard Ellerkar, the prebendary of Castleknock to act as the prior of Kilmainham's steward from the 1520s until the priory was dissolved in 1540.[77]

The dean and chapter's capacity to radiate their canonical culture amongst the corporate clergy generally was hugely important, for with it came a much greater capacity to extend that same culture into the parishes of their diocese and of the Pale as a whole. The foundation upon which this capacity to influence the parishes was built was the corporate clergy's almost total control of the parochial system, a control which was derived from their position as the appropriators of the vast majority of parochial rectories. Thus on the eve of the reformation, c. 1530, 163 rectories out of a total of 192 in the diocese of Dublin - just over 84% - were appropriated to the two Dublin cathedrals and 18 religious houses. Of these 163 appropriated parishes only 34 or 21% had endowed vicarages which meant that the corporate clergy, either as individuals or as collective entities, had the ultimate responsibility for appointing curates and chaplains to 129 or 67% of all Dublin parishes.[78] This was an extremely powerful position because the vast majority of the curates and chaplains were totally dependent upon the corporate clergy for their economic well-being. The starkest manifestation of this reality was the fact that all of these curates and chaplains could be removed at will from their posts by the corporate rectors, because none of them possessed any freehold interest in the livings in which they served. It would be wrong, however, to assume that this relationship of economic dependency was built upon fear. On the contrary, it was paternalistic in nature. Some of the corporate clergy, especially the richly endowed clergy of St Patrick's cathedral, were sufficiently indulgent to allow their curates portions of their parochial possessions, usually the altarages and occasionally the

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77 *Register of wills*, ed. Berry, p 199; *Miscellany of the Irish Archaeological Society*, i, pp 81-3; P.R.O., E 344/18, f 29r.

78 Below chapter 7.

glebeland, in recompense for serving the cures.[79] With these grants, the curates would normally receive warranties from their masters that their possession of the properties would be automatically defended in the church and secular courts against intrusions, or the refusal of their parishioners to pay the customary parochial dues.[80] In this way the corporate clergy appeared as the beneficent defenders of the lower clergy, a pose which occasionally evoked gestures of genuine affection from individual parish priests towards their employees;[81] but which, above all, would have demanded from them a full acceptance of their masters' dearly held notions of English civility and canonical rectitude. In turn, the parochial clergy attempted to promote and disseminate these ideas themselves amongst the wider community through the parochial schools that they kept on the eve of the reformation.

Very little information now survives on individual parochial schools from the late fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. The incidental reference to the school that was kept in the 'priest's chamber' by Sir Richard Roger, chaplain of Dunsoghly, in the early sixteenth century, is almost unique.[82] Nevertheless, a number of such schools - the equivalent of the English petty or ABC schools - do seem to have been in operation in this period, and were very much involved in the work of preserving and maintaining English cultural mores. Some evidence for this can be found in a statute passed by the Irish parliament in 1537, the act for

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79 On this see the survey of the cathedral's possessions taken after its dissolution in 1547: St Patrick's cathedral, Muniments, no. 112 (Jackson MS catalogue number), *passim* (printed in Mason, *History of St Patrick's,* pp 28-99). On the glebelands and altarages generally see Murray, 'Sources of clerical income' pp 146-57.

80 For some later examples of such warranties coming into effect see the cases of Archbishop Loftus, chancellor of St Patrick's (and rector of Finglas), v John Lenan, and the same v Walter Nevell, 1597 (Act book of the Dublin consistory, 1596-99, Marsh's Library, MS Z4.2.19, pp 102-3, 110). Loftus as rector was acting on behalf of his appointee to the curacy of Finglas, Gabriel Cornewall, against two locals who had witheld payment of their altarages.

81 One such priest was Patrick Law, chaplain of Glasnevin who, on his death in 1514, left all his goods to Christ Church cathedral, the corporate rector of his parish ('Christ Church deeds', no. 1117; Crosthwaite, ed., *Book of obits,* p 48).

82 'Christ Church deeds', no. 429.

the English order, habit and tongue. Framed with the intention of extending into Gaelic and Gaelicized Ireland the cultural mores and practices that were already current in the Pale, the act provided that all beneficed clergy were to keep 'a school for to learn English' in their parishes, in just the same manner, the act implied, that was now in operation throughout the Maghery.[83] And there is further evidence that the early application of the act was extremely successful, at least in Co. Dublin. Thus, of the 48 or so beneficed clergymen who, under the terms of the act, were bound to keep schools in the county, only five - Thomas Hallynge, vicar [sic] of Baldongan, Patrick Long, vicar of Bray, Gilbert Rose, vicar of Swords, John Wogan, vicar of Balrothery and Thomas Cruise, vicar of Balscaddan - were found by the barons of the exchequer in February 1548 to have neglected this duty.[84] Overall, then, it would seem that the corporate clergy were not only successful in keeping their ethos alive in their own cloisters and precincts, and amongst the political community whom they were responsible for educating; but also - through the influence they exerted on the parochial clergy - in the community of lowly artisans and humble farmers who inhabited the parishes of the English Pale. It is no surprise, therefore, that representatives of these groups, men like John Aleyn of the farming community of east Co. Meath, would enter the ranks of the corporate clergy themselves, and make their own deeply motivated contribution towards preserving English culture, and the notion of canonical rectitude which it encompassed, from one generation to the next.

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83 *Stat. Ire.,* i, pp 119-127, especially pp 119-120, 125-6. The act stated that the parish priest/school keeper should should take for his pains 'such convenient stipend or salary as in the said land is *accustomably used* to be taken' (my italics).

84 N.A.I., RC 9/2, pp 300, 304-7; M.C. Griffith, ed., *Calendar of Inquisitions formerly in the office of the Chief Remembrancer of the Exchequer prepared from the MSS of the Irish Record Commission* (Dublin, 1991), pp 120-1; *Valor beneficiorum,* pp 9-10.

IV

There is little doubt that at the time of his death in January 1506, John Aleyn believed that the main danger to the survival of the Pale clergy's anglocentric, *Laudabiliter*-based, communal identity was the influence of the deviant Irishry. It was this fear, which had animated many generations of the English-Irish clerical élite since the original Anglo-Norman Conquest, that led him to establish an almshouse dedicated to preserving an overtly English and canonically correct version of the catholic religion. Yet within a few decades of his death, a new and potentially more damaging enemy would emerge to threaten the existence of the culture which he and his contemporaries had done so much to preserve and pass on to the next generation of corporate clergy. Most disturbingly for the successors of Dean Aleyn, the new enemy was one of the bedrock institutions upon which their culture was founded and to which they had traditionally looked for its continued sustenance, the English monarchy.

The Tudor monarchs, who ushered in what was once thought of as 'The English Reformation', are now reckoned by many modern historians to have presided over the introduction of more than one reformation or, at the very least, a number of theologically distinct religious settlements, which provoked many and varied local responses throughout the Tudor dominions during the sixteenth century.[85] This view has much to commend it and, in the wake of Brendan Bradshaw's pioneering work on the reformation in Ireland, has found its way into the mainstream of Irish historiography, where it is now generally accepted that sections of the indigenous population, however nominally, were willing to conform to aspects of the reformed religion, especially under Henry VIII.[86] Yet the point

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85 The fullest and most explicit use of this 'various (and varied) Reformations' interpretative framework is now Haigh, *English Reformations*. See especially pp 12-21.

86 Murray, 'Church of Ireland: critical bibliography', pp 347-9.

can obscure the other reality that there were also some highly influential groups in Irish society who found the reformation in all its various guises virtually impossible to embrace from the start. The most important of these groups was the corporate clerical élite of Dublin and the English Pale. For the latter group, in particular, the fact that there were dissimilarities between the various Tudor religious settlements - that some were liturgically or doctrinally less radical than the others - was of little concern or little consolation, in the light of those traits which all of them held in common. The most important of these traits - the crown's abolition of papal authority in its dominions, its rejection of the authority of Roman canon law, and its disregard for the independence and liberties of the clerical estate - undermined or threatened to destroy virtually every element of their traditional ethos; including the political basis of the original *Laudabiliter* settlement, the intellectual and legal foundations of their cherished notions of canonical correctness, and even their own hallowed position in Pale society. Thus, from the outset, the reformation was a source of great discomfiture to the corporate clerical élite. Inevitably, it would arouse consistent opposition from within its ranks.

The individual who experienced this opposition most intensely was the archbishop of Dublin; for, given that the Tudors chose to maintain the traditional, episcopally-based governmental structures of the medieval church as part of their religious settlements, the responsibility for promoting and enforcing their religious dictates in the archbishop's own domain rested firmly upon his shoulders. In addition, the same ecclesiological policy also meant that the archbishop would be expected to enlist the support of the corporate clerical élite - the traditional judicial and administrative caste of his diocese and province - in undertaking this task. It was to be in the working out of these administrative imperatives that divisions and discord would arise between the archbishop and his senior clergy. The following chapters, then, will attempt to chart, in the context of the archbishops' efforts to

enforce the reformation, the course of clerical opposition in Dublin, and to analyse its impact and significance on the fate of the reformation.

Part II

Episcopal government and the enforcement of the reformation

Chapter Three

The old order under fire: the clerical élite, Archbishop Browne and the early reformation, c. 1534-1554

The reformation began in the English Pale in an atmosphere of crisis. The reason for this was the outbreak of the Kildare rebellion in the summer of 1534. Although motivated initially by secular concerns,[1] the revolt swiftly assumed a religious dimension. From an early stage, Silken Thomas and his supporters claimed that they were 'of the pope's sect and band and him will they serve against the king and all his partakers'.[2] For the Tudor régime, and for many historians subsequently, the most striking aspect of this claim was the possibility that it might secure for the Kildare cause military or financial support from the papacy and the Holy Roman emperor, thus turning what was in essence a domestic disturbance into an international catholic crusade against a schismatic English king.[3] In practice its repercussions were less dramatic, yet it was a development which still proved to be damaging to the fate of the Henrician reformation in Ireland. In justifying their decision to play the papal card, the Fitzgeralds drew heavily upon the thinking, and sought the support of the clerical élite of the English Pale. Thus, as the Tudor régime prepared itself to implement its ecclesiastical revolution, the Kildare intervention crystallised the issues that were at stake for the local

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1 The secular motivation behind the rebellion - the Fitzgeralds' attempt to force the abandonment of the political and administrative reforms of Thomas Cromwell which threatened to undermine their traditional and paramount influence in Irish affairs - is covered in L. Corristine, *The revolt of Silken Thomas* (Dublin, 1987), chapter 2; S.G. Ellis, 'Tudor policy and the Kildare ascendancy in the lordship of Ireland', in *I.H.S.*, xx (1976-7), pp 235-71; idem, 'Thomas Cromwell and Ireland', in *Hist. Jn.*, xxiii (1980), pp 497-518; B. Bradshaw, 'Cromwellian reform and the origins of the Kildare rebellion', in *Trans. R. Hist. Soc.*, 5th ser., xxvii (1977), pp 69-93.

2 *S. P. Hen. VIII*, ii, pp 197-8.

3 *L. & P. Hen. VIII*, viii, no. 957; Edwards, *Church & state*, pp 1-5; Corristine, *Revolt of Silken Thomas*, pp 71-8; W. Palmer, *The problem of Ireland in Tudor Foreign Policy 1485-1603* (Woodbridge, 1994), chapter 3.

clergy and, as a result, ensured that the reformation was greeted by a well-informed and organised culture of indigenous clerical resistance.

I

Kildare and his supporters were advised on the religious question by a group of 'learned counsellors', amongst whom were Charles Reynolds, the archdeacon of Kells and official principal of Meath; Cormac Roth, the archdeacon and official principal of Armagh; and Edward Dillon, the dean of St Brigid's cathedral, Kildare, and prebendary of Maynooth in St Patrick's cathedral, Dublin.[4] Although it is well known that all of these men had Kildare connections which pre-dated the outbreak of the revolt,[5] it has been too readily assumed that they acted out of purely factional motives. What has not been appreciated generally is the extent to which they were part of the senior clerical establishment of the Pale and how much their political attitudes were influenced by the traditional values of this group. In essence, all of them upheld the *Laudabiliter*-inspired, canonical ethos of the senior English-Irish clergy, a set of beliefs which they had been either born into, or had bought into to further their ecclesiastical careers.

Cormac Roth personified more than most the essential characteristics of this caste. A native of the diocese of Meath, he came from a family with a strong legist bent: a near kinsman, William, was a chaplain to the bishop of Meath in the 1490s and later served as official of the diocese in the 1520s. Roth himself studied at Oxford where he graduated in canon law. Thereafter he was a very active archdeacon and official principal in Armagh *inter Anglos* until his death c. 1540.[6] Charles Reynolds was

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4 *S.P. Hen VIII*, ii, pp 221-2; Gwynn, *Med. province Armagh*, pp 48, 56-7, 61, 68, 71-2, 127-30, 153, 182-5; Lawlor, *Fasti of St Patrick's*, p 128.

5 S.G. Ellis, 'The Kildare rebellion and the early Henrician reformation', in *Hist. Jn.*, 19, 4 (1976), pp 820-1.

6 Gwynn, *Med. province Armagh*, pp 56, 72, 81; *B.R.U.O. 1501-40*, pp 492-3.

initially a less typical member of the group, but he did acquire the traits of his peers as his career progressed. A scion of the Gaelic Irish family of MacRaghnaill from Co. Leitrim, Reynolds adopted the cultural mores of the clergy of English Ireland by securing a grant of English liberty in 1531. Like Roth, he was both a canonist and graduate of Oxford, and worked very actively as a diocesan and provincial administrator, sometimes in conjunction with the archdeacon of Armagh, prior to his involvement in the rebellion. In addition, there was also a legist tradition in his family. A near kinsman, Thady, also undertook legal studies at Oxford and became a doctor of canon and civil law, serving later as a papal and royal bishop in the 1540s.[7] The surviving notices of Edward Dillon are less informative. Nevertheless, given the fact that he was a member of two quintessentially English religious corporations in Ireland - both of which, St Patrick's cathedral and St Brigid's cathedral, perceived themselves to be embodiments of English Irish canonical rectitude - it is safe to assume that he too subscribed fully to the traditional canonical culture of his peers.

It was this culture which informed the attitude of Kildare's 'learned counsellors' to the reformation. As canon lawyers, senior ecclesiastical officials and upholders of the traditional justification for the English presence in Ireland - they believed their people were there under papal sanction to reform the Irishry along conventional canonical lines - the group quickly recognized how fundamental an attack the reformation was on all of their values, from the intellectual and legal bases of their dearly-held notions of canonical correctness, to the very foundations of the original *Laudabiliter* settlement itself. Thus, spurred on by the political ambitions and anxieties of their Fitzgerald masters, the onset of the reformation provided them with sufficient justification to think the most radical of thoughts and to make the most radical of decisions. Quite simply, if the king of England was prepared to reject both the papal authority upon which his own

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7 Gwynn, *Med. province Armagh*, pp 127-31, 153; *Cal. pat. rolls Ire., Hen. VIII-Eliz*, p 2; *B.R.U.O. 1501-40*, pp 477-9. Thady Reynolds was provided by Pope Paul III to the bishopric of Kildare in 1540 but later surrendered his bulls to the king and was recognised as a suffragan bishop to Archbishop Browne of Dublin.

sovereignty over Ireland rested, and the orthodox canonical religion which he and his people were traditionally bound to promote and spread amongst the Irishry, then it was legitimate for his subjects to deny the validity of his own authority. It was on these grounds, therefore, that they supported the Kildare rebellion and sought foreign aid for the rebels. In December 1534 Archdeacon Reynolds went to Rome with 'diverse old muniments and precedents which should prove that the king hold this land of the see of Rome, alledging the king and his realm to be heretics digressed from the ... faith catholic'. Once again, *Laudabiliter* showed itself to have a deep contemporary resonance for senior clerical figures in the English Pale.[8] For Thomas Cromwell and the Tudor régime, on the other hand, the fact that this notion was current amongst senior ecclesiastical officials in Ireland at the very time they sought to implement the Henrician ecclesiastical revolution was disturbing in the extreme. Thus when the rebellion was eventually crushed he made strenuous efforts to ascertain from the captured Silken Thomas 'what spiritual persons in Ireland did denounce unto him that the king was an heretic, and that it was lawful therefore ... to digress from his obedience'.[9]

Yet Archdeacon Reynolds and his fellow Kildare counsellors were not representative of the Pale ecclesiastical establishment as a whole, and their radical decision to enter into open rebellion against the king was not taken by the majority of their peers. Although many of the latter would have agreed with the premises advanced by the Kildare group for withdrawing their allegiance from the crown, centuries of habitual loyalty to the monarchy and a fundamental belief and trust in the crown's essential contribution to the maintenance of their English identity and canonical ethos - and the hope, at this early stage of the reformation, that it might still be restored - cautioned them against taking such a precipitate step. As a result, the Kildare group were faced not only with the task of winning international support for their cause, but also of persuading their essentially

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8 *S.P. Hen VIII*, ii, pp 222; Ellis, 'Rebellion and the early reformation', pp 813-4.

9 Ibid.

conservative brethren elsewhere in the Pale - in particular, the Dublin diocesan establishment based in St Patrick's cathedral - that their actions were legitimate.

The omens for their success in this task were mixed. On the negative side, the canonical legitimacy of the Kildare cause had been badly undermined by the murder of Archbishop Alen of Dublin. Although the archbishop was not a very popular figure amongst his officials, a feature evinced in the fact that he was left buried in a pauper's grave after his death, his murder at the hands of Lord Thomas and a small band of supporters at Artane in July 1534 was still regarded as a heinous crime and a poor advertisement for a movement which sought to defend clerical privilege from the ravages of a heretical king. Not surprisingly it resulted in the custodians of the see's spiritual jurisdiction - Dean Geoffrey Fyche of St Patrick's cathedral and Prior Thomas Hassard of Christ Church - issuing a very strongly worded ecclesiastical censure against its perpetrators. While the custodians' 'curse' had been eagerly sought by Lord Deputy Skeffington and the Dublin administration for propagandist purposes, there is no reason to doubt that it was an authentic expression of the diocesan administration's feelings on the matter, nor that it caused deep embarrasment to the clerical supporters of Kildare who were seeking to portray his rebellion as a religious crusade. Thus one of Archdeacon Reynolds's main objectives during his mission to Rome in late 1534 was the procurement of a papal absolution for Kildare, a move designed to validate the rebellion's image as a movement of orthodox catholic protest.[10]

The more positive omen for Kildare's clerical counsellors was the well-known suspicion of Dean Fyche and the chapter of St Patrick's towards the reformation. As the patron of two prebends in the cathedral, Maynooth and Yago, Kildare would have been fully aware of the developing reaction of the cathedral canons to the changes wrought on the

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10 Murray, 'Archbishop Alen and reform', pp 1-2; *S.P. Hen VIII*, ii, pp 206, 217-9; Gwynn, *Med. province Armagh*, pp 69-70; F.M. Jones, *The Counter Reformation* (Dublin and Melbourne, 1967), pp 1-2.

English church by the crown in the early 1530s; one of which - the punishment of Archbishop Alen in 1531 for committing offences against the English statutes of *praemunire* and provisors - had already made a devastating impact in the diocese of Dublin itself. Fined the massive sum of £1,466 13*s*. 4*d*. sterling for his involvement in the exercise of Cardinal Wolsey's legatine jurisdiction, Alen was a victim both of the 'aristocratic *putsch*' that had brought about his former master's demise; and of the king's general *praemunire* manoeuvers - undertaken to cow the bench into submission to his divorce plans, and as a display of royal power aimed at the Roman Curia - conducted against the Canterbury clergy in 1531. Standing at four times the annual revenue of the see of Dublin, the fine imposed upon Alen sent out a very chilling warning to the local clergy about the king's determination to secure the full submission of the clerical estate to his will, and provided a vivid preview of the financial ramifications that such a submission might entail for them.[11]

Any doubts that were still harboured on this matter were resolved late in 1533 or early in 1534, with the arrival in Dublin of Dr John Travers, an English theologian, who took up the post of chancellor of St Patrick's cathedral, and who confirmed for his fellow canons the full and unwelcome extent of the Henrician revolution in England. The exact circumstances surrounding Travers's appointment are obscure. His living was in the gift of the archbishop of Dublin, which suggests that Archbishop Alen - attracted possibly by the Oxford educated Travers's academic attainments - was responsible for making it. Arguably of more significance, however, were Travers's own reasons for coming to Dublin. For someone with his qualifications, the move to the relative obscurity of St Patrick's cathedral was unusual and certainly not undertaken to advance his career. Rather, given his later actions - he is thought to have written a book in defence of the papal supremacy and is known certainly to have joined the Kildare rebellion on religious

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11 Murray, 'Archbishop Alen and reform', pp 11-2. On the praemunire manoeuvres and the submission of the clergy generally see J.A. Guy, 'Henry VIII and the praemunire manoeuvres of 1530-1531', in *E.H.R.*, 97 (1982), pp 482-503; idem, *Tudor England* (Oxford, 1988), pp 127-8; G.W. Bernard, 'The pardon of the clergy reconsidered', in *Jn. Ecc. Hist*, 37 (1986), pp 258-82.

grounds - it is likely that he came to Dublin because of his disillusionment with the crown's onslaught on the liberties of the English church, and in the knowledge that his own religious preferences would find a more receptive audience in Ireland.[12]

Travers's hopes were soon confirmed. From the moment he arrived in Dublin, there was a genuine meeting of minds between the new chancellor and the cathedral chapter of St Patrick's, so much so in fact that Geoffrey Fyche was prepared to resign the deanery - a living which was normally reserved as a reward for existing and senior members of the chapter who had made a significant contribution towards the administration of the diocese - to enable the canons to elect him as their leader ahead of the impending struggles over the implementation of the reformation.[13] The favourable impression that Travers made in St Patrick's soon spread beyond the cathedral precincts. Once the Kildare rebellion broke out, he was identified - presumably by Lord Thomas's 'learned counsellors' - as a key figure who could help persuade his fellow clergymen in St Patrick's of the necessity of supporting the revolt on religious grounds. With the experience of the English clergy's capitulation to the king so fresh in his mind, Travers himself took little persuading and was quickly recruited to the cause. Yet, despite his popularity in St Patrick's, and his undoubted abilities as a negotiator - once he joined the rebellion he was employed by Lord Thomas as an emissary in discussions with the citizens of of Dublin over gaining entrance to the city to take over the Castle[14] - he failed to bring any of the cathedral clergy with him into rebellion.

Little or no evidence about the progress of these deliberations has survived, but what is clear is that they were a close run thing. In the aftermath of the rebellion, the Dublin administration certainly felt that Dean Fyche and his chapter were tainted with the same

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12 Lawlor, *Fasti of St Patrick's*, p 63; R.D. Edwards, 'Venerable John Travers and the rebellion of Silken Thomas' in *Studies*, xxiii (1934), pp 687-99; *B.R.U.O. 1501-40*, p 575.

13 *S.P. Hen VIII*, ii, pp 420-1.

14 Edwards, 'Venerable John Travers', p 691.

treasonable intent that Travers had openly exhibited, an intent which was stimulated wholly by their distaste for the crown's reforming intentions.[15] More significantly, the delay in pronouncing the excommunication against the murderers of Archbishop Alen - the archbishop was killed in July 1534, the pronouncement was not made until the end of November or early December[16] - suggests that the dean and chapter were still considering their position as late as the autumn of 1534. In the end, however, their traditional loyalty to the crown, and that of their community generally - shown, for example, in the resistance of the citizens of Dublin to the rebels - had just about stood firm. Yet the crown still had to pay a not insignificant cost. The debate inaugurated by Archdeacon Roth, Archdeacon Reynolds and Chancellor Travers at the outset of the Kildare rebellion, had clarified for all of the senior clergy of the Pale how offensive and unacceptable the crown's reforming intentions were. And it had done so not for any abstruse theological reasons, but for reasons which every English-Irish clergyman in the Pale could relate to. The reformation challenged their very *raison d'être*: their traditional role of reforming Ireland, under papal sanction, according to conventional canonical standards and according to English ecclesiological norms.

The immediate legacy of this unresolved debate was to be found in the proceedings of the Irish parliament which met in 1536-7 to enact Henry VIII's reformation legislation. It is now well established that the clergy, represented by their proctors, provided the sole opposition to the passage of the crown's ecclesiastical acts. Traditional characterisations of the clerical proctors, however - that they represented the voice of a heroic lower clergy who courageously resisted the dictates of Henry VIII - are wide of the mark.[17] Rather, as we have seen, they represented predominantly the voice of the cathedral

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15 *S.P. Hen VIII*, ii, pp 420-1.

16 Ibid., ii, pp 206-7, 217-9.

17 Bradshaw, 'Irish reformation parliament, pp 292, 298-9; G.A. Hayes-McCoy, 'The royal supremacy and the ecclesiastical revolution, 1534-1547', in *New. hist. Ire.*, ii, pp 57-8; Ellis, *Tudor Ire.*, pp 194-5; Lennon, *Sixteenth-century Ireland*, p 135.

chapters and diocesan administrations of English Ireland,[18] the clerical élite of the Pale, which had so recently flirted with rebellion because they felt that the onset of the reformation would destroy all that they stood for. In a very real sense, then, the parliamentary opposition of the proctors was a direct continuation of the opposition which had emerged during the rebellion. Nor is it surprising that such opposition was confined exclusively to this group. According to the canonical theory of representation, the dean and chapter of a diocese were thought to hold a mandate to speak on behalf of the entire population.[19] It may well be that the original idea behind the proctors sitting in parliament was to enable them to exercise this voice when the institution had to deal with religious and ecclesiastical matters. Certainly, this would help explain why the proctors's activities in the medieval Irish parliaments were concerned almost exclusively with such matters,[20] and why it was they alone who resisted the imposition of the reformation legislation. The bishops, monastic heads and laity who objected to this legislation but who for political reasons were in no position to oppose it, could content themselves in the knowledge that their objections were being raised literally by proxy.

The actions of the proctors in parliament, coming so soon after the dissidence which the clergy displayed during the Kildare rebellion, confirmed to the Tudor régime that there was a serious problem of clerical resistance to the reformation in the Pale. Yet given the nature of the crown's reformation strategy, that it was to be implemented through the existing ecclesiastical structures, the only sure way of overcoming this resistance - sacking and replacing all of those clergy who objected to the crown's dictates - was impractical. Thus, those short term measures which were taken - the silencing of the proctors' voice in parliament,[21] the forcing of the resignations of the dean of St Patrick's

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18 Above pp 91-3.

19 Brundage, *Medieval canon law*, pp 106-8.

20 Edwards, *Church &state*, p 9; Ellis, 'Parliament and community in Yorkist and Tudor Ireland', p 49.

21 *Stat. Ire.*, i, pp 102-3; Edwards, *Church & state*, pp 9-10; Bradshaw, 'Irish reformation parliament', pp 298-9; idem, 'Beginnings of modern Ireland', p 74; R. D. Edwards, *Ireland in the*

and the prior of Christ Church and their replacement by more compliant English clergymen[22] - only scratched the surface of the problem. To overcome it in the longer term, Cromwell and the régime decided to plant a small band of loyal, handpicked bishops and other clergymen in the Pale who would act as a countervailing force to this indigenous resistance. It was hoped that the existence of such clergymen in the midst of the local clergy, and their operation of the traditional ecclesiastical structures in the name of the new dispensation, would eventually win the doubters over, if not through the force of the reformers' message itself, then at least through administrative familiarity and inertia. The first man appointed to put this strategy into practice was the new archbishop of Dublin George Browne.

II

George Browne was elected archbishop of Dublin by the cathedral chapter of St Patrick and the prior and convent of Christ Church in March 1536, and took up residence in his new diocese in the following July. Although it was intended from the outset that he should be one of the chief agents in the execution of its enactments, the new archbishop missed the opening session of the reformation parliament which took place in May

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age of the Tudors. The destruction of Hiberno-Norman civilisation (London, 1977), p 46.

22 On the manoeuvres of Cromwell and the Irish council to force the resignation of Dean Fyche of St Patrick's and to secure the appointment of Edward Basnet in his place see Percival, 'The Basnetts during the 16th and 17th centuries', pp 3-4; *S.P. Hen VIII*, ii, pp 420-1; Prebendaries of St Patrick's to Cromwell, 20 Feb 1537 (P.R.O., SP 60/4, no. 10). Fyche refused to go, but conveniently died on 8 April 1537. Hassard resigned from the priorship of Christ Church around the same time. The timing of his resignation, and the fact that he was replaced at Cromwell's behest by a compliant Englishman, Robert Payneswick *alias* Castle, suggests very strongly that the régime deliberately set out to remove the leaders of the two Dublin cathedrals in reprisal for their proctors' opposition to the reformation legislation in parliament. It also appears that the convent of Christ Church, like the chapter of St Patrick's, objected to the forced removal of their prior, for they are known to have elected one of their own number, Walter White, to replace him. White's election was probably quashed by Cromwell in favour of Payneswick (R.C.B., C.6.1.6, no. 3 [Registrum Novum of Christ Church], pp 1084-7; 'Christ Church deeds', nos. 426-7; Archbishop Browne, Dean Basnet and Prior-elect White to Henry VIII, 30 April 1537 [Lambeth, MS 602, ff 54- 55; *Cal. Carew MSS, 1515-74*, p 161, where it is mistakenly ascribed to Archbishop Cromer and misdated to 1540]; Gray to Cromwell, 19 January 1540 [incorrectly dated to 1538 by the editors of *S.P. Hen. VIII*, ii, pp 544-5]; S.P. Hen. VIII, iii, p 468).

1536. Excluding the first act of Succession, which was never executed because of Anne Boleyn's fall, four acts were passed in this session - the acts of Supremacy, Slander, Appeals, and First Fruits - which established the central principle of the Henrician reformation that the king, rather than the pope, was the supreme ecclesiastical authority in the Irish church; as well as defining particular areas where the crown could put into immediate effect its new prerogatives and jurisdiction.[23]

The establishment by parliament of the royal supremacy was not, of course, any surprise to Browne. He had been handpicked by Thomas Cromwell, the intellectual and motive force behind the Henrician ecclesiastical revolution, to spearhead the campaign to secure its full and proper acceptance in Ireland. And it was a job for which he was particularly well-fitted, given his previous experiences in England as a pulpit apologist for the settlement, and as the king's visitor general of the Mendicant orders.[24] All his energies, in fact, were to be concentrated in this pursuit. Unlike his immediate predecessors and successors in the see of Dublin he was not encumbered with any office of state, a feature which highlighted the task-specific nature of his appointment.[25] Yet, despite all this, the output of the first session of the reformation parliament posed a particular problem for Browne. As he perceived it, it did not specify a particular enforcement role for him and his diocesan officials. Although many of the new structures touched upon various aspects of the government of his diocese - such as

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23 *L. & P. Hen. VIII*, x, no. 597 (grants 20, 23); Bradshaw, 'George Browne', p 310; idem, 'Irish reformation parliament', pp 290-2.

24 Bradshaw, 'George Browne', pp 307-9. On Cromwell's central role in the Henrician reformation see A.G.Dickens, *Thomas Cromwell and the English reformation* (London, 1959); and the works of Geoffrey Elton: *England under the Tudors* (2nd edn., London, 1955), chapters 6-7; *Henry VIII. An essay in revision* (London, The Historical Association, 1965 reprint); *Policy and Police. The enforcement of the Reformation in the age of Thomas Cromwell* (Cambridge, 1972); *Reform and Renewal: Thomas Cromwell and the Common Weal* (Cambridge, 1973); *Reform and Reformation, England 1509-58* (London, 1977).

25 Archbishops Hugh Inge (1523-8), John Alen (1529-34), Hugh Curwen (1555-67) and Adam Loftus (1567-1605) all served as lord chancellor of Ireland during their episcopates. Curwen and Loftus also exercised the functions of the chief governor during spells as lord justice of Ireland, as did John Alen in 1529-30 when he was appointed to a three-man 'secret council', which was given the same authority as a resident governor.

those instituted to enable the crown to dispense its subjects from canonical impediments[26] or to enable it to hear their appeals from the decrees of local ecclesiastical courts[27] - not a single act within the first batch of ecclesiastical legislation defined any offences against the new settlement which he or his diocesan officials were empowered to detect and correct. Nor, on account of the fall of Anne Boleyn, and in stark contrast to what had transpired in England at the outset of its reformation, was there any legislation on the statute books enabling the archbishop to impel positive statements of loyalty to the settlement in the form of a corporal oath upholding new succession rights to the crown. Indeed, the passing of such acts did not take place until the final session of the parliament in the autumn of 1537, with the result that Browne spent his first fifteen months as the leader of the reformation campaign, and as archbishop of the strategically crucial diocese of Dublin, in an administrative vacuum.[28]

Browne's response to this situation was to await further clarification of his role. Thus, instead of undertaking a primary visitation of his diocese and province, the normal way in which a new archbishop would display and establish his authority amongst his clergy and flock, he busied himself with occasional preaching on behalf of the supremacy,[29] and in attending sessions of the parliament in the Irish Lords. It was not only a lack of clear legislative guidance, however, which gave rise to this initial cautiousness on

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26 A bill for faculties was introduced in the first session of the parliament, but was not passed until the final session. The corresponding English act, however, applied to Ireland also, and was operating in Dublin even before Browne became archbishop (Bradshaw, 'Irish reformation parliament', pp 292-4; D.S. Chambers, *Faculty Office Registers 1534-1549. A Calendar of the first two Registers of the Archbishop of Canterbury's Faculty Office*[Oxford, 1966], pp xxix-xxx).

27 Alexander Keating, a Wexford-based priest, claimed that his 'apellation from the archbishop of Dublin' was the first to be 'made out of Ireland to his grace [the king] sith the making of the act for that purpose ...' (Keating to Cromwell, c. August 1537, P.R.O., SP 60/5, no. 5).

28 On the use and importance of the first succession oath in the campaign to enforce the Henrician ecclesiastical revolution in England see Elton, *Policy and Police*, pp 222-7.

29 For an appreciative view of Browne's first sermon in Dublin (3 December 1536) see Martin Pelles to Cromwell, 4 December 1536 (*Cal. Carew MSS, 1515-74*, p 111).

Browne's part. It is likely that he also desired one further piece of direction from the centre. Given his background and his perception of his own mission - he 'boasteth himself to rule all the clergy under our sovereign lord'[30] - there are good grounds for assuming that he expected a commission to be issued, either to himself or to a group of crown officials, to undertake a royal visitation of the Irish church along the lines of his own visitation of the English Mendicants in 1534, or the general royal visitation of the English church which was undertaken in 1535.[31] This method of enforcement - a spectacular, annunciatory, display of Henry VIII's new powers, in particular, his acquisition of the pope's position as the supreme ordinary in the local church - was the classical enforcement strategy employed by Cromwell in the immediate aftermath of the establishment of the royal supremacy. For Browne, a man who had played a significant part in the implementation of this strategy, and whose administrative experiences of the structures and procedures of ecclesiastical government were confined to their operation in this new, revolutionary context, this would have been the most desirable way of inaugurating the enforcement of the Henrician reformation in Ireland. Not only would it have had the reassuring virtue of mirroring the familiar pattern established on the mainland, it would also, through the terms of the commission, have given the archbishop the requisite authority to institute those enforcement proceedings for which a statutory prescription was lacking.

Yet no such commission was granted for a royal visitation of the Irish church. The reason for this was the changing circumstances in England. In 1535 the royal visitation of the English church had been preceded by the inhibition of the powers and jurisdiction

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30 Bishop Staples to Sir Anthony St Leger, the king's comissioner, 17 June 1538 (*S. P. Hen. VIII*, iii, pp 29-30). Staples was not enamoured with Browne's boast and asked St Leger and his fellow commissioner, Sir Thomas Moyle, in jest to preserve 'his soul from the purgatory of the bishop of Dublin', in return for which he would give each of them a mass penny.

31 On Browne's visitation of the Mendicants see F. Roth, *The English Austin Friars 1249-1538* (2 vols., New York, 1961-66), ii, pp 445-8; on the royal visitation of the English church see Elton, *Policy and Police*, pp 247-51; M. Bowker, 'The Supremacy and the Episcopate: the Struggle for Control', in *Hist. Jn.*, 18 (1975), pp 235-40; W.H. Frere, *Visitation Articles and Injunctions of the period of the Reformation* (Alcuin Club, 3 vols., London, 1910), i, pp 119-23.

of the English bishops. These powers, which included the right to visit, were only returned gradually by royal commission in the succeeding years. Originally, this policy was instituted to undermine the notion that the bishops derived their authority from the pope, the main effect of which was that it transformed the episcopate into a body of royal functionaries who served as ecclesiastics at the king's pleasure. The policy also acted, however, as a strong political pressure on the bishops to conform to the king's religious dictates, and to ensure that those same dictates were implemented throughout their own dioceses. In other words, the more a bishop conformed, the more speedily he would recover his powers to hold visitations and to grant probate on wills, with their attendant and lucrative fees.[32] By the time George Browne arrived in Dublin, the policy had achieved its desired ends and the gradual restoration of episcopal authority was growing apace.[33] In fact, it was gradually becoming clearer that there was now no need for the king to intervene directly in the administration of ecclesiastical discipline. The reconstructed episcopacy could be called upon to do the job for him through the operation of their own individual ordinary jurisdictions. In this, the archbishop of Dublin was not to be excepted, especially as he was a prelate whose loyalty to the new settlement was unquestioned and who required no reconstruction whatsoever. He, no less than any of his fellow English bishops, was expected to use his own episcopal authority to enforce the settlement.

George Browne was slow, even reluctant, to take up this challenge. Part of the reason for this was his inexperience as a conventional diocesan administrator. A theologian by training, he lacked theoretical and practical experience of the administration of traditional canonical procedures, and was certainly not equipped to adapt them for the enforcement of the Henrician religious settlement, particularly as there was no statutory guidance on offer, or the reassurance of the dictates of a royal commission, to instil the

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32 Haigh, *English Reformations,* pp 123-4; Bowker, *John Longland*, pp 76-8.

33 In February 1537, for example, Bishop Longland of Lincoln recovered all his powers by licence from the king (Bowker, 'Supremacy and the Episcopate', p 242).

necessary confidence.[34] No allowance, however, was made for this by his political masters. Instead, the archbishop's apparent reluctance to activate the machinery of the traditional episcopal visitation, coupled with the emergence of complaints against him concerning his boastful claims that he exercised an overriding authority over the rest of the Irish clergy, gave a generally negative impression of his episcopacy. Thus at the end of July 1537, only a year after his arrival, he received a letter from the king which rebuked him for his failure to instruct his flock in the word of God and to advance the king's affairs in Ireland; and which castigated him for his arrogant behaviour and the inflated notions he held of his own importance.[35] The low key, even shallow, beginning of Browne's episcopacy had a more telling effect, however, than the lowering of his standing in the eyes of the king. By depriving himself of the use of the machinery of episcopal visitation, the archbishop also failed to acquaint himself fully with the mood and reaction of his clergy and flock to the new religious situation. Although he vaguely sensed, as he reported to the king in September 1537, that the people of his diocese upheld the pretensions of the papacy, he had no real intelligence upon which to make an accurate assessment of the nature of this attachment.[36]

The archbishop finally secured this intelligence in the last two months of 1537 when he at last undertook the primary metropolitan visitation of his diocese and province. What it revealed to him was extremely disturbing. In a report of the visitation sent to

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34 On Browne's training see *B.R.U.O. 1501-40*, p 76. For a practical manifestation of his inexperience see below pp 131-2.

35 *S. P. Hen. VIII*, ii, p 465. On one level this letter of rebuke was a repeat of a device, often employed by the king and Cromwell, to stir the bishops to make greater efforts on behalf of the settlement. Similar letters were issued to the bishops during the enforcement campaign in England, and to Bishop Staples of Meath at the same time as Browne (Elton, *Policy and Police*, pp 231-3, 251-2; P.R.O., SP 60/4, no. 56). However, the unique references to the 'elation' of Browne's 'mind in pride', his 'glorying in foolish ceremonies' and his 'delighting in We and Us' are probably related to Bishop Staples' later complaint about Browne's claim that he ruled over the entire Irish clergy. According to Staples, 'every honest man ... reckoneth that pride and arrogance hath ravished him' (*S. P. Hen. VIII*, iii, p 29).

36 *S. P. Hen. VIII*, ii, pp 512-4. Browne told the king that the 'usurped power of the bishop of Rome' was 'a thing not a little rooted amongst the inhabitants here'.

Cromwell on 8 January 1538, the archbishop put on record, in confirmation of his earlier suspicion, how 'unfaithful a sort' the king had 'in this land'. The main reason for this general unfaithfulness was the attitude of his clergy, who, he said, 'seduceth the rest' and 'hindereth and plucketh back amongst the people' all his work in promoting the crown's supremacy over the church.[37] This is a fascinating claim. It is one of the few surviving instances were an individual actually attempted to define particular elements of what many contemporaries were to describe as the 'popery' of the Tudor Irish. Given the source of the claim - from a man who who had just reviewed his clergy in an episcopal visitation - some weight must be attached to it. However, the question that needs to be answered is precisely how much weight, a question which can only be addressed by examining the context and circumstances of Browne's visitation.

III

Apart from the letter of rebuke which he received from the king, the spur to the initiation of Browne's first diocesan visitation was the passing of two acts in the final session of the reformation parliament in the autumn of 1537. One of these was the second act of succession. This act, which legitimized the progeny of Henry VIII's marriage to Jane Seymour, established formal procedures for positively binding the king's subjects to the new dispensation. A corporal oath upholding the succession could now be administered by the king, his heirs or any duly appointed deputy, to any of his subjects living in Ireland who were of full age. Refusal to take the oath was adjudged to be high treason and punishable by death.[38] Here, at last, was something tangible that the archbishop could implement in a visitation. Indeed, the archbishop now had a choice of oaths to administer, for the other reformist measure passed in the final session of the parliament - the act against the authority of the bishop of Rome - laid down that a

37 *S. P. Hen. VIII*, ii, pp 539-41.

38 The second act of succession has not been printed yet. The text survives on the original statute roll of the 1536-7 parliament (N.A.I., CH 1/1, mm 15-18). The text of the oath is on membrane 18.

separate oath upholding the king's supremacy should be taken by all ecclesiastical and temporal officials on entering office, by all clergy and laymen suing livery out of the king, and by all secular clerks and religious taking their orders or vows. As with the oath of succession, refusal to take the oath of supremacy was also decreed to be a treasonable offence and punishable by death.[39]

In terms of enforcement policy generally, the act against the authority of the bishop of Rome did much more than just seek to elicit a formal statement of support for the new order from the king's Irish subjects. It also sought to destroy indigenous support for the papacy. To this end, it forbade any act or deed - including printing, writing, teaching or preaching - which set forth, maintained or defended the authority, jurisdiction or power of the bishop of Rome after 1 November 1537. The responsibility for policing the new law was divided between the secular and ecclesiastical authorities. The justices of the peace and assize, for example, were empowered to inquire into all offences against the act. Any such offences detected by them were to be certified into King's Bench for their hearing and determination, the penalty for conviction being the same as those of the medieval statute of *praemunire*. The other side of the detection process fell to the ecclesiastical ordinaries. The act authorised all archbishops, bishops, archdeacons and other ecclesiastical judges to inquire during visitation into offences specifically committed by the clergy. Clergymen suspected of such crimes or actually found guilty in the ecclesiastical courts were to be handed over to the secular arm - either to the next gaol delivery or to the deputy and council at Dublin Castle - where their case would receive a further hearing; or, if they had already been found guilty by an ecclesiastical tribunal, where they would be subjected to the penalties of *praemunire*. To ensure that this enforcement procedure would not be subverted, ecclesiastical visitors who knowingly concealed or hid any knowledge of a clergyman's offence were to be subject to a fine of *IR*£40.

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39 The text of the act is printed in *Stat. Ire.*, i, p 104-10. The oath is on p 108.

It is clear from the terms of this act that the crown considered it a vital undertaking to secure the conformity of the Irish clergy. Although the secular authorities had a general brief to detect and punish instances of support for the papacy amongst the community at large, the special provisions laid down for detecting clerical offences indicate that it had a higher priority. There were two important reasons for this. The first concerned the actions of the clergy during the Kildare rebellion. Cromwell and the Tudor régime were fully aware of the extent to which the clergy had attempted to subvert the reformation during the revolt, and thus recognised that the securing of their allegiance to the settlement would be a vital aspect of preventing any further outbreaks of dissidence, whether overt or covert. But this was not to be an end in itself. Once clerical obedience was achieved, it was envisaged by the Tudor régime that they would become enforcement agencies themselves by promoting the Henrician religious settlement through their traditional teaching and preaching functions.[40] Fully aware of this prerequisite of the Henrician scheme of reform, the passage of the act against the authority of the bishop of Rome firmly placed the onus on Browne to meet his clergy head on, and to attempt by the formal procedures of episcopal visitation to win them over to his way of thinking.

Most of the formal documentation of Browne's primary visitation - including the mandate, the articles of inquiry and the *acta* - are not now extant.[41] However, shortly after the completion of the visitation the archbishop drew up a set of articles at the command of the king 'for the reformation of certain enormities and abuses amongst his clergy'. These were to be issued to the bishops and clergy of Ireland at large.[42] The

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40 On the important role of pulpit propaganda in the enforcement of the Henrician settlement in England see Elton, *Policy and Police*, pp 211-16; Rex, *Henry VIII*, pp 29-31.

41 For a general introduction to the process of visitation and its associated documents see Frere, *Visitation Articles*, i, pp 1-169, especially pp 93-117.

42 The articles are printed in J.P. Collier, ed., *The Egerton Papers* (Camden Society, London, 1840), pp 7-10.

format of the articles,[43] the timing of their issue[44] and the similarity of some of their contents with matters that Browne had previously raised in his correspondence with Cromwell on the visitation,[45] suggests that they were either an adaptation of the provincial visitation injunctions for general consumption, or that they actually served as the visitation injunctions themselves. With these injunctions and Browne's correspondence as a basis, it is possible to reconstruct the main proceedings of the visitation in Dublin.

The vividness with which Browne spoke of clerical resistance to the new religious settlement clearly indicates that he experienced it at first hand. Thus there is no reason to suppose that he deviated from the customary practice whereby the new diocesan would conduct his primary visitation personally. The itinerary of Browne's visitation would also have been a well established practice. It is likely that he travelled on horseback, followed by his train, to a pre-chosen parish church in each of the rural deaneries of Christianity (Dublin city and suburbs), Swords, Taney, Bray and Leixlip.[46] However, like his predescessors and, indeed, many of his sucessors, it is unlikely that he risked his safety by venturing into the Gaelic deaneries of Wicklow and Arklow and into

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43 The 'articles' are not articles of enquiry but orders or injunctions such as would have been issued after a visitation (see Frere, *Visitation Articles*, i, pp 111-17). For an alternative view of the articles see Edwards, *Church & State*, pp 63-4.

44 The 'articles' were promulgated before May 1538. Writing to Cromwell on 8 May, Browne noted that they had already been condemned by one of the canons of St Patrick's cathedral (*S. P. Hen. VIII*, iii, p 7). The date of issue was probably January or February 1538 i.e., after the conclusion of the visitation in December 1537 and the forwarding of Browne's report on the same to Cromwell on 8 January 1538.

45 Compare, for example, articles 1 and 2 (orders to the clergy to take the oaths of sucession and supremacy), articles 4 and 5 (orders to the senior clergy to preach on behalf of the new settlement), and articles 8 and 9 (orders that the corporate clergy, including the exempt religious orders, should acknowledge the supremacy in writing under their seals) with Browne's report of the visitation to Cromwell on 8 January 1538 (*Egerton papers*, pp 7-9; *S. P. Hen. VIII*, ii, pp 539-41). It is clear from such a comparison that the articles were issued as a response or a formal conclusion to the things Browne had encountered, experienced or instituted during his visitation in November-December 1537 i.e. they were visitation injunctions.

46 In this Browne conformed with the practice of his predecessor Archbishop Alen, for which see *Alen's Reg.*, pp 277-8, 293-4.

the more exposed parts of the marcher deaneries of Ballymore and Omurthy.[47] What is certain is that he intended to make stop-overs in all of the religious corporations *en route*. And here, in each of the chapter houses, as well as in each of the selected parish churches, he would have presided over specially convened visitation courts before which the inmates of the monasteries and the assembled secular clergy of each deanery would have been examined on the pre-prepared visitation articles.[48]

The actual business of Browne's visitation was a mixture of old and new concerns. The clergy were examined on a number of traditional disciplinary matters such as their frequenting of common taverns and ale houses or, in the case of dispensed non-resident beneficed clergy, whether they had found sufficient curates to serve the cure of souls in their stead.[49] The bulk of the business, however, concerned the enforcement of the new settlement. Browne appears to have believed that his dictate for obedience - outlined in the pre-visitation articles - would go largely unchallenged. Nevertheless, as he soon discovered, the opposite proved to be the case. Evidence of widespread neglect of the provisions laid down in the act against the authority of the bishop of Rome was everywhere apparant, especially the failure of the bulk of the clergy to remove the pope's name from the canon of the mass and other liturgical books. For the archbishop, this was a great shock and he interpreted it as a complete and total rejection of his own authority.[50] If this had been the only evidence of clerical dissidence it would be fair to argue that his reaction to the discovery was unduly pessimistic, or even hysterical, for,

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47 The fear of brigandage and attack '*in partibus hibernicanis et marchialibus*' impeded archiepiscopal administration of the diocese of Dublin througout the fifteenth century (see above pp 78-81). Archbishop Alen's list of proxies from his inaugural visitation in 1531 does not include any sums for Wicklow and Arklow deaneries, which indicates that he did not visit them (*Alen's Reg.*, pp 277-8). As late as 1615, the ecclesiastical authorities in Dublin were ignorant of the state of the Gaelic and marcher deaneries. Summing up his report on the regal visitation of that year, one of Browne's sucessors, Archbishop Jones (1605-19), was only able to give a 'slender account' of them as they lay in 'places remote' (B.L. Add. MS 19836, f 14r).

48 On visitation articles of enquiry generally see Frere, *Visitation Articles*, i, pp 93-104, 187-9.

49 *Egerton papers*, pp 9-10 (articles 13 and 14).

50 *S. P. Hen. VIII*, ii, pp 539-41.

given that the act against the authority of the bishop of Rome had only recently come into effect, the failure to remove the pope's name from the service books may have only stemmed from ignorance of the act. However, Browne also discovered more insidious and worrying evidence of resistance.

Tactically, he tried to enforce clerical obedience in a hierachical manner, by concentrating his efforts on the numerically small, but highly influential, senior corporate clergy. This involved swearing in cathedral and monastic chapters to the supremacy in writing under their seals, and attempting to institute a preaching programme on behalf of the settlement amongst abbots, priors, cathedral dignitaries and prebendaries and masters of hospitals.[51] There were a number of compelling reasons for adopting this approach, the first of which was the fact that advanced clerical learning, whether formally or informally acquired, was concentrated in the corporate clergy. One of the main implications of this was that ecclesiastical judges, both those who administered diocesan and peculiar jurisdictions, were invariably recruited from the grouping or held their positions by virtue of their membership. In effect, this meant that in some cases the sole responsibility for the enforcement of the Henrician reformation, or the responsibility for its continuing enforcement in the times between the triennial episcopal visitation,[52] lay in their hands.

As learned clerks, the senior corporate clergy also played an important social role either as educators of youth, or as men of affairs. This could be a particularly infuential role if the cleric in question was related to families of good social standing, which was often the case in a tightly-knit and endogamous society like the English Pale.[53] A man who

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51 *Egerton papers*, pp 7-9 (articles 1, 2, 4, 5, 7, and 8); *S. P. Hen. VIII*, ii, pp 539-41.

52 I have found no contemporary references to the frequency of episcopal visitations in Dublin. However, Canon 17 of the 1635 ecclesiastical canons implies that the employment of triennial episcopal visitations was a longstanding custom throughout the Church of Ireland.

53 On the endogamous pattern of marriage in Dublin city and county see Lennon, *Lords of Dublin*, pp 78-83.

embodied all of these qualities when Archbishop Browne arrived in Dublin was Robert Fitzsimon, the precentor of St Patrick's cathedral and, as official principal of his consistory court, the leading legal officer in the diocese.[54] Fitzsimon was a scion of an eminent family amongst the Dublin city merchant oligarchy. His brother Thomas, for example, was recorder of the city. Robert, himself, was an Oxford MA and graduate in civil law which virtually guaranteed him a career as a senior administrator in his native diocese. The range of his interests did not stop here however. He also acted as a free-lance legal adviser to monastic houses on canonical matters, was a broker of monastic leases, served as a master in the Irish chancery, and kept a household which made provision for the education of young boys from leading Pale families, like John Plunket, of Dunsoghly, who later became chief justice of the Queen's Bench in Elizabeth's reign.[55]

The final reason for Browne concentrating his efforts upon the senior corporate clergy was the fact that they exercised a controlling influence over the vast majority of Dublin parishes. 84% of Dublin parishes, in fact, were appropriated to the see's two cathedrals and a number of religious houses, most of which were based within the English Pale. This controlling influence gave the local corporate clergy the authority to appoint curates and chaplains to nearly two thirds of all Dublin parishes. Thus they had the power to sway the majority of the parochial clergy towards their way of thinking, whether on political or religious matters, because most of these curates and chaplains were totally dependent upon the corporate clergy for their economic well-being.[56]

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54 Lawlor, *Fasti of St Patrick's,* p 56; Berry, ed.,'Deeds of the gild of S. Anne in S. Audoen's Church', p 50. Fitzsimon was appointed official principal *sede vacante* in the wake of Archbishop Alen's murder in 1534. It is not absolutely certain that he held on to the post after Browne's arrival, but the facts that there are no extant references to another incumbent of the office until after his death in 1542, and that Browne is known to have encountered great difficulties in recruiting administrators outside the diocese, suggests that he did. On Browne's recruitment difficulties see below pp 134-5.

55 Above pp 90-1, 95-6 (nt. 64); on Fitzsimon's brokering of monastic leases see *Cal. pat. rolls Ire., Hen. VIII-Eliz*, pp 312-3.

56 Above pp 102-3, and below chapter 7.

It is clear from the foregoing that Archbishop Browne's decision to concentrate his attentions on the senior corporate clergy was well founded, for they were a group who controlled the government of the local church, who commanded the loyalty of the parochial clergy and whose influence reached into the very heart of the local political community. It was here, however, that he found the most organized and ingrained resistance to the new religious dispensation. On the whole the corporate clergy took the oath of supremacy as administered by the archbishop, although in St Patrick's cathedral one member of the chapter, James Humphrey, campaigned vigorously to get his fellow canons to withold their signatures from the acknowledgement document.[57] The main resistance manifested itself in two ways: first, in a refusal in all quarters to preach on behalf of the settlement; second, in a refusal by exempt religious orders like the Knights Hospitallers of Kilmainham and the Observant Friars in Dublin to admit the archbishop into their jurisdictions.[58] Browne's surprise at the latter phenomenon, in particular, was indicative of his inexperience as an episcopal administrator. A cursory examination of the records of his predescessors' episcopacies would have revealed to him that these orders, if for no other reason than to maintain their peculiar jurisdictions inviolate, were destined to provide a tough legal challenge to any enforcement campaign run by the archbishop of Dublin on behalf of the crown. Even his immediate predescessor, the pugnacious canonist John Alen, a man who rarely flinched in the face of conflict and who dedicated much of his episcopacy to strengthening his authority over the regular clergy, had not dared to challenge the Observants and the Knights Hospitallers. Browne, himself, soon learned that he had been mistaken in his assumption that he had the legal authority to enter their jurisdictions. Shortly after he issued his visitation injunctions in the early spring of 1538, he was forced to abandon article 10 which

57 *S. P. Hen. VIII*, iii, p 7.

58 Ibid., ii, pp 539-41.

stipulated that 'in places exempt' he could 'punish such as been culpable' of offences against the settlement 'no liberty, grant, ne licences withstanding'.[59]

All of this dismayed Archbishop Browne because he could not see any way in which the situation would be improved using the conventional diocesan administrative system, even with the coercive backing of the statute against the authority of the bishop of Rome. Because so many of his clergy were patently guilty of offences against the statute, it would have been politically and administratively impossible to prosecute and inflict the penalties of *praemunire* upon them all. Thus in his own visitation he tried to persuade his clergy to row in behind the settlement 'by gentle exhortation, evangelical instruction' and 'threats of sharp correction'.[60] These varied tactics were unsuccessful. Yet even the exertion of this much pressure could not be guaranteed once the archbishop ceased his visitation. From that point on the responsibility for disciplinary proceedings in the heartland of the diocese would devolve for three years upon the archdeacon of Dublin, William Power, and the official principal, Robert Fitzsimon, both of whom were longstanding and probably conservatively inclined members of the cathedal chapter of St Patrick's.[61] Certainly Browne was of the opinion that his ordinaries would be slow to detect and correct offences against the settlement. In his report on his visitation in January 1538 he urged Cromwell to issue a letter to the Irish treasurer, the chief justice and the Master of the Rolls giving them authority over all ecclesiastical persons, which he believed would help him 'prick other forthwards that been underneath me' to execute their offices.[62]

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59 *Egerton papers*, p 9 (article 10 is struck out in the original). On Archbishop Alen's campaign against the regulars see Murray, 'Archbishop Alen and reform', pp 6-7.

60 *S. P. Hen. VIII*, ii, p 539.

61 On Power see Lawlor, *Fasti of St Patrick's*, pp 63, 79, 117.

62 *S. P. Hen. VIII*, ii, p 540.

In making this request Browne revealed his true instincts. Instead of convincing him that there was more than one way to enforce the Henrician reformation, the experience of his primary visitation had reaffirmed his faith in the belief that a direct display of the supreme head's power, such as he had partaken in in England, was the only truly effective way of furthering the cause amongst a stubborn clergy who were determined to undermine his best efforts. Indeed, Browne was so convinced of this fact that he sought the erection in Ireland of the full apparatus of the royal supremacy including the appointment of a separate 'Vicar General [or vicegerent] and a Master of the Faculties'. He believed that such offices would make the supremacy visible on the ground, buttress his little-regarded authority and counteract the nefarious influence of the papacy, which manifested itself in the too easily available papal indulgences and dispensations.[63]

Despite this passionate advocacy, however, Browne's request went unheeded. Support of the kind he sought from the secular authorities was not sanctioned by the king and Cromwell. Instead, the archbishop was commanded to issue his visitation injunctions or articles of reformation to the clergy of Ireland at large. The articles, eighteen in all, dealt with the taking of the corporal oaths concerning the king's succession and supremacy, the rejection of papal authority and with a variety of reformed practices to be undertaken at different clerical levels. In effect, it was a handbook for Henry VIII's new model Irish clergy.[64] The strategy was fundamentally flawed, however, because all it did was was create a new set of rules and observances which required monitoring by a diocesan government known by its archbishop to lack any commitment to the principles lying behind them. Who, for example, Browne must have wondered, would ensure that the parsons, vicars and curates of the diocese would read the archbishop's new bidding prayers - 'The Form of the Beads' - after the gospel every Sunday and holyday? Who would ensure that they would teach the people their Paternoster and Creed in English, or

63 Ibid.

64 *Egerton papers*, pp 7-10.

that they would teach the people what the communion was, why they should receive it and what profit would come from receiving it?[65]

In the absence of secular pressure upon the diocesan establishment, the only other option available to Browne for securing their support was to reconstitute it by appointing officials who favoured the settlement. This was not a straightforward task. The key position in the administration was the archdeaconry of Dublin, because outside the periods of the triennial episcopal visitation most of the responsibility for correcting delinquent clergy in the heartland of the diocese fell upon the holder of this office. Once an appointment was made to it, however, it was difficult to remove the incumbent because it was first and foremost a freehold benefice in the cathedral of St Patrick. Unless good grounds for deprivation could be found, the only option open to the archbishop for changing his archdeacon was to secure his resignation. Similar tactics had been used by Cromwell and the Irish council in 1537 to remove the conservative head of St Patrick's, Dean Geoffrey Fyche, in order to replace him by Edward Basnet, a compliant English clerk. The problem here, of course, was that the archdeacon might refuse to go, as Geoffrey Fyche had done, and become, like the aged and venerable dean of Dublin, a focus for conservative clerical opposition.[66]

And even if such a resignation was successfully achieved, there still remained the problem of finding a suitable replacement. Both Cromwell and Browne discovered that this posed an insuperable problem. In 1536 Cromwell induced one Stephen Caston to resign his London living, the rectory of St Leonard's, Eastcheap, to accompany Browne to Dublin, and offered him the then vacant archdeaconry of Dublin. However, when Caston arrived in Ireland he became unconvinced that the remuneration on offer, *IR*£40, was sufficient to justify his emmigration and duly boarded the first barque back to

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65 Articles 6, 15 and 16 (*Egerton papers*, pp 8-10). Browne's bidding prayers, 'The form of the beads', are printed in *S. P. Hen. VIII*, ii, pp 564-5.

66 Above pp 52-4, 116-8.

Southampton.[67] Browne's attempt to broaden the pool of clerical talent in his diocese was equally unsuccessful. His difficulty stemmed from the fact his contacts appear to have been restricted to former confréres from the English Augustinian friars, men like Gilbert Rose and William Pound, appointees to the vicarage of Swords and prebend of Dunlavan respectively.[68] Like the archbishop himself, both men were theologians by training - Rose a doctor, and Pound a bachelor, of divinity[69] - and not particularly suited to the day to day work of administering a diocese. However, even if they had proved capable of undertaking this work, there still would have remained the additional hurdles of getting them to reside in Ireland, and of guaranteeing their loyalty to the Henrician religious settlement. Dr Gilbert Rose, it appears, failed on both counts. He was a non-resident absentee vicar of Swords for at least a decade after his induction in 1537 and, just prior to this, he was suspected of preaching a conservative and seditious sermon against the Henrician régime's attack on the church's possessions.[70] Thus, in the end, Browne's only success in restructuring his administration was a very modest one indeed. In 1538 he acquired notarial faculties for his London-born lay servant, William Mowseherst, after which he made him his diocesan registrar.[71]

The failure to reconstruct the diocesan administration not only hindered the archbishop's efforts to sustain, after his visitation, an enforcement campaign amongst the lower clergy and community at large, it also in many ways ensured that a sanctuary was

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67 P.R.O., SP 1/133, ff 204rv (*L. & P. Hen. VIII*, xii [i], no. 960); *Valor beneficiorum*, p 9.

68 Roth, *Austin Friars*, ii, pp 395, 412, 415, 421, 427-8, 431, 442; P.R.O., SP 65/1, f 14v (Vice-treasurer Brabazon's account 1534-7, receipt of IR£20 in first fruits for the vicarage of Swords from Gilbert Rose in the year of his induction, 1537); Chambers, *Faculty Office Registers*, p 55; *Cal. pat. rolls Ire., Hen. VIII-Eliz*, p 142.

69 *B.R.U.O. 1501-40*, pp 459, 491.

70 Inquisitions held before the barons of the Irish Exchequer recorded Rose's absenteeism on 11 November 1541 and 2 February 1548 (N.A.I., RC 9/3, pp 227-8, RC 9/2, pp 300, 304-9); P.R.O., SP 1/105, ff 210-212r, 'Certain words that Doctor Gilbert should speak who is chaplain to the archbishop of Dublin' (*L. & P. Hen. VIII*, xi, no. 196).

71 *S. P. Hen. VIII*, iii, p 3; R.C.B., C.6.1.6, no 3 (Registrum Novum of Christ Church cathedral), p 1088.

maintained for the continued existence of a traditional and deeply embedded papalist cult in the diocese. That such a cult existed is hardly surprising, for it was the clerical élite among the Pale community, especially the diocesan administrators based in St Patrick's cathedral, who would have had the most consistent experience of papal claims to supremacy, both in its theoretical and practical aspects. Their awareness and appreciation of the pope's traditional position would have been acquired through their legal studies and in the day to day administration of the canon law; a code of law in which the notion of papal suzerainty was always implicitly, if not explicitly, stated. This, in itself, would have attuned the clergy to respond positively and loyally to the fact of papal rule, if for no other reason than that they continually experienced its constant and unquestioned reiteration, whether in the dating of official documents in pontifical years[72] or in the notarial formulae of their registrars.[73] However, the notion of papal suzerainty was also a fundamental part of the traditional ethos which they shared with the rest of the Pale clerical élite; because it was the papacy that had sanctioned the original English conquest of Ireland and which, in the process, had instituted the English Irish clergy's mission of enforcing and upholding the standards of Christian behaviour enshrined in canon law. The maintenance and protection of this ethos, therefore, was almost synonymous with the defence of papal claims to supremacy.

The resistance to the reformation that this ideology provoked, especially amongst the secular clerical élite, was the most consistent and intransigent source of disobedience throughout Henry VIII's reign and beyond. It had manifested itself even before Browne's arrival in the diocese when senior cathedral clerics, including Dean Fyche, associated themselves with Dr John Travers's vehement and ultimately traitorous critique of the Henrician settlement during the period of the Kildare rebellion. When

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72 See, for example, the decree of election of Geoffrey Fyche as dean of St Patrick's, 1530 (Mason, *History of St Patrick's*, pp xix-xx).

73 For some examples see the formulae of Thomas Walsh, diocesan registrar, 1522 (B.L. Add. Charters, nos. 7043, 7044); Hugh Holgrave, diocesan registrar, 1533 (R.C.B., C.6.1.6, no 3, p 1078); Nicholas Bennet, archidiaconal registrar, 1537 (R.C.B., C.6.1.6, no 3, p 1085).

the Henrician settlement made its first impact in the parliament of 1536-7, it manifested itself in the parliamentary opposition of their representatives, the clerical proctors. Finally, when Cromwell decided to punish these past misdemeanours - by removing Geoffrey Fyche from the deanery of St Patrick's - it manifested itself in a concerted protest undertaken against this action by the cathedral prebendaries. The arguments employed by the cathedral clergy on this occasion - that the liberties of their church had been granted by Henry VIII's progenitors and had been instrumental in preserving it free from the disorder and chaos which contaminated the 'churches in Irishry' - as well as their insistence that the deanery should be preserved for someone of 'this country, nation and birth', clearly identified the English-Irish cultural origins of this ongoing clerical protest.[74] Yet for all the evidence of its existence, in the crucial period leading up to the fall of Thomas Cromwell in 1540 Archbishop Browne was unable to rid himself of it. There was one important reason for this. A higher priority was given to the destruction of monasticism at this juncture, a process in which Archbishop Browne himself was intimately involved and the one reformation initiative which, of all those embarked upon in the Tudor period, received the greatest support of the secular authorities.[75] In contrast, Browne's efforts to break clerical resistance in his cathedral during the period were not only not supported by the secular authorities, but were actually hampered and ultimately destroyed by them.

One example of this concerned the promotion of Thomas Creef, a vicar choral of St Patrick's, to a prebend in the same church. A competent and efficient administrator, Creef had served Archbishop Browne as his steward in the early days of his episcopate, but the archbishop had been forced to sack him because of 'his popishness'. Undaunted by the archbishop's actions, and exhibiting what would prove to be the characteristic self-confidence of the conservative clerical opponents of the reformation in St Patrick's,

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74 Above pp 52-4, 116-8; *S. P. Hen. VIII*, ii, pp 420-1.

75 On Browne's involvement in the dissolution campaign see Bradshaw, *Dissolution of the religious orders*, pp 110-21.

Creef responded by visiting England in the spring or early summer of 1538, where he secured from Thomas Cromwell letters directing his appointment to a prebend in the cathedral. Browne complied with the directive from England and duly appointed Creef to the prebend of Saggart. However, he did not let the incident pass without communicating his exasperation to his master, requesting in particular that Cromwell should 'hire my simple advice' in making future appointments within his jurisdiction, especially concerning 'them that shall come out of these parts'. The archbishop's frustration was compounded by the fact Creef was 'both at Canterbury and Walsingham and other pilgrimages' during his visit to England.[76]

The most serious failure of the secular authorities to support Archbishop Browne, however, occurred earlier in the summer of 1538, and concerned an initiative directed against the man perceived by the archbishop to be the ringleader of resistance, James Humphrey, the prebendary of St Audoen's in St Patrick's cathedral. Humphrey's background was typical of a member of the clerical élite in Dublin. He came from a respectable freeholding family from Lusk in the Fingal region of north Co. Dublin, and was educated at Oxford where he graduated as a master of Arts in 1518.[77] Thereafter he acquired the usual crop of benefices in Dublin and Meath, including various prebends in St Patrick's cathedral. Although he never held a formal diocesan administrative office, he had been a confidante, perhaps the chaplain, of Archbishop Browne's last predescessor but one, Hugh Inge, in the 1520s; a position which he had shared with Browne's archdeacon, William Power.[78] The seniority of Humphrey and the depth and extent of his relations with the local community - manifest in his involvement in land

76 Archbishop Browne to Cromwell, 17 July 1538 (P.R.O., SP 60/7, no. 27); *L. & P. Hen VIII*, xvi, no. 777 (39). Creef had previously acted as a collector of the clerical subsidy of the chapter of St Patrick's (Memoranda roll 15 Henry VIII, Michaelmas term, m. 17d [N.A.I., Ferguson MS, iv, p 74]) and receiver of the rents of the royal manor of Crumlin (Vice-treasurer Brabazon's account, 26 August 1534-Michaelmas 1537 [P.R.O., SP 65/1, no. 2, f 1v]).

77 *Cal. pat. rolls Ire., Eliz.*, pp 379-80; *B.R.U.O. 1501-40*, pp 304-5.

78 *Cal. pat. rolls Ire., Hen. VIII-Eliz*, pp 14, 24; *Alen's Reg.*, pp 270-1, 297; P.R.O., SP 65/1, f 31r.

conveyancing transactions as a feofee to use[79] - meant that his determination to resist the Henrician religious settlement and the influence that he could wield to ensure that others followed suit were significant.

Humphrey first revealed his conservative leanings in early 1537 when he signed the letter of protest to Cromwell from the prebendaries of St Patrick's against the Irish council's attempted removal of their aged dean, Geoffrey Fyche.[80] Thereafter he resisted the imposition of the oath of Supremacy and Browne's articles for reforming the clergy.[81] He was also involved in stirring up ill feeling between Browne and his fellow reforming bishop, Edward Staples of Meath.[82] It was an event which took place on 5 May 1538, however, which finally provoked the archbishop to attempt to bring him down. The event in question took place during the patronal feast day mass in Humphrey's prebendal church of St Audoen. Humphrey was the main celebrant and, after he had read the gospel, he declined to read the special bidding prayers composed by Browne - the 'Form of the Beads' - which upheld the king's supremacy and denegrated papal authority, and which had been enjoined upon the clergy by Browne's articles of reformation. Humphrey's curate tried to remedy this omission but was stopped in his tracks by his superior who began the preface of the mass to the accompaniment of the clerks in the choir.[83]

A formal presentment of Humphrey's offence was made by some of the parishioners to the archbishop. It is unclear, however, whether this was a spontaneous gesture on their part or whether it was solicited by Browne's registrar, William Mowesherst, who would

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79 *Cal. pat. rolls Ire., Eliz.*, pp 379-80.

80 P.R.O., SP 60/4, no. 10.

81 *S. P. Hen. VIII*, iii, p 7.

82 Ibid, pp 1-2; Ronan, *Reformation in Dublin*, p 103.

83 *S. P. Hen. VIII*, iii, pp 6-7; *Egerton papers*, pp 8-9 (article 6).

have been the usual conduit for receiving such extra-visitation presentments. In any case, Browne was determined to make the most of the incident and quickly incarcerated the offending cleric in the episcopal gaol at St Sepulchre's. He also wrote in haste to Cromwell to inform him of the incident and to seek his advice on how he should proceed.[84] It is clear from his later correspondence on the matter that he believed he had a *prima facie* case against him for offences under the act against the authority of the bishop of Rome.[85] Certainly, Humphrey's adamant refusal to read the 'Form of the Beads' could be interpreted as an act of defiance against the royal supremacy and in favour of papal authority.

While Browne awaited his reply, however, Humphrey was freed from prison against the archbishop's will by the lord deputy of Ireland, Lord Leonard Grey. It is not entirely clear why Grey took this action. Certainly, there was no love lost between the pair as Browne was part of a faction on the Irish council which disliked his quasi-Geraldine methods of governing the lordship of Ireland.[86] Another possibility is that there may have been some petitioning for mercy on Humphrey's behalf, and that the deputy may have been motivated by the belief that his action would win him local political support at the expense of a man who he was later to describe as a 'poll shorne friar'.[87] What is clear is that Grey's action completely undermined the archbishop's authority. The act of arresting Humphrey in the first place would have soured Browne's already poisoned relationship with his cathedral clergy. But Grey's intervention robbed him of all credibility in their eyes. The archbishop said so much when he informed Cromwell of the matter on 20 May, lamenting the fact that the simplest holy water clerk was better

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84 *S. P. Hen. VIII*, iii, p 7; R. O'Day, 'The role of the registrar in diocesan administration' in O'Day and Heal, eds., *Continuity and Change*, pp 81-4.

85 *S. P. Hen. VIII*, iii, pp 8-9 (Browne had intended to hand Humphrey over to the deputy and council for prosecution as stipulated by the act against the authority of the bishop of Rome).

86 Ibid.; Ellis, *Tudor Ireland*, pp 135-6, 198; Edwards, *Church & State*, pp 39-44.

87 Bradshaw, 'George Browne', p 310.

esteemed than he in his diocese. Indeed, he went much further and pleaded with Cromwell that he should either let his authority take effect or else let him return home again unto the cloister.[88]

The Humphrey incident was one of the most telling events in the history of the Tudor reformation in Ireland as it represented in miniature many of the elements which contributed to the movement's failure. All the protagonists, in fact, were emblematic of these elements. Humphrey, himself, represented the conservative clerical élite of the Pale which survived as a cuckoo in the nest of the established church until well into Elizabeth's reign. Browne and Grey represented the Tudor officialdom which never managed to establish a co-ordinated and integrated approach to the problem of enforcing the reformation against a clergy who were determined to resist it. The reason behind this lack of co-ordination is easy to find. Political, rather than the religious, reform of Ireland had a higher priority in the Tudor régime's eyes. In moments of crisis, the fear of alienating the Pale community and destroying the viceregal programmes for political reform ensured that the enforcement of the state religion was always implemented in a timid manner.

For Browne, this was hugely frustrating and it confirmed, more than ever before, his conviction that reform could not be achieved through the conventional diocesan system of ecclesiastical justice. Not only were the instruments of reform in the diocesan system itself proven to be untrustworthy, but, worse, so too was the man who represented the crown's secular authority on the island, the viceroy. Thus the enforcement of the reformation in Ireland was being subverted from within. It could not possibly succeed in the manner in which the king and Cromwell envisaged. The Humphrey incident, therefore, represented Browne's final attempt to enforce reform amongst his secular clergy using this system. Thereafter, he sought from Cromwell the right to exercise

88 *S. P. Hen. VIII*, iii, pp 8-9.

ecclesiastical justice as a direct agent of the crown, through a commission to act as the latter's deputy in his capacity as vicegerent in spirituals of the king. Browne appears to have argued his case convincingly for such a commission was finally granted to him, in conjunction with the lord chancellor, John Alen, and the vice-treasurer of the Irish administration, William Brabazon, in February 1539.[89] Unfortunately for Browne, however, he never got much opportunity to exercise it. Despite his undoubted enthusiasm to put it into effect,[90] the involvement of all three in the commissions to suppress the Irish monasteries, and, more importantly, Cromwell's fall from power in the following year, determined that the vicegerency commission was never properly activated. Indeed, not only did the fall of Cromwell nullify Browne's commision to act as deputy to the vicegerent - the office disappeared with its first and only occupant - it actually brought to a complete close the active phase in the archbishop's career as a reformer.

This cessation of reformist activity on Browne's part has long been recognized by historians, but nothing concrete, apart from general allusions to the loss of influence and direction which his patron's fall entailed for him,[91] has ever been put forward to explain it. Yet evidence for the reason which underlay it does exist, and it provides an ironic conclusion to this account of Browne's efforts to overcome the resistance of the conservative clergy to the reformation within his diocese. The fall of Cromwell was a traumatic event for the archbishop because it removed from the scene his only protection against exposure to the gathering forces of the conservative religious reaction in England, which had been ushered in by the passage of the act of six articles in 1539.[92] That he needed such protection was due to the fact that he himself was an

89 *Cal. pat. rolls Ire., Hen. VIII-Eliz*, p 55.

90 *S. P. Hen. VIII*, iii, p 122.

91 Edwards, *Church & state*, pp 75-6; Bradshaw, 'George Browne', pp 314-5.

92 On the conservative reaction and fall of Cromwell generally see the account in Guy, *Tudor England*, pp 180-9.

offender against one of the main provisions of the act: the proscription of clerical marriage. The archbishop had married an Irish woman, Elizabeth Miagh, soon after his arrival in Dublin, and she had borne him three sons, Alexander, George junior, and Anthony.[93] Browne's marriage was an acute embarassment in this new atmosphere. Although no equivalent of the act of six articles was ever passed in Ireland, a bill for 'the continent living of priests' was sent from England for enactment in the Irish parliament of 1541-3. While this bill was eventually 'stayed' by the Irish council because it would only have applied to 'Englishmen and a few others of English blood, inhabited in a small circuit under the obedience of the law' and would not therefore be 'beneficial to the realm', the official thinking on clerical celibacy which it and the English act of six articles exhibited, severely compromised the archbishop in the eyes of his clergy and flock.[94]

The archbishop certainly felt that his situation was untenable, and he took drastic action to improve it. In the early 1540s he cast off his wife and had her remarried to his servant, Robert Bathe.[95] Although there is no extant evidence to corroborate it, the achievement of this separation and remarriage must have been connived at by the archbishop's officials and other leading clergy, because a willingness on their part to co-operate in other matters affecting his marriage settlement - that is, the arrangements Browne made for the upkeep of his children - is certainly demonstrable from the

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93 The identities of Browne's wife and children are revealed in 'Christ Church deeds' no. 1220. Assuming that all Browne's children were born in wedlock before he 'put over' his wife to his servant Robert Bathe after the enactment of the act of six articles (see below note 95), the marriage, which had been formally contracted, must have taken place in the latter half of 1536 or early 1537 (M. V. Ronan, 'Cardinal Pole's absolution of George Browne', in *I.E.R.*, 5th series, lxxii [1949], pp 195-8). On this see also Edwards, *Church & State*, p 52.

94 *S.P. Hen VIII*, iii, pp 406-7; Edwards, *Church & state*, pp 51-2. The council's decision to stay the act was almost certainly arrived at in order to spare the blushes, and protect the positions of fellow councillors and loyal reformers like Browne and Bishop Staples of Meath.

95 N. Harpsfield, *A Treatise of the Pretended Divorce between Henry VIII and Catharine of Aragon*, ed. N. Pocock (Camden Society, London, 1878) p 276; 'Christ Church Deeds', no 1220; P. Happé and J.N. King, eds., *The Vocacyon of Johan Bale* (Renaissance English Text Society, Binghamton, New York, 1990), p 68. Browne's decision was no doubt prompted by the appearance of the bill at the council board.

surviving records. What Browne did, in fact, was set up a number of trusts for his sons involving the alienation of archiepiscopal property.[96] Formal documentation for one of these trusts - the alienation of the mensal rectories of Ballybaught, Boystown and Usk - reveals that the archbishop had some interesting bedfellows in his endeavours. In this particular case, he began by alienating the property to a group of eleven prominent gentlemen from the Pale on 20 September 1547.[97] By 1 December they had assigned their interest to the dean and chapter of Christ Church who, on that date, alienated it to William Mowseherst, the registrar of Browne's consistory court.[98] Finally, on 6 September 1548 the trail of assigments ended when Mowseherst granted the property in trust to a group of five clergymen and Robert Bathe, Katherine Miagh's husband, who undertook to dispose of the revenue of the rectories in the maintenance of Browne's sons in 'good houses, meat, drink, clothes and lodging' and in teaching them reading, writing, singing and grammar until each of them reached the age of 18 years. The most remarkable aspect of this entire transaction was that the group of clergy entrusted with the upkeep of Browne's children included James Humphrey, the archbishop's *bête noire* of the 1530s.[99]

Browne had to pay a heavy price for this co-operation with his erstwhile enemies. One part of the bargain was his promotion of Humphrey to the precentorship of St Patrick's cathedral in 1542 on the death of Robert Fitzsimon.[100] Another probable part was his replacement of Fitzsimon as official principal by one Martin Stanton, a young ecclesiastical lawyer from Dublin, who was the latest in a long line of indigenous

96 Shirley, *Ch. in Ire., 1547-67*, p 18; T.C.D., MS 578, f 22v (transcript of a statute 3 & 4 Philip and Mary in favour of Hugh Curwen, archbishop of Dublin, voiding all of Browne's alienations of see property including all leases and demises 'to the use of the said George, of any bastard of his, or of any person reputed for his child or bastard').

97 R.C.B., C.6.1.6, no 3, pp 1173-5 ('Christ Church Deeds', nos. 441, 442).

98 'Christ Church Deeds', no. 1214.

99 Ibid., no. 1220.

100 Lawlor, *Fasti of St Patrick's*, p 56.

canonists to take up a position at the top of the Dublin diocesan administration.[101] The most important price that the archbishop was forced to pay, however, was the almost complete abandonment of his reformist ideals. For the remainder of Henry VIII's reign, and for much of Edward VI's, Browne would keep a generally low profile. While it would be wrong to conclude from this that he disengaged completely from the religious controversies of the period, he certainly stepped down as the active leader of the reformation campaign in the English Pale; and, mindful of the frustrating and ultimately painful difficulties that the encounter had entailed for him in the very recent past, he ceased also to continue his fight against religious conservatism amongst the clerical élite of his diocese. It was a decision which was nothing less than an admission that the conservative clergy had defeated him.

IV

The fall of Cromwell in 1540, and Browne's cessation of overtly reformist activity, placed the leadership of the reformation campaign in Ireland in the hands of Sir Anthony Leger, who had succeeded Lord Leonard Grey as the king's deputy in the same year. St Leger's approach to the enforcement of the reformation was markedly different to that of the archbishop. For the deputy, religious and ecclesiastical reform was but one, and not necessarily the most important aspect of the general problem of governing the lordship of Ireland. Thus, while never wholly neglected, the Henrician religious settlement was subsumed under his general reform strategy for achieving a lasting political settlement

101 The only surviving notice of Stanton as official principal of Dublin dates from 1552, but as there are no further records of any other appointments, nor of any other budding ecclesiastical lawyers becoming available to take up the post at this juncture, it is possible that Stanton acquired it following Fitzsimon's death. Stanton was educated at Oxford, presumably as a canon lawyer, but whether he acquired his degree before the abolition of the study of canon law in 1535 - his attendance at Oxford was recorded in September 1533 - is not known. His Dublin origins are confirmed by the fact that he was appointed custos of St Stephen's hospital - a living generally preserved for the sons of Dublin citizens studying abroad - by the mayor and commons of Dublin in 1535. By 1540 he was resident again in the Pale and serving as the archdeacon of Kildare, a post which would have provided him with an ideal preparation for taking over the presidency of the metropolitan court in Dublin ('Christ Church deeds' no. 552; *B.R.U.O 1501-40*, p 536; *Anc. rec. Dub.*, i, p 399; *Extent Ir. mon. possessions,* pp 159-60).

on the island, and treated accordingly. At the heart of this general strategy was the 'act for the kingly title'. Passed by the Irish parliament in 1541, this act sought to create a unified polity in Ireland and to break down the old ethnic divisions between the English Irish and Gaelic inhabitants of the island by treating them as equal subjects under the English crown. It also served as the constitutional basis for the inauguration of the policy of 'surrender and regrant', through which St Leger attempted to negotiate in a conciliatory and gradualist manner the incorporation of the independent Gaelic lordships into this new unified polity.[102] The second major element of St Leger's reform strategy was the construction of a new political interest in Ireland: the 'king's party'. Formed by the deputy through his very liberal distribution of crown properties among the many and diverse interest groups on the island, its purpose was to transcend and ultimately neutralise the destructive factionalism that traditionally dogged Irish politics and which had destroyed all attempts at achieving a lasting and peaceful political settlement hitherto.[103]

Both aspects of St Leger's reform strategy - the constitutional and 'party political' elements - were evident in his approach to the enforcement of the reformation. The grand constitutional design contained in the act for the kingly title, for example, was not only framed with the intention of breaking down the ethnic divisions of the inhabitants of Ireland, but also aimed to counteract the claims - advanced by conservative clergy during the recent crises of the Kildare rebellion and the Geraldine League - that the king's right to sovereignty in Ireland was dependent upon various papal grants, and that it had been invalidated because he had abolished papal authority within his dominions. Thus, in December 1540, St Leger and the council sought to justify the proposed act to the king on the grounds that it would help extirpate this 'foolish opinion'.[104] Yet there

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102 Bradshaw, *Irish constitutional revolution*; idem, 'Beginnings of modern Ireland', pp 75-80.

103 On this see Brady, *Chief Governors*, pp 25-44.

104 Ellis, 'Kildare rebellion and the early reformation', pp 813-4; Sheehy, 'The Bull *Laudabiliter*', pp 52-3; *S.P. Hen VIII*, iii, p 278.

was more to it than this. Although he described the intended effect of the act in these crude terms for the benefit of the king, it is likely that the politically sensitive St Leger had a more positive view of the process. It is arguable that the deputy also envisaged it as capable of superseding some of the other claims inherent within the old papal grants, such as the Englishry's traditional mission to reform the Irishry along conventional canonical lines. Thus the act was a document which would not only justify constitutionally Henry VIII's imperial kingship over Ireland and all the spiritual claims that the king wished to attach to it, but would also over time provide the clergy with sufficient justification for giving their allegance to, and ultimately promoting, these claims, in much the same way that they had accepted and promoted their traditional reforming mission. In effect, the act for the kingly title was the *Laudabiliter* of the Henrician religious settlement.

St Leger's construction and patronising of the king's party also had major implications for the enforcement of the reformation. The distribution of monastic property to the laity, in particular, not only secured the entry of many of the most important members of the local political community into the suprafactional system of politics favoured by the deputy, but also ensured that that community acquired a financial stake in the success of the Henrician religious settlement.[105] Further, he also made it clear that the secular clergy, certainly those who were willing to act loyally on behalf of the state, or in support of the reformation, also stood to benefit from the property bonanza. The clergy of St Patrick's, for example, saw their ultra-loyalist dean, Edward Basnet, build up sizeable estates for his family in Newcastle, Co. Wicklow, and in Kiltiernan and Ballydowd in Co. Dublin.[106] Similarly, Walter Trott, the vicar of Rathmore and a government mainstay in this exposed marcher district of the diocese of Dublin, was

105 On the distribution of monastic property under St Leger see Bradshaw, *Dissolution of the religious orders*, pp 181-205, 231-47; Brady, *Chief Governors*, pp 35-40.

106 *Fiants Ire. Hen. VIII*, nos. 389, 418, 449; Percival, 'The Basnetts during the 16th and 17th centuries', pp 4-7.

granted a 21 year lease on the manor of Rathmore, which was part of the possessions of the attainted Sir James Fitzgerald.[107] For at least one member of the chapter of St Patrick's, Robert Eustace, St Leger's temptations had the desired effect. Having already acted as a feofee to use in a conveyance of a monastic estate for Patrick Barnewall - one of the most prominent Co. Dublin members of the 'king's party' - he and another priest, Thomas Fleming, acquired a leasehold interest of their own in the former monastic rectory of Galtrim in Co. Meath in February 1546; a sign that he, at least, was willing to give his allegiance to the Henrician reformation as promoted by Lord Deputy St Leger.[108] Yet St Leger not only dangled carrots in front of wavering conservatives, he also endeavoured to win the support of the most persistent and committed clerical doubters by confirming some of their traditional, and hitherto threatened, liberties under the auspices of the new dispensation; an approach to reform which departed dramatically from that employed by the combative Archbishop Browne. Thus in August 1544, the St Leger régime granted the dean and chapter of St Patrick's - 'for the glory and honour of God, the Blessed Virgin and St Patrick' - a licence to be absent from their parochial cures, when residing within the precinct of the cathedral.[109]

The overall effect of these measures was to allay many of the fears and anxieties that the Pale communty had felt about state-sponsored religious reform in the 1530s, a situation which was also aided by Archbishop Browne's new found and pragmatic willingness to co-operate with his clergy and to accept their conservative religious stance; and by the generally conservative tone of many of the religious dictates that emanated from England during the early 1540s. Thus the years 1540 to 1546 represented the high watermark for the reformation in the English Pale, a period in which the general

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107 *Fiants Ire. Hen. VIII*, no. 184. On Trott's service to the government in the 1540s see Richard Aylmer to Lord Deputy Bellingham c. July 1548, Oliver Sutton to Bellingham, 21 October 1548 (P.R.O., SP 61/1, nos. 43, 111).

108 *Fiants Ire. Hen. VIII.*, nos. 270, 473.

109 Ibid., no. 432.

religious conservatism of the settlement and St Leger's unique style of government combined to neutralise the discontent of alienated clerics, and to win the allegiance of a growing body of supporters attached to the 'king's party'. Yet if all this can be termed a success, it was a success which was built upon the weakest of foundations. In reality, the attachment to the reformation which St Leger cultivated in the 1540s had no ideological or intellectual strength of its own, at least not at this early stage of its development. Rather, it was created out of the rough and tumble of contemporary politics and, like virtually all of the deputy's achievements, it was purchased at a considerable financial cost to the crown. The essential problem with this approach to the enforcement of the reformation, and indeed with the entire St Leger political programme, was that its ongoing success was contingent upon continuing displays of government largesse. By 1546, with much of the monastic booty already exploited and government finances in a parlous state due to the financial malfeasance of his administration, St Leger needed to find new sources of revenue to sustain his programme of reform.[110] Thus his solution was to seek, on his own initiative, permission from the crown to dissolve the richest ecclesiastical institution in Ireland: St Patrick's cathedral.

The suppression of St Patrick's, a secular cathedral, was unparalleled within the Tudor dominions during the reformation. In England, the only cathedrals which met with a similar fate were the monastic cathedrals of Coventry and Bath, both of which were regarded as superfluous because their bishops already possessed seats in the secular co-cathedrals of Lichfield and Wells.[111] The medieval inheritance of the see of Dublin - two cathedral churches in close proximity to each other, one regular, the other secular - meant that it too was ripe for a similar trimming at the outset of the Henrician reformation. Yet in the late 1530s and early 1540s, it was St Patrick's sister cathedral,

110 On the maladministation of the government's finances see Brady, *Chief Governors*, pp 33-6.

111 Lehmberg, *Reformation of cathedrals*, p 82.

Christ Church, which seemed the most likely to be suppressed because of the Henrician regime's antipathy towards the monastic life, and because of its poorer endowment which was reckoned to be only *IR*£260 net. In contrast, St Patrick's cathedral, with an annual income of nearly *IR*£1,400 gross in the 1540s, was considered by the Irish administration to be 'well endowed and meet to be preserved and maintained'.[112]

This situation was altered by two unrelated factors, the first of which directly concerned the fate of Christ Church. Although it lived under the threat of suppression between 1539 and 1543, the institution survived in an altered secular state, a cathedral of the new foundation, because it was able to call upon the support of the mayor and citizens of Dublin. Being the oldest and most venerable of the two Dublin cathedrals, and the only major religious institution located within the old city walls, the civic élite argued vehemently against its suppression as they believed it would denude and devalue the city's ordered urban landscape, and ultimately threaten its English identity. Their lobbying on behalf of the cathedral was successful on more than one occasion during these years and, as a result, the plan to suppress it was finally abandoned in January 1544.[113]

Had Christ Church been dissolved, it is unlikely that St Patrick's would have met with a similar fate. Yet the abandonment by the crown of its plans for the elder cathedral, did not in itself lead to the suppression of St Patrick's. On the contrary, as we have seen, St Leger's administration reaffirmed the crown's traditional favour to the cathedral in 1544 when it granted its dean and canons a licence exempting them from personal attendance

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112 *S. P. Hen. VIII*, iii, pp 414-6; St Patrick's cathedral, Muniments, no 112 (Jackson MS Catalogue number), survey of cathedral possessions, 1547. Most of this survey is printed in translation in Mason, *History of St. Patrick's*, pp 28-99 *passim*. It is also conveniently summarised in Ronan, *Reformation in Dublin*, pp 316-7.

113 R.C.B., C.6.1.6, no. 3, pp 1104-1121 ('Christ Church Deeds', no 431, return of the king's commissioners concerning the alteration of Christ Church into a secular cathedral, 12 December 1539); *S. P. Hen. VIII*, ii, 544-5, Lord Deputy Grey to Cromwell, 19 January 1540 (misplaced in 1538); *ibid.*, 545-6, the mayor and aldermen of Dublin to Cromwell, 23 January 1540 (misplaced in 1538); *ibid.*, iii, 130-1, 414-6, 468, 484, 489-90.

at their benefices while they resided in the cathedral precinct.[114] It was, in fact, a new development in the crown's attack on the possessions of the English church - the dissolution of the English secular colleges - which proved to be the more significant catalyst in bringing about St Patrick's demise. Although the bulk of the English colleges were dissolved between 1547 and 1549, it has been estimated that c. 25% were brought down through 'voluntary' surrender during the final two years of Henry VIII's reign. The effect of this upon St Patrick's was twofold. Because the majority of the surrenders resulted from the promptings of royal servants and courtiers and the descendants of the founders of colleges, all of whom were intent on enriching themselves with valuable college properties, they both encouraged, and acted as procedural models for, a privately initiated attack upon the Dublin cathedral, especially as the latter had a similar collegial constitution.[115] Thus, having been recalled to England in the spring of 1546 to resolve a dispute with the earl of Ormond, St Leger not only became aware of the success of his fellow courtiers in securing new ecclesiastical spoils in the shape of the secular colleges, but actually resolved to use this visit to instigate the dissolution of St Patrick's as a means of solving his financial problems; a process which in its initial prompting by St Leger and the manner of its subsequent execution clearly followed the pattern of the contemporaneous dissolutions on the mainland.[116]

The process of dissolution began in earnest in the following autumn. In early October, St Leger secured Henry VIII's support for the plan, and spoke with the chancellor of the court of augmentations about current administrative practices for the swift and efficient

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114 *Fiants Ire. Hen. VIII.*, no. 432.

115 On the English dissolutions see J.J. Scarisbrick, 'Henry VIII and the dissolution of the secular colleges', in C. Cross, D. Loades and J.J. Scarisbrick, eds., *Law and Government under the Tudors. Essays presented to Sir Geoffrey Elton on his retirement* (Cambridge, 1988), pp 51-66.

116 The connection of St Leger's initiative with the attack against the English secular colleges is also reinforced by his simultaneous involvement in the suppression of Holy Cross Abbey, Thurles, a former Cistercian monastery which had been converted into a secular college at the height of the campaign against the religious orders (Bradshaw, *Dissolution of the religious orders*, pp 124-5; P.R.O., SP 1/225, f 125r [*L. & P. Hen. VIII*, xxi (ii), no. 212]).

suppression of a religious house and the distribution of pensions to its inmates. On 8 November, letters subscribed by the English privy council were issued under the king's secret stamp to Archbishop Browne and the dean and chapter of St Patrick's informing them of its imminent suppression. On the same day, St Leger and other commissioners - with the notable omission of Browne, who had previously served on all other royal commissions concerning ecclesiastical matters - were appointed to receive its surrender.[117] Although the king commanded that the 'thing' was to 'pass immediately without delay', the dissolution was not secured until exactly two months later, on 8 January 1547, because the cathedral canons put up some resistance. It appears that the consent of the precentor, the treasurer and archdeacons, and fifteen of the prebendaries was withheld until they had suffered the chastening experience of forcible imprisonment at the hands of their dean, Edward Basnet.[118] The surrender obtained, St Leger and his fellow commissioners moved on to the surveying of the cathedral's property which took place on the 27 January, the day before Henry VIII died, and again on 13 May 1547, after the accession of Edward VI and the granting of a new commission. Finally, throughout the summer and autumn of 1547, the cathedral clergy were pensioned off, during which time St Leger also oversaw the disposal of the bulk of their property to his supporters on 21 year leasehold terms.[119]

The dissolution of St Patrick's cathedral was a major turning point in the history of the reformation in the diocese of Dublin and, indeed, elsewhere in the English Pale. For the clergy, at least, it reawakened all of the suspicions and fears that they had previously held about the reformers' intentions, suspicions and fears which were soon exacerbated

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117 P.R.O., SP 1/225, f 125r (*L. & P. Hen. VIII*, xxi (ii), no 212); *ibid.*, SP 4/1 (*L. & P. Hen. VIII*, xxi (ii), no 475). Browne's exclusion from the commission is significant. It indicates that he was neither a party to St Leger's plans, nor that he was expected to support the initiative. For evidence that he did not give his assent to the undertaking see below chapter 8.

118 P.R.O., SP 1/225, f 125r (*L. & P. Hen. VIII*, xxi (ii), no 212); Mason, *History of St Patrick's*, p 150.

119 Mason, *History of St Patrick's*, pp 28-99 *passim*, 151-4, lxv; Griffith, ed., *Calendar of Exchequer Inquisitions*, pp 113-7; *Fiants Ire. Edw. VI*, nos. 32-111 *passim*.

by the accession of Edward VI and the inauguration of a more radical, and now identifiably protestant programme of religious reform in England and Ireland.[120] Yet, ironically, it was not the cathedral clergy themselves who registered the strongest protest against the deputy's nakedly materialist attack on their church, for, in the immediate aftermath of the dissolution, indeed for the rest of the Edwardian period, they would remain in a very disjointed, fatalistic and dispirited state.[121] Rather the clergy found an unlikely champion for their cause in the person of their former adversary, Archbishop George Browne, who, under the guise of a proposal to the new king for the foundation of a university out of the revenues of the dissolved cathedral, launched a thinly-veiled critique of St Leger's action and the motives which underpinned it. Indeed, Browne's proposal even endeavoured to secure the ressurection of the cathedral under the disguise of an incorporated university church, a church which would have had the ancillary, but essentially traditional function of assisting the archbishop in governing his see.[122]

Browne's proposal set the tone for his episcopate for the remainder of Edward VI's reign. Although ostensibly the proposal sought to establish his evangelical credentials with the new régime, its underlying intent was to serve the interests of his conservative diocesan clergy, interests which he now increasingly appropriated as his own. The same double standard was evident in the actions he took to enforce the provisions of the Edwardian settlement. According to John Bale, the protestant bishop of Ossory, one of the reasons advanced by his clergy for disobeying his command that they follow the Book of Common Prayer was 'the lewd example of the archbishop of Dublin, which was

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120 The campaign to enforce the Edwardian reformation in Ireland is sparsely documented compared with its English counterpart. The definitve treatment is Bradshaw, 'Edwardian reformation', pp 83-99.

121 One sign of their sinking morale and growing fatalism was the willingness of four members of the dissolved chapter to act as feofees to use in a land conveyance transaction for St Leger. These included James Humphrey and Simon Jeffrey who had earlier lead the fight to protect the cathedral's liberties against the early Henrician depredations under Cromwell and Browne (*Fiants Ire. Edw. VI*, no. 162).

122 Browne's university proposal is discussed in detail in chapter 8 below.

always slack in things pertaining to God's glory'. Bale, in fact, went so far as to describe Browne as 'a dissembling proselyte' and 'a very pernicious papist'.[123] While such pronouncements were undoubtedly hyperbolic, they still captured the essence of what was in effect Browne's reinvention of himself. Here was an old Cromwellian reformer who had now abandoned his reformist ideals and thrown in his lot with a religiously conservative clerical élite. Bale put it more colourfully. Where in the past the archbishop of Dublin had prayed for Ireland's reformation, 'now he commandeth her to go a whoring again, and to follow the same devil that she followed before'.[124]

Even Browne's attack on the papism of Archbishop Dowdall of Armagh and Lord Deputy St Leger, an action which has traditionally been seen as a reflection of Browne's protestantism in the reign of Edward VI, can be interpreted in a different light. Apart from the desire to exact revenge against the hated St Leger and his associates, a major reason for the attack on the two men in 1551 was the procurement of the primatial title and dignity for his own see. And one of the grounds upon which he argued for the acquisition of the title was the inherent Englishness of the see of Dublin and the traditional loyalty of its archbishops 'who since the conquest hath been the chief stays under the king in these parts of the realm and ever true to the crown'.[125] Such arguments were deeply traditional - having been used by many a medieval archbishop of Dublin in the past - and would have appealed to Browne's senior clergy, especially the ex-prebendaries of St Patrick's,[126] and may have been advanced to further the process of integration with them which he was now firmly embarked upon.

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123 *Vocacyon of Johan Bale*, pp 56, 68.

124 Ibid., p 68.

125 Ibid., p 68; Browne to the earl of Warwick, 6 August 1551 (P.R.O., SP 61/3, no 45).

126 See, for example, the prebendaries of St Patrick's to Cromwell, 20 Feb 1537 (P.R.O., SP 60/4, no. 10).

The Browne of the 1540 and 1550s, then, was a different type of archbishop to the Browne of the 1530s. In his later years, the turn of events had changed him into an establishment figure, who conformed to the type of prelate that Dublin's clerical élite had long been used to and approved of: an Englishman who defended the traditional institutions and honour of the see of Dublin. Yet Browne went even further. In the reign of Mary Tudor he was able to call upon 'the testimony of trustworthy persons' that, in the preceding reign, he was 'a champion and defender of the truth of the most holy sacrament of the Eucharist'.[127] This growing tendency to adopt, protect and promote the values - spiritual, political and institutional - of the clergy he had once fought against was completed in Mary's reign when he converted fully to catholicism. Although he was deprived of his archbishopric because of his marriage, Browne remained a part of the Dublin clerical élite by securing a pardon from Cardinal Pole for his previous misdemeanours, and by accepting a prebend in the restored cathedral of St Patrick.[128] In a very real sense, then, the old reformer made a significant contribution to the preservation of the old religion. At a time, following the dissolution of St Patrick's, when the conservative clerical opposition was in disarray, Browne's decision to embrace its spirit and to allow it a breathing space in the reformed Edwardian church was crucial to its survival.

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127 'et quod ut fidedignorum testimonio informati fuimus, tu veritatis sacratissimi Eucharistie sacramenti accerrimus assertor et defensor fuisti': Cardinal Pole's absolution of Browne 12 March 1555, printed in M.V. Ronan, 'Cardinal Pole's absolution of George Browne', in *I.E.R.*, 5th series, lxxii (1949), p 195.

128 Ibid., pp 193-205; Bradshaw, 'George Browne', p 323. The last notice I have found of Browne dates from 25 November 1556. He appears to have died shortly afterwards (Griffith, ed., *Calendar of Exchequer Inquisitions,* p 152).

Chapter Four

Archbishop Dowdall and the restoration of catholicism in Dublin

When Mary Tudor was proclaimed queen few of her subjects were in any doubt about the religious significance of her accession. The prospect that the old religion would receive official sanction once again was generally welcomed in Ireland.[1] However, while there is no doubting the existence of this residual affection, the common assumption that it led to a relatively smooth and trouble free process of catholic restoration is more questionable.[2] Certainly, this was not the case in the diocese of Dublin. Here, the restoration of catholicism was neither carried forward upon a ground swell of popular affection for traditional religion nor relief that Edwardian protestantism was about to be abolished. Nor was it even driven primarily by a determined queen through her officials in the Irish administration. Rather, the impetus for restoration came from a group of senior diocesan clergy whose actions on behalf of the old religion would provoke opposition at the highest level of the Irish administration. It was an unusual feature of the Marian restoration, which gives the lie to the belief that it, alone of all the religious settlements promoted in sixteenth century Ireland, failed to engender any controversy.

I

That the senior clergy of Dublin would play such a prominent role in restoring the old religion in their diocese could not have been easily predicted at the outset of Mary's reign,

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1 Edwards, *Church & state*, pp 158-9; G. A. Hayes-McCoy, 'Conciliation, coercion, and the protestant reformation, 1547-71', in *New hist. Ire.*, iii, pp 75-6; Lennon, *Sixteenth Century Ireland*, p 306.

2 See for example Edwards, *Church & state*, pp 158-9; idem, *Ireland in the Age of the Tudors*, p 78; M. MacCurtain, *Tudor and Stuart Ireland* (Dublin, 1972), p 65-6; Lennon, *Lords of Dublin*, pp 130-2; idem, 'The Counter-Reformation in Ireland, 1542-1641', in Brady and Gillespie (eds.), *Natives and Newcomers*, pp 79-80; P. Williams, *The Later Tudors. England 1547-1603* (Oxford, 1995), p 111.

for one simple reason. Clerical leadership in the diocese had been dealt an apparently fatal blow at the end of Henry VIII's reign as a result of the dissolution of St Patrick's cathedral. Where, in the past, the dean and chapter of St Patrick's had provided the essential core of clerical leadership in the diocese, they had now been out of existence as a body corporate for six years and, like the monastic chapters before them, were in danger of becoming a dim and increasingly irrelevant memory.[3] Nothing demonstrated this more graphically than the spectacle of life in the cathedral close. The manses of the former canons, which had once symbolized their status, power and corporate existence, had now been turned over to officials in the Dublin administration, to local gentry or to out of town ecclesiastics. Deprived of their dwellings and ecclesiastical livings, albeit with pensions, the ex-prebendaries of St Patrick's had become a scattered, disembodied group. Notable conservatives from among their number - men like Thomas Creef and Bartholomew Fitzsimon who had fought attempts to undermine the old religion or the cathedral's liberties at the outset of the reformation - were now beneficed and based outside the diocese. Others of a similar bent like James Humphrey, the former precentor, Simon Jeffrey, the former prebendary of Howth, and John Wogan, one of the ex-prebendaries of Donaghmore in Imaal, were either dead or approaching the end of their lives.[4] In fine, the memory and traditions of St Patrick's, and the clerical leadership that had once emanated from it, were

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3 The devastation inflicted by the Henrician dissolution campaigns on late medieval monasticism is reflected in the small number of religious houses restored in England and English Ireland during the Marian period (D. Loades, *Mary Tudor. A Life* [Oxford: Blackwell, 1989], pp 246-7; Ellis, *Tudor Ire.*, p 210; Lennon, *Sixteenth Century Ireland*, p 306).

4 Fitzsimon, the former prebendary of Tipper was rector of Clongill in Co. Meath (*Cal. pat. rolls, 1553-54,* p 302); Creef, the former prebendary of Saggart, was prebendary of Tascoffin in Ossory cathedral (Leslie, *Ossory clergy*, p 144); Humphrey died on 29 March 1550, Jeffrey on 28 March 1555 (Crosthwaite, *Book of Obits,* pp 17, 18; Mason, *History of St. Patrick's*, p 156, note e); Wogan died c. 1556 ('Index to the Act or Grant Books and to Original Wills of the Diocese of Dublin', in Appendix to *P.R.I. rep. D. K.*, 26 [1899], p 930); Fitzsimon, Humphrey, Jeffrey and Wogan were signatories to the letter of protest against Thomas Cromwell's attempt to curtail their cathedral's liberties in 1537, Creef had been sacked from his post as an archiepiscopal steward by Archbishop Browne for his 'popishness' (P.R.O., SP 60/4, no. 10, SP 60/7, no. 27). For the distribution of the prebendaries' manses see *Fiants Ire., Edw. VI*, nos 32, 36, 50, 61, 69, 78-9, 88, 91-2, 101-2, 104, 113-4, 648, 762, 955, 1109.

becoming attenuated, and dying a slow but inevitable death. The former canons were adrift and, without some external push, they were quite incapable of influencing the direction of religious policy in the diocese of Dublin.

The succession of a new avowedly catholic queen would appear to have been just the kind of stimulant that was needed to stiffen the resolve of the old clerical élite. But, initially, this proved not to be the case. Paradoxically, the effect of the new queen's actions in the first year of her reign actually inhibited their active participation in the first phase of the reintroduction of catholicism, and dampened any ambitions they may have harboured for resuming their position at the apex of the local clerical hierarchy in a fully restored and functioning secular cathedral. The main reason for this was the queen's reappointment of Sir Anthony St Leger as her lord deputy in Ireland in the autumn of 1553. St Leger had not stood out as a religious radical in Edward VI's reign, and the queen had sufficient confidence in his orthodoxy to give him a leading role in the restoration of the old religion. Soon after his appointment, he and the Irish council were urged 'by their own doings and example' to encourage the celebration of mass and the divine service 'amongst our loving subjects ... as near as they hath been of old time used'.[5] The fact remained, however, that St Leger had also been the architect of the dissolution of St Patrick's cathedral and was thus responsible for destroying the old clerical élite's pre-eminent position in the local church. Moreover, as his reaction to the eventual re-establishment of the cathedral would later demonstrate, he was still convinced that the dissolution should stand, given that the reasons which had lead him to this course of action in the first place - his need for a ready supply of crown property to dispense in patronage and to sustain a vibrant and politically popular market in real property, the chief means of retaining his party support - were still applicable.[6]

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5 Shirley, *Ch. in Ire., 1547-67*, pp 75-6.

6 See below pp 186-200.

The inhibiting effect of St Leger's reappointment on the old prebendaries was exacerbated by the problems then plaguing their ordinary, Archbishop George Browne. Browne's initial disagreement with the dissolution of St Patrick's in Henry VIII's reign, his dislike of St Leger and the fact that he later took a prebend in the restored cathedral indicate very strongly that he would have supported its re-establishment at this juncture. Indeed, his abandonment of his reformist past suggests that he would have even been quite willing to continue as archbishop of Dublin under a fully catholic religious settlement.[7] In reality, however, there was no real likelihood that he would be allowed to do so, mainly because of his notorious marriage, and particularly after the queen appointed a clerical commission in April 1554 to deprive married, schismatic and heretical clergy.[8] Browne, in effect, was a totally emasculated figure waiting for his inevitable demise. His most immediate concern was not to lock horns with the lord deputy on the matter of St Patrick's - an issue upon which he had already been defeated by the same adversary at the end of Henry VIII's reign - but to negotiate a personal settlement in which his own future would be provided for. The combination of St Leger's return to Ireland and Browne's impending dismissal, then, served as a very strong deterrent to those amongst the former prebendaries who might have supposed that the reintroduction of catholic doctrine and practice afforded an opportunity to seek again the past glories of their medieval history. The fact was that if the cathedral prebendaries were ever to see these days again, they would need to overcome the legacy of the immediate past and to find a mechanism to achieve this end. Above all, they would need the support of a very strong advocate, armed with very powerful arguments, to plead their case. Fortunately for the cathedral prebendaries, all of these requirements would be met in the person of George Dowdall, the recently reinstated archbishop of Armagh.

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7 Above pp 152-5.

8 *Cal. pat. rolls, 1553-4*, pp 302-3; and below pp 176-9.

II

A scion of a leading merchant family from Drogheda,[9] George Dowdall had spent his entire career working as a canon lawyer and diocesan official in the see of Armagh *inter anglos*.[10] Initially, c. 1518, and despite being a professed religious, he practised as a proctor in the metropolitan court of Armagh, representing the plaintiffs or defendants in party and party actions. This suggests that he developed his canonical expertise locally, either in the diocesan registrar's office or through apprenticeship to an existing proctor, rather than through formal study at an English or continental university.[11] The Armagh ecclesiastical establishment certainly considered him to be a promising canonist and, in the succeeding years, he was given greater responsibilities, including various ad hoc commissions to act as an examiner, as an arbitrator and as an assessor of compensation in a variety of ecclesiastical causes. By the 1530s he was firmly established as a leading diocesan administrator who exercised aspects of Archbishop Cromers's ordinary jurisdiction and disciplinary functions, including commissions to hold a metropolitan visitation of the diocese of Meath and to induct archiepiscopal presentees into their benefices. Although Dowdall's conservative religious temperament suggests that he may have opposed the dissolution of his own religious house in 1539,[12] in practice the conferral of secular clerical

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9 T. Gogarty, (ed.), 'Documents concerning Primate Dowdall', in *Archiv. Hib.*, i (1912), p 249.

10 The following account of Dowdall's background as a canonist is based upon L.P. Murray, ed. (continued by A. Gwynn), 'Archbishop Cromer's Register' in *Louth Arch. Soc. Jn.*, vii (1929-32), pp 520, 522-3; *ibid.*, viii (1933-6), pp 46, 176-9, 182, 332-3, 346; *ibid.*, ix (1937-40), pp 117-8; idem, ed., 'A Calendar of the Register of Primate George Dowdall, commonly called the "Liber Niger" or "Black Book"', in *ibid.*, vi (1925-8), pp 92, 94, 97; see also Gwynn, *Med. province Armagh*, pp 261-2.

11 On proctors, their training and the procedures of the party and party or 'instance' actions which they worked on see Houlbrooke, *Church courts*, pp 38-44, 51-2; M. Ingram, *Church Courts, Sex and Marriage in England, 1570-1640* (Cambridge, 1987), p 61.

12 On this suggestion see Bradshaw, *Dissolution of religious orders*, pp 126-8: as early as 1538, in a dossier drawn up by his cousin Sir Thomas Cusack on the Pale monasteries, Dowdall had been described as a 'papistical fellow ... able to corrupt a whole country'.

status which this entailed for him opened up the pathway to further advancement in the Armagh diocesan administration. By 1539 he was official principal of the metropolitan court in Armagh. By 1542 he stood on the threshold of the office of archbishop itself, having secured from Henry VIII an appointment in reversion as a reward for his efforts in bringing about O'Neill's acceptance of Sir Anthony St Leger's policy of surrender and regrant. He finally crossed this threshold in the winter of 1543, following Archbishop Cromer's death in March of that year, and a spell as subcustos of the see during which he presided over a synod of the Armagh clergy *inter anglos*.[13]

Depite his staunch loyalty to the crown, however, and his conformity to the reformation in Henry VIII's reign, Dowdall felt unable to comply with the Edwardian régime's liturgical reforms and, under political pressure from reform-minded Irish councillors like Archbishop Browne and Sir Ralph Bagenal, went into self-imposed exile on the continent.[14] Little is known about this period of exile save that, following the death in November 1551 of his former rival, Robert Wauchop, the papally appointed archbishop of Armagh, Dowdall effected a reconciliation with the papacy. This led ultimately to him being provided by Pope Julius III to the archbishopric as successor to Wauchop on 1 March 1553.[15] Dowdall's principled rejection of the Edwardian settlement also brought him to the notice of Mary Tudor. Returning to Ireland via England, it is likely that he met the queen in the late summer or early autumn of 1553 - Dowdall later recalled that he was in England at the time of Queen Mary's coronation and that he returned to Ireland in Lord Deputy St Leger's company - during which visit he obtained confirmation of his papal provision and several

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13 *S.P. Hen. VIII*, iii, p 429; Gwynn, *Med. province Armagh*, pp 260-1; *Cal. pat. rolls Ire., Hen. VIII-Eliz*, p 103.

14 Edwards, *Church & state*, pp 138-141; Shirley, *Ch. in Ire., 1547-67*, pp 54-60; on Dowdall's first period as archbishop of Armagh see Gwynn, *Med. province Armagh*, pp 264-74.

15 *Ibid.*, p 275; Brady, *Epis. succ.*, i, pp 217-8.

other marks of royal favour.[16] These included the restoration of the title of primate of all Ireland, which had been transferred to George Browne and the see of Dublin by the late king after Dowdall had gone into exile. They also included, in consideration of the loss of his goods and his estate, and the spoil of his archbishopric during his exile, a life term free of rent in the priory of the Crutched Friars of Ardee, an establishment which he himself had ruled as the last prior before its dissolution in 1539.[17]

It was through yet another mark of royal favour, however, that Dowdall first revealed his intention of involving himself in the affairs of the diocese of Dublin. This was his placement at the head of the commission, appointed by Queen Mary in April 1554, to deprive married, heretical and schismatic clergymen in the Irish church. The real significance of this commission lay not so much in the task which it was originally appointed to fulfil, but in the use that Archbishop Dowdall made of it as a vehicle for communicating and realizing his own particular vision about how the restoration of catholicism should proceed in the English Pale. The archbishop, in fact, had already conceived a fully worked out programme of restoration which he had instituted in his own diocese and province. Built upon the traditional values of the clergy of the English Pale - it encompassed the revival of independent ecclesiastical jurisdiction, the unencumbered practice of the medieval canon law and the renewal of the clergy's traditional role of reforming the Irishry along conventional canonical lines - Dowdall had sought to revive catholicism both by the enactment and enforcement of local synodal legislation, and through the recreation of the essentially medieval, politico-cultural setting in which it had existed prior to the reformation. Given its politico-cultural and canonical foundations,

16 Dowdall and St Leger landed at Dalkey on 3 November 1553 ('The Archbishop of Armagh's opinion touching Ireland delivered in 1558', B.L., Harleian MS 35, f 203r; Chronicle of Dublin, T.C.D. MS 591, f 17v).

17 *Cal. pat. rolls Ire., Hen. VIII-Eliz*, pp 250, 301-2, 315; A. Gwynn and R. N. Hadcock, *Medieval Religious Houses in Ireland* (London, 1970), p 210.

Dowdall's programme was profoundly attractive to the former canons of St Patrick's. Ultimately, it instilled in them the conviction and confidence to argue that a full and proper restoration of catholicism in the heart of English Ireland would be wholly dependent upon the re-establishment of their cathedral.

The revival of canon law, as conceived and instituted by Archbishop Dowdall, was not merely the revival of one of a number of abandoned catholic traditions requiring restoration, but the actual means and engine of reintroducing and enforcing all of them. The potential in such a strategy was apparent to him because he was a deeply experienced practitioner of canon law at the diocesan and provincial levels. Moreover, as someone who had served the diocesan administration of Armagh, or presided over it, during the reformations of Henry VIII and Edward VI, he was fully conversant with the theoretical and practical changes wrought by their régimes upon the ecclesiastical law and, conversely, with the theoretical standing of their religious settlements within that same ecclesiastical law.[18] It was this understanding of the legal ramifications of the reformation which enabled him to formulate his strategy of catholic restoration. The Edwardian settlement had never been enacted by parliamentary statute in Ireland. Rather it had been enjoined upon the crown's subjects through royal injunctions and, more importantly, through the proclamations of the crown's viceroys. The issuing of these injunctions and proclamations were direct manifestations of the royal supremacy in the Church of Ireland and added, in effect, new additions to the corpus of its ecclesiastical law. In Dowdall's eyes, the restoration of the old religion in Ireland was essentially a question of amending this local ecclesiastical law, given that the queen, still the supreme head, had clearly signalled in her instructions to the incoming lord deputy, and possibly also to the archbishop himself in a personal audience, her desire that

18 For a general account of these changes see W. N. Osborough, 'Ecclesiastical law and the Reformation in Ireland', in R. Hemholz, ed., *Canon law in Protestant lands* (Berlin, 1992), pp 223-52.

her brother's religious settlement should be dismantled, and replaced by a settlement which upheld the traditional rites of the late medieval church.

Dowdall responded decisively to these signals. Sometime towards the close of 1553 or in the early months of 1554, he convened the traditional canon law-making body of the province of Armagh, the provincial council, to a meeting in St Peter's church in Drogheda. The council enacted seventeen canons or 'reformanda'. These included measures for the deprivation of married clergy, for the absolution of bishops and priests who had taken part in heretical rites, for the restoration of the 'ancient rites and ceremonies' of the church, for the rooting out of heretics by specially appointed diocesan and metropolitan inquisitors and for the burning of heretical books. Collectively, they restored the religious and ecclesiastical life of Armagh to the state it had been in at the death of Henry VIII.[19]

The importance of Dowdall's action extended far beyond its tactical significance as a means of formally restoring catholic practice. His revival of the canon law was not just an academic exercise - the re-establishment of an objective body of law which was codified in the classical canonical texts or local synodal decrees, and which was recognized internationally by fellow canonists throughout the Roman church - but something much more fundamental and deep-rooted. He perceived it as an embodiment of the value system of the community from which he had emerged and its revival was intended as a reassertion and reinforcement of those values. An ultra-loyal Palesman, Dowdall saw it as his essential duty to uphold and defend the English political and socio-cultural order in Ireland. Like so many of his community, the archbishop perceived the contrasting socio-cultural order of the

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19 'Reformanda in concilio provinciali Reverendissimi in Christo Patris ac Domini Domini Georgii Dowdall Archiepiscopi Armachani totius Hibernia Primatis celebrato in Ecclesia Sancti Petri de Drogheda Anno Domini 1553' (T.C.D., MS 557/13, pp 87-92; calendared by Murray in 'Primate Dowdall's Register', *Louth Arch. Soc. Jn*, vi [1925-8], pp 154-5). The council took place sometime between Dowdall's arrival in Ireland on 3 November 1553 and the end of 1553 as it was then reckoned i.e., 24 March 1554.

'wild Irish' as a lawless and barbarous threat to this system, and as something which had to be opposed vehemently. Opposing the lawless and uncivilized ways of the Irishry, in fact, was a traditional preoccupation of his community and provided, in effect, the historical justification for its presence in Ireland. The community believed that the original English conquest of Ireland had been papally sanctioned in Adrian VII's bull *Laudabiliter*, because the Gaelic Irish were uncivilized and required reformation, especially in religious matters, where the survival of many of their pre-Christian social codes were deemed to be in direct contravention of the canon law. Although the first conquest had failed, and successive generations of the Englishry had gone native outside the English Pale, the historical imperative to civilize the Irish along the lines envisaged in the first conquest, including the enforcement of the canon law, retained a powerful hold on the imagination of the Pale community, especially upon clergymen with a corporatist and legal background like George Dowdall.[20]

Dowdall's attitudes towards the Irishry are evident in a written submission he made to the English privy council on the eve of his death in 1558, in which he endeavoured to provide 'advice of some kind of reformation' to be applied in Ireland to eradicate the political and social disorder that had long bedevilled the country.[21] He affirmed in this text that he believed that the Irishry had remained in the unreformed condition they had been in at the time of the first conquest - the 'pride and ravenous behaviour' of their ancestors was 'printed' in their hearts - and that nothing, 'neither preaching, good counsel, good example or yet any good mean' that he knew of, could get them to change their ways.[22] He therefore

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20 See chapter two above.

21 'The Archbishop of Armagh's opinion touching Ireland delivered in 1558' (B.L., Harleian MS 35, ff 195r-204v). Dowdall's memorandum was specifically requested from him by the privy council following an earlier submission in which he outlined these political and social ills (P.R.O., SP 62/2, no. 44).

22 B.L. Harl. MS 35, f 197r.

considered it 'a godly reformation' to subdue and banish them and to plant the country anew with civil English settlers because they were 'always disposed to all naughtiness as murder, robbery, stealth and deceit and do not obey god or man's laws'. It was this disposition, he contended, that had 'moved the pope's holiness to give the king licence at the time of the first conquest to take their lands from them as the chronicles doth declare'.[23]

Despite this allusion to *Laudabiliter* and the Anglo-Norman Conquest, and his own belief that a new conquest and plantation were worthy of serious consideration, Dowdall was too much of a political realist to recommend the undertaking of a violent and expropriatory policy to the English privy council. Past experience, and the crown's current commitment to the war in France, had shown that a new and expensive reconquest of the island would not be seriously countenanced. He was left with no choice therefore but to recommend that a conciliatory approach should be adopted to bring the Irishry under control. Nevertheless, his passionate and trenchantly critical views on the Irishry should not be discounted as hyperbolic polemic. They were real and heartfelt and provide, in effect, the context in which we must estimate the full significance of his revival of canon law in Armagh in 1553/4.

To Dowdall and the clergy of English Ireland, canon law was one of those very codes of law and civility which the Irishry and their clergy traditionally flouted, both through their general lawlessness and through a specific and aberrant set of ecclesiastical practices, which ranged from tolerance for the practice of clerical concubinage to the usurpation by the laity of clerical functions. By the same token, canon law also represented a code of ethics or behavioural standards which the Pale community, especially their clergy, subscribed to, and

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23 Ibid., f 197v. It is significant that Dowdall's notion of instituting a new conquest and plantation was, like so much of his thought, influenced by his legal background in the romano-canonical tradition: he justified it by quoting the civil law maxim 'Quod princeps debet purgare provinciam suam malis hominibus'.

which they believed set them apart from their Gaelic counterparts. More than that, it was a system of law which they had a particular and historical responsibility to enforce upon the Irishry, a responsibility which Dowdall, throughout his entire career as an archbishop and canon lawyer, had endeavoured to discharge even in the most difficult of circumstances. This is evident, for example, in the surviving record of the diocesan visitation of Armagh of 1546, which shows that the archbishop, both personally and through his commissaries, made very real efforts to enforce conventional canonical standards amongst the Gaelic clergy of the Irish deaneries of Orior and Tullaghogue, including the strict enforcement of celibacy.[24] Thus the revival of canon law had great cultural significance. It gave Dowdall and his community a renewed sense of their *raison d'etre* in Ireland. The values which their forefathers had been sent into Ireland to enforce and which had been undermined by the reformations of Henry VIII and Edward VI, the values which lay at the heart of their culture, were renewed and validated as a result.

This kind of thinking was implicit in two distinct aspects of Archbishop Dowdall's programme for catholic restoration. The first of these was the constitutional basis of the settlement which was established on 7 June 1555 when Pope Paul IV granted Queen Mary and King Philip a bull erecting Ireland into a kingdom, following a request made by Cardinal Pole on their behalf.[25] The granting of this bull has traditionally been seen as a matter strictly between the English crown and the papacy, though there has been no consensus as to which of the parties was the most desirous to see it effected, nor why they

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24 Gwynn, *Med. province Armagh*, pp 272-4.

25 The bull was obtained during the embassy of Thomas Thirlby, bishop of Ely, Sir Edward Carne and Viscount Montague who were in Rome to make solemn obedience to the Holy See in the wake of England's return to the papal fold (L. Von Pastor, *The History of the Popes from the close of the Middle Ages*, translated by F.I. Antrobus and R.F.Kerr [24 vols, London, 1891-1933], xiv, p 360; A. Bellesheim, *Geschichte der katholischen Kirche in Irland* [Vol 2, Mainz, 1890], pp 107-8; Cardinal Pole to Pope Julius III, 10 March 1555: A.M. Quirini, ed., *Epistolae Reginaldi Poli* [5 vols., Brescia, 1744-57], v, pp 4-7; *Cal. S.P. Venice 1555-6*, pp 16-7). The latin text of the bull is printed in J. Hogan, ed., 'Miscellanea Vaticano-Hibernica, 1420-1631', in *Archiv. Hib.*, iv (1915), p 217.

felt so. In the mid-1570s, for example, Nicholas Ormanetto, the bishop of Padua and a former servant of Cardinal Pole at the time he requested the papacy to grant Ireland kingly status, was of the view that the initiative originated solely with the queen, being an attempt to overcome her scruple about using a title which had been assumed by her schismatic father.[26] In contrast, Paolo Sarpi, in his early-seventeenth-century history of the Council of Trent, saw it as a typically agressive gesture by Paul IV to reassert the uniquely papal prerogative, arising from the 'Donation of Constantine', of bestowing the title of kingship over all islands; a view which was later echoed by the nineteenth-century papal historian, Ludwig Von Pastor, though in a much less emphatic form.[27] Recent views on the significance of the bull have been more prosaic. The consensus amongst twentieth-century Irish historians is that it resulted from a concerted action by both parties to regularize Anglo-papal relations *vis-a-vis* Ireland.[28]

There are problems with all of these assessments. Mary's alleged scrupulousness cannot have been too acute, given that she waited for nearly two years after her accession to relieve it.[29] Similarly, Paul IV's aggressive and jealous guardianship of papal prerogatives was well known, but, as regards the papal power to bestow the title of king on princes, he was noticeably silent on the matter at the time of the issue of the bull to Mary and Philip, while the bull itself originated in a request from the king and queen to his predecesor which had

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26 Nicholas Ormanetto, bishop of Padua, to the Cardinal of Como, 19th Dec 1575 (*Cal. S.P. Rome,* ii, pp 240-1).

27 Pietro Soave Polano (Paolo Sarpi), *The Historie of the Councel of Trent,* trans. Nathaniel Brent (London, 1629), pp 391-2; *Cal. Carew MSS*, i, pp 251-2; Pastor, *History of the Popes*, xiv, p 360.

28 Ellis, *Tudor Ire.*, p 210; Lennon, *Sixteenth Century Ireland*, p 306. R.D. Edwards described the bull as 'a gracious acknowledgement of an unalterable fact' (Edwards, *Church & State*, p 166).

29 Pole stated that the king and queen sought the papal confirmation 'out of their piety' (Quirini, *Epistolae Reginaldi Poli*, v, p 5).

nothing to do with him.[30] More importantly, the belief that the bull regularized the position between England and Rome as far as Ireland was concerned is open to question. At the time the bull was granted in June 1555 the more controversial and overtly anti-papal legislation of Henry VIII's 1536-7 parliament was as yet unrepealed. Although this legislation had fallen into abeyance, Ireland had not been formally reconciled to the Holy See in the same way that England had been, which strongly suggests that the bull was never envisaged as a means of normalizing Anglo-papal relations on the question of Ireland.

The major problem with the existing explanations, then, is that the alleged intentions and motivations which underscored the parties' effort to procure or promulgate the bull do not altogether fit with the timing of the grant. An alternative and more cogent explanation, which admits no such discrepancies between motivation, intention and timing, is that the bull was sought by Archbishop Dowdall as part and parcel of his strategy of catholic restoration in the English Pale. The main evidence for the involvement of Dowdall in the acquisition of the papal grant lies in the content of the bull itself and in the circumstances surrounding Cardinal Pole's initial request for papal confirmation of the crown's title to kingship over Ireland.[31] In essence, the bull was a reaffirmation of the papacy's grant of the lordship of Ireland to the English, a reaffirmation of the bull *Laudabiliter*, made necessary by the schismatic Henry VIII's assumption of the kingly title, and abandonment of the old title of lord, through an act of the Irish parliament enacted in 1541.

> We raise in perpetuity the island of Ireland into a kingdom, in the pattern of other islands resplendent with royal title, dignity and honour of which the kings of England - who were at the time accustomed to be called lords only, from the time they received lordship over her from the aforesaid See, and of which first the late Henry VIII after he had seceded from the unity of the Catholic church and from obedience to the Roman pontiff, [and] then his son

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30 Cardinal Pole to Pope Julius III, 10 March 1555 (Quirini, ed., *Epistolae Reginaldi Poli*, v, pp 4-7; *Cal. S.P. Venice 1555-6*, pp 16-7).

31 The negotiations which lead to Cardinal Pole's request for papal confirmation of the kingly title are discussed below pp 179-86.

> Edward, on the pretext of a certain law passed ... by the parliament of that same island - usurped the title of king ....[32]

One group in particular, arguably more so than the king and queen or even the pope, would have been troubled by the action taken by Henry VIII in 1541. This was the English-Irish clergy. They had traditionally viewed *Laudabiliter* not only as a justification for the English presence on the island, but as a particular justification for their own historic role of reforming the Irishry along orthodox canonical lines. The reformation, through the royal supremacy, the attacks on clerical independence and canon law, and the abolition of papal authority, cut a swathe through this age-old world view and, indeed, it was partly to assuage doubts about the legitimacy of the monarch's right to make such radical defiance of the authority which had given it its dominion in Ireland - a view expressed by some English and Gaelic Irish clergy during, and in the wake of, the Kildare rebellion - that the 1541 act was introduced and passed in the first instance.[33] For the English-Irish clergy, the 1541 act may have legitimised the crown's right to rule in Ireland on a political level, but on a psychological level it was far from satisfactory. The existence of the 1541 act, especially when viewed in the wider context of the Henrician attacks on the papacy, canon law and the clerical estate, had effectively destroyed the authority and the theoretical basis for their traditional reforming role and, in consequence, the justification and means for continuing with it. In contrast, the unexpected reconciliation of the crown and papacy, presented them with the very welcome opportunity of reviving it once again. There it is little doubt, then, that Dowdall had the necessary motivation for seeking papal confirmation of the kingly title. Such confirmation, combined with his own efforts to restore clerical independence and the rule of pre-reformation canon law, would re-establish once again all those elements which traditionally comprised the historic mission of the Englishry in Ireland. Overall, it

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32 Hogan, ed., 'Miscellanea Vaticano-Hibernica', p 217. I would like to thank Dr Stephen O'Connor, formerly of the Medieval Latin Dictionary and now of the Public Record Office, London, for his help with the translation of the bull.

33 Ellis, 'Kildare rebellion and the early reformation', pp 813-4; Sheehy, 'The Bull *Laudabiliter*', pp 52-3.

provided the perfect consitutional underpinning for the archbishop's strategy of catholic restoration.

Dowdall's determination to validate the Englishry's *Laudabiliter*-based reforming role in Ireland was not only implicit in the acquisition of the 1555 bull, but also in the legislative output of his provincial council of 1553/4. The legislation enacted by the council was not confined solely to anti-reformation measures. Only five canons, in fact, dealt specifically with reformation matters at all. The remainder ranged far and wide over the spectrum of ecclesiastical and religious matters normally legislated for by synodal bodies in the pre-reformation Irish church, and included canons, the first four in fact, which proscribed practices traditionally associated with the Gaelic Irish, such as the conferral of benefices on laymen and boys, and the acquisition by laymen, through deception, of the power to confer benefices from the papacy. Other canons included measures for the reconciliation of divorcees, for the repair of ruined churches and for the institution of a fast for the vigil of St Brigid. Viewed as a whole, the legislation shows that Dowdall was not only attempting to restore the externals of the old religion but to recreate the full historical and avowedly English Irish cultural context in which that religion had traditionally existed and from which it had derived its full meaning.[34]

In this context, the reformist practices introduced during the schism, no more than a host of other canonical offences, were deemed to be anathema because they had undermined a code of ethics and behavioural standards which were perceived as being uniquely English. In other words, Dowdall's 'reformanda' defined the English-Irish clergy's rejection of the reformation in a manner that was directly comparable to their traditional rejection of the

34 T.C.D., MS 557/13, pp 87-92 (Murray, ed., 'Primate Dowdall's Register', *Louth Arch. Soc. Jn*, vi [1925-8], pp 154-5); on such legislation generally see M.A.J. Burrows, 'Fifteenth century Irish provincial legislation and pastoral care', in Sheils and Wood, (ed.), *The churches, Ireland and the Irish*, pp 55-67

uncanonical practices of the Gaelic Irish. Indeed in one important respect these two preferences were inextricably linked, a feature evident in the provincial council's opening canon, which legislated against clerical marriage. Here, a practice specific to the reformers was given a particularly derogatory slant by linking it to the traditionally Gaelic, pre-reformation practice of clerical concubinage. The new canon stated that all priests, not only those who had 'presumed' to contract marriage at the time of the schism, but also those 'notorious fornicators who, despite many warnings, publicly annointed their whores as wives in their own homes', should be declared deprived of their livings and unfit to administer the sacraments until they received proper canonical dispensations.[35] The implication here was that the reformers' rejection of the canonical bans on clerical marriage and incontinence were exactly akin to the Irishry's traditional rejection of the same laws, offences which Dowdall had long endeavoured to correct. In English Irish eyes, therefore, the reformers' cause was particularly discredited in that it seemed to justify Irish, non-English, behaviour.

A similar implication was embedded in a petition Dowdall made to Queen Mary c. 1558 concerning the unfettered use of the canon law. The archbishop asked the queen to grant him 'at all times liberty and licence to exercise and minister all kind of ecclesiastical censures against the ... wild Irish that do not answer writ or bill'.[36] Significantly, the reason Dowdall sought this specific permission was the fear engendered in him by some 'learned men' - a hangover no doubt from the days of the schism - that it would be an offence

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35 'Imprimis ut declarentur omnes sacerdotes non modo qui hac in tempestate matrimonium contrahere presumpserunt verum et notarii fornicatores tum pluries moniti ut scorta sua non secus quam uxores in domibus suis publice delivuerunt [?delibuerunt, ?deleverunt] suis beneficiis privatos [?privati] et inhabiles ad regimen vel ad sacramentorum administrationem donec eum [sic] eis super his sufficienter erit dispensatos ...'. (T.C.D., MS 557/13, p 87; Gwynn, *Med. province Armagh*, pp 272-4). The text of Dowdall's register, which has come down to us in a seventeenth century transcript, is corrupt in several places including this section (see also Gwynn, *Med. province Armagh*, p 265, note 2), but its meaning is clear. I would like to thank Dr Stephen O'Connor for his help in reading the text.

36 Shirley, *Ch. in Ire., 1547-67*, pp 82-3.

against the statutes of praemunire to 'curse' any of the Irishry in a temporal cause, just as much as it would be an offence to curse an English subject 'of whom remedy may be daily had by the course of the king's laws'. The sub-text in Dowdall's petition repays repeated reading. He was concerned to note the point that the Gaelic Irish could not be regarded as subjects in the same way as the English Irish were, and that they were clearly unamenable to the process and strictures of the common law. It was therefore legitimate for English-Irish ecclesiastics to act in the capacity of substitute secular magistrates and to defend both the English ecclesiastical interest in Ireland, and the interest of English border communities, by using ecclesiastical censures to maintain some degree of order amongst the Irishry 'as hath ever continued there'.

For Dowdall and many other English Irish clerics, then, conditions on the ground in the territories under their ecclesiastical jurisdictions implied that the traditional concerns of the crown and common lawyers that the canon law was a foreign jurisidictional import which needed to be controlled rigorously by the statutes of praemunire were wholly inappropriate. For the clergy of English Ireland, canon law was perceived not as an enemy but as an aid. It was a long established instrument in their battle to impose civility upon the Irishry, and its existence could be justified solely on that account, particularly as the Irishry afforded some recognition to it. It was therefore wrong, as had been the case during the preceding reigns, to circumscribe its use and effectiveness, particularly in the name of reformed religion; for, like their encouragement of clerical marriage, the reformers' exploitation of the statutes of praemunire seemed to be pro-Gaelic and anti-English in intent, as it attacked and undermined a legal code which had not only been historically designated as the standard of English civility to which the unreformed Irish should aspire, but had also been a very practical aid in bringing them into that same civility.

Overall, then, Dowdall's strategy for the restoration of catholicism in the province of Armagh had a very marked English politico-cultural agenda attached to it, an agenda that was clearly adumbrated in canon 15 of the 1553/4 provincial council, which commanded the clergy to make in their masses a procession twice weekly, and one collect or prayer, for the state or wellbeing of the 'royal majesty'. Here was the old order of the English Pale in all its ancient fulness: old religion, old politics, old loyalties.[37] The existence of this agenda is particularly significant because it strongly suggests that the archbishop, perhaps mindful of his primatial responsibilities, framed it with the English Pale in view rather than his own predominantly Gaelic province, a territory wherein its full significance would only have been appreciated and obeyed in the English areas of Meath and Louth. Although theoretically the seventeen 'reformanda' of the provincial council of 1553/4 were legally binding in the suffragan Gaelic sees of Ardagh, Clogher, Clonmacnoise, Derry, Down, Dromore, Kilmore and Raphoe, in reality they were more relevant to the church in English Ireland, including the diocese of Dublin and its suffragan sees. It is very likely, then, that Dowdall's strategy was designed to appeal to the clergy of the English Pale as a whole, including the ex-prebendaries of St Patrick's cathedral. They, no less than Dowdall, would have appreciated the legal ingenuity of restoring catholicism by amending local ecclesiastical law. They too would have appreciated that the revival of medieval canon law was of profound historical and cultural significance for the English Irish community as a whole and, for themselves in particular, the living embodiment of English Irish canonical correctness. Above all, however, they would have appreciated the potential significance of what Dowdall was doing for their former cathedral.

Dowdall's strategy provided, in effect, the strongest possible reason for seeking the re-establishment of St Patrick's cathedral because his aim of restoring the old religion by

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37 'Item quod processio bis hebdomade fiat pro statu regie majestatis et una collecta in missis' (T.C.D., MS 557/13, p 92; Murray, ed., 'Primate Dowdall's Register', *Louth Arch. Soc. Jn*, vi [1925-8], p 155).

canonical means throughout the English Pale could not have been seriously countenanced without it. If the requisite synodal legislation was to be enacted in Dublin, and it had to be as the Armagh legislation was not binding outside the boundaries of that province, it would require proper monitoring and enforcement by a fully functional diocesan administration. Such an administration did not exist in the see of Dublin at this juncture. The suppression of St Patrick's had severely disrupted the workings of the pre-reformation administrative structure, and it badly needed reconstruction before it would be in a fit state to support the implementation of new provincial legislation. Similarly, if any such canon law was to take proper effect in Dublin's suffragan sees, then the full apparatus of provincial ecclesiastical government would also have to be revived. Here the main administrative organ was the archbishop's metropolitan or consistory court. Although the consistory did not cease to operate during the period of the cathedral's suppression, its standing had been greatly diminished. Instead of occupying its traditional and unique position as the supreme court of appeal for ecclesiastical causes in the province of Dublin, an eminence which in the past had been reflected in its association with the visible wealth and splendour of the old cathedral, the consistory had been reduced in status to that of a junior partner in a larger judicial complex, following the crown's decision in March 1547 to remove the four courts of judicature to a portion of the skeletal church.[38] The content of Arcbishop Dowdall's strategy, then, demanded not only that it should be implemented throughout Dublin and the English Pale, but that as a pre-condition for this the cathedral church of St Patrick should also be restored.

38 For a discussion of the administrative disruption caused by the dissolution of St Patrick's see chapter 8.

III

The implementation of Dowdall's strategy in Dublin began in the spring and early summer of 1554, through the operation of a commission, issued by the queen on 14 April, to deprive married clergy of their benefices. Dowdall headed this commission and was joined on it by Patrick Walshe, bishop of Waterford, Alexander Deveroux, bishop of Ferns, Terence Donnelly, dean of Armagh, Robert Luttrell, archdeacon of Meath, William Walshe, S.T.P. (later appointed bishop of Meath), and Bartholomew Fitzsimon, rector of Clongill, Co. Meath. According to the terms of the commission many clerks, priests and religious in Ireland, including benefice holders, had committed 'grave enormities' by unlawfully cohabiting with women 'under the colour and veil of matrimony' and had sown heresies and schisms away from the true catholic faith. The commissioners were ordered to summon all such clergy to appear before them and if, after summary examination they were found guilty, to deprive them of their benefices, to enjoin upon them salutary penance and to divorce them from their wives or concubines.[39]

The royal commission made an impact on the diocese of Dublin in two related ways. First, it provided a vehicle or forum for Dowdall to communicate his strategy to the clergy of Dublin; either directly, through a personal visit to the diocese at the head of the commission or, more likely, through associates and intermediaries who were well connected with himself and the old ecclesiastical establishment in Dublin, and fully supportive of the notion of reintroducing pre-reformation canonical norms. Such figures would have included his fellow commissioners, Bartholomew Fitzsimon, a cleric who had himself been a notably conservative member of the chapter of St Patrick's cathedral at the time of its

39 P.R.O., C 66/874, mm. 39-40d (*Cal. pat. rolls, 1553-4*, pp 302-3). Most historians, past and present, have been unaware that the original commission has survived on the English patent rolls and, following Ware, have incorrectly given its personnel as Dowdall, William Walshe and Thomas Leverous (Edwards, *Church &state*, p 162).

suppression; and Robert Luttrell, a qualified canonist and the archdeacon of Meath, who had served as Dowdall's official principal during his first period as archbishop of Armagh, and who had held the rectory of Hollywood in the diocese of Dublin during Henry VIII's reign.[40] It is likely that the archbishop mobilised support for his strategy outside the province of Armagh through clerics such as these.

The commission did more, however, than provide an excuse for old clerical friends to gather, learn about and discuss the implications of Dowdall's strategy of catholic restoration. In a very practical way, it was also a necessary step in the implementation of the strategy itself, although this is not readily apparent when the terms of the commission are considered in isolation. On first sight, in fact, the commission seems at odds with the strategy Dowdall had instituted in Armagh. Dowdall's plan aimed at re-establishing the autonomy of the local ordinary on matters pertaining to ecclesiastical jurisdiction and discipline. The queen's commission, by contrast, could be interpreted as a statement that she retained the ultimate authority to pronounce on all local ecclesiastical disciplinary matters, given that the Henrician act of supremacy, passed by the Irish parliament in 1536, was still on the statute books. There are, however, a number of factors which indicate strongly that Dowdall and the queen viewed the commission in a quite different way. First there was the attitude of Queen Mary herself. It has long been recognized that, from the outset of her reign, Mary was anxious to shed the supremacy from her list of royal prerogatives and that she only ever exercised authority on ecclesiastical matters to further the cause of catholicism. Given this, and her known predilection for restoring the traditional disciplinary machinery of the medieval church,[41] there can be little doubt that

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40 Above pp 53-4; *B.R.U.O. 1501-40*, p 367; Murray, (ed)., 'Primate Dowdall's Register', *Louth Arch. Soc. Jn*, vi [1925-8], p 153; *Stat. Ire.*, i, pp 131-2.

41 On Mary's attitude to the Supremacy and her revival of the traditional disciplinary machinery of the church see C. Cross, 'Churchmen and the Royal Supremacy', in F. Heal and R. O'Day, eds., *Church and Society in England Henry VIII to James I* (London, 1977), pp 20-1.

she approved of Dowdall's strategy of reviving catholicism through the enactment and enforcement of local canon law, a fact borne out by her appointment of the archbishop at the head of a commission which was dominated by like-minded, clerical associates from his own province. As well as Robert Luttrell and Bartholomew Fitzsimon, these included Terence Donnelly, the dean of Armagh, whose subscription to the Dowdall programme in its anglocentric entirety is evident from his acquisition of a grant of English liberty less than three weeks after the archbishop's return to Ireland in November 1553.[42]

That the royal commission was instituted not to undermine, but to advance Dowdall's strategy is confirmed both by the circumstances in which it was issued and by the manner in which it was executed. In reality, Dowdall faced a problem with his programme of restoration in that the majority of Pale sees were held by bishops who, of their own accord, were unlikely or incapable of initiating it effectively, either because they were still supporters of the reformation, or because they were compromised in canonical terms by their marriages or their past behaviour as reformers. In this sense Thomas Lancaster of Kildare, Robert Travers of Leighlin, Edward Staples of Meath and George Browne of Dublin were all compromised to a greater or lesser degree. The effective implementation of Dowdall's plan was predicated upon the removal of such men and their replacement by unambiguous or untainted catholics. And it was this crucial need which the commission was appointed to serve, because at this juncture the only authority on the island which could lawfully deprive all of these bishops, or which would be accepted by those bishops about to be deprived, was the monarch. Thus, once in operation, the first victims of the commission were not surprisingly the bishops named above. Significantly, only a handful of lesser clergy were deprived as a result of its activities, the commissioners being content to leave

42 *Cal. pat. rolls Ire., Hen. VIII-Eliz*, p 307. Donnelly was generally known thereafter as Terence Daniel.

this work to local diocesan administrations once they were happy that they were headed by trustworthy ordinaries.[43]

Archbishop George Browne was deprived sometime during the summer of 1554, an act which drew a very firm line under the see of Dublin's recently schismatic and heretical past. Browne's deprivation enabled Dowdall to move to the second vital step in the implementation of his counter-reformation. This was his campaign to secure the queen's agreement to three related measures: the appointment of a suitable successor to Browne, the re-establishment of St Patrick's cathedral, and the regularization of Ireland's constitutional status in line with traditional English-Irish clerical values. The thinking behind these measures was clear. The first was designed to reconstruct the Dublin diocesan administration from top to bottom according to the model of its pre-reformation structure. The second would qualify it to take over all further responsibility for the revival of canon law and the restoration of the old religion And the third sought to restore the medieval constitutional context in which these essentially English Irish politico-cultural activities had taken place prior to the innovations of Henry VIII and Edward VI. Given these objectives, the timing of their execution was all important. In order that the Dowdall programme could be implemented without delay, it was required that all three measures should be realised quickly and simultaneously. Thus they were dealt with as a unit, a feature evident in the fact that final decisions on all were resolved and announced within weeks of each other in the spring of 1555. On 18 February, Queen Mary issued two letters missive under her signet from Westminster. One of them commanded the dean and chapter of Christ Church cathedral to elect Dr Hugh Curwen, dean of Hereford cathedral, as archbishop of Dublin. The other signified to the lord deputy, lord chancellor and council of Ireland her intent, to restore 'our metropolitan and prebendary church and chapter of St Patrick ... unto her

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43 For the Dublin deprivations which resulted from the commission see Ronan, *Reformation in Dublin*, pp 428-9; *Cal. pat. rolls Ire., Hen. VIII-Eliz*, p 325.

pristine honorable state' from Lady Day following. On 10 March, Cardinal Pole wrote to Pope Julius III requesting that he confirm the kingly title over Ireland to Queen Mary and King Philip.[44]

The securing of these measures was the culmination of weeks, or perhaps months of negotiations, conducted between the crown and a delegation of former prebendaries, 'them of St Patrick's', who attended upon the queen sometime in the latter half of 1554 or in the opening months of 1555. The crown appears to have been represented by a sub-committee of the privy council, consisting of William Paulet, marquis of Winchester and lord treasurer of England, Bishop Thomas Thirlby of Ely, Sir Francis Englefield and Sir Edmund Peckham, who, on 10 August 1554, had been given responsibility for the 'stay and good order' of the realm of Ireland.[45] The identities of the members of the St Patrick's delegation are not now on record, but it is certainly known that they conducted their business under the aegis and direction of Archbishop Dowdall. His involvement in and all pervasive influence on the process is clearly revealed in his domination of the new cathedral chapter appointed by Queen Mary. Dowdall himself received the prebend of Saggart. More importantly, the two most senior positions, the deanery and precentorship, went to close associates. These were respectively Thomas Leverous, the former tutor of Gerald Fitzgerald, eleventh earl of Kildare, and Dowdall's archdeacon in Armagh; and Thomas Creef, the religiously conservative ex-prebendary of Saggart who, after the suppression of the cathedral and

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44 R.C.B., C.6.1.6, Registrum Novum of Christ Church, iii, p 1190 ('Christ Church Deeds', no. 447); Mason, *History of St Patrick's*, pp 155-6 (*Cal. pat. rolls Ire., Hen. VIII-Eliz*, pp 328-9); Cardinal Pole to Pope Julius III, 10 March 1555 (Quirini, ed., *Epistolae Reginaldi Poli*, v, pp 4-7; *Cal. S.P. Venice 1555-6*, pp 16-7).

45 Signet letter from the queen to the lord deputy, lord chancellor and council of Ireland, dated 23 February 1555, printed in Mason, *History of St Patrick's*, pp 156-8 (*Cal. pat. rolls Ire., Hen. VIII-Eliz*, pp 327-8); *Acts privy council, 1554-6*, p 59.

before Dowdall had gone into exile in Edward VI's reign, had served in the archbishop's household as a chaplain.[46]

Of the matters under discussion, the finding of a successor to George Browne was perhaps the easiest to accomplish. Fully briefed about and fully sympathetic to the requirements of Dowdall's strategy of restoration, the delegation of ex-prebendaries would have been able to provide a full specification to the privy councillors of the kind of person that was needed to fill the position: a professional legist with extensive experience of diocesan administration. It seems clear too that their arguments were listened to, for, in the person of Hugh Curwen, this is precisely what they got. A native of Cumberland, Curwen's career as a legist commenced in the 1520s when he undertook studies for a baccalaureate in canon law in one of the halls or inns of Oxford. After acquiring his degree in 1528, he supplicated to lecture on the books of the Institutes, and five years later he obtained a doctorate in laws. Like any well educated clergyman of his day, he went on to secure a host of benefices and ecclesiastical offices. These included, during the period 1535 to 1540, appointments as vicar general and official principal to two successive bishops of Hereford, Edward Foxe and Edmund Bonner, appointments which were punctuated by a spell as keeper of the spiritualities *sede vacante* between May 1538 and March 1539. His ascent to the upper echelons of the Hereford clerical hierarchy was completed in 1541, after his appointment by Henry VIII to the deanery of the cathedral.[47]

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46 Murray, ed., 'Primate Dowdall's Register', in *Louth Arch. Soc. Jn.*, vi [1925-8], p 154; Memoranda Roll 1 & 2 Edward VI, m. 164 (N.A.I., Ferguson MS, v, p 69). A Patrick Dowdall, perhaps a kinsman of the archbishop, was appointed beadle and registrar of the cathedral on its re-establishment: Account of the proctor of the economy of St Patrick's, c. June 1555 - c. June 1556, printed in Mason, *History of St Patrick's.*, p xxxii. This account, of which only the expenses section survived, is undated. However, as Mason surmised, it is clearly related to the period of the re-establishment and probably spans the traditional accounting period used by the proctors of St Patrick's, i.e., mid-Summer to mid-Summer (c/f the accounts of John Andowe, June 1509 to June 1510 [Mason, *op. cit.*, pp xxvii-xxxi] and James Ussher, June 1606 to June 1607 [T.C.D., MS 788, ff 87r-91r]).

47 Emden, *B.R.U.O., 1501-40*, pp 137-8.

Curwen, then, was ideally suited for the job of archbishop as specified by Dowdall and the ex-prebendaries. A proven ecclesiastical lawyer and bureaucrat, he had the qualifications and experience necessary to enact and enforce the synodal legislation required by Dowdall's strategy for restoring the old religion. Curwen's appointment was also facilitated by the presence of Bishop Thomas Thirlby on the crown's negotiating team. Thirlby, best known as a royal servant and diplomat, was himself a highly qualified legist who throughout an episcopal career spanning three reigns and three dioceses - Westminster, Norwich and Ely - had become well versed in the task of finding dependable ecclesiastical administrators to fill his absentee shoes. Thus he would have been both attuned to the needs of Dowdall and the clergy of St Patrick's, and possessed of the information and connection to find them the man that they wanted. It is almost certain too that he was acquainted with Hugh Curwen before the Dublin vacancy arose, if not directly, then at least indirectly through Curwen's brother Richard. Before his death in 1543, Richard Curwen had worked very closely with Thirlby, sharing membership of Doctors Commons and, more significantly, the Council of the North, where they participated in the suppression of the Pilgrimage of Grace under the Duke of Norfolk.[48] Thirlby's promotion of the candidacy of his former colleague's brother may well have been crucial given that the queen herself, and Cardinal Pole, the recently arrived papal legate to England, preferred to appoint clerics with a theological and pastoral background to the episcopate, rather than the 'worldly' legists and administrators who had dominated the bench in Henry VIII's reign, and who had conspicuously failed to defend the old religion in its hour of need.[49]

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48 T.F. Shirley, *Thomas Thirlby Tudor Bishop* (London 1964), pp 3-17, 34-9, 104-8, 134.

49 P. Hughes, *The Reformation in England* (revised edn., 3 vols in one, London, 1963), ii, 231-2; R. Pogson, 'The Legacy of the Schism: Confusion, Continuity and Change in the Marian Clergy', in J. Loach and R. Tittler, (eds.) *The Mid-Tudor Polity, c. 1540-1560* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1980), pp 123-7; D. MacCulloch, *The Later Reformation in England* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1990), p 24. Pole arrived in England in November 1554.

Reassurance on the advisability of appointing Hugh Curwen was available from another reliable source. Archbishop Dowdall's plans for the restoration of St Patrick's cathedral also made careful provision for keeping a watchful eye on future proceedings in the diocese, and for ensuring that the new archbishop's administration would be irreproachably orthodox and unrelenting in its efforts to fulfil its appointed task. Both of these objectives were realised in the nature of the personnel selected by the archbishop and his cohorts to staff the new chapter of St Patrick's. Including his own inner circle, consisting of himself, Dean Leverous and Precentor Creef, a group who could be counted on to keep the programme of reviving canon law on track, it purposely comprised a coalition of clergymen from the English Pale which represented in miniature the main clerical power bases and groupings of the pre-reformation church, with particular emphasis on those corporate clergy whose existence and values had been attacked, or who had shown markedly conservative religious leanings during the previous two reigns.[50]

Thus, apart from Thomas Creef, the group included another ten clergymen who had served in the pre-suppression cathedral (seven ex-canons, two ex-vicars choral and one petty canon), amongst whom were the former prebendaries, Simon Jeffrey and Henry Parker, original signatories to the letter of protest against Thomas Cromwell's attempt to curtail the cathedral's liberties nearly two decades earlier.[51] It also included a number of former monastic heads from the Pale: Robert Wellesley, late prior of Conall in Co. Kildare; John Galbally, the former abbot of the Cistercian Abbey of Baltinglass; and John Willey, a

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50 For a complete list of the clergy appointed to the new chapter see the documents printed in Mason, *History of St Patrick's*, pp 156, 160, xxi-xxvi (*Cal. pat. rolls Ire., Hen. VIII-Eliz.*, pp 329, 332-3).

51 The other canons were Richard Ellercar, Nicholas Miagh, John Sonnyng, Richard Johnson and Henry Dancy; James Sarsfield and John Cane or Come were the ex-vicars; and Patrick Fynne, the ex-petty canon; Simon Jeffrey died before the restoration was completed (Mason, *History of St Patrick's*, pp 156, 160, xxi-xxvi).

former neighbour of Dowdall's as pre-dissolution prior of the Augustinian priory of the Blessed Virgin Mary at Louth. Other notables were Thomas Lockwood, the dean of Christ Church cathedral, a cleric who had earned the opprobrium of the ardent protestant reformer, Bishop Bale of Ossory, for resisting his attempt to introduce the second Edwardian Prayer Book in 1552; and George Browne, the ex-archbishop of Dublin, who was equally disliked by Bale and who completed his abandonment of the reformist cause and his integration into the fold of the old clerical guard by accepting the prebend of Clonmethan. In the process he also provided a major propagandist coup for the adherents of the old religion.[52] Taken together, these clergymen formed a group who through their differing experiences were living symbols of the old order's triumphant restoration, and who supplied a pool of almost exclusively conservative clerical talent from which Archbishop Curwen would select his administrative officers.

The reconstruction of the chapter along these conservative lines was achieved with relative ease. Dowdall's negotiators provided the names of the clergy, the queen duly approved them and, in her missive of 18 February, reiterated again on 23 February, she ordered Lord Deputy St Leger, Lord Chancellor Cusack, and the Irish council 'to make out in our name ... unto every of the said persons several grants, gifts, presentations and letters patents of the said dignities, offices and prebends' bearing the date 26 March 1555. The deputy and chancellor responded promptly to her command. On the required date letters of appointment for Dean Leverous and his colleagues, as well as letters patent of admission and installation into the chapter, were issued out of the Irish chancery at a total cost of £1 17*s*. 10*d*. to the recipients.[53]

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52 *Cal. pat. rolls Ire., Hen. VIII-Eliz.*, pp 57-8; *Extents Ir. Mon. possessions*, p 133; Mason, *History of St Patrick's*, pp 156, 160, xxi-xxvi

53 Mason, *History of St Patrick's*, pp *155-8; Cal. pat. rolls Ire., Hen. VIII-Eliz*, pp 328-9; Account of the proctor of the economy of St Patrick's, c. 1555 - c. 1556 (printed in Mason, *op. cit.*, p xxxiii).

Details of how Dowdall and his cohorts proceeded with the procurement of the constitutional requirements of their reform programme are relatively sparse. Nevertheless, there is enough circumstantial evidence - in the events surrounding Cardinal Pole's solicitation of the grant of the kingly title to Queen Mary and King Philip - to link all three events. Significantly, the resumption of Thirlby's ambassadorial role was announced on 18 February 1555, the same day that Curwen's appointment and the restoration of St Patrick's were announced.[54] This suggests that Thirlby played a crucial role in the episode. It is likely that he and Dowdall's negotiating team originated the idea of seeking papal confirmation for the kingly title in their discussions of late 1554 or early 1555, probably after it became known that Thirlby would be undertaking the embassy to the Vatican. Although Pole made the formal request, it is clear from his letter to Julius III that the confirmation of the kingly title was considered from the outset to be a part of the mission of Thirlby, Sir Edward Carne and Viscount Montague, who were sent as ambassadors to Rome to make solemn obedience to the Holy See in the wake of England's return to the papal fold. In essence, Pole's letter to the pope was a letter of introduction to the three ambassadors, with additional petitions appended, including the request that the papal confirmation of the crown's title should be given directly to the ambassadors on their arrival in Rome.[55] Furthermore, following Thirlby's departure to the continent, all further activity relating to the bull and, indeed, on some other business relating to the implementation of the Dowdall strategy, were kept in senior clerical hands. Thus, apart from making the formal request for papal confirmation of the kingly title on March 10, Cardinal Pole also granted George Browne his canonical dispensation to hold an ecclesiastical benefice, effectively the prebend of Clonmethan in St Patrick's cathedral, three days later on March 13 1555. It is

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54 Pastor, *History of the Popes*, xiii, p 288; Shirley, *Thomas Thirlby*, p 142.

55 Cardinal Pole to Pope Julius III, 10 March 1555 (Quirini, ed., *Epistolae Reginaldi Poli*, v, pp 4-7; *Cal. S.P. Venice 1555-6*, pp 16-7).

evident from this that Thirlby, after taking on the *obedientia* mission, handed over the responsibility for supporting and liaising with Dowdall and his cohorts to the cardinal, an informal handover which was soon formalised with Pole's appointment, again secured with Thirlby's aid, as papal legate to Ireland in July 1555. Finally, and no less significantly, on Thirlby's return from the continent in August, he and the privy council chose Archbishop-elect Hugh Curwen, and not the lord deputy or council of Ireland, to bring the bull to Ireland and to publish it throughout the kingdom. Thus, although the bull was a matter of state, it would appear that it was considered to be of primary interest to the clergy involved in restoring the old religion in the English Pale, for no other reason, as Thomas Thirlby well knew, than that it was they who had sought it in the first place.[56]

IV

The decision of Archbishop Dowdall and the clergy of St Patrick's to proceed with their restoration strategy in an independent manner, and the support which the crown evinced for their actions, were not accidental. From the outset, the clergy knew that their plans - in particular, the restoration of St Patrick's cathedral - were unlikely to gain the support of Lord Deputy St Leger and his supporters in the Irish administration, as it was the deputy who had orchestrated the original dissolution of the cathedral in the dying days of Henry VIII's reign. Indeed, their worst fears about St Leger's intentions were soon confirmed. Apart from granting the patents of appointment to the cathedral clergy in March 1555, and a formal charter of restoration in the following June,[57] the Irish administration refused to co-

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56 Edwards, *Church & state,* p 164; *Acts privy council, 1554-6*, p 179.

57 The text of the charter is printed in *Dignitus decani*, pp 149-63 (calendered in *Cal. pat. rolls Ire., Hen VIII-Eliz*, pp 329-335). The charter, which recapitulates the earlier foundation charters and property grants to St Patrick's, as well as reaffirming the queen's decision to revive it, was solicited by the cathedral clergy. Patrick Dowdall, the cathedral registrar, drafted the text. It was issued by the Irish chancery, being dated at Dublin 15 June 1555 (Account of the proctor of the economy of St Patrick's, c. June 1555 - c. June 1556 [Mason, *History of St Patrick's.*, pxxxiii]).

operate further in the process of the cathedral's re-establishment. Moreover, in regard to the most substantive element of this process, the restitution of the cathedral's goods and property, St Leger resisted all attempts throughout the spring and summer of 1555 to prise them away from the state, and return them to their former owners. It was a course of action which would greatly anger the queen and undermine the credibility of an already unravelling administration.

The queen and her advisers were fully aware that the restitution of the property of St Patrick's was likely to cause some problems. At the very time that they began discussing its mechanics, in the latter half of 1554, England's long awaited return to the papal fold was effected, but only after Cardinal Pole, bowing to the concerted political pressure of the queen's 'possessioner' subjects, relinquished the church's claim over the monastic and other ecclesiastical lands that had been secularized during the reigns of Henry VIII and Edward VI. The lesson from this was obvious. Secular opposition, rooted in a similar economic self-interest, could be expected in Ireland, once it became generally known that it was the queen's intention to restore the lucrative prebends of St Patrick's to their original owners.[58]

The task of overcoming this prospective opposition was complicated by the legal position of the dissolved cathedral. As the dissolution of St Patrick's had been effected by 'voluntary surrender', it was the dean and chapter themselves who had voted it out of existence and who, in their final corporate act, had voluntarily given up all its property to the crown, including the property of the subordinate corporations of vicars choral and petty canons.[59] Thus the simplest and least controversial way of undoing the dissolution would have been

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58 On the manoeuvres and discussions, in and out of parliament, which lead to the English possessioners retaining their ecclesiasical property see J. Loach, *Parliament and the crown in the reign of Mary Tudor* (Oxford, 1986), chapters 6, 7.

59 *Dignitus Decani,* pp 143-4; *Cal. pat. rolls Ire., Hen. VIII-Eliz*, p 132.

for the crown to found the cathedral anew and, as the legal proprietor, to endow it afresh with its old property in a staged manner. In this scenario, the crown lesees could have held on to their interests in the property but paid their rents to the clergy instead of the crown, thus avoiding any contention over the re-establishment. Thereafter, the property would have reverted to the clergy on the expiration of the existing 21 year leases.[60] For Dowdall and the cathedral clergy, however, the adoption of such an arrangement was not a serious option. By pursuing a settlement based on the premises of refoundation and re-endowment, they would have been acknowledging implicity the moral validity of the Henrician dissolution of St Patrick's and, most embarassingly, the clergy's reluctant complicity in the matter. In turn, such acknowledgements would have compromised and undermined Dowdall's strategy of catholic restoration because it was based on a claim to continuity with, and loyalty to, the ecclesiastical and canonical past. What Dowdall and the clergy wanted was not a new St Patrick's cathedral, however much it may have resembled the old one, but the revival of the same institution which had been established over three hundred years previously.[61] Thus they had to ensure that the Henrician dissolution, the act which had broken the continuity with the medieval past, would not merely be overturned but wholly negated.

Queen Mary and her advisers supported this position. By placing the restoration of St Patrick's at the very heart of his strategy for restoring the old religion in English Ireland, Archbishop Dowdall had appealed directly to the queen's high moral sense, and provided her in the process with a ready made policy which sat well with her own brand of conviction politics. She had already forsaken her desire to return the bulk of the expropriated English ecclesiastical property to its original owners, in order to achieve the

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60 Most of the existing crown leases were due to fall in in 1568 or 1569.

61 This desire for continuity is evident in the restoration charter of 15 June 1555.

greater good of bringing the realm back into the papal fold. The re-establishment of a fully endowed St Patrick's thus offered an alternative and consoling means of making amends to the church, particularly as it would play such a crucial role in the general restoration and strengthening of the old religion in English Ireland. In short, the re-establishment of St Patrick's was a matter of fundamental principle. All that had to be done was to find the legal and administrative means to make this principle a reality.

To achieve this, the queen called upon her 'learned counsel' to furnish the requisite legal formula. Instead of attacking the Henrician dissolution outright, the counsellors found a solution to the problem by highlighting the legal validity of the original foundation of St Patrick's, which they concluded was 'godly and right honourable'. It was this finding, rather than any inadequacies in the process *per se*, which raised serious questions about the legitimacy of the Henrician dissolution of St Patrick's. Seen in this light, it was difficult to find a moral or legal justification for the act and, not suprisingly, when the counsellors went looking for one, their search was unsuccessful. St Patrick's cathedral, they advised the queen, had been 'at no time by the order of our laws of that our realm [of Ireland] dissolved'. In short, what had transpired in January 1547 was a 'pretensed dissolution'.[62]

This finding had two important implications. The first was that the new dean and chapter of St Patrick's, and the new colleges of vicars choral and petty canons, would from the moment they received their patents of appointment be legally entitled to enter into the property of the cathedral. The second was that the state, which had engineered the original dissolution, would also be duty bound to place at the clergy's disposal its full legal and administrative apparatus to enable them to regain possession of the property which had

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62 The queen to the lord deputy, lord chancellor and Irish council, 23 February 1555 (Mason, *History of St Patrick's*, pp 156-8); the queen to the lord deputy, the keeper of the great seal and the attorney general, 10 September 1555, Memoranda Roll 2 & 3 Philip and Mary, m 2 (N.A.I., Ferguson MS, v, pp 21-4).

been wrongly detained from them. On 23 February 1555 the queen spelt this out in no uncertain terms to Lord Deputy St Leger, Lord Chancellor Cusack and the Irish council, commanding them to suffer the new dean and chapter 'without contradiction to enter the said church, and all the lands, possessions and goods thereto belonging, and all the rents and profits thereof to take ... in like sort as the late dean and chapter did ... before the pretensed dissolution'. She also ordered them to deliver unto the dean and chapter 'such writings and processes, under our great seal out of our chancery and other courts there, as be necessary for the accomplishment of our said pleasure, and the sure and lawful assurance of the said dean and chapter in this behalf'.[63]

Given the explicit nature of the queen's commands, Lord Deputy St Leger's decision to challenge them is somewhat surprising. Yet it is also explicable. At this juncture, he was beset by a series of problems which threatened to engulf him and his administration, and which created the pressurized context that moved him to put his political future on the line by subverting the queen's wishes. Amongst an ever growing list of troubles was the imminent destruction, at the hands of the resurgent O'Mores and O'Connors, of his plantation scheme in Laois and Offaly. It also included, in the work of an ongoing royal commission investigating corruption at the heart of the Irish government, the threatened exposure of his longstanding financial malpractices. And as if these troubles were not bad enough, St Leger's traditional method of papering over cracks in his administration - his use of the crown lands as a source of patronage, and to create a dynamic market in real property, to bolster his political standing - was becoming increasingly difficult to sustain. Alienations and long leases had diminished the politico-economic value of the monastic lands. The restoration in May 1554 of Gerald, eleventh earl of Kildare, had taken away the possibility of exploiting further the valuable FitzGerald estates. And now he was faced

63 Mason, *History of St Patrick's*, pp 156-8

with the prospective loss of the lucrative parsonages of St Patrick's cathedral, property which through his own machinations had only relatively recently come on to the market.[64] Despite all this, however, it is doubtful that St Leger would have challenged the queen had he not sensed in her settlement of the property of St Patrick's a genuine opportunity to salvage something from the wreckage. This opportunity presented itself in the one concession that Queen Mary made to a beneficiary of the dissolution of St Patrick's cathedral. The beneficiary in question was Matthew King, the English born clerk of the check in Ireland.

Prior to Mary's accession in 1553, King had bought a lease of the prebends of Kilmactalway, Mulhuddart and Newcastle Lyons, from the original crown leasee, James Walshe, 'to his great charges'. The lease had cost him £300, which was 2½ times the value of the annual rent of £118 13*s*. 8*d*., and he stood to make a very significant loss from the transaction now that the parsonages were to be returned to their former owners, respectively the prebendaries of Mulhuddart and Kilmactalway and the archdeacon of Glendalough. He therefore petitioned the queen for some redress, counting on his long service to the crown in Ireland to win him a sympathethic hearing, a ploy which had already yielded substantial dividends in a series of unrelated suits made in the opening months of Mary's reign. King's unerring ability to tap the queen's largesse did not fail him on this occasion either. Having discussed his predicament with the delegation from St Patrick's, and bearing in mind how he 'had served us and our dearest father and brother right honestly', the queen once again acted as his good lady and prevailed upon the clergy 'to suffer the same Matthew to enjoy the moiety of the said lease'.[65]

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64 For a general account of the difficulties experienced by St Leger during his last spell as lord deputy of Ireland see Brady, *Chief Governors*, pp 66-71.

65 *Lib. mun. pub. hib.*, i, pt 2, p 99; Mason, *History of St Patrick's*, pp 48 (note f), 158; *Fiants Ire., Edw. VI*, no. 87; Matthew King to Sir William Cecil, 9 August 1565 (P.R.O. SP 63/14, no. 43). For King's earlier and successful petitions at the Marian court see the grants of (i) a discharge of debt of £234 16*s*. 4*d*. and an instruction to the lord deputy to take order with the Irish rebels to undo the despoilation of

As far as the queen was concerned, this concession to Matthew King was unique and, even on it own terms, strictly limited in scope. The clerk of the check would only be allowed to retain his interest in half of the leased tithes, for which he would have to pay the reserved rent to the clergy instead of the crown. The clergy themselves would repossess the remainder of the tithes with immediate effect, and would be free to demise them to whoever they wished at whatever price the market would bear. Furthermore, on the expiry of King's existing lease in 1569, they would also regain full possession of his moiety.[66] Overall, then, it is clear that the cathedral clergy had entered into a bargain which was designed not to disadvantage them unduly. Nor was the arrangement indicative of any general concern on the part of the queen to mollify prospective lay discontent over the imminent restitution of the lands, tithes, buildings and valuables of St Patrick's. In reality, it was an attempt, exceptional at that, to accomodate the conflicting wishes of a favoured royal servitor and three members of the newly appointed, and equally favoured, chapter of St Patrick's.

It is doubtful, however, that many of the cathedral property holders saw King's concession in these terms. In theory, it held out the possibility that others in a similar position to him might be able to negotiate personal settlements which would allow them to retain some or all of their cathedral holdings; an inference which the queen and her counsellors inadvertently led others to draw by including the announcement of the concession in the same letter in which the general settlement of the cathedral's property was disclosed.[67] For

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his goods in Kilkenny and Upper Ossory, he being 'a man of long service', dated at Westminister 31 October 1553; and (ii) of leases of the manors of Lucan and Moyclare, 'in consideration of his long and honest service', given under letters dated at Westminster 13 and 19 December 1553 (*Cal. pat. rolls Ire., Hen. VIII-Eliz*, pp 317-8). King had originally come over to Ireland in the 1530s as a servant of Lord Deputy Grey (*S.P. Hen. VIII*, ii, p 314, 530). His repeated success at court suggests that he may have had a patron close to the queen, perhaps related in some way to his earlier association with Grey.

66 Mason, *History of St Patrick's*, p 158; *Fiants Ire., Edw. VI*, no. 87.

67 Mason, *History of St Patrick's*, p 158.

Lord Deputy St Leger, in particular, already aware of the queen's capitulation over the expropriated monastic lands, this contradictory juxtaposition of uncompromising royal resolve and apparent liberality served to highlight one possible way in which his mounting problems might be eased. And it was on this basis - the hope of extending King's concession to the other holders of cathedral property - that he mounted his campaign of opposition.

St Leger's immediate objective, then, was strictly delimited. There is no real evidence to suggest that he wished to obstruct the restoration of St Patrick's in general terms, a conclusion evident from his compliant participation in the early formalities of re-establishment, such as the granting of the clergy's patents and their charter of restoration. Nor, in accepting the principle of re-establishment, could he have hoped to prevent outright the restitution of the cathedral's goods and property, given that the full resumption of its old endowments would have been both a necessary and inevitable part of its revival. Rather, St Leger's aim in challenging the queen's will was to bring the clergy to the negotiating table so that he and his supporters might salvage some as yet indeterminate portion of their cathedral holdings, in the same way that Matthew King had done. Once at the table, St Leger could be quietly confident that he would wring worthwhile concessions from a queen who had already shown a willingness to abandon high principle when faced with the unpalateable reality of well organised political opposition, and from a clergy who only eight years previously had submitted to him on the matter of the dissolution. Such concessions, once achieved, would ultimately help preserve the reputation of his increasingly tarnished style of viceregal government.

The limited purview of St Leger's campaign of resistance was otherwise evident in the dilatory and secretive tactics that comprised it, tactics which reveal that he was determined to avoid gestures or utternances which might be construed as an open, outright rejection of

the cathedral's re-establishment and the restitution of its property. Such manoeuvers began almost as soon as he received the queen's letter of 23 February 1555, which commanded him to put the clergy into possession of their property by the feast of the Annunciation (26 March) following. It appears that St Leger and his officials responded by seeking the postponement of the restitution until Easter (14 April), probably on the grounds that they would have had insufficient time to effect it in the short interval between the receipt of the queen's letter and the designated date for restitution. On this occasion, at least, the argument was plausible and the request was upheld by the queen and the dean and chapter.[68]

Easter 1555 came and went, however, and still St Leger and his officials made no move to put the clergy in possession of their goods and property.[69] On the contrary, the dean and chapter were of the view, later accepted by the queen, that St Leger had not only encouraged the cathedral property holders to withstand her pleasure, 'refusing or delaying to make restitution according our said desire', but was actually holding in his own custody a 'great part' of the plate and ornaments. In the spring or early summer of 1555, therefore, the dean and chapter, who had retained Richard Netterville[70] as their legal adviser, served a writ of

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68 That official sanction was given for this later date is confirmed by the queen's letter to the lord deputy, the keeper of the great seal and the attorney general of 10 September 1555, Memoranda Roll 2 & 3 Philip and Mary, m 2 (N.A.I., Ferguson MS, v, p 21). The queen stated therein that St Leger had been instructed 'to restore or see full restitution made unto the ... dean, prebendaries, chapter and company from Easter last of all their lands, tenements and whole possessions and of all jewels, ornaments, books, plate and moveables'. The queen also mentioned that St Leger had not 'since Easter last signified any cause or good matter' why he had failed to effect the restitution, which clearly implies that he had done so prior to Easter.

69 The reconstruction of events in this paragraph is based on information contained in the following sources: the queen to the lord deputy, the keeper of the great seal and the attorney general, 10 September 1555, Memoranda Roll 2 & 3 Philip and Mary, m 2 (N.A.I., Ferguson MS, v, pp 21-4); Account of the proctor of the economy of St Patrick's, c. June 1555 - c. June 1556 (Mason, *History of St Patrick's.*, pp xxxii-xxxiii); N.A.I., RC 6/1, p 47.

70 Netterville later emerged as one of the leading spokesmen of the Pale community's protests against the viceregal imposition of the cess (Brady, *Chief Governors*, pp 149, 153, 236-7).

sub poena upon the 'farmers' of the cathedral property - amongst whom was St Leger's stalwart supporter, John Parker, the master of the rolls, and such local luminaries as John Plunket of Dunsoghly and Richard St Laurence, lord of Howth - in the hope that the issue would be finally resolved in their favour in the court of chancery. Yet even in this, the court of equity and conscience, the clergy found that they faced not only the occupiers of their property, but the political muscle of the lord deputy. Sir Thomas Cusack, the lord chancellor, who sat in judgement on the case, was one of St Leger's closest and longstanding allies in Ireland. His advancement to the chancellorship had been procured by the deputy, and he was was now in a position to reciprocate. To the frustration of the dean and chapter and, later, the great annoyance of the queen, it appears that Cusack, at St Leger's bidding, found 'an office' or title in the property for the crown.[71]

The lord chancellor's judgement that the crown was the lawful owner of the cathedral's property, a judgement made on the grounds that the extant documentation on the Henrician dissolution in the Irish chancery was sound in law and witnessed the irrefutable fact that the dean and chapter had surrendered voluntarily, marked the high point of St Leger's campaign of opposition. For the deputy, this was the ultimate delaying tactic, a clever stroke that denied and overrode the dean and chapter's contention that the Henrician dissolution was illegitimate; a move which would finally convince them that their interests would best be served by reaching an accomodation with him. The clergy, however, were to prove more resilient than St Leger had bargained for. Encouraged both by their conviction in the righteousness of their cause, a conviction that Dowdall's strategy had instilled in them, and the confidence that the crown's recently professed support engendered, they were prepared to carry the fight beyond the Irish chancery, all the way back to the court of Queen Mary. Thus, at some point in the early summer of 1555, the dean and chapter wrote to the queen

71 On the relationship of Cusack and Parker with St Leger see Brady, *Chief Governors*, pp 31-2.

informing her of the judgement the lord chancellor had made. The queen and her counsel responded in kind, advising the dean and chapter to enter a 'traverse' or a formal denial against the unwanted office. She also wrote to St Leger and the attorney general, Barnaby Scurlock, ordering them to 'confess' or admit the traverse as soon as the dean and chapter entered it in court.[72]

The queen's decision that the dean and chapter should formally contest her 'office' or title to their lands was an admission of sorts that the lord deputy's tactics, no matter how unscrupulous, were technically valid. St Leger's 'victory', however, was very hollow. In reality, all that the queen had done was acknowledge that the deputy's campaign of resistance had remained within strictly legal limits. A more sober analysis, an analysis which was becoming increasingly apparent to the lord deputy himself, was that he had made a major miscalculation in his estimation of the resolve of the queen and the cathedral clergy. Their response to his machinations during the summer of 1555 clearly showed that they had no intention of submitting to him, and that they were quite content to play and were confident of beating him at his own game. Indeed they were even prepared to apply the kind of political pressure which he himself was used to dispensing, but which he had rarely been forced to endure, a pressure which was applied to the deputy most vigorously, and to its greatest effect, in the late summer of 1555.

In late June or early July, Sir Thomas Cusack was summoned to London to appear before the lords of the English privy council. The precise reasons for this summons are unknown. It is possible that Cusack's involvement in finding the queen's unwanted office in the

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72 None of these letters are now extant but their existence is either implied or referred to explicitly in the queen's letter to the lord deputy, the keeper of the great seal and the attorney general of 10 September 1555, Memoranda Roll 2 & 3 Philip and Mary, m 2 (N.A.I., Ferguson MS, v, pp 21-4). A 'traverse of office' was a mode of disputing an office or inquisition which found the crown entitled to property obtained by or belonging to the party traversing (D. M. Walker, *The Oxford Companion to Law* [Oxford, 1980], p 1231).

cathedral property lay behind it, although this cannot now be proved. More likely, it was part of a general investigation into St Leger's government which was being conducted at this time following recent revelations of the deputy's financial misconduct produced by the royal commissioner, Sir William Fitzwilliam.[73] What is certain, however, is that Cusack's summons demonstrated the increasing vulnerability of St Leger and his régime. And it was a vulnerability which the dean and chapter of St Patrick's were quick to recognize and turn to their advantage. At some point in July or in the opening weeks of August, Dean Leverous and the chapter appointed Sir John Sonnyng, the prebendary of Wicklow, and Sir Richard Johnson, the prebendary of Maynooth, as their agents to attend upon the queen to seek her further support in their efforts to resume the cathedral's property. It was a mission which was designed to coincide with Cusack's stay in England and to cause the maximum discomfiture to the chancellor, the lord deputy, and the latter's tottering administration.[74]

Sonnyng and Johnson appeared before the queen sometime in late August or early September and made 'lamentable complaint' against the deputy and his officials for their conduct in resisting the restitution of their property. In truth, it is unlikely that the queen was made aware of anything substantially new by the prebendaries. Nevertheless, their first hand testimony was still significant. It threw the deputy's evasive and secretive disobedience and, more particularly, its consequences, into sharper focus. Johnson and Sonnyng painted a vivid picture of the suffering which they and their colleagues had endured as a result of the deputy's proceedings, recounting how they had been 'oppressed

73 *Cal. pat. rolls, 1554-5*, p 344; Brady, *Chief Governors*, pp 66-7. Ralph Cockerill, St Leger's private secretary, was also subjected to questioning by the privy council at the same time as Cusack (*Acts privy council, 1554-6*, p 158).

74 The queen to the lord deputy, the keeper of the great seal and the attorney general, 10 September 1555, Memoranda Roll 2 & 3 Philip and Mary, m 2 (N.A.I., Ferguson MS, v, p 21). The precise date of Sonnyng and Johnson's appointment cannot now be ascertained. However, we can assume that it pre-dated the dean and chapter's discovery, made in August 1555, that Johnson was a married priest. Formal proceedings against Johnson commenced in the consistory court in Dublin on 31 August 1555 while he was in England (*Reg. Dioc.Dublinensis.*, pp 77-8).

and driven to their shifts without house or any provision towards household, in such wise as they be fain to seek their dinners in the city, and there to hostry undecently'. Their testimony had the desired effect. The pious queen was both scandalised and infuriated by these revelations. On 10 September she voiced her anger in a stinging letter to St Leger in which she castigated him for actions that had not only caused the clerical suffering reported by Sonnyng and Johnson, but which had also hindered 'the service of God' and caused great offence 'amongst our subjects'. She therefore demanded in uncompromising terms that he and his officials do 'all that by order of law and justice is necessary to be done' to bring about the long delayed restitution, including the complete abrogation of the crown's 'pretensed office' in the property, and the immediate restoration to the dean and chapter of those parcels of the premises which were held by the deputy and his supporters.[75] And in case they were in any doubt about the seriousness with which she viewed this matter, the queen demonstrated in the most graphic of terms what the consequences would be for anyone in the Irish administration still contemplating further disobedience. Three days after writing to St Leger, on 13 September 1555, the queen removed Sir Thomas Cusack, the man who had marshalled opposition to the restitution of the cathedral's property in the court of chancery, from his office. The timing of his removal, and the fact that he was replaced as chancellor by the incoming archbishop of Dublin, Hugh Curwen, an appointee who had a vested interest in looking after the cathedral's interests, suggests very strongly that Cusack's recalcitrance featured very prominently among the queen's reasons for instituting the change in personnel.[76]

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75 N.A.I., Ferguson MS, v, pp 21-4.

76 *Cal. pat. rolls, 1555-7*, p 33. Lascelles, without citing any source, stated that Cusack resigned from office on 3 July 1555 (*Lib. mun. pub. hib.*, i, pt 2, p 4). An entry on the Irish patent rolls refutes this, however, confirming that he was still chancellor on 10 July (*Cal. pat. rolls Ire., Hen. VIII-Eliz*, pp 340-2). The most likely explanation for his departure is that he was forced out of office after the investigation of his conduct, including his contribution to St Leger's campaign of resistance against the restitution of the cathedral's property, was concluded by the English privy council.

Cusack's removal from office marked the effective end of Lord Deputy St Leger's campaign of resistance. Bereft of a supportive lord chancellor, he had neither the capacity nor the will to sustain an outwardly lawful challenge against the queen's order to restore the cathedral's property. Thus, within the year and following their procurement of a judgement of *Amoveas manus* in the Irish exchequer in Michaelmas term 1555,[77] the dean and chapter obtained decrees in chancery, and at least one judgement in a common law court, which finally quashed the opposition to the restitution.[78] Cusack's departure from office also had much wider ramifications however. More than anything, it signified the declining powers of Lord Deputy St Leger and the ailing condition of his régime. He too was dismissed from office within the year, having failed to rebut the many charges of corruption and incompetence levelled against him by the queen's commissioner, Sir William Fitzwilliam. Amongst this catalogue of perceived failings, St Leger's defiance of the queen on the matter of St Patrick's must have loomed very large.[79]

There was a certain irony in this denouément. When Archbishop Dowdall conceived and commenced the implementation of his strategy of catholic restoration at the beginning of Mary's reign, he could not have foreseen, and certainly did not intend, that it should have had such ultimately negative consequences for St Leger and Cusack. Dowdall had been a

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77 Mason, *History of St Patrick's*, pp 150 (note k), 162; the sealing of the writ of *Amoveas manus* cost the cathedral 3 shillings (Account of the proctor of the economy of St Patrick's, c. June 1555 - c. June 1556 [Mason, *op cit.*, p xxxii]). The writ of *Amoveas manus* commanded the return to a person or institution of property belonging to him, which was in the possession of the crown (Walker, *Oxford Companion to Law*, p 53).

78 Surviving notices of chancery decrees in the dean and chapter's favour, dating from the Spring and Summer of 1556, were against Richard St Laurence, lord of Howth, William Basnet and Robert Bathe (N.A.I., RC 6/1, pp 47-8, 50); the common law ruling, dating from the same period, was against George Carey (*Cal. pat. rolls, 1560-3*, p 113). St Laurence, Basnet and Bathe were probably the last to hold out against the restoration of the cathedral's property. It is likely that most of the crown lessees submitted after the judgement of *Amoveas manus* was given in the exchequer.

79 For a general account of the circumstances and significance of St Leger's fall see Brady, *Chief Governors*, pp 66-71.

close ally of St Leger's in the halcyon days of his government during Henry VIII's reign. Sir Thomas Cusack was his cousin. Both men had defended him when his religious conservatism came under fire at the council board in Edward VI's reign.[80] Despite these old friendships, however, it was inevitable that the implementation of Dowdall's strategy would lead to this undesired outcome. Based, as it was, on a rejuvenated, independent and assertive clericalism, there was no place for the Dowdall strategy in the St Leger mode of government, a mode of government which was created in the era of, and which came to depend upon, clerical submissiveness and the despoilation of the church. It was St Leger's misfortune that at a time when most other aspects of his government were beset by crippling problems, Mary Tudor cut off one of the main avenues of escape by turning back the clock and allowing the revival of an independent, richly endowed and newly reinvigorated church in the English Pale. Faced with the loss of existing ecclesiastical resources, and no prospect of acquiring others, St Leger's ability to buy himself out of trouble was fatally undermined. His departure from Ireland, and the fall of his ally Thomas Cusack, symbolised nothing less than the victory of medieval clerical corporatism over the secular forces that were so integral a part of the Henrician reformation. The defeat of these forces provided Archbishop Curwen with the most favourable of circumstances in which to implement Archbishop Dowdall's strategy in the diocese of Dublin.

80 Shirley, *Ch. in Ire., 1547-67*, pp 54-60.

Chapter Five

Rejuvenation and survival: the old religion during the episcopacy of Hugh Curwen, 1555-67

Hugh Curwen, archbishop of Dublin and lord chancellor of Ireland (1555-67), is one of the more obscure figures to have featured in Ireland's reformation story. Unlike the other men who occupied the archbishopric after Henry VIII's break with Rome, Curwen's career is poorly documented in the sources through which the history of sixteenth century Ireland is normally studied, in particular, the archive of the English secretaries of state in the Public Record Office. Thus there are no readily accessible insights into the character, motives and actions of a man who, in a tumultuous period in the late 1550s and early 1560s, presided over the successive restoration of catholic and protestant religious settlements in the heart of English Ireland.[1]

Curwen's inconspicuousness in the sources has had a derogatory effect on the way historians have treated him hitherto. In the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, for example, when much of the historiography was infused with religious polemic, it led to a very crude concentration on the best known fact about his career: his apparent willingness to accept whatever creed was promoted by the Tudor monarchs. In this connection, Curwen was perceived as something of an embarrassment by catholic and Church of Ireland writers alike; a figure unworthy of approbation, yet one who could not be disowned entirely. To catholics, he personified the happy but all too brief reconciliation of the see of Dublin with Rome in the mid-1550s, a man who then ruined it all by becoming an 'even more abandoned character than Brown[e], his heterodox predecessor', when he accepted Queen Elizabeth's call to acknowledge her supremacy.[2]

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1 Most of the surviving Curwen correspondence is printed in Shirley, *Ch. in Ire., 1547-67*, pp 142-8, 151-3, 240-1, 248-9, 253-4, 304-5. The majority of these letters date from the latter end of his career in Ireland and are mainly concerned with his attempt to secure a translation to an English bishopric, on account of age and mounting health problems.

2 Brennan, *Ecclesiastical history of Ireland,* ii, p 104.

Similarly, for supporters of the established church, the fact of Curwen's compliance, although welcome - it legitimated the claim that the Church of Ireland alone maintained the apostolic succession on the island[3] - could not disguise the reality that the most devoutly protestant of his episcopal colleagues castigated him as a crypto-catholic, who did nothing to further the cause of godly reform.[4] Thus, in an effort to reconcile these opposites, historians on both sides of the religious divide treated the archbishop contemptuously and dismissively. Following the lead of the English historian, John Strype, they judged him to be a temporizing product of an amoral age, 'a complier in all reigns'.[5]

The emergence of a more objective school of historical writing in this century has created one of the essential preconditions for a much needed re-evaluation of Curwen's role in the religious upheavals of his time. Yet it has proved difficult to reconstruct an alternative picture to the caricature of Curwen as a religious trimmer. Instead, lacking the controversial convictions which informed previous estimations of the archbishop, and beset by the same problems with the sources that past historians experienced, modern writers have allowed Curwen to assume an increasingly bland historical persona, a feature typified by the treatment afforded him in the standard account of the Irish reformation, Robin Dudley Edwards's *Church and State in Tudor Ireland.* Here, Curwen is the subject of a mere handful of incidental references which do little more

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3 Mant, *History of the Church of Ireland*, i, pp 269-70; H.J. Lawlor, *The reformation and the Irish episcopate* (London, 1932).

4 This was starkly revealed by E.P. Shirley in his edition of letters and papers relating to the history of the Church of Ireland in the mid-Tudor period. Ironically, one of the avowed aims of his book was to show 'that the true succession of Bishops in the Church was ever preserved, and that *solely* in the line of Prelates acknowledged by the State ... ' (Shirley, *Ch. in Ire., 1547-67*, p vii). The damning letters about Curwen were written by Archbishop Loftus of Armagh and Bishop Brady of Meath (ibid., pp 200-2, 225-7, 274-6).

5 J. Strype, *Memorials of the most reverend father in God, Thomas Cranmer* ... (2 vols., Oxford edn, 1812), i, p 54; Ronan, *Reformation in Dublin*, pp 429-31; P. Wilson, *The beginnings of modern Ireland* (Dublin, 1912), pp 336-8; Phillips, *Ch. of Ire.*, ii, pp 281-2, 298.

than depict him as a shadowy, almost anonymous, figure, a depiction that has remained in being to the present day.[6]

The existing portrayals of Curwen, then, are deeply unsatisfactory. Yet, paradoxically, it is Curwen's very inconspicuousness that provides one of the essential keys to opening up our understanding of his role and impact. While we cannot discount the possibility that important records have been lost in the conventional sources, it is not entirely accidental that they are silent about the archbishop's beliefs and activities. The main reason for this was the nature of Curwen's mission in Ireland. As we saw in the preceding chapter, he was sent to Dublin with the express purpose of implementing the strategy for catholic restoration that had been conceived and promoted by Archbishop Dowdall of Armagh and the clergy of the English Pale, a strategy which was grounded upon the revival of local ecclesiastical jurisdiction, and the unrestricted practice of medieval canon law. Given this, it was inevitable that Curwen's sphere of activity would be confined largely to local ecclesiastical institutions, institutions whose personnel would also be predisposed towards supporting his endeavours. Thus, certainly in the early years of his episcopate, he had no compelling reasons to write about religious matters to the crown and its advisers on a regular basis. Fully appraised of the requirements of the Dowdall strategy, and fully possessed of the wherewithal to give them effect - both by virtue of his qualifications and the support that he commanded from his clergy - Hugh Curwen needed none of the guidance, nor succour, so frequently sought by the reformist archbishops of Dublin, George Browne and Adam Loftus, from their political masters in London. His story, then, cannot be, nor arguably could ever have been, reconstructed from the cross channel communications of the Dublin and London governments. Rather, it is to be found in the surviving, albeit sketchy, notices of the activities of the two institutions over which he presided during his stay in Ireland: the Dublin diocesan administration and the court of chancery.

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6 Edwards, *Church & state*, pp 163, 178, 188, 190, 211, 217.

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Hugh Curwen landed at Ringsend on 22 October 1555[7] and immediately set about implementing the Dowdall strategy for the canonical restoration of catholicism. His first task was to make known the constitutional basis of the settlement. Thus, as instructed by the crown on the eve of his departure from England, he brought with him the bull of Pope Paul IV erecting Ireland into a kingdom, and published it throughout the realm. This document, which had been sought specifically by the clerical élite of the English Pale, and which was effectively a restatement of the medieval bull *Laudabiliter*, re-established in one stroke the catholic and canonical credentials of the Englishry in Ireland, and renewed the validity of their traditional role of reforming the Irishry along conventional canonical lines. As such, it signified that the return of the country to the catholic fold would not merely be a religious event, but also a return to the political, social and cultural environment in which the old religion had existed prior to Henry VIII's break with Rome. Whether Hugh Curwen himself shared in these beliefs and aspirations is not now known, but in assuming the role of herald of the pope's grant - by its very nature indicative of a formal acceptance of the message it proclaimed - he quickly established his *bona fides* with those who did uphold them, in particular the senior clergy of his diocese.[8]

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7 Chronicle of Dublin (T.C.D., MS 591, f 18r). The manuscript gives 1557 as the year of Curwen's arrival, but this was clearly an error for 1555. Thomas Rogers, who the chronicler stated was mayor of Dublin at the time Curwen landed, held this position during 1555-6. In addition, Curwen took his oath of office for the chancellorship on 24 October 1555 (*New hist. Ire.*, ix, p 554; *Cal. pat. rolls Ire., Hen. VIII-Eliz*, p 340).

8 *Acts privy council, 1554-6*, p 179; *Cal. pat. rolls Ire., Hen. VIII-Eliz*, p 339. Some political reformers in the Pale saw the propaganda potential in the bull and sought to make the most of it. One writer, for example, in proposing 'A present remedy for the reformation of the north and the rest of Ireland', suggested that Queen Mary and King Philip should exploit their position by writing letters to the Irishry declaring that the pope had given them his whole interest in the kingdom (P.R.O., SP 62/1, no. 13).

Curwen's dedication to supporting the interests and aspirations of his clergy was also apparent in another early activity. Only three days after he arrived in Dublin, the archbishop held his first session in the court of chancery.[9] This was significant on a number of counts. In the first instance, the reappearance of a catholic, English-born archbishop of Dublin as president of the court of equity and conscience - a throwback to the days before the schism when the office of lord chancellor was regularly held by the archbishop - had great symbolic resonance. Like Pope Paul IV's bull, it too proclaimed that the impending restoration of the old religion would take place in its familiar, essentially medieval, politico-cultural setting; a setting in which the organs of church and state would work together to promote a mutually held notion of a canonically orthodox, English civility in Ireland. But it also had a more practical ramification. One of the key measures of the Dowdall strategy for restoring catholicism was the re-establishment of St Patrick's cathedral, the traditional centre for the administration of canon law in the diocese of Dublin. Despite the queen's support for this measure, however, it had met with considerable resistance from Lord Deputy St Leger and his supporters in the months prior to Curwen's arrival in Ireland, a group who hoped to retain some or all of the interests which they had acquired in the cathedral's property following its dissolution in 1547. The appointment of Archbishop Curwen as lord chancellor in September 1555 - an appointment pointedly made at the expense of St Leger's trusted supporter, Sir Thomas Cusack - was intended to bring this resistance to an end, an intention which was quickly realised. Ranged against an institution which commanded such powerful political and judicial backing, much of the opposition to an unconditional restitution of the cathedral's property collapsed. The few recalcitrant individuals who continued the fight - men like Richard St Laurence, lord of Howth, William Basnett and Robert Bath - were finally defeated in chancery, where Archbishop Curwen granted decrees in favour of Dean Leverous, Chancellor Nangle and the cathedral chapter during his first ten months in office.[10]

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9 Chronicle of Dublin (T.C.D., MS 591, f 18r); *Cal. pat. rolls Ire., Hen. VIII-Eliz*, p 340.

10 N.A.I., RC 6/1, pp 47-8, 50. The cathedral's business was expedited in chancery by one John

Curwen's early appearances in chancery, then, not only helped define the politico-cultural context in which the old religion was to be restored, but also established the fact that the local church was a rejuvenated body, an institution which had rediscovered and repossessed important links to its past and, as a result, had recovered the moral authority and political strength that it had lost during the reigns of Henry VIII and Edward VI. All of these developments were crucial, given that Archbishop Curwen and his clergy - following the lead and direction of Archbishop Dowdall in Armagh - were about to restore traditional religion solely by means of their own clerical and canonical authority. The chosen medium for instituting this restoration of the old religion was the provincial council, the body traditionally responsible for enacting local canon law for the diocese and its suffragan sees.

Curwen held his provincial council sometime between his arrival in Ireland on 22 October 1555 and the close of that year as it was then reckoned, on 24 March 1556. Few notices of the council's deliberations have survived, but it is known that careful efforts were made to ensure that it conformed in every possible way with its medieval predescessors, an important consideration given the very fundamental appeal to the canonical past upon which the whole restoration strategy was founded. Thus it was held in its traditional location, Christ Church cathedral, in the heart of the city of Dublin. In addition, apart from the defunct religious houses, its membership would have been the same as that which had sat in the pre-reformation councils, comprising the archbishop of Dublin, his four suffragan bishops of Kildare, Ossory, Ferns and Leighlin, all the archdeacons of the province, and representatives of the deans and chapters and of the parochial clergy from each diocese. It also included a representative of the mayor and commons of Dublin, Alderman Nicholas Bennet, a papal notary who had once served

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Wicombe who received a fee of 23*s.* in the year June 1555 to June 1556. The cathedral also paid 17*s.* in this year for the drafting of a copy of one of the decrees granted by Curwen (Account of the proctor of the economy of St Patrick's, c. 1555 - c. 1556, printed in Mason, *History of St Patrick's*, p xxxiii).

William Power, the Henrician archdeacon of Dublin, as registrar of his court. Together, this group met and prayed for a total of forty-two days, concluding its deliberations by promulgating a set of new canons that restored the religious and ecclesiastical life of the province to something closely akin to its late medieval condition.[11]

It is reasonable to assume that one of the key objectives of Curwen's legislation - given the fact that the entire restoration settlement was predicated upon the notion of traditional canonical authority - was the reaffirmation of conventional standards of clerical behaviour and deportment, especially priestly celibacy, the litmus test of canonical rectitude for the English Irish clerical élite. This assumption is corroborated by the fact that similar measures had already featured prominently in Archbishop Dowdall's canons of 1553/4, the paradigm upon which the new Dublin legislation would have been based; and, more importantly, by the fact that it was known to the new diocesan administration in St Patrick's cathedral that there were still of a number of married priests operating within the boundaries of the diocese and province. Any doubts that may have persisted on this score were resolved in the late summer of 1555, when it was discovered that one of their own number, Richard Johnson, a cathedral prebendary, was himself a married priest.[12]

Johnson's case was a source of some embarrassment to the local church. An Englishman by birth, he originally came to Ireland in the mid-1530s in the retinue of the Lord Deputy Skeffington, from whom he acquired a number of livings, including the rectory of Delgany, and the prebend of Maynooth in St Patrick's, which he held until the cathedral's suppression in 1547.[13] Johnson was regarded by his peers as sufficiently

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11 Marsh's Library, MS Z4.2.7 (Loftus Annals), f. 431; *Reg. Dioc. Dublinensis*, pp 28-35; Book of accounts of the corporation of the city of Dublin, 1541-1613 (D.C.A., MR/35, p 140); Registrum Novum of Christ Church (R.C.B., C.6.1.6, no. 3, pp 1084-5). Bennet sought an allowance of 2s. per day in expenses from the Trinity Guild for attendance at the council.

12 T.C.D., MS 557/13, pp 87-92 (Murray, ed., 'Primate Dowdall's Register', *Louth Arch. Soc. Jn*, vi [1925-8], pp 154-5); *Reg. Dioc. Dublinensis*, pp 77-8.

13 *L. & P. Hen. VIII*, viii, no. 729; Chambers, *Faculty Office Registers*, p 221; *Cal. pat. rolls Ire.*,

orthodox to receive their nomination for his old prebend on the cathedral's restoration in the spring of 1555. Indeed, in July or August of that year, he was actually at court campaigning on the cathedral's behalf to secure the crown's help in the battle against Lord Deputy St Leger and his supporters over the restitution of its property.[14] Yet it was while he was on this mission in England that a scandalous and apparently hidden part of his past was brought to the notice of Robert Wellesley, archdeacon of Dublin, and official principal of the see *sede vacante*. One of Johnson's parishioners from Delgany, James Archebold, appeared in the consistory court at the head of a delegation from the parish, and gave evidence that he had solemnly contracted matrimony with one Margery Sutton in the late 1530s, and that they had lived together for years as man and wife. Moreover, 'heedless of his salvation', he had continued to celebrate masses and other divine services without obtaining any absolution or dispensation 'to the great denigration of honest clerics established in sacred orders', the damage of his 'humble flock' and 'the most pernicious example of other christians not immediately entrusted to himself'. Thus, notwithstanding the fact that he had played an important role in the re-establishment of St Patrick's, and particularly because he had failed to come forward to confess his past indiscretion, Johnson was deprived of his livings and removed from the cathedral body shortly after returning from England in September 1555.[15]

The condemnatory tone of the language used in the official record of the proceedings against Johnson clearly reveals how strongly the new diocesan administration felt about

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Hen. VIII-Eliz, pp 21, 142. Johnson's livings were temporarily in the gift of the crown *sede vacante* when he originally received them in the mid-1530s.

14 Mason, *History of St Patrick's*, pp 155-6; the queen to the lord deputy, the keeper of the great seal and the attorney general, 10 September 1555, Memoranda Roll 2 & 3 Philip and Mary, m 2 (N.A.I., Ferguson MS, v, p 21); above pp 196-8.

15 'necnon missas et alia divina officia atque sacramenta et sacramentalia sine aliquibus absolucione et dispensacione per eum in hac parte obtentis immemor sue salutis adhuc celebrare et ministrare non erubescit in magnam denigracionem honestatis clericorum in sacris ordinibus constitutorum dampnumque non modicum gregis sibi immediate commissi et aliorum Christifidelium perniciosissimum exemplum': *Reg. Dioc. Dublinensis*, pp 77-8; Lawlor, *Fasti of St Patrick's*, p 129.

the issue of clerical celibacy. Thus, on Curwen's arrival, it was inevitable that the traditional bans on clerical marriage and clerical concubinage would be re-enacted by the provincial council and rigorously enforced by the various diocesan administrations thereafter. In the diocese of Dublin proper Johnson's is the last recorded prosecution for clerical marriage during Mary's reign, but it is possible that there may have been more, just as there were elsewhere in the province. In the suffragan see of Kildare, for example, Bishop Leverous, who was also dean of St Patrick's cathedral, deprived at least one married clerk, James White, vicar of Moynam, during an episcopal visitation in November 1557. This was probably done on the back of Archbishop Curwen's provincial legislation of 1555-6.[16]

The pursuit of such offenders was undertaken for a number of reasons, all of which would have been understood and accepted by the provincial council. Not only did it confirm the clergy's own commitment to the traditional discipline of celibacy, a discipline which they believed defined their canonical rectitude *vis-a-vis* the Irish clergy; but, more importantly, it also provided the essential, legitimating context for the introduction of the second major element in Dowdall's strategy for restoring catholicism. As the parishioners of Delgany had expressed it, the ministration of the sacraments and other observances by priests with serious canonical impediments denigrated the work of the clergy as a whole and was a pernicious example to all christians. The regularization of their position, therefore, whether through dispensation or deprivation, would be necessary to clear the way for the formal reintroduction of the mass and other proscribed catholic services and devotions.[17]

The provincial council's laws for restoring the mass and other observances, like its measures for reinstituting traditional clerical discipline, are not now extant, but they

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16 *Reg. Dioc. Dublinensis*, pp 61-4

17 Ibid., pp 77-8.

were certainly passed and enforced with genuine energy and commitment, as is evident from surviving documentation relating to Dublin's two cathedrals. In St Patrick's, for example, the restoration of the old liturgy coincided with the cathedral's re-establishment, and followed an eight year hiatus in which the building had been used to house the four courts of judicature. As a result, much work had to be done, and a good deal of money spent, to refit the building to make it a suitable place for traditional worship. The most pressing need was for the re-erection of the altars. David Walsh, a local stonemason, was entrusted with the task and paid *IR*40*s*. for his labour. Additional work was required to beautify them, especially the high altar. Here, *IR*£11 1*s*. 8*d*. was spent on the wages and refreshment of carpenters, two labourers, and a painter and his boy, a group whose tasks included the erection of an image of St Peter, which had been brought over specially from Chester at a cost of *IR*18*s*. 9*d*., and a picture of the resurrection which was purchased for *IR*20*s*. Apart from the renovatory work done to the altars and their surrounds, extensive repairs were also undertaken on the windows, especially on the north window, and on the 'great' and 'second' bells in the cathedral belfries.[18]

The repair and adornment of the fabric and fittings of St Patrick's was only one element of the preparations necessary for the restoration of the mass and other catholic services. The losses incurred by the cathedral during the period of its suppression also necessitated the purchase of new, and costly, liturgical accoutrements. In the year June 1555 to June 1556, for example, almost *IR*£180 was spent on a rich and ornate collection of vestments and altar cloths. These included vestments made from cloth of gold, damask, baudkyn and red velvet. In addition, three new crucifixes were purchased at a cost of *IR*£6, as well as two new thurifers for *IR*£1 10*s*., and a silver gilt staff for *IR*£19 8*s*. 2*d*. Lost or destroyed service books also had to be replaced. In the year in which the provincial council sat, the cathedral purchased four new antiphonaries at a

18 Account of the proctor of the economy of St Patrick's, c. 1555 - c. 1556, Mason, *History of St Patrick's*, pp xxxii-xxxiii.

total cost of *IR*£15. This process of refitting and replenishing St Patrick's was substantially completed by Easter 1556 when, with the full authority of local canon law behind them, the cathedral clergy and choristers enacted the elaborate ritual, drama and music of the Sarum Easter services for the first time in a decade. Something of the richness and complexity of these services is hinted at in the facts that additional singers were hired on Palm Sunday to supplement the resident choir, and a special incense angel was made for the feast of Pentecost.[19]

In Christ Church cathedral, the impact of Tudor religious reform had been less dramatic than in St Patrick's but, in terms of the restoration of a traditional liturgy, it still presented a challenge to Archbishop Curwen. The reformation years constituted a period of confusion in the cathedral's history, a period which saw it undergo a change from a monastic to a secular constitution under Henry VIII, and the adoption of a vernacular, protestant liturgy under Edward VI. As a result, the clergy of Christ Church were not fully apprised of the roles and standards which were expected of them now that a catholic liturgical round had been re-introduced following the enactment of the provincial council's legislation of 1555-6. To clarify these matters, therefore, Archbishop Curwen drew up a set of acts or articles on liturgical observance which the cathedral clergy subscribed to, and which were probably intended to supplement the general legislation passed by the provincial council.[20]

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19 Ibid.

20 The articles, a later copy of which has survived in the Chapter Act Book of Christ Church 1574-1634 (R.C.B., C.6.1.7 no. 1, ff 1r-2r) are undated, but can be assigned to the period 13 February 1557 x 18 February 1560, the dates at which John Cardiff, treasurer of the cathedral and one of the signatories of the document, was presented to and deprived of this living (*Cal. pat. rolls Ire., Hen. VIII-Eliz*, pp 353, 440; *Fiants Ire., Eliz*, nos 225-6). They were probably drawn up after an episcopal visitation of the cathedral and, given their content, and the concern that they show about maintaining proper standards for the newly restored catholic liturgy, they probably date to the beginning of this period, c. 1557. The articles appear to have been copied into the Elizabethan chapter act book for use as a general guide to the drafting of disciplinary articles for the clergy, even though they were of catholic origin.

One of the main objectives of Curwen's acts was to identify which of the various groups of cathedral clergy were responsible for particular aspects of the liturgy and to institute a series of punitive measures to ensure that they would be fulfilled. Thus, for example, the six vicars choral were held responsible for celebrating in turn the weekly 'Rood' mass, the Jesus mass in Lent and the daily Lady mass, as well as reading the Martyrology, assisting at the high altar during high mass and, again in turn, leading the choir during the canonical hours. Failure to do so was punishable by a 12*d.* fine payable to the vicars' board, which was to be split amongst the remaining vicars who attended the services. Similarly, the three prebendaries had to sing high mass in turn, all masses of the time and the second daily mass, as well as attending the daily office on Sundays, ferial days and upon all principal feasts. The fine for neglect of these duties was also 12*d.*, again payable to the vicars' board.[21] In addition to these regulations for the various clerical groupings, rules were also put in place for particular observances, including the canonical hours. Thus, for those ministers who 'without reasonable cause and licence neglecteth his course appointed to matins', there was a fine of 2*d.*; for prime, lauds, terce, sext and none, 3*d*; and for evensong and compline, 2*d.*[22]

Curwen's acts not only aimed at ordering the liturgical round in Christ Church however. They were also concerned with instilling a genuine sense of decorum, solemnity and beauty into the proceedings, something which would have been deemed necessary after the iconclastic and demythologising attacks to which the traditional forms of worship had been subjected during the Henrician and Edwardian reformations. Such concern was particularly evident in the archbishop's injunctions for the cathedral's sextens. The clerk of the choir, for example, was ordered 'to see the altars appertaining to his charge decently arrayed with clean towels and other apparel for the same' and 'to see the

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21 R.C.B., C.6.1.7 no. 1, f 1r. The acts also laid down the observances to be undertaken by the three dignitaries of precentor, chancellor and treasurer, though they said nothing about the dean's liturgical responsibilities, except that he knew 'his charge'.

22 Ibid., f 2r.

ornaments, copes and vestments well folded and set up'. He was also expected to 'help mass to his charge daily', to wear his surplice 'in time of divine service' when he went 'through the chancel or by the high altar', and to 'see the pavement of the chancel and tiles appointed to his charge clean and well broomed and the cobwebs to be done away'.[23] The clergy, of course, were also expected to contribute to the maintenance of a dignified and solemn liturgical round in the cathedral. Thus Archbishop Curwen instituted the general order that no cathedral cleric 'shall walk in the church in time of divine service without their habit'. Other clergymen had more specific duties in this regard. The chantor's vicar, Nicholas Dardis, and the chancellor's vicar, Edward Ellis, were, 'for the more honour of god's divine service', held responsible for appointing 'for Mary mass daily certain of basses and counter tenors, and for the epistle and gospel of high mass, deacon and subdeacon'.[24]

It is clear from the foregoing that the re-establishment of the mass and other catholic observances was a central part of Curwen's synodal legislation of 1555-6, a series of measures which, like all aspects of the restoration strategy conceived by Archbishop Dowdall, was designed to recapture in all its various facets the religion of the English Pale as it had been practised in the canonically authoritative medieval past. Nowhere was this more clearly illustrated than in the elaborate religious ritual and ceremonial that was enacted to mark the occasion of the swearing-in of Thomas Radcliffe, Viscount Fitzwalter, as lord lieutenant of Ireland in the spring of 1556; ceremonies which spoke eloquently of the local church's attachment to conventional catholic devotions, the seamless integration of that religion into the political and social fabric of English Ireland, and the local clergy's perception of themselves as the defenders of the old religion and English rule in Ireland. Thus on the day after he took his oath in Christ

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23 Ibid., f 2r. Similar instructions were also instituted for the Mary clerk. He was expected to maintain the same standards of decorum for the altars over which he was responsible and 'to help the mass appointed to his charge always in his surplice'. His cleaning duties extended to the 'rood loft and body of the church'.

24 Ibid., ff 1v, 2r.

Church, Fitzwalter returned to the cathedral to hear divine service. Here, at the church door 'under a canopy', and accompanied by noble and civic dignitaries, he was received by Archbishop Curwen and a kneeling clergy, who censed and blessed him while he kissed the cross. He then went to the high altar and, while *Te Deum* was sung, knelt in prayer. Thereafter, he was censed and blessed again, heard divine service in the choir and, finally, proceeded to the altar once more where he offered a piece of gold. Similar ceremonies were subsequently held in St Patrick's cathedral, presided over by Archbishop Curwen, and in churches in Drogheda and Dundalk, which were lead by Archbishop Dowdall. It is difficult not to think of these ceremonies as anything other than a festival of Pale culture, a triumphant celebration held to mark the re-integration of the religious, political and social values that had traditionally defined the identity of the English Irish community of eastern Ireland.[25]

The restoration of the old religion in Mary Tudor's reign, then, was an unqualified success in Dublin. Even before parliament met in 1557 to repeal the anti-papal legislation of Henry VIII's reign, even before Cardinal Pole's papal legateship in Ireland became fully operative,[26] and even before royal commissions were issued in December 1557 to enquire into the whereabouts of the plate, ornaments, bells and real property that parish churches had lost during the schism,[27] Archbishop Curwen and the indigenous

25 *Cal. Carew MSS, 1515-74,* pp 258-9.

26 Pole was appointed legate to Ireland on 1 July 1555. He intended to send commisioners and officials to visit the clergy and people of Ireland, but this was not achieved before his legateship was revoked by Pope Paul IV in the summer of 1557. He did, however, make a significant number of rulings on jurisdictional and marital matters relating to Ireland prior to this, usually in response to petitions forwarded by local bishops and covering the dioceses of Meath, Kildare, Ossory, Limerick, Killaloe and Tuam. Apart from the grant of a dispensation to the former archbishop of Dublin, George Browne, a grant which allowed him, despite his marriage, to hold a prebend in the restored cathedral of St Patrick, none of Pole's legatine business had any direct bearing on the see of Dublin (Edwards, *Church & state*, p 164; *Cal. Carew MSS, 1515-74*, pp 252-3; Loades, *Reign of Mary Tudor*, pp 362-5; B. Jackson, review article in *I.H.S.*, xxx (1996), pp 270-1; R. D. Edwards, *Ireland in the age of the Tudors* [London, 1977], pp 80-1; Ronan, 'Cardinal Pole's Absolution of George Browne', pp 193-205; C.H. Garret, 'The Legatine Register of Cardinal Pole', in *Journal of Modern History*, xiii (1941), pp 189-194; Douai Municipal Archives, MS 922 [microfilm in N.L.I.]).

27 *Fiants Ire., Ph. & Mary*, no. 181.

clergy had done a considerable amount of work to ensure that medieval catholicism had been brought fully back to life in the heart of English Ireland. The real testimony to this success, however, is not to be found in the small body of evidence that has survived from Mary Tudor's reign concerning the restoration of traditional religious practices. Rather, the strength of this revitalised version of the old religion would only become fully apparent when the state attempted to deconstruct it and to impose an alternative protestant religious settlement following the accession of Queen Elizabeth in November 1558.

II

The deaths of Queen Mary and Cardinal Pole within hours of each other on 17 November 1558, deaths which literally and figuratively heralded the cessation of the catholic restoration in England, were also paralleled in Ireland. Only three months previously, and while in England campaigning against the ill-effects of the government of Lord Lieutenant Sussex, Archbishop George Dowdall of Armagh also died.[28] The death of Dowdall, as much an architect of catholic restoration in the English Pale as the queen and the cardinal had been in England, instantaneously changed the nature of Archbishop Hugh Curwen's mission in Ireland. Hitherto he had played the part of the faceless, bureaucrat-legist, a man who implemented in a completely efficient manner the requisite steps in Dowdall's strategy for the restoration of the old religion in Dublin. Now, however, he was unexpectedly thrust into a position of general leadership over the English Irish clergy, a position which, in the wake of Queen Mary's death, would require him to provide direction and guidance in a period fraught with difficult choices, as the ramifications of the accession of the protestant Queen Elizabeth began to make themselves felt in the Irish church.

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28 *D.N.B.*; Brady, *Chief Governors*, pp 89-91.

The path which Curwen chose for himself, and the example which he provided for the clergy of the Pale, was almost unique amongst Englishmen on the Marian episcopal bench. Where in the English church all of the Marian bishops, saving Kitchin of Llandaff, had opposed the enactment of the Elizabethan religious settlement, Curwen chose to conform to it both by supporting its passage in the Irish parliament in 1560 and by taking the oath of supremacy thereafter. In so doing, the archbishop apparently confirmed the worst suspicions that Mary Tudor and Cardinal Pole had harboured about equivocating and 'worldly' Henrician canonists, a view subsequently adopted by more than one generation of historians.[29] Yet while this evaluation of Curwen's motivation is certainly plausible, it does not accord well with the extant evidence. What we know about the events which occurred in and around the time of the 1560 parliament suggests, rather, that the archbishop's response to the Elizabethan settlement was arrived at after some serious soul searching on the part of the senior Pale clergy, and for reasons which had more to do with religion and conscience than earlier historians were prepared to admit.

Although poorly documented, it is evident that that the senior Pale clergy held a genuine debate amongst themselves as to what course they should follow once parliament was presented with, or had passed, bills on religion, a feature evinced in the fact that the participants split into distinct, coherent groups once the time for making definitive decisions was reached. One of these groups followed Curwen's lead, and was comprised of the chapter of St Patrick's cathedral who, with the single exception of their dean, Thomas Leverous, appear to have taken the oath of supremacy in the spring of 1560. The other group, which consisted of former associates of Archbishop Dowdall in the upper echelons of the Armagh provincial administration, was led by William Walshe, the bishop of Meath, who, following the death of the primate, had become the most

29 MacCulloch, *Later reformation in England*, pp 24, 29-31; H.A. Jefferies, 'The Irish parliament of 1560: the anglican reforms authorised', in *I.H.S.*, xxvi (1988), pp 129-30, 137; *Fiants Ire., Eliz.*, no. 226.

senior cleric in the province of Armagh *inter Anglos*. This group rejected Curwen's counsel and withheld its support for the Elizabethan settlement both within and without parliament. In addition to its Armagh constituency, amongst whom were numbered Bishop Leverous of Kildare, Dowdall's former archdeacon and the dean of St Patrick's cathedral, support was also forthcoming from four members of Curwen's cathedral chapter of Christ Church.[30]

While no documentary evidence now survives on the substance or course of this clerical debate, there are still a number of assumptions that we can make about it. The first is that the positions of the leaders of both groups were publicly known as early as the first half of 1559, as the government is known to have considered taking steps at this time to nullify the influence of the anti-conformity party. Thus, in a proposal endorsed by the earl of Sussex, it was suggested that Bishops Walshe and Leverous should be brought over to London to discuss matters of state, and kept there while parliament sat in Dublin. In their absence their proxies would be given to the reliably conformist Archbishop Curwen.[31] The second assumption we can make about the debate is that its terms of reference would have been exclusively catholic in nature, given that all of the participants were committed adherents of the old religion and none of them supporters of any form of protestantism. Thus it follows that the point at issue between the different camps was not the efficacy or otherwise of the Elizabethan settlement. All would have agreed that the protestant religion which it advanced was heterodox and uncanonical. Rather, what had to be decided was which of the two possible responses to it - outward conformity or principled rejection - would be the most beneficial course of action for the local, recently rejuvenated, catholic church. In seeking an answer to this question, the main protagonists of the debate brought their own personal and

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30 Edwards, *Ireland in the age of the Tudors*, pp 92-5; idem, *Church & state*, pp 187-8; *Fiants Ire., Eliz.*, nos. 198-9, 226, 236; *Cal. pat. rolls Ire., Hen. VIII-Eliz*, p 435.

31 Jefferies, 'Anglican reforms authorised', p 129; *Calendar of the MSS of the marquis of Salisbury* (23 vols., H.M.C., London, 1883-1973), iii, no. 968.

individual concerns to the table, concerns which were directly attributable to their background formation and training.

Such personal concerns were particularly evident in the leader of the anti-conformity party, Bishop Walshe of Meath. Walshe was the holder of a doctorate in theology and had lived in exile in Rome in the entourage of Cardinal Pole prior to his promotion to Meath in 1554. More than most of the Pale clergy at this time, then, he was both aware and a zealous supporter of counter-reformation catholicism, a stance which had secured him, ahead of the canon lawyers Archbishops Dowdall and Curwen, the position of deputy-legate to Cardinal Pole in Ireland.[32] Thus from a moral theological perspective, as well as from his sense of the deepening credal division that was developing between catholicism and protestantism on the continent, the royal demand for conformity to the Elizabethan settlement was totally unacceptable. For Walshe, this demand presented a stark moral choice between right and wrong which the informed catholic conscience could not fudge. Moreover, judging from the vigour with which he maintained this stance in the years following his deprivation,[33] it is likely that he was a very persuasive advocate in convincing others to follow his lead, certainly among those with Armagh ecclesiastical connections, like Bishop Leverous of Kildare and Archdeacon Luttrell of Meath; and perhaps even amongst those outside the province, like the four members of the chapter of Christ Church who refused the oath in 1560.[34]

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32 P.R.O., C 66/874, mm. 39-40d (*Cal. pat. rolls, 1553-4*, pp 302-3); Shirley, *Ch. in Ire., 1547-67*, pp 87-9; J.J. Silke, 'The Irish abroad, 1534-1691', in *New hist. Ire.*, iii, p 592; Edwards, *Ireland in the age of the Tudors*, p 80.

33 Walsh was committed to Dublin Castle in the summer of 1565 by the High Commission for refusing to take the oath of supremacy and for refusing to answer a series of articles administered to him by the commissioners. According to the commission's leader, Archbishop Loftus of Armagh, Walshe had, ever since the last parliament, 'condemned and openly showed himself to be a misliker of all the queen's majesty's proceedings; he openly protested before all the people the same day he was before us that he would never communicate or be present (by his will) where the service ahould be ministered, for it was against his conscience, and ... against god's word' (Shirley, *Ch. in Ire., 1547-67*, p 220).

34 *Cal. pat. rolls Ire., Hen. VIII-Eliz*, p 435; *Fiants Ire., Eliz.*, nos. 226, 236.

By way of contrast, it is unlikely that Hugh Curwen saw the choices that confronted him with the same immediacy and in such stark and compelling moral terms. An old Henrician hand who had lived through all the religious changes introduced by the Tudors, he would have been keenly aware of the fact that the mere enactment of a particular religious settlement by parliament would not of itself guarantee it longevity nor ultimate success. Thus, no matter how distasteful the situation in 1560 may have appeared to the archbishop and his St Patrick's-based supporters, their conformity to the Elizabethan settlement would have been informed by a natural predisposition to adopt a wait and see approach. Yet it would be wrong to assume that such cautiousness signified a passive disengagement from the religious controversies of the age. While it was certainly true that the archbishop and his supporters would have believed that the best hope for the old religion lay in a future dynastic alteration or some other unpredictable and uncontrollable political change, they were not content to remain inactive in the meantime. On the contrary, as adept canon lawyers and experienced ecclesiastical administrators, they were fully conversant with the fact that the 1560 legislation devolved much of the responsibility for enforcing the new protestant settlement upon the existing diocesan administrations. Thus, by adopting a position of outward conformity, they knew they would be able to maintain control over one of the key parts of the judicial machinery upon which the overall success of the Elizabethan settlement would ultimately rest. It is extremely likely, then, particularly when we consider their behaviour as diocesan administrators in the early 1560s, that the decision to conform was taken firmly in the knowledge that it would allow them every opportunity to subvert Elizabethan protestantism from within. Indeed, this feature would also go some way towards explaining why the chapter of St Patrick signed up to the Elizabethan settlement, while the chapter of Christ Church neglected to do so. As a group directly involved in the process of diocesan administration, the chapter of St Patrick's knew they would have a valuable role to play as catholic subversives under the new dispensation. For the chapter of Christ Church, by contrast, a group whose main

function was the daily performance of a liturgy which was about to take on an unmistakeably protestant hue, there was no such consolation.

There is considerable evidence to support the contention that Archbishop Curwen and his diocesan administration consciously set out to subvert the 1560 settlement from day one. One of the earliest signs concerned the passing of two amendments to the English version of the Act of Uniformity in the Irish parliament of 1560, amendments which permitted the use of a conservative Latin version of the Book of Common Prayer, and the clerical vestments and ornaments that had been allowed at the outset of Edward VI's reign. While there is insufficient evidence to attribute these amendments directly to Archbishop Curwen's machinations in parliament, and although one of them was ostensibly enacted to give non-English speakers access to the godly religion of the Prayer Book, there is little doubt that they were introduced by a predominantly conservative English-Irish parliament - prodded no doubt by the conservative clergy - to allow the maintenance of a service which looked and sounded like mass. Certainly, this was the way Curwen's diocesan administration interpreted and exploited them. Under his government, the use of the Latin Prayer Book became the norm throughout much of Dublin and elsewhere in the English Pale, establishing a precedent which would last until well into the 1580s.[35]

There were, however, even more obvious signs of the Curwen régime's subversive intentions. Led by his official principal, Thomas Creef,[36] and the archdeacon of Dublin,

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35 Jefferies, 'Anglican reforms authorised', pp 133-4; *Acts privy council, 1587-8*, pp 410-11. On the 1560 edition of the Latin Prayer Book, the version which was probably in circulation in Elizabethan Ireland, and its use of rubrics and forms from the earlier and more conservative of the two Edwardian Prayer books, see Haugaard, *Elizabeth and the English Reformation*, pp 112-17.

36 The earliest notice of Creef acting as official principal that I have found is an unspecified date in 1558, but he probably was appointed as soon as Curwen arrived in Ireland in October 1555. Likewise the last notice I have found of him acting in this capacity is from the winter of 1562-3, but again he probably held the post until at least the time of Curwen's departure in late 1567. It is possible that he also held it during the opening months of Archbishop Loftus's episcopate as the latter is not known to have made an appointment to the post until late 1568 (Act book of the Dublin consistory c. 1596-99, Marsh's Library, MS Z4.2.19, p 7; Will of Robert Golding, 26 December 1562, T.C.D., MS 1207, no. 297).

Robert Wellesley, men who had been put in place to supervise the restoration of catholicism under Mary Tudor, it turned a blind eye to the continued usage of proscribed catholic practices in the diocese and neglected to enforce some of the most basic requirements of the 1560 settlement; failings which came to light during the summer of 1565, in the wake of a Pale-wide investigation of the state of religion conducted by the newly appointed High Commission. The most disturbing of the commission's findings concerned the fact that the nobility and chief gentlemen of Dublin and other Pale counties were allowed, notwithstanding the existence of the Latin Prayer Book, to frequent mass unhindered, and had done so since the parliament had proscribed it in 1560. Neither were they troubled to attend the prayer book services, with the result that 'very few of them ever received the holy communion, or used such kind of public prayer and service as is presently established by law'.[37]

It was not only the nobility and gentry who were allowed to practice their catholicism with impunity however. Curwen, Creef and Wellesley permitted the continuance of the old ways in the parishes, and even in Christ Church cathedral in the heart of the city of Dublin. Thus in 1564-5, for example, the clergy of Christ Church rung the 'mind' of Christopher Rathe. Rathe had been precentor of the cathedral during Mary's reign but had lost his living because he refused to take the oath of Supremacy in 1560; a show of conservatism which not only commended itself to his former colleagues, but also to Alderman Richard Fyan of Dublin, who gave half a loaf of bread and half a beef to feed the masons that were currently being employed by the cathedral in return for the five peals rung for Rathe's soul.[38] In a similar vein, Hugh O'Lurchan, the curate of Templeogue in south Dublin, erected two wooden wayside crosses in September 1567 to

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37 Shirley, *Ch. in Ire., 1547-67*, pp 194 -7.

38 R. Gillespie, ed., *The proctor's accounts of Peter Lewis 1564-1565* (Dublin, 1996), pp 28, 109.

commemorate 'according to the custom of the district' the deaths of Gilpatrick Roe McShane and Gilpatrick McThomas, two husbandmen from Knocklyon.[39]

It is clear, then, that Archbishop Curwen's decision to conform to the Elizabethan settlement in 1560 was a very significant act indeed. In essence, it threw a protective veil over the community of the diocese of Dublin in the crucial early years of the Elizabethan settlement, a protective veil which ensured that the local and customary attachment to the old religion - an attachment that had been revived and strengthened in all its shades and forms in the Marian period - would be preserved and consolidated even as the state endeavoured to destroy it. Thus, while the brand of 'compromising' church papism practiced by Curwen, Creef and Wellesley may not have met the strictest standards of post-Tridentine catholicism, it was still one, if not the most important, of the factors which contributed to the failure of the reformation in the diocese. Certainly, its potency was recognised by the two men who were charged with the task of promoting godly protestant religion in the Pale in the 1560s, Bishop Brady of Meath and Archbishop Loftus of Armagh. It was no accident that their major initiative during this period - the attempt to establish a protestant university out of the revenues of St Patrick's cathedral - was motivated more by the need to destroy Archbishop Curwen and his diocesan administration, than by the need to create an institution for the training of protestant clerics.[40]

Although Curwen and his clergy successfully fended off this attempt to bring their régime to an end, it did mark a turning point for the archbishop. The criticism that he received at the hands of dedicated protestants like Loftus and Brady, criticism which he knew had been levelled at him because of his staunch defence of the old religion and the

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39 T.C.D., MS 1207, no. 299.

40 See below chapter 8.

institutions which underpinned it, began to take a heavy toll on him. The strain was keenly articulated in letter to the queen in April 1564 wherein he wrote:

> I fear much lest your highness upon sinister information have conceived some misliking towards me and my doings, which grieveth me more than any wordly matter, and therefore I humbly beseech your majesty to will my lord lieutenant or the commissioners [Sir Nicholas Arnold and Sir Thomas Wroth] to enquire and certify my doings to your majesty, wherein I trust your majesty shall understand my duty, doing without corruption, and my travail in furthering all your proceedings belonging to my function.[41]

From this point on, therefore, the archbishop knew that it would be increasingly difficult to sustain his outwardly conformist attitude to the established religion, while at the same time continuing to defend the interests of the old religion and his conservative clergy. Thus, he was eager to secure his release from Ireland on the grounds, ostensibly, of his old age and increasing ill-health. His wish was finally realised in the spring of 1566 when the queen announced his translation to the see of Oxford.[42]

Curwen departed Ireland in the winter of 1567 and was succeeded as archbishop of Dublin by Adam Loftus, the protestant archbishop of Armagh. He left behind him a major legacy however. Thanks to his efforts, or the carefully contrived lack of them, the old religion was in a very healthy state on his departure, while the reformation, as a report from Lord Deputy Sidney to the English privy council had made clear in April of the previous year, 'goeth slowly forward ... by reason of the former errors and superstitions inveterated and leavened in the people's hearts'.[43] No one was more responsible for sustaining such errors and superstitions in the people's hearts than Hugh Curwen. It was this legacy that Loftus would have to confront, and somehow overcome, in order that true protestant religion would gain a foothold in the diocese.

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41 Shirley, *Ch. in Ire., 1547-67*, pp 142-5.

42 Ibid., pp 145-8, 240-1, 248-51, 299-303.

43 Ibid., p 234.

Chapter Six

The drive to protestantize Dublin: the episcopacy of Adam Loftus, 1567-1590

I

The nomination of Adam Loftus to succeed Hugh Curwen as archbishop of Dublin in the spring of 1567 was greeted with great hope and expectancy amongst the reforming circle in the Irish administration. Lord Deputy Sidney gave the clearest expression of this official anticipation, when he heralded the appointment as signalling nothing less than the coming of 'the hour' for the reformation of the church. It is doubtful, however, whether Loftus himself was quite so sanguine about his promotion. While it was certainly true, as Sidney averred, that the see's wealth and English culture offered the most favourable conditions for establishing the reformed religion in Ireland, the new archbishop would have had few illusions that the task was anything other than formidable.[1]

Loftus's appreciation of the difficulties that lay ahead was rooted in an already extensive knowledge of the state of religion in Dublin, which he had acquired from two distinct sources. The first of these was his role as a participant on the commission for ecclesiastical causes appointed in October 1564. By virtue of this commission, a commission which was executed largely through his own lead, Loftus had built up a detailed dossier of 'all manner disorders and offences' committed against the Elizabethan settlement throughout the English Pale. Thus he was fully aware - whether he contemplated the Dublin stonemasons who upheld proscribed holy days, or the nobility and gentry who refused to receive communion according to the Prayer Book rite - that traditional religion still retained a very strong hold on the affections of the inhabitants of

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1 Shirley, *Ch. in Ire., 1547-67*, p 294.

most Dublin parishes; and that the officially-approved doctrines and practices of the crown's religious dispensation were equally disliked.[2]

Loftus's knowlege about the ailing condition of 'true religion' in Dublin, however, went beyond the mere cataloguing of these 'disorders and offences'. He also had a deep understanding of why and how they occurred, an understanding grounded upon insights derived from his incumbency of the two livings he held prior to his promotion to Dublin, the archbishopric of Armagh and the deanery of St Patrick's cathedral.[3] As the successor to George Dowdall in Armagh, and as the head of Dublin's secular cathedral, Loftus saw at close hand the lingering and harmful effects of the canonical restoration of catholicism which Dowdall, Archbishop Curwen and the prebendaries of St Patrick's had instituted in Queen Mary's reign. This legacy was particularly manifest in the Dublin diocesan administration, an administration which was based in and funded from the cathedral; and which was responsible, in ecclesiastical terms, for policing the statutes of Supremacy and Uniformity, the bedrock legislation of the Elizabethan religious settlement. Despite the fundamental importance of this task, the administration which Archbishop Curwen maintained to fulfil it was the same one which had been put together in 1555 to oversee the restoration of catholicism. It was this body, a body still deeply loyal to the old religion, which had done much to foster and sustain the communal attachment to catholicism following Queen Elizabeth's accession, both through its covert approval of proscribed catholic services and practices, and by its neglect to enforce the reformation statutes.[4]

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2 *Cal. pat. rolls, 1563-66*, pp 32-3; *Cal. pat. rolls Ire., Hen. VIII-Eliz*, p 490; Shirley, *Ch. in Ire.*, pp 194-7; Gillespie, ed., *Proctor's accounts of Peter Lewis,* pp 86-7; Edwards, *Church & State*, pp 194-6.

3 Loftus was appointed to Armagh in October 1562 and to the deanery of St Patrick's in January 1565.

4 Above chapter 5.

By accepting the nomination to the see of Dublin, then, Loftus knew he would have to combat a deeply ingrained communal religious conservatism, a conservatism which permeated the entire social spectrum, and which had a longstanding intellectual and institutional basis that was sustained by an indigenous coterie of canon lawyers at the heart of his own diocesan administration. Yet it did not mark the full extent of the archbishop's impending difficulties. More troublesome still was the crown's equivocal attitude towards enforcing the reformation. In theory at least, the queen and her councillors had a clearly defined and uncompromising attitude to the question of enforcement. The establishment of the High Commission of 1564 gave the reformers extensive powers to seek out and punish all forms of disobedience to the new religious settlement, and seemed to betoken a real determination to secure universal outward conformity to the new settlement.[5] Similarly, the crown's simultaneous sponsorship of a scheme to dissolve St Patrick's cathedral, and to establish a university in its place, seemed to show a genuine sensitivity to the particular needs of Irish protestantism, as articulated by the leading reformers such as Loftus and Bishop Brady of Meath. This was a scheme which sought not only to create a seminary for educating the Church of Ireland's future ministers, but was also intent on destroying the nerve centre of the conservative canonical culture which sustained the old religion.[6]

Yet while the queen and her councillors were quick to encourage the formulation of practical reformist policy, recent experience had shown that they were also extremely tentative about supporting its implementation in Ireland, particularly if it threatened to alienate sections of the loyal community or to disrupt the government of the realm, as the levying of the cess in the Pale had done so recently. The queen's refusal to endorse, in the summer of 1565, an aggressive suggestion of Loftus to levy upon the Pale nobility and gentry 'a good round fine and sum of money' to observe her 'most godly laws and

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5 *Cal. pat. rolls, 1563-66*, pp 32-3; *Cal. pat. rolls Ire., Hen. VIII-Eliz*, p 490.

6 For the university project see below chapter 8.

injunctions' was a clear indicator of her circumspection.[7] Again, the abandonment of the university project in 1566 was in large part due to the fear that the dissolution of St Patrick's would provoke an adverse local reaction.[8] Thus, as Adam Loftus set out to govern the see of Dublin, it had become painfully obvious to him that the radical protestant policies which he had advocated since his arrival in Ireland in 1560 - even to the eve of his nomination to the archbishopric[9] - were impracticable, because there would be no guarantee that the crown's ministers in London and Dublin would give them the necessary political support.

Loftus's pragmatic re-assessment of the situation that confronted him, soon became apparent in the way he conducted his business in the opening years of his episcopate. Far from delivering anything even remotely approaching the radicalism of the once touted plans to destroy the popish cathedral of St Patrick, and to found a protestant seminary in its place, this period was notable for the emergence of a new conservatism on Loftus's part, a conservatism which was particularly noticeable in the efforts that he made to preserve and consolidate the traditional structures and rights of his see. In the year June 1567 to June 1568, for example, he assiduously lobbied Sir William Cecil, the queen's secretary, ultimately with telling effect, to prevent the proposed enactment in the upcoming parliament of a statute which would have abolished the ancient liberties of his manor of St Sepulchre and, more significantly, those of St Patrick's cathedral. By so doing, Loftus signalled his willingness to maintain the conventional feudal attributes

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7 Shirley, *Ch. in Ire., 1547-67*, p 194-7. A few months previous to Loftus's letter, Sir William Cecil had voiced what was tantamount to being the official view from London about the religious non-conformity of her Irish subjects when he advised Lord Justice Arnold to 'stir no sleeping dogs in Ireland ... many things in commonweals are suffered that are not liked' (Cecil to Arnold, 28 February 1565, P.R.O., SP 63/12, no. 50). On the problem of the cess in the 1560s see Brady, *Chief Governors*, pp 87-91, chapter 6 *passim*.

8 On the abandonment of the university scheme see below chapter 8.

9 Loftus's continued advocacy of a tough policy on religion is evident from his contributions to the debate on the nomination of Curwen's successor in Dublin. He wrote at least six letters touching on the matter to Secretary Cecil between April 1566 and January 1567, as well as proferring advice to Lord Deputy Sidney on possible candidates (Shirley, *Ch. in Ire., 1547-67*, pp 242-3, 255-9, 269-71, 274-6, 289-91).

associated with the unreformed medieval prelacy.[10] Similarly, when Lord Deputy Sidney attempted to revive plans for the establishment of an Irish university in the same parliament, the archbishop, in stark contrast to his earlier advocacy of the scheme, elected not to give him his support. In part, this was due to the fact that Sidney wished to secure funding for his proposed college from the local community, a plan which Loftus and the other bishops were sceptical about on the grounds that it would have entailed the surrender of some ideological control over the new foundation to the donors, many of whom would have been favourers of the old religion. Yet it also grew as much from the fear that St Patrick's cathedral might once again be drawn into the fray; something which Loftus, as evinced by his protection of the cathedral's liberties, was now clearly set against.[11]

Yet while this circumspection was certainly prompted by the crown's reluctance to embark upon a tough, coercive policy of religious enforcement, it was not purely a political response on his part to circumstances beyond his control, a response which could easily be reversed in more favourable times. In reality, it marked the beginning of a much deeper reappraisal of the reform strategy he had employed hitherto, one outcome of which was his rejection of the aggressive and ultimately impolitic policies of the recent past. But there was more to it than that. In place of the old policies, and here Loftus's new willingness to defend the interests of St Patrick's cathedral was a sign of things to come, the archbishop chose to govern his see in a conventional manner - through the traditional administrative structures based in the cathedral - and, by this means, to attempt to win the allegiance of the local community to the reformation through a less coercive approach to enforcement. Loftus did not come to these

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10 Shirley, *Ch. in Ire., 1547-67*, pp 308-10; petitions of Lewis Chaloner, on behalf of Loftus, to Cecil, May 1568 (P.R.O., SP 63/24, nos 39, 40; Loftus to Cecil, 10 June 1568 (P.R.O., SP 63/25, no. 4); V. Treadwell, 'The Irish Parliament of 1569-71', in *R.I.A. Proc.*, lxv, C (1966-7), pp 62-3. Loftus suspected that the proposed act would ultimately lead to the ecclesiastical liberties being subject to the municipal government of Dublin. For an abstract of the bill see P.R.O. SP 63/27, no. 12.

11 See below chapter 8.

conclusions alone. In developing an alternative to the tough and thorough strategy of enforcement, the archbishop drew inspiration from the latest recruit to the Dublin Castle administration, the new lord chancellor of Ireland, Sir Robert Weston.

II

The decision to appoint Robert Weston as lord chancellor in 1567 was made by Lord Deputy Sidney and the English privy council as part of a broad policy initiative in which the perceived 'insufficiency' of the Irish bench would be remedied by appointing judges from England; and on the specific grounds that he was an ably qualified and experienced civil lawyer, being the holder of a doctorate in the discipline from Oxford, and a curriculum vitae which listed judgeships in various ecclesiastical courts, most notably, the archbishop of Canterbury's Court of the Arches.[12] Weston's appointment was made without any reference to the needs of the new archbishop of Dublin, and indeed appeared even to undermine them, because the new chancellor, a lay man, was also granted the deanery of St Patrick's as a sinecure, despite the fact that Loftus, the incumbent, had requested that he be allowed to retain the living to bolster his own archiepiscopal income. Yet, more than any other single event or influence, Weston's arrival in Ireland would help him confront the tasks of episcopal government that lay ahead.[13]

Whatever tensions may have existed between the two men at the outset were quickly assuaged once Loftus had experienced the chancellor's learning and genuine piety. In regard to the latter, Weston exhibited scruples of conscience over holding a spiritual benefice with five appropriated parishes, although he was not in orders, and attempted

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12 Queen Elizabeth to Lord Deputy Sidney, 10, 11 June 1567 (P.R.O, SP 63/21, nos. 6, 10); *D.N.B.*, *sub nomine* 'Weston, Robert'; W.H. Frere, ed. (transcribed by E. Margaret Thompson), *Registrum Matthei Parker Diocesis Cantuariensis AD 1559-1575* (Canterbury and York Society, 3 vols., Oxford, 1928-32), i, pp 334-7.

13 Shirley, *Ch. in Ire., 1547-67*, pp 295-7.

to make amends by endowing new vicarages on the three decanal prebends of Clondalkin, Esker and Rathcoole. Yet not only was Weston a pious and devout layman, he was also a professional ecclesiastical lawyer of a type which Loftus had rarely encountered: 'a notable and singular man, by profession a lawyer, but in life divine'.[14] Loftus's experience of ecclesiastical lawyers had been negative. In Ireland, they were unreformed canonists, men like Thomas Creef, the conservative official principal of his own consistory court.[15] But Weston had actively and consistently used his legal skills in the service of the reformed church in England; initally as an ecclesiastical commissioner during the regal visitation of 1559, and subsequently as diocesan chancellor of the see of Coventry and Lichfield and the proctor of its clergy in the convocation of 1563, and as the archbishop of Canterbury's Dean of the Arches.[16]

This was promising. Weston's coming opened up the possibility of acquiring a moral, intellectual and practical justification for the abandonment of the radical, almost iconoclastic, ideas on church reform that he had once purveyed. With the new dean by his side, Loftus came to appreciate that being a bishop was not just about executing the queen's ecclesiastical commission, a method of church government which he had favoured because of his own inexperience of conventional ecclesiastical administration, his deep suspicion of the canonists that staffed the existing diocesan establishments and, above all, the great difficulty he had experienced in governing the O'Neill dominated see

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14 Weston to Cecil, 14 September 1569, (P.R.O., SP 63/29, no. 62); Lord Deputy Perrot to Lord Treasurer Burghley, May 1585 (Bodl., Perrot MS 1, f 104r); Abstract of the will of Katherine Bulkeley of Balgaddy, 28 November 1574 (G.O., MS 290 p 17); T.C.D., MS 567, f 1v. The quote from Holinshed is cited in Weston's *D.N.B.* entry.

15 There is no record of Loftus having appointed a new official principal until the winter of 1568-9. This suggests that Curwen's official, Creef, remained in the post for a year or so after Loftus's succession. Curwen's last diocesan registrar, James Cuskelly, also continued in office for a number of years after Loftus's succession (*Reg. Dioc. Dublinensis*, pp 37, 52; N.A.I., Chancery Bills, D/73).

16 W.P. Haugard, *Elizabeth and the English Reformation* (Cambridge, 1970), pp 130-7; R. O'Day, 'The role of the registrar in diocesan administration', in O'Day and Heal, eds., *Continuity and Change*, pp 90-1.

of Armagh.[17] Rather, this was a church which was held to exist in administrative continuity with its medieval and Marian predecessors; a church which, although ultimately subject to the monarch, was expected to be governed in her name by her bishops, and the ancient judicial and administrative structures over which they presided.[18]

At the heart of this system of traditional episcopal government lay the ecclesiastical law, a law which Loftus well knew was identical in many respects to the popish canon law that Dowdall, Curwen and the prebendaries of St Patrick's had used to restore catholicism in Mary's reign; and towards which he was naturally antipathetic. Now, however, under the guidance of Robert Weston, he saw the ecclesiastical law and the diocesan structures which administered it in a new light. These relics of the see's popish past not only showed the inherent continuities that existed between the Elizabethan Church of Ireland and its medieval and Marian predescessors, but actually highlighted some of those elements which attracted the local community to the old religion. Armed with such an appreciation, Loftus was able to recast or reformulate the problem of enforcement in a way which took account of and sought to appease indigenous sensitivities. In particular, he came to see enforcement policy as but an aspect of the wider dispensation and administration of ecclesiastical justice, a system of justice which presented a potential medium for addressing one of the new diocesan administration's most fundamental problems, the difficulty of convincing the local community that the state-sponsored reform of the church was a genuinely orthodox undertaking.

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17 Prior to his promotion to Dublin, Loftus had complained that Armagh was was 'neither ... worth anything to me, nor I able to do any good in it, for that altogether it lieth among the Irish' (Shirley, *Ch. in Ire., 1547-67*, pp 278-80).

18 For a discussion of the institutional continuities that existed between the medieval and post-Reformation churches in England, a discussion which has much relevance for the Irish situation, see R. O'Day and F. Heal's introduction to *Continuity and Change*, pp 13-29.

The innovatory nature of Elizabethan English protestantism, and its apparent heterodoxy, was felt acutely amongst the Pale community because the local clergy - for political and cultural, as well as for religious, reasons - had long believed and taught that the authority of canon law was the definitive means of legitimizing religious doctrine and practice, a belief which had been recently reaffirmed by the canonical restoration of catholicism effected by Archbishops Dowdall and Curwen. In other words, the more protestantism departed from medieval canonical forms, whether through its legislation on jurisdictional and devotional matters in secular bodies like parliament, or through its government of the church in novel bodies like the High Commission, the more illegitmate it seemed to the Englishry. Two strategic implications were to be drawn from such an analysis. The first was that the Elizabethan settlement would have to be presented with a veneer of canonical legitimacy if it was ever to receive the approbation and loyalty of the see's inhabitants. The second, and related, implication was that the influence of the senior conservative clergy would have to be nullified to allow such a process to proceed, as they were a group who saw themselves as the guardians of the canonical traditions of the English Pale and who would remain fully committed to preserving this role and to subverting the reformers' plans. With these considerations in mind, Loftus and Weston initiated a new and carefully modulated programme of ecclesiastical discipline, which aimed at marginalizing the clerical old guard and the value system which they purveyed, and which sought to establish the Loftus-Weston régime and the Elizabethan ecclesiastical settlement as the more legitimate, conservative and therefore attractive alternative. In order to achieve this aim, however, Loftus and Weston new from the outset that they would have to establish the authority and credibility of their régime fairly quickly. The only way to do this was to confront and face down the conservative clergy resident in St Patrick's cathedral.

As the new dean of St Patrick's, Weston was well placed for this new offensive. He began by recruiting the assistance of his nephew from England - John Ball, an Oxford

MA and bachelor in civil law - whom he had 'bred up of a little one in learning' and was 'of such knowledge and manners that may be in diverse parts of my service a help and comfort unto me, and whom in weighty and secret matters I may boldly repose above any other'. Loftus appointed Ball as his vicar general and the official principal of his consistory court in the place of Thomas Creef, Curwen's appointee from the previous reign. And together with Ball, the archbishop and dean undertook their inaugural visitations of the cathedral, beginning in April 1569.[19]

Ordinary jurisdiction over St Patrick's, according to the cathedral's statutes, was held conjointly by the archbishop and dean; the dean having cognizance of the majority of ecclesiastical causes concerning the cathedral clergy in the first instance, the archbishop having cognizance over those crimes which carried the penalty of deprivation. In addition, the archbishop was also obliged to obtain the assistance of the dean and chapter in cases where he wished to proceed against an individual canon. The implication of these rulings, rulings which were originally drawn up by Archbishop Rokeby and his chapter in 1515, and approved by Pope Leo X,[20] was that the co-operation of Loftus and Weston in their visitations was not only desired by the parties, but legally enshrined in local canonical customs. The irony of this cannot have been lost either on the visitors, nor on the cathedral clergy about to be visited, especially when Loftus chose to depute the archiepiscopal visitation to his new vicar general, John Ball. By means of this decision Loftus was effectively invading the canonical citadel of St Patrick's in the cause of reform, not, however, in the manner that would previously have been expected - at the head of a commission to take its surrender - but through a formally trained family of ecclesiastical lawyers who came to administer and apply

19 Lord Justice Weston to Cecil, 2 August 1568 (P.R.O., SP 63/ 25, no. 29); *Al. Oxon.*, i, p 62. The extant record of the visitation is from a precedent book of the metropolitan court of Dublin, which was compiled in the 1570s (R.C.B., Dublin Diocesan Registry MS 12, pp 47-65) and published by the Irish Manuscripts Commission in 1959 *(Reg. Dioc. Dublinensis*, pp 40-52).

20 *Alen's Reg.*, pp 262-3; Mason, *History of St Patrick's*, pp 143-4; *Dignitus decani*, pp 56-64.

many of the legal principles and procedures which the cathedral clergy had so recently used on behalf of the old religion.

Weston and Ball did their visitorial work with devastating thoroughness over the course of the ensuing eighteen months. Every member of the cathedral body was cited to appear at the visitation, either personally or through their legitmately appointed proctors, whether they were a known protestant or a known conservative, whether a bishop or a humble vicar choral. And every one of them had to produce before Loftus's vicar general each and every of their letters of ordination, presentation and dispensation, all of which were scrupulously examined and registered in the acts of the court. Furthermore, for those who failed to exhibit the requisite documentation on their first appearance, terms were assigned for one or more additional appearances, all of which were followed up until they proved their eligibility to be a member of the cathedral, resident or otherwise. Meanwhile, Dean Weston probed the morals and character of the cathedral clergy to detect and correct all forms of delinquency.[21]

Although such visitorial rigour had been prefigured in an investigation into the non-residence of two prebendaries in early 1568, it appears that most of the cathedral clergy were neither expecting it, nor were prepared for it, when it arrived.[22] Among the unprepared were men like Robert Daly, the protestant bishop of Kildare and prebendary of Clonmethan, who, after an initial appearance on 12 December 1569, was forced to travel 'twenty miles and more' to gather his letters of ordination, collation, institution and dispensation, for exhibition on 18 January following; and Walter Busher, a vicar choral, who had to return to Wexford to collect his letters of ordination. Leniency, even where the circumstances seemed to warrant it, was rare in this visitation. Richard

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21 *Reg. Dioc. Dublinensis*, pp 40-52 *passim*.

22 Ibid., pp 37-9. The absentee canons were Dr Thomas Ithell, prebendary of Castleknock, and Geoffrey Crosse, one of the prebendaries of Donaghmore in Imaal and a chaplain of Hugh Curwen, who was then bishop of Oxford.

Johnson, a pluralist whose livings included the prebend of Tipperkevin, was unable to exhibit his letters of institution to the vicarage of Wicklow on his first appearance on 12 December 1569, because of the wars there and the attendant danger that any journey to retrieve them would entail. Ball still insisted, however, that he should appear with the document on the morrow of the feast of the Purification following or, failing that, on the next judicial day after the feast of the Ascension.[23]

The same visitorial rigour was also extended to the well connected. Robert Comander, a chaplain of Lord Deputy Sidney and the pluralist prebendary of Kilmactalway, was summoned to appear on 19 November and commanded, with six other canons, to exhibit letters of dispensation three weeks hence. Weston and Ball's endeavours over the previous seven months had clearly made a big impression on Comander, however, for, unlike many of his colleagues, he came armed with what were probably hastily drafted 'letters of qualification of the worshipful man Sir Henry Sidney, deputy of the kingdom of Ireland, under his seal at arms'. These were accepted and registered in the acts.[24] In contrast, a client of Sidney's predecessor as chief governor, the earl of Sussex, was much less fortunate. This was John Vulp, his Hungarian physician, who, despite being a layman, had acquired the archdeaconry of Glendalough from Archbishop Curwen in 1565. Ball deprived him on 12 December 1569 for non-residence, evinced in his repeated failure to appear at the visitation.[25]

The most striking evidence of Ball's stringency, however, was exhibited in his investigation of Edmund Barnewall, the non-resident treasurer of the cathedral. On 6 March 1570, Robert Wellesley, the archdeacon of Dublin, appeared on behalf of the absent treasurer, and alleged that he was too sick to appear personally, and that he was

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23 *Reg. Dioc. Dublinensis*, pp 43, 45, 47, 48.

24 Ibid., p 43: 'litteras qualificationum honorabilis viri domini henrici Sydney deputati Regni Hibernie sub sigillo eius ad arma'.

25 Lambeth, Muniment Book, F1/B, f 127r; *Al. Cant.*, iv, p 306; *Reg. Dioc. Dublinensis*, pp 40-4.

excused from residence by means of letters of dispensation granted during the reigns of Henry VIII and Edward VI, all of which were in the custody of David Delahide, an Irish scholar at Oxford.[26] Ball would not accept Wellesley's contentions, however, and asked him to take an oath that all the premises were true, and that they were not being put forward to delay proceedings or to prevent a judgement being pronounced against Barnewall. Under this pressure, the archdeacon wilted and refused to take the oath, admitting that he had only learned of the premises from one Thomas Cusake, a lawyer, who had brought Barnewall's letters of procuration to Wellesley. The vicar general, scenting blood, continued his pursuit. Cusake was summoned to the chapter house immmediately after the archdeacon, and interrogated as to whether he had seen the letters of dispensation. He too, it transpired, had not seen them, stating that he had only 'heard' that Barnewall held such letters. Ball decreed, therefore, that Barnewall should either produce his letters on the morrow after the feast of St Patrick, or else make personal residence in the cathedral. It seems he failed on both counts and was subsequently deprived.[27]

The purpose behind all of these summonses and such intensely pursued enquiries was manifold. In the first instance, they asserted and demonstrated the authority and professionalism of the newly constituted Loftus régime, and the conventional legal basis upon which it intended to operate. They also demonstrated the seriousness of its reforming intent which, in the case of St Patrick's, meant ridding it of those non-productive members whose only identifiable activity in connection with the cathedral benefices they held was the collection of the revenues. Above all, however, they were designed to strike a particular blow at the heart of the English-Irish conservative clerical interest which had such played havoc with the reform of the established church in the early years of Elizabeth's reign; a blow which the conservatives would not be able to

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26 Ibid, p 51. Barnewall had already been pronounced contumacious by Ball for failing to answer his initial citation (ibid., pp 43, 48-9).

27 Ibid., p 51. Barnewall was replaced as treasurer in 1570 (Lawlor, *Fasti of St Patrick's*, p 70).

gainsay in terms of its legitimacy, as it was prompted by the old canonical rules which they themselves held so dearly. The attack on Edmund Barnewall was a striking case in point. Barnewall, a scion of an illegitimate line of the Barnewall's of Crickstown in Co. Meath, had been appointed treasurer at the restoration of St Patrick's cathedral, which indicates very strongly that he was of a markedly conservative religious bent, a bent otherwise confirmed by his relationship with David Delahide, an Irish civilian who had been committed to prison in 1560 for refusing to comply with the Elizabethan settlement, following the visitation of Oxford University by royal commissioners.[28] Yet, officially, this had no bearing on the case. Barnewall was deprived for an offence against the cathedral's own timehonoured statutes, prebendal non-residence.

Another case in point was the deprivation of Leonard Fitzsimon. Fitzsimon was a member of one of most eminent families amongst the Dublin city oligarchy, a family which also had a longstanding association with the local church. Indeed, his own personal embodiment of this association began at a very early age, as a six year old choirboy in Christ Church cathedral, and, in more propitious times, especially with his scholastic abilities - he was an Oxford graduate and a 'deep and pithy clerk, well seen in the Greek and Latin tongue' - could have expected to enjoy a long and prosperous career in the upper echelons of the Dublin diocesan administration. His conservative religious instincts, however, instincts which were fostered within the social milieu in which he was raised, would eventually lead him to Louvain and ordination as a catholic priest. Yet, like Barnewall, it was not for his attachment to the old religion that he lost his cathedral prebend in December 1569, but for contumacy in repeatedly failing to leave Oxford to appear at the visitation.[29]

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28 S.B. Barnewall, 'The Barnewall family during the 16th and 17th centuries (Part II)', in *Ir. Gen.*, 3, no. 6 (1961), p 199; J. Brady, 'Some Irish scholars of the sixteenth century', in *Studies*, xxxvii (1948), pp 227-8.

29 *Cal. pat. rolls Ire., Hen. VIII-Eliz*, p 143; *Reg. Dioc. Dublinensis*, pp 40-4; *Al. Oxon.*, ii, p 504; Stanyhurst, *Holinshed's Irish Chonicle*, p 101; Lennon, *Lords of Dubin*, pp 154-5, 158; Brady, 'Some Irish scholars', pp 228-31. It is not known which prebend Fitzsimon held at the time of his deprivation. In the early 1560s he was prebendary of St Audoen, but at the time of the visitations this prebend was held by one John Alen, who had been appointed in 1564 (First Fruits Account

The deprivations of Barnewall and Fitzsimon on points of traditional canon law were of largely symbolic significance, given that they were inactive members of the chapter at the time of the visitation. Yet Loftus and Weston were also determined to cow into submission those conservative prebendaries who resided within the cathedral and who had actively undermined the reformers' cause during Archbishop Curwen's episcopacy. At the forefront of this group was Thomas Creef, the old precentor of St Patrick's, a man who had lived through all the religious vicissitudes wrought by the Tudors, but who, despite nominal conformity to the Elizabethan settlement, had remained stubbornly loyal to the traditional religion he had upheld since he first entered St Patrick's as a vicar choral in the early 1520s. Creef was regarded as the chief fomentor of papistry in the cathedral and was thus singled out for what was effectively, and intentionally, a ritualistic harrassment and humiliation; ritualistic both in the sense that it was conducted on the back of that most damaging of allegations for the English-Irish clerical psyche - a charge of sexual impropriety - and in the sense that it was administered to him through canonical procedures which he himself was well versed in, having used them to revive the old religion during his incumbency of the official principalship in the reign of Mary.

Creef's troubles emerged in January 1570, when Ball, the man who had replaced him as vicar general and official principal of Dublin, formally charged him to respond on oath to articles touching a crime of adultery detected by Dean Weston in his visitation of the cathedral. Nothing is known about the background to the alledged crime, but it does seem an unusual allegation, given that the precentor was in or around seventy years of age at the time. Thus, while the charge was probably not wholly manufactured - all the dean needed to bring it forward was a rumour or some gossip - it seems likely that it

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Michaelmas 1566-Michaelmas 1568, abstract in T.C.D., MS 1745, ff 1-2; *Reg. Dioc. Dublinensis*, p 46).

was politically motivated, being proceeded with to publicly embarass the leader of the old religion in St Patrick's.[30]

Not surprisingly, when it was put to him under formal examination, Creef denied the allegation and, on 25 February, was ordered to undergo compurgation, a canonical process whereby he would have to produce six 'compurgators' of his own sex and standing, effectively six prebendaries, who would be prepared to swear in the vicar general's court that they believed the charge to be untrue. On 3 March, Creef nominated his compurgators - Robert Nangle, chancellor of St Patrick's, Robert Wellesley, archdeacon of Dublin, Patrick Byrne, prebendary of Swords, Christopher Browne, prebendary of Wicklow, Richard Johnson, prebendary of Tipperkevin, and Ninian Menywell, prebendary of Dunlavin - a group notable for the fact that five of the six were colleagues of Creef from the chapter presented by Queen Mary in 1555, Menywell being the exception. It is clear from what followed that Weston and Ball recognised Creef's compurgators for what they were - the old clerical guard closing ranks - and determined to derive the maximum effect from the proceedings by turning them into an attack on the group as a whole. Thus, having prepared the case thoroughly in advance with his uncle, Ball decreed four of Creef's nominees to be illegitmate, three of them - Nangle, Browne and Byrne - on the grounds that the dean had also detected unspecified crimes committed by them and they were not as yet purgated; the fourth, the recently arrived Menywell, on the grounds that he had been convicted of usury in the English exchequer. The embarassed Creef had no other recourse at this juncture but to respond by seeking another term for compurgation.[31]

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30 *Reg. Dioc. Dublinensis*, pp 43, 48, 49. Creef was already a vicar choral of St Patrick's, and thus probably in major orders, in 1523. He would therefore have been at least 24 years of age (the minimum for major orders) in 1523, making him at least 70 years of age at the time of the visitation (Memoranda Roll, 15 Henry VIII, Michaelmas term, m 17, N.A.I., Ferguson MS, iv, p 74; Lawlor, *Fasti of St Patrick's*, p 35). In April 1574 Loftus described Creef as 'well spent in years' (Loftus to Burgley, 23 April 1574 [P.R.O., SP 63/45, no. 81]).

31 Ibid., pp 49, 50. Creef was allowed another term for compurgation because there was an insufficient number of prebendaries in Dublin on that day to supply the deficiency in his nominees, and because he successfully contended that he had believed his original selection to be irreprehensible. On compurgation generally see Houlbrooke, *Church courts and the people*, pp

Unfortunately, no further record of the proceedings against Creef is now extant, but it appears that he restored his good name in a second compurgation, for he is known to have survived as precentor of St Patrick's beyond the visitation.[32] The relief and satisfaction that Creef derived from his survival can only have been shortlived however, for, in the months that followed, a substantial number of his conservative allies were to lose their livings as a result of Weston and Ball's strict application of canonical standards in the cathedral close.[33] These included Patrick Byrne, one of Creef's own compurgators;[34] Richard Betagh, the prebendary of Saggard and, like Creef, a former confidante of Archbishop Curwen;[35] Thomas Fleming, prebendary of Maynooth;[36] and

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45-6; Ingram, *Church courts, sex and marriage*, pp 51-2, 331-4.

32 *Fiants Ire., Eliz.*, nos. 3014, 3216. This outcome corroborates the view that the proceedings were politically motivated, as the second compurgation would not have been upheld if substantial evidence or witnesses could have been produced to contradict it.

33 The evidence for these deprivations is circumstantial. Each of the four clergy concerned is known to have vacated his cathedal living c. 1570, the year in which the visitation was concluded (Lawlor, *Fasti of St Patrick's*, pp 129, 159, 164, 185). All had demonstrable links with the conservative clerical interest, or possessed a background typical of the group; and, in three cases out of the four, proceedings for non-residence or delinquency are known to have been initiated by Dean Weston and Vicar General Ball during their visitations. The outcome of these cases is not recorded in the extant record.

34 Byrne had to undergo compurgation himself for an unspecified offence detected by Dean Weston. It appears that he did not complete it successfully for he was replaced as prebendary of Swords by Edmund Ennos in 1570 (*Reg. Dioc. Dublinensis*, p 43-4, 48, 50; Lawlor, *Fasti of St Patrick's*, p 159).

35 Betagh, a vicar choral at the suppression of St Patrick's in 1547, and nominated to the prebend of Stagonil at the restoration in 1555, was a witness to Curwen's will on 20 November 1564, along with Creef and another known conservative cathedral cleric, Christopher Browne, the prebendary of Wicklow (*Cal. pat. rolls Ire., Hen. VIII-Eliz*, pp 142-3, Mason, *History of St Patrick's*, pp 155-6; P.R.O., PROB 11/50, f 182v). Betagh was in possession of the prebend at the outset of the visitation and was replaced by one William Prott or Pratt in 1570 (*Reg. Dioc. Dublinensis*, p 40; Lawlor, *Fasti of St Patrick's*, p 164).

36 Fleming was appointed to the prebend of Maynooth in September 1555 in place of Richard Johnson, who had been deprived by Archdeacon Wellesley because he was married. He was still prebendary in 1562 and is undoubtedly the 'Thomas J. prebendary of Maynooth' who was pronounced contumacious for non-residence on 6 March 1570. His punishment, which was reserved to the morrow of the feast of St Patrick but which is not now on record, was probably deprivation, for he was replaced around this time by one John Doyne (*Reg. Dioc. Dublinensis*, pp 48-9, 51-2, 77-8; St Patrick's cathedral, Muniments, bundle 116 [Jackson Ms catalogue number]; Lawlor, *Fasti of St Patrick's*, p 129).

John Dillon, prebendary of Yago.[37] Taken together, such deprivations represented a very considerable dent in the power-base of what Loftus called the 'papist faction' in St Patrick's cathedral,[38] a purge effected by the archbishop's ecclesiastical lawyers in the name of the reformed religion. For Creef and his allies the visitation and its outcome thus presented a grim warning of the threat which hung over the conservative religious position within St Patrick's cathedral. For Loftus, Weston and Ball, on the other hand, it marked a satisfying beginning to the task of reforming the church in Dublin, one which was cemented by the conferral of the newly vacated livings on genuinely protestant clergymen and administrators, including Ball himself, who received the archdeaconry of Glendalough;[39] John Kearney, the Cambridge graduate and Connaught born author of the first protestant catechism in the Irish language, who received the treasurership;[40] and Edmund Enos, a Cambridge M.A. graduate, who received the prebend of Swords.[41]

III

But this was just a beginning. Apart from the fact that Creef and some of his allies had survived the visitations, they now had to face the more daunting prospect of extending

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37 Dillon was cited, but failed to appear, on a number of occasions during Ball's visitation. On 12 December 1569, the same day that Fitzsimon, Vulp and the prebendary of Rathmichael, Edward Croft, were deprived for non-residence, Robert Nangle, the conservative chancellor of St Patrick's, appeared on Dillon's behalf and alledged that he was studying arts at Oxford where he had performed well, and that he was his legitimate proctor but did not have the requisite letters to hand. Had Nangle not intervened, Dillon would have been deprived there and then. His efforts were to no avail, however, because Dillon lost his prebend soon after, possibly on the quindene of Easter 1570, the date on which Nangle was required, but presumably failed, to produce the letters of procuration. It is likely that Dillon was a young protege of Nangle and his fellow conservatives (*Reg. Dioc. Dublinensis*, pp 40-4).

38 Loftus to Burghley, 26 September 1571 (P.R.O., SP 63/34, no. 13).

39 *Reg. Dioc. Dublinensis*, p 80.

40 *Al. Cant.*, i, p 294; *D.N.B.*, sub nomine 'Kearney or Carney, John'; Lawlor, *Fasti of St Patrick's*, p 70; B. Ó Cuív, 'The Irish language in the early modern period', in *New hist. Ire.*, iii, pp 511-2. The catechism was published in 1571 shortly after Kearney received the treasurership.

41 *Al. Cant.*, i, p 104; Historical Manuscripts Commission, *Calendar of the manuscripts of the marquess of Salisbury xiii* (London, 1905), p 113; Lawlor, *Fasti of St Patrick's*, p 159.

the reformation into the parishes of the diocese. The first requirement of this task was to domesticate the reformation, by turning its legislative aspects into local canon law. To this end, Loftus called a sitting of the traditional canon law-making body of the diocese, the provincial council, in February 1570.[42] This, as he and Weston were fully aware, was the body which had played such a key part in re-establishing and legitimizing catholicism under the previous diocesan administration. Thus, although no record of its deliberations now survives, it is probable that the council was summoned to invest key reformist decrees such as the Royal Injunctions of 1559,[43] or the twelve articles of religion which Lord Deputy Sidney and the High Commission had promulgated in January 1567,[44] with the same authoritative canonical standing that Dowdall and Curwen had given their catholic canons of 1553 and 1555.

The provincial council also had another important function. As well as enacting what was effectively reformist canon law, it also provided an initial medium for communicating this law to key clerical personnel in the province of Dublin, and for securing their compliance to it, an important consideration given that some of these clerics would be called upon to communicate or enforce the legislation amongst the laity and their clerical subordinates after the council's business was completed. Those

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42 *Reg. Dioc. Dublinensis*, pp 34-5.

43 The Injunctions were prepared for the royal visitation of the English Church in 1559, but remained a permanent part of the Elizabethan settlement on both sides of the Irish sea. As an expert ecclesiastical lawyer who had participated in the royal visitation, but had subsequently learned about the canonical restoration of catholicism effected by Dowdall and Curwen in Ireland, Sir Robert Weston would have been particularly attuned to the need of validating the injunctions through a provincial council. On the injunctions generally see Haugaard, *Elizabeth and the English Reformation*, pp 135-44; for the text see Frere, *Visitation Articles*, iii, pp 17-8.

44 The twelve articles were a formulary of faith issued to the parochial clergy who were expected to teach them on first entering their cures, and twice yearly thereafter. They defined the erastian, liturgical and protestant bases of the Elizabethan settlement by asserting *inter alia* the crown's 'prerogative and superiority of government of all estates and in all causes, as well ecclesiastical and temporal', and by rejecting papal supremacy (articles 5, 6); by asserting the primacy of scripture and the agreeability of the Book of Common Prayer to the same (articles 2, 7); by rejecting private masses and the doctrine of the sacrifice of the mass (article 9); and by rejecting images, pilgrimages and other 'superstitious' practices (article 11). The articles are printed in C.R. Elrington, *The Life of the Most Rev. James Ussher* (Dublin, 1848), appendix 3, pp xx-xxix.

summoned to the council included the other bishops of the province, who appeared personally or by their proctors, representatives of the cathedral chapters, the archdeacons of the province, and the proctors of the parochial clergy of each diocese.[45] Loftus and Weston made no presumption, however, that the council would be an automatically compliant body. The possibilty of dissent was real and was soon confirmed in the non-appearance of representatives of the dean and chapter of Ferns and the parochial clergy of Kildare, as well as the archdeacons of those dioceses.[46] Indeed it seems that Loftus and Weston may have feared that more serious demonstrations of dissent might occur during the council sessions proper, including overt opposition by disgruntled, conservative clerics to the planned programme of legislation. Such fears probably lay at the root of the archbishop's decision to keep the meeting a purely clerical gathering, and to abandon the customary practice of inviting a representative of the mayor and commons of the city of Dublin.[47] This was a move which clearly served notice that he and Weston were intent on minimizing the opportunities for unseemly demonstrations of conservative clerical resistance to the reformation, especially in the sight of an influential figure from lay society .

Although no trace of the council's legislation now exists, there are good grounds for assuming that Loftus was successful in getting it passed. Apart from the fact that the Weston-Ball visitations of St Patrick's had already contributed to making some of the gathering quite malleable, and thus responsive to the demand to give the Elizabethan settlement local synodal validation,[48] the council was immediately followed by the

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45 *Reg. Dioc. Dublinensis*, pp 34-5.

46 Ibid.

47 *Reg. Dioc. Dublinensis*, pp 31-3, 34-5; Book of accounts of the corporation of the city of Dublin, 1541-1613 (D.C.A., MR/35, p 140).

48 The council included, for example, a representative of the clergy of St Patrick's nominated by Dean Weston and the post visitation chapter. It also included the archdeacon of Dublin, Robert Wellesley, a man whose part in the downfall of Treasurer Barnewall had shown that he had little stomach for overtly heroic stands against the Loftus régime (*Reg. Dioc. Dublinensis*, p 34).

activation of another traditional structure, the metropolitan visitation. Had the legislation run aground, it is unlikely that Loftus would have set about visiting the parishes of his diocese and his four suffragan sees of Kildare, Ferns, Ossory and Leighlin, as he would have had nothing of substance to lay before his flock to show that his régime, and the religion that it upheld, were the legitimate heirs of the see's medieval past. Armed with the new protestant canons, this is precisely what he set out to do.

The metropolitan visitation took place in the autumn of 1570, and was conducted by specially appointed commissaries in each diocese, such as Daniel Kavanagh, the bishop of Leighlin, and David Clere, the dean of Holy Trinity cathedral, Waterford, who were deputed by Loftus to visit the diocese of Leighlin.[49] In the diocese of Dublin proper, the visitation was conducted by Loftus's vicar general, John Ball. What we know about Ball's first reforming foray into the parishes shows that, in line with the régime's avowed objective of avoiding unnecessary antagonism of the leaders of the local community, he was much less rigorous in seeking out and punishing lay delinquency, than he had been in his detection and correction of clerical delinquency in the cathedral. One man who appreciated this difference of approach more than most was Christopher Browne, the conservative prebendary of Wicklow, who had experienced the Weston-Ball onslaught on St Patrick's at close hand. Shortly after the metropolitan visitation was completed, Browne complained bitterly that the vicar general, 'having any rich man of the country in the censures of the church for fornication, adultery or any like offence', would absolve them 'for money ... with the Pope's absolution, Absolvo te ... and hath been seen and heard of credible persons giving that absolution on horseback in the fields, the penitent kneeling before him ...'.[50]

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49 *Reg. Dioc. Dublinensis*, pp 35-6.

50 'Articles objected against Sir John Bale, clerk, commissary unto the archbishop of Dublin' (P.R.O., SP 63/71, no. 10; calendered in Brady, *Ir. ch. Eliz.*, pp 37-9). For the dating, authorship and significance of these articles see below p 258.

Although this witness was hostile, the substance of the complaint rings true. What the régime was endeavouring to do was to win the allegiance of the political community to the new settlement by establishing firm canonical credentials for itself, and by creating a firm sense of continuity with the medieval past, an approach which had already been evinced in such measures as the provincial council's translation of reformist articles and injunctions into local synodal canons, and which was now evident in the liberal and highly visible use of the traditional canonical formula for granting absolution during an episcopal visitation. The same approach is also detectable in other aspects of the visitation. The episcopal commissaries, for example, waged an offensive against clerical concubinage, an offensive which was deeply redolent of the canonical past, albeit with a protestant twist, in that the offending clergy were allowed to legalize their relationships through marriage, rather than end them.[51] Most remarkably of all, however, there is evidence to suggest that the visitors were even willing to countenance the use of the Latin version of the Book of Common Prayer, a practice which had started under Archbishop Curwen's conservative administration.[52] Overall, this approach to reform allowed the Loftus régime to present itself, and thus the reformation, in terms which were more easily assimilable by the leaders of the community; and which, in the

51 *Reg. Dioc. Dublinensis*, p 36.

52 The evidence for this comes from a letter written by the English privy council to Loftus and Lord Deputy Perrot in March 1588, in which they noted that they 'had been of late advertised of a notable abuse continued in the English Pale, where it was said that in sundry parts thereof the Book of Common Prayer is publicly used in the Latin tongue and contrarywise the Book of Prayer in English ... almost wholly neglected and but little used' (*Acts privy council, 1587-8*, pp 410-11). Although this letter was written many years after the visitation of 1570, it had been solicited by the deputy and his supporters as part of a general campaign and critique of Loftus's government of the church to that point. The complaint about the abuse of the Latin Prayer Book was not therefore a complaint about a recent development, but something which was of long duration and something for which Loftus was considered to be responsible. According to the council, the queen could not 'but impute the fault thereof chiefly to the Lord Archbishop, considering how the care to abolish such kind of superstitious abuses principally appertaineth to him ...'. This suggests very strongly that Loftus's diocesan administrations, all the way back to the Weston era, allowed the use of the Latin Prayer book to go unpunished as part of their conciliatory reform strategy.

fulness of time, would enable it to replace the old clerical élite as the legitimate voice of clerical authority in the community, and to win a similar place in its affections.

Obviously, at this delicate stage, there had to be some sweeteners to begin the process, a consideration which accounts for the relative leniency exhibited both in relation to the the Latin Prayer Book, and the treatment of lay delicts. The leniency on the Prayer Book, although strictly against the letter of the act of Uniformity - the Latin version was only supposed to be used in places where the presiding minister was unable to speak English[53] - was designed as a confidence building measure, a measure which would avoid alienating adherents of the old religion by negating the most overt sign of the changover from catholic mass to protestant communion service, the use of a different language. A similar design was evident in the treatment of lay delicts. Although offences were detected and money fines levied in return for the vicar general's absolution, it was all done in a casual, almost routine, manner, which was intended to avoid causing embarassment to particular individuals - and a consequent build-up of resentment against the exponents of godly reform - while at the same time showing that the new régime upheld the same moral and canonical standards, and the same procedures for enforcing them, that all previous diocesan administrations had done.[54] In this way the Loftus régime posed not only as the legitimate upholder of the traditional ecclesiastical law, but as a sensitive and caring administrator of it.

The ultimate success of this strategy, as Loftus and Weston well knew, would be dependent upon their ability to sustain it in an uninterrupted manner over a lengthy period of time. In this scenario, habitual loyalty to the old clergy would gradually be transferred to Loftus's régime, thus rendering it more capable of transforming traditional religion into something akin to the religion officially sanctioned by the Elizabethan

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53 *Stat. Ire.*, i, p 219.

54 The redemption of penances by monetary payments was a longstanding tradition of the English and Irish churches and was sanctioned by local synodal legislation (*Alen's Reg.*, pp 92-4).

settlement. In particular, the acquisition of communal loyalty would ultimately help the régime to improve the pastoral care on offer in the diocese, by enabling it to exert an effective influence over the lay impropriators. This ability to influence the impropriators was vitally important for, as a group, they controlled the rectorial interest in some 46% of all diocesan parishes, and were thus responsible for finding and funding the bulk of the parochial clergy, and for the upkeep of much of the church fabric. Without their co-operation, therefore, it would be virtually impossible to maintain any form of religion in the parishes, let alone establish reformed standards therein, a consideration which must have weighed heavily with the reformers when they conceived their conciliatory reform strategy.[55]

But the essential premise, that the success of the reformers' strategy would be dependent upon their ability to sustain it in the long term, immediately posed an administrative problem. Outside the periods of the triennial archiepiscopal visitation, the responsibility for detecting and correcting lay and clerical delicts, and thus maintaining the visibility of the régime and its policy of fostering communal loyalty through the dispensation of ecclesiastical justice, would reside with the archdeacon of Dublin in his guise as 'oculus episcopi'. And that official, Robert Wellesley, was a conservative who could not be trusted to support this strategy as whole-heartedly as Vicar General Ball. Worse, unlike other diocesan officials, Wellesley could not be removed from the archdeaconry at Loftus's pleasure, because it was annexed to a cathedral prebend and was thus, effectively, a freehold position. The only way Wellesley could be ejected, in fact, was by finding sufficient grounds for his deprivation were found. And though his standing had been undermined by the events surrounding the deprivation of Treasurer Barnewall and the humiliation of Precentor Creef, no such evidence was uncovered to begin proceedings against him. The reality, therefore, was that his removal would either have to wait until he himself presented such grounds for deprivation or until he died.

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55 The role of the impropriators in the pastoral care of the diocese at this time is discussed in chapter seven below.

Aware of this difficulty Loftus and Weston sought to circumvent it by procuring a new commission for ecclesiastical causes, which was granted on 14 June 1568.[56] The new commission had a broad remit - it was issued to pursue and punish offences throughout the entire realm against the acts of Uniformity and Supremacy in particular, and against ecclesiastical law generally - but essentially it provided Loftus and Weston with a means of extending their diocesan administration which, in the absence of a dependable archdeacon, would enable them to maintain their reform strategy in between episcopal visitations, and provide a highly visible model for other diocesan administrations to imitate.

This conception of the new ecclesiastical commission was made apparent in its composition. Apart from Archbishop Loftus and Dean Weston themselves, it also included Weston's brother, James, an experienced diocesan administrator based in England, who, at this point, seemed destined to join him in Ireland to help with the reform of the church. All three were on the commission's quorum.[57] In addition, William Fludde, a notary public and practising proctor in the consistory court of Dublin, was appointed to the key position of registrar and receiver of the fines.[58] With such a

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56 Loftus to Cecil, 2 April 1568 (P.R.O., SP 63/24, no. 1); A list of 'the Queen's Majesty's Commissioners nominated in her Highness ecclesiastical commission heretofore granted for Ireland', a list of proposed new commissioners, endorsed by Lord Deputy Sidney, n.d. (P.R.O., SP 63/25, no 52); *Cal. pat. rolls, 1566-69*, pp 173-4. The undated lists are obviously the document which Loftus sent to Cecil by his servant, Lewis Challoner, in April 1568.

57 *Cal. pat. rolls, 1566-69*, pp 173-4. James Weston had partnered his brother as diocesan registrar in the Coventry and Lichfield administration before the latter came over to Ireland. It is likely that Robert had envisaged that James would play a similar partnering role in the Dublin diocesan administration and the High Commission. For some reason, possibly because Robert felt that he would be better served by leaving him behind to look after his property interests in their native Lichfield, James never came to Ireland. When this decision was made, probably in the late summer of 1568, Weston turned to his nephew, John Ball, the son of 'my sister Ball', to help him with the reformation of the Irish church. James remained behind and administered the leases of several parsonages and prebends belonging to Robert, which the latter eventually bequeathed to his wife Alice, his son John and his daughter Audrey (O'Day, 'Role of the registrar', pp 84, 90-1; Will of Robert Weston, 2 May 1573 [P.R.O., PROB 11/55, ff 189v-190r]).

58 Brief declaration of the account of William Fludde, gent, registrar and receiver of the fines imposed by the commissioners for ecclesiastical causes, Michaelmas 1568-Michaelmas 1573 (P.R.O., SP 63/94, no. 109); *Reg. Dioc. Dublinensis*, pp 52-4, 79. Lewis Challoner, Loftus's

composition, the reins of the commission were firmly in their grip, enabling them to direct it in whatever way they saw fit.[59]

Once established Loftus and Weston sought to put the commission on a more permanent and formal footing than it had previously been, a feature evinced both in the yielding of accounts 'to her highness's use' by the registrar and receiver of fines - the first since the erection of that office in 1564 - and in the keeping of a formal register of proceedings.[60] The new formality gave the commission the aura and standing of a coventional church court, rather than the appearance of the *ad hoc* and innovatory body which it had previously had. This, along with its staffing, would be an important factor in making it appear as an extension or relative of the conventional diocesan administration and a genuine substitute for Archdeacon Wellesley's court. The formal structure was important in another way however. It geared the commission towards dealing with the whole panopoly of ecclesiastical causes, a feature which again set it in contrast to the previous commission, the latter having dealt almost exclusively with offences against the reformation statutes.[61] Thus, as in Loftus's metropolitan visitation, the enforcement of the reformation under the commission would be subsumed under the

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servant, was originally appointed to the post but never took it up *(Cal. pat. rolls, 1566-69*, pp 173-4).

59 On Loftus and Weston's leadership of the commission see Loftus to Cecil, 2 July 1570 (P.R.O., SP 63/30, no. 64), and Loftus to Cecil (then Lord Burghley), 14 November 1573 (P.R.O., SP 63/42, no. 76).

60 Brief declaration of the account of William Fludde (P.R.O., SP 63/94, no. 109). The High Commission's register, which covered the period 1570-7, survived until the destruction of the Irish Public Record Office in 1922 (H. Wood, *A guide to the records deposited in the Public Record Office in Ireland* [Dublin, 1919], p 223). Some details of its contents can be gleaned from Lawlor's *Fasti of St Patrick's*. The period covered by the register corresponds exactly to the era in which Weston presided over the commission and, following his death in 1573, the registrarship of his nephew John Ball (Brief of the account of John Ball, gent, collector of the fines and amerciaments in causes ecclesiastical in the realm of Ireland, 15 October 1573-31 January 1577 [P.R.O., SP 63/94, no. 109]). It is unlikely that the commission was very active prior to 1570 as Weston was then busy with the visitation of St Patrick's.

61 Shirley, *Ch. in Ire.*, pp 194-7.

wider dispensation of ecclesiastical justice, and given the appearance of a traditional, less threatening, quasi-canonical undertaking.

The most convincing evidence of Loftus and Weston's intentions, however, is to be found in the surviving record of the commissions proceedings. Two aspects of its work stand out in this period which clearly show that it was designed to complement the reform strategy which they had instituted in their ordinary visitations. One of these was the ongoing concern with the reformation of St Patrick's cathedral. Under Loftus and Weston the commission continued to act with the same exacting rigour to rid the institution of manifestly unsuitable clergy. Among its victims were two well connected canons who, ironically, had acquired their livings as a result of the clear-out effected by Weston and Ball in 1569-70. These were Richard Dixon, bishop of Cork, prebendary of Rathmichael, and erstwhile chaplain to Lord Deputy Sidney; and John Doyne, a cleric who had been appointed prebendary of Maynooth by the earl of Kildare. Both men were deprived for sexual incontinence.[62] The deprivation of Dixon for bigamy was particularly significant. Loftus and Weston were unsure whether the ecclesiastical commissioners had sufficient authority to deprive a bishop and wrote to Burghley in April 1571 for advice on the matter. It was clear, however, that they wanted to take responsibility for the deprivation, to maintain the tough offensive against clerical incontinence begun in the metropolitan visitation, and to counteract the scandal and damage that Dixon's case had caused for 'the professors of godly word' and their espousal of clerical marriage. To this end, therefore, Dixon was forced to do a very traditional form of penance in St Patrick's cathedral. On two Sundays, standing under the pulpit, he very publicly acknowledged his offence in the time of the sermon, an action which once again showed the reformers' concern to demonstrate their conventional canonical rectitude.[63]

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62 Lawlor, *Fasti of St Patrick's*, pp 129, 144; *Cal. S. P. Ire., 1509-73*, pp 424, 444, 460.

63 Weston, Loftus and Fitzwilliam to Burghley, 16 April 1571 (P.R.O., SP 63/32, no. 10).

The second aspect of the commission's work which complemented the Loftus-Weston reform strategy was its approach to the laity. Here again, and in contrast to its treatment of clerical delicts, the commission's main concern was to define the standards of the reformed religion, and to establish trust in it, rather than ruthlessly making an example out and make an example of all those whose behaviour fell short of godly protestant ideals. The commission did this by expending its efforts on the detection of offences, while at the same time neglecting to exact the full retribution of the law. As in the metropolitan visitation, the main form of punishment for delicts was the monetary fine. Overall, however, the volume of fines imposed by the commmissioners in the period was quite small. This feature, and the casual approach that they took to collecting them, suggests very strongly that the efforts of the Loftus-Weston commission were neither intended to be overly agressive towards, nor were perceived as such by, the local community. Thus, in the period Michaelmas 1568 to Michaelmas 1573, fines totalling *IR*£442 7*s*. 4*d*. were levied throughout Ireland.[64] Of this total, about 37%, or *IR*£163 13*s*. 7*d*., were imposed on inhabitants of the diocese of Dublin, making an average annual total of somewhere in the region of *IR*£32 14*s*. 8*d*. during these years.[65] Of this annual diocesan average, about 65% or *IR*£21 5*s*. 6*d*. would have been imposed on the inhabitants of Dublin city, the remaining 35% or *IR*£11 9*s*. 2*d*. on the inhabitants of the country parishes in Co. Dublin.[66]

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64 Brief declaration of the account of William Fludde (P.R.O., SP 63/94, no. 109).

65 These figures were calculated on the basis of the geographical distribution of arrears on High Commission fines, *IR*£500 10*s*. 2*d*, which accumulated in the years 1568-1582. Given that £255 13*s*. 4*d*. in arrears were carried over from the Weston period (Fludde's account 1568-73), into the next accounting period (Ball's account 1573-77), we can be confident that they made up a substantial portion of the cumulative arrears between 1568-82 and are thus a reasonably reliable indicator to the general distribution of fines levied (Brief declaration of the account of William Fludde; Brief of the account of John Ball; Brief estimate of the account of John Bird, gent, registrar and receiver of fines in causes ecclesiastical in Ireland, 7 February 1577-7 February 1582 [P.R.O., SP 63/94, no. 109]). For the geographical distribution of arrears see *Table 6.1*, below p 254.

66 The city and county figures were calculated on the same basis as the diocesan figure (*Table 6.1*, below, p 254).

Although these estimates are not perfect - they do not, for example, allow for variations in the level of fines from year to year[67] - they still illustrate that the ecclesiastical commission exercised a far from draconian policy of enforcement during the period in which Loftus and Weston lead it. If, for example, we take the following case - that all of the fines levied in this period consisted of the minimum statutory penalty of 12*d.* for non-attendance at the Prayer Book service[68] - then the number of individuals fined each year in the diocese of Dublin would have been approximately 654; 425 in the city of Dublin, and 229 in the country parishes. The reality, however, is that not all of these fines would have been for such offences, nor so lowly valued, with the result that the number of individuals punished in this way would have been very much lower. Some offenders, for example, forfeited recognisances - rated at *IR*£10 to *IR*£20 in the early 1590s[69] - for failing to appear before the commission. Although it is unlikely that such recognisances were so highly rated at this juncture, four or five of them each year, even at a fifth of the cost of the 1590s recognisances, would have reduced these worst case figures for those punished from c. 654 to somewhere between 454 and 494 annually.[70]

Yet it is likely that the numbers punished were even lower still. It is known that the commissioners also had the authority to impose higher discretionary fines than the statutory minimum, an authority which they must have exercised on at least some occasions during the period 1568 to 1573, and which would have brought the number of individuals fined down further. Given these considerations, and the facts that not all the

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67 It is likely that the activity of the High Commission, and the level of fines, would have been higher after the ordinary visitations of St Patrick's cathedral and the province were completed, i.e., from the winter of 1570-1 until Weston's death in the summer of 1573. This is the period which the High Commission's register covered.

68 *Stat. Ire.*, i, p 287.

69 D.C.A., MS C1/J3/1, Recognizance Book, 1589-90, p 34.

70 When a new ecclesiastical commission was appointed in May 1577, the 1568 commission was revoked. However, power was reserved to the old commissioners to recover 'forfeited recognisances not yet paid in' (*Fiants Ire. Eliz.*, no. 3047).

fines levied would have had anything to do with the reformation statutes; that there is no record of anyone being incarcerated for repeated offending by the commissioners at this time;[71] and, above all, that nearly 58% of the total fines imposed under Weston and Loftus, *IR*£255 13*s*. 4*d*., were not collected in the period of their leadership,[72] and it is evident that their aim was not to coerce the population of Dublin into accepting the reformation through systematic, punitive taxation. Rather the aim was to buttress the diocesan administration's efforts to establish canonical credentials for the reformers' cause - the commission, for example, conducted its business according to the coventional legal forms used by the courts christian, including the use of the latin tongue[73] - and to continue the policy of marginalizing the senior conservative clergy. Over time, it was hoped, that this firm but relatively conciliatory and gradualist approach would wear away lay resistance to the reformation through the establishment of real confidence in the new order, through the nullification of conservative clerical influence, and through sheer force of habit and a growing urge to remove the irritation of being hauled before and fined by the commission.

IV

Initially, at any rate, Loftus and Weston had some real cause for optimism that this strategy might work. Their new régime, for example, appears to have been reasonably popular at this juncture. It was no accident that Lord Deputy Fitzwilliam could report to Burghley in August 1571 that Archbishop Loftus was 'greatly liked' in the English

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71 In the 1590s, by contrast, the High Commission would acquire its own gaoler (*Cal. pat. rolls Ire., Eliz.*, p 290). No such office existed at this time.

72 Brief of the account of John Ball (P.R.O., SP 63/94, no. 109).

73 For an example see 'The tenor of Sir Richard Plunkett's sentence of deprivation from his benefices ... pronounced by due course of her majesty's ecclesiastical laws ... by the Queen's High Commissioners', 1 July 1581 (P.R.O., SP 63/108, no. 50 [iii]).

Pale.[74] More significantly, there were encouraging signs that a younger generation of ecclesiastical lawyers in the Pale were impressed by, and willing to give their allegiance

Table 6.1 *Cumulative Arrears of High Commission Fines 1568-82*[75]

Diocese	*District*	*Fines*	*Diocesan Total*	*% (District)*	*% (Diocese)*
Dublin	Dublin City	£120 10s. 0d.		24	
	Co Dublin	£ 64 12s. 4d.	£185 2s. 4d.	13	37
Meath	Co Meath	£139 16s. 0d.		28	
	Co Westmeath	£ 13 2s. 8d	£152 18s. 8d.	3	31
Kildare	Co Kildare	£ 71 0s. 0d.	£ 71 0s. 0d.	14	14
Armagh Inter	Drogheda	£ 25 11s. 8d.		5	
Anglos	Co Louth	£ 29 3s. 4d.	£ 54 15s. 0d.	6	11
Ferns	Co. Wexford	£ 17 0s. 0d.	£ 17 0s. 0d.	3	3
Ossory	Co Kilkenny	£ 11 10s. 0d.	£ 11 10s. 0d	2	2
Waterford	Co Waterford	£ 6 0s. 0d.	£ 6 0s. 0d.	1.5	1.5
Cashel	Co Tipperary	£ 1 10s. 0d.	£ 1 10s. 0d.	0.5	0.5

to, the civilian, and protestant, legal culture which was developing in Dublin under the influence of Weston and his nephew, John Ball. One such figure was Thady Dowling, who later became the chancellor of Leighlin cathedral, and who is best known for his work as an annalist. In the early 1570s, Dowling was in attendance at the free school of Dublin city, under its master Patrick Cusack, where he remained 'about four years space', a period during which he determined 'to learn the institutions of both laws'. Thus, as he later recalled, he 'did every term and law days resort to the consistory, legates [delegates] and admiral courts etc and lay nightly in one bed with Mr Birne, a civilian of commendation, and had the use and revolving of his books with his conferences and resolutions'. He also 'became in acquaintance and great amity with Mr John Bale [Ball], master of art and bachelor in both the laws, vicar general .... '. The 'Mr

74 Fitzwilliam to Burghley, 24 August 1571 (P.R.O., SP 63/33, no. 43).

75 Brief estimate of the account of John Bird (P.R.O., SP 63/94, no. 109).

Birne' in question was probably John Byrne, a notary public, who had served as registrar of Archdeacon Wellesley's court in the late 1560s, and who had subsequently become a lawyer or proctor in the archbishop's consistory during Ball's presidency. The fact that a young student like Dowling, and an aspiring lawyer like Byrne, were willing to attach themselves to Ball, even though Byrne had links with the conservative archdeacon of Dublin, Robert Wellesley, augured well for the régime's avowed aim of marginalizing the clerical old guard and forging its own links with the local community.[76]

Yet, depite such early promise, these objectives were never realised. On the contrary, over the course of the following decade or so, the Loftus-Weston strategy was completely destroyed by a very varied sequence of events and processes, which finally and irrevocably put paid to all hopes that the established church would secure the allegiance of the indigenous population of the diocese of Dublin. What all of these events and processes had in common was that they created great instability both within the Loftus-Weston régime itself, and in the environment within which it operated; instabilities which fatally undermined the régime's carefully modulated and delicately balanced efforts to marginalize the old clerical élite and to assume that group's position and status in Pale society. The first and most important of these destabilizing factors was the poor health of Robert Weston, which culminated in his untimely death in May 1573.

For much of the five years he resided in Ireland, Weston was an ill-man afflicted by intermittent but serious bouts of sickness. One of these these occurred during the

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76 Notes by Thady Dowling, chancellor of Leighlin cathedral, on the ecclesiastical establishment of Ireland, 12 March 1602 (P.R.O., SP 63/210, no. 62; *Cal. S. P. Ire.,* 1601-3, p 333); *Reg. Dioc. Dublinensis*, p 53; Will and inventory of Hugh Kennedy of Dublin, merchant, 17 July 1567, proven before Archdeacon Wellesley and Byrne on 24 September 1567 (Bodl., MS Talbot c. 99/3). Dowling's support for Ball's work was also evinced by his part in the compilation of the precedent book of legal forms for the province of Dublin, which dates from this time and which drew extensively on Ball's reign as offical principal and vicar general of Dublin for its selection of legal precedents. On Dowling's role in the compilation see J. Watt's introduction to *Reg. Dioc. Dublinensis*, pp iii-iv. It is possible, in fact, that Ball may have initiated the project; the paper used has a 1570s watermark.

visitation of St Patrick's in February 1570, and it prevented him from attending one of the hearings in the cause against Thomas Creef. More significantly, Weston's frequent illnesses depressed him and, at times, lead him to seek his recall to England.[77] In the spring of 1571, most observers, including Adam Loftus, thought that the chancellor's departure was imminent, a belief which stimulated and encouraged a very marked, and ultimately, damaging attempt by the conservative canons in St Patrick's to re-establish their authority in the cathedral close.

The attempted coup revolved around the question of finding a successor to Weston as dean of St Patrick's. Both Loftus and the cathedral chapter, including the 'papist faction', were anxious that the crown would refrain from appointing a lay man to the deanery and, in a rare display of unanimity, they agreed that they should petition the crown to allow the living to be bestowed on an 'ecclesiastical person'. In February 1571, Loftus wrote to Cecil to this effect, while the chapter nominated an emissary, Christopher Browne, the prebendary of Wicklow, to pursue the suit in England before the privy council.[78] Loftus was caught badly offguard by this turn of events. Browne was an arch-conservative[79] and, during a lengthy stay in England throughout much of

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77 Weston to Cecil, 2 August 1568, (P.R.O., SP 63/25, no. 59); Weston to Cecil, 14 September 1569, (P.R.O., SP 63/29, no. 62); *Reg. Dioc. Dublinensis*, p 49; Weston to Cecil, 7 August 1570, (P.R.O., SP 63/30, no. 78); Weston to the earl of Leicester, 11 April 1571 (P.R.O., SP 63/32, no. 8); Weston to Burghley, 20 October 1572 (P.R.O., SP 63/38, no. 16); Weston to Queen Elizabeth, 31 March 1573 (P.R.O., SP 63/39, no. 56); Weston to Burghley, 31 March 1573 (P.R.O., SP 63/39, no. 57).

78 Loftus to Cecil, 16 February 1571 (P.R.O., SP 63/31, no. 11); Loftus to Burghley, 26 September 1571 (P.R.O., SP 63/34, no. 13); privy council to Lord Deputy Fitzwilliam, 9 July 1572 (Bodl., Carte MS, vol. 57, ff 390, 398r).

79 Browne began his career as chaplain in his native parish of Clondalkin. In this capacity, he first became associated with the conservative cause when, along with James Humphrey, the leader of clerical opposition to the Henrician reformation in Dublin, and four others, he was entrusted with the task of bringing up Archbishop Browne's 'bastard' sons; a settlement which effectively enshrined the archbishop's capitulation to the conservatives after the enactment of the English Act of Six Articles. Browne maintained his relationship with at least one of the archbishop's sons until the 1570s ('Christ Church Deeds', no. 1220; *Cal. pat. rolls Ire., Eliz*, p 640). His conservatism is also attested to by his subsequent nomination to the Marian chapter of 1555, his witnessing of Archbishop Curwen's will in 1564 and his nomination as a compurgator of Thomas Creef in 1570 (*Cal. pat. rolls Ire., Hen. VIII-Eliz*, pp 142-3, Mason, *History of St Patrick's*, pp 155-6; P.R.O., PROB 11/50, f 182v; *Reg. Dioc. Dublinensis*, p 50).

1571 and 1572, he worked assiduously to revive the fortunes of the conservatives and to discredit the archbishop's reforming régime. He began this task by seeking to solidify his own position. The Weston-Ball visitations had taught him that the Loftus régime was determined to find every conceivable irregularity in the qualifications of its clerical enemies, in order that it might legally eject them from their cathedral livings. Thus, although he already possessed a dispensation out of the Irish chancery dating from January 1567, Browne sought and acquired an additional dispensation from the Archbishop of Canterbury's Faculty Office on 10 December 1571, which confirmed his right to hold his prebend and the vicarages of Tallaght and Downings in plurality.[80]

Browne's concern for protection is understandable for, at the time, he was engaged in some deeply subversive plotting. Although he had gone to England with the archbishop's blessing to seek a renewal of the cathedral's 1555 charter of restoration, a renewal which would have allowed the chapter to elect its dean freely, Browne used this as a cover for a much more ambitious plan. Through contacts at court like Sir Valentine Browne, and in anticipation of the renewal of the charter, he attempted to procure the queen's, or the privy council's, letters to the chapter of St Patrick, recommending that he himself should be elected to the deanery.[81] Furthermore, having successfully marketed himself to Lord Deputy Fitzwilliam as a 'very wise' Irish-speaking man 'of good civil government and judgement and ... well given to duty and obedience', he also sought to secure the vacant bishopric of Down for himself, a move designed to increase the power

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80 Loftus to Burghley, 26 September 1571 (P.R.O., SP 63/34, no. 13); St Patrick's cathedral, Muniments, 'Maguire's Miscellaneous Papers', vol. 2, p 54; Lambeth, Muniment Book, F1/B, f 48r; privy council to Lord Deputy Fitzwilliam, 9 July 1572 (Bodl., Carte MS, vol. 57, ff 390, 398r).

81 Loftus to Burghley, 26 September 1571 (P.R.O., SP 63/34, no. 13); privy council to Lord Deputy Fitzwilliam, 9 July 1572 (Bodl., Carte MS, vol. 57, ff 390, 398r). Sir Valentine Browne had played a prominent part with Sir William Fitzwilliam in bringing about Sir Anthony St Leger's downfall in the 1550s by revealing the extent of his financial malfeasance (Brady, *Chief Governors*, pp 66-7). This, of course, was an enterprise which Christopher Browne and his fellow prebendaries in St Patrick's would have supported, because of the deputy's efforts to impede the restoration of the cathedral's property. His acquaintance with Sir Valentine probably dated to this period and may have been associated with the campaign against St Leger.

of the conservatives in the church generally.[82] Finally, he endeavoured to undermine the reputation, and instigate the removal from office, of the conservatives' *bête noire*, John Ball, by laying a set of ten articles of complaint against him before the privy council.[83]

There is little doubt that Browne's efforts were part of a carefully orchestrated plan on the part of the conservatives, to regain their pre-eminence in the Dublin diocesan administration and in the church generally. The articles against the vicar general in particular - a very heterogeneous and sometimes contradictory series of complaints - bear all the hallmarks of a document which originated in committee. Indeed, a number of the articles can actually be attributed with some confidence to particular individuals in the chapter. The resentful voice of Thomas Creef, for example, the old celibate canonist who had been forced to undergo the humiliation of compurgation by Ball on a charge of adultery, probably lay behind two articles which accused the vicar general of being an adulterer himself; and in the complaint that Ball,

> challenging a greater pre-eminence than others, is not contented to possess his own stall in the choir next the chanter [Creef], but hath installed his wife in the seat next unto him ... which unseemly seat for a woman is some deal marked, not for any cause of religion, but for some spark of disorder to see a father's wife of the church gibbishly apparalled with ruffled and curled hair ... usurp a father's seat.[84]

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82 Loftus, Brady and Fitzwilliam to Burghley, 1 October 1572 (P.R.O., SP 63/38, no. 2); Lord Deputy Fitzwilliam to the Queen, 19 February 1573 (P.R.O., SP 63/39, no. 30). Fitzwilliam's estimation of Browne's qualities suggest that he was reasonably well acquainted with him. As with Sir Valentine Browne, this acquaintance probably dated back to the Marian period and may have been associated with the campaign against St Leger.

83 'Articles objected against Sir John Bale, clerk, commissary unto the archbishop of Dublin' (P.R.O., SP 63/71, no. 10; calendered in Brady, *Ir. ch. Eliz.*, pp 37-9). These articles, which are undated and unsigned, but endorsed in a contemporary hand 'p.b. is notes', were incorrectly placed in 1580 by the archivists in the State Paper Office (*Cal. S. P. Ire., 1574-1585*, p 205). The references in the present tense to Lord Chancellor Weston (articles 2, 9), and to Ball's visitation of Dublin diocese 'giving that absolution on horseback in the fields ... as he visits in the country' (article 3), date the composition of the document to c. 1571-3. In addition, their author's knowledge of the goings on in St Patrick's cathedral, and the diocese of Dublin generally, clearly identifies him as a member of the chapter of St Patrick's (articles 2, 8). Thus it is virtually certain that the 'p.b.' was Christopher Browne, or 'Parson Browne' as the privy council referred to him (privy council to Lord Deputy Fitzwilliam, 9 July 1572 [Bodl., Carte MS, vol. 57, ff 390, 398r]); and that the articles were presented to the council during Browne's visit to England in 1571-2.

84 'Articles objected against Sir John Bale', nos. 2, 5, 8 (P.R.O., SP 63/71, no. 10).

In a similarly bitter vein, the voice of Patrick Byrne, a casualty of the Weston-Ball visitation, a known Creef ally, and a man of Gaelic Irish descent, is detectable in the complaint that Ball, having cited 'great flocks of the rudest and miserablest poor people Irish to appear in his consistory at Dublin', would leave them begging in the streets for days 'without further process or indictment', until at last he committed them to prison for failure to pay certain fees, saying that 'when the prison hath consumed them they shall go home like naked Irish slaves'. Byrne prayed that God would 'convert' this 'plague and calamity ... from our poor Irish nation'.[85]

The bitter hatred which the conservative prebendaries felt for the vicar general - a testimony, no doubt, to the early success of the Loftus-Weston reform strategy - and their absolute determination to bring him down, unified these disparate complaints. This determination was evinced in their tactical appeal to every conceivable interest group or shade of opinion capable of furthering this cause, even those which opposed their own traditional values. Hence they could characterise Ball as a papist because of his lecherous instincts, 'lechery being incident to popery'; a 'dissembler in religion' because of his allegedly amoral behaviour; and even an inspiration to puritans, because he refused to wear the surplice, a stand which the prebendaries claimed bred contempt for 'the injunctions for the decent apparel for ministers in the church'.[86]

Their appeals were not confined to the religious sphere however. They also sought support from political thinkers and reformers. To this end, they carefully highlighted the damage Ball had done, and was doing, to the Irish commonwealth, through his favourable treatment of the rich and his oppression of the poor, and his ill-treatment of the Irishry.[87] The tone and contents of these latter articles, in particular, suggest that the

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85 Ibid., no. 4 (P.R.O., SP 63/71, no. 10).

86 Ibid., nos. 2, 7 (P.R.O., SP 63/71, no. 10).

87 Ibid., nos. 3, 4, 10 (P.R.O., SP 63/71, no. 10).

prebendaries may have been influenced by the 'commonwealth men' of the Pale and their campaign against the cess. It is no surprise to find that Browne resided at the London Inns of Court during his sojourn in England, a centre from which some of the earliest opposition to the cess had emerged under Lord Lieutenant Sussex.[88] Yet amidst all these calculated, exaggerated and, in some cases, fabricated allegations, the authentic, medieval voice of the prebendaries of St Patrick's was still audible. In particular, their concern to bring John Ball to book over his alleged lechery, and the manner in which they expressed it - they believed it a source of 'great grief' to 'true hearted subjects to see such apparant vices unpunished in their commonwealth' - was a very traditional evocation of the identity and value system of the English Irish clerical caste. Similarly, the complaint about Ball's liberal usage of the 'Pope's absolution' in his visitation, while presented for political purposes in a conformist protestant light, was really a reflection of conservative disgust at the fact that a reformer should use a technique that was traditionally a catholic preserve.[89]

The results of Browne's campaign were mixed. The attempt to acquire the deanery failed outright. Not only did Loftus get wind of his plotting, and petition Burghley to stop it in its tracks, but Weston recovered his health and the ensuing vacancy in the deanery thus evaporated. Moreover, the conservatives also discovered that when indeed the next vacancy would arise, they were unlikely to get their man placed as the privy council 'did not think it convenient ... that her majesty should be restrained from the nomination of the dean', as it was a living 'fit to be bestowed upon some chosen personage meet otherwise for her majesty's service in that realm'.[90] Browne's hopes of getting the bishopric of Down were also stymied. The influential courtier, Sir Thomas

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88 Sir Thomas Smith to Lord Deputy Fitzwilliam, 12 April 1573 (Bodl., Carte MS 56/49); Brady, *Chief Governors*, pp 102-3.

89 'Articles objected against Sir John Bale', nos. 2, 3 (P.R.O., SP 63/71, no. 10).

90 Loftus to Burghley, 26 September 1571 (P.R.O., SP 63/34, no. 13); privy council to Lord Deputy Fitzwilliam, 9 July 1572 (Bodl., Carte MS, vol. 57, ff 390, 398r).

Smith, who was about to launch a colony in the area, thought that he lacked the necessary discretion for such a promotion.[91] He thus advised the queen against promoting him, advice which, to the chagrin of Lord Deputy Fitzwilliam, was heeded when the bishopric went to Smith's own nominee, the English protestant preacher, Hugh Allen.[92]

The final element in Browne's campaign - the attack on John Ball - did bear some fruit however. Although poorly documented, it appears that the privy council thought that the vicar general had a case to answer, for, during the second round of visitations of the cathedral conducted by the Loftus-Weston régime in the summer of 1572, Ball's authority was briefly suspended. Moreover, he was also compelled to answer an unspecified charge 'detected' by his uncle, Dean Weston. It is likely that this charge related to the accusations of fornication made by Browne before the privy council, in particular to an alleged incident with one Cicelie Fletcher. According to Browne, the

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91 This evaluation was based on an encounter he had with Browne in his home in Mounthawle in Essex during the prebendary's sojourn in England. On the night of 11 or 12 July 1572, Browne and an unnamed companion were brought before Smith, the local JP, by the High Constable on suspicion of stealing horses and 'because they were so late at night out of all highways and axing their way to Abridge or Romford'. Smith examined them and 'perceived them handsome gentlemen both, Browne the perter, the fuller of words', and conceded that 'he had a very pretty wit, and ... some knowledge both in logic and the civil law, wherefore I had the more delight to common with him'. Through such banter he also discovered that they had come to Mounthawle 'to make merry' and 'not to steal an horse, but ... it was a mare with two legs only, the parson's daughter of the town, a pretty handsome wench ... lately married at London ... who had been seen very suspiciously and wantonly with them ... in the fields'. In the end, Smith released Browne and his companion into the custody of the High Constable, who put them up for the night in his own home, and warned them 'not to come again into Essex, except they could show a better errand'. Yet, although the encounter was good natured, it effectively put paid to the prebendary's chances of getting the bishopric of Down. In time, Smith soberly concluded, Browne might make a good bishop 'but a bishopric would not be conferred for hope, but upon trial of gravity, discretion and ability to teach both in doctrine and example' (Smith to Lord Deputy Fitzwilliam, 12 April 1573 [Bodl., Carte MS 56/49]).

92 Smith to Lord Deputy Fitzwilliam, 12 April 1573 (Bodl., Carte MS 56/49); *Cal. pat. rolls Ire., Hen. VIII-Eliz.*, pp 553-4; Lord Deputy Fitzwilliam to the Queen, 19 February 1573 (P.R.O., SP 63/39, no. 30). Fitzwilliam openly expressed his disagreement with the queen's decision to appoint Allen ahead of Browne: 'It was not so much for preaching as for your majesty's service that we desired to have those places [the bishoprics of Ardagh and Down] occupied by fit men. The use of a learned English preacher is not so needful in those parts, as the use of a discreet wise and dutifully affected man, having the language to be employed in dealings with the Irishry. Such a one is Browne and of the English race'. Fitzwilliam's evaluation of Browne is an interesting commentary on the perceived value of the political loyalty of the papistically inclined English Irish clergy.

same charge had also been raised with Dean Weston on a prior occasion, probably during the visitation of 1569-70, but had been dismissed 'by the sufferance of the dean, being his uncle'. The fact that it was now under investigation suggests very strongly that Loftus was ordered by the privy council to attend to the matter, if for no other reason than to clear Ball's name.[93]

Not surprisingly, Ball did clear his name and was soon back at the helm of the administration.[94] Nevertheless, the incident was significant. For the prebendaries, it recalled some of their previous triumphs against their enemies, such as their humbling of Archbishop Browne over his marriage in Henry VIII's reign, and their role in the collapse of Lord Deputy St Leger's administration during the events surrounding the restoration of their cathedral in the mid-1550s. As such, it renewed their self-belief because it showed that, despite the efforts of Loftus and Weston to marginalize them, they were still a real force to be reckoned with in the diocese. Of this, Archbishop Loftus in particular, was in no doubt. Hence his response to Browne's machinations. Not surprisingly, he backed his efforts to gain promotion to the bishopric of Down, no doubt thinking that Browne would cause less harm in the faraway north 'under the elbows of the rebellious Irishry'.[95]

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93 *Reg. Dioc. Dublinensis*, pp 79-80; 'Articles objected against Sir John Bale', no. 2 (P.R.O., SP 63/71, no. 10).

94 *Fiants Ire., Eliz.*, nos. 2124, 2219.

95 Loftus, Brady and Fitzwilliam to Burghley, 1 October 1572 (P.R.O., SP 63/38, no. 2). Loftus's determination to send Browne into exile is reflected in the disparate estimations he made of his abilities as a prospective dean of St Patrick's and as a prospective bishop of Down. When endeavouring to stop Browne's efforts to procure the deanery, Loftus described him as 'a man without all sense and feeling of true religion ... ignorant and altogether void of any learning'. In contrast, in supporting his candidature for the bishopric 'far in the north', Loftus subscribed to the view that he was 'a very wise man', 'not unlearned' and 'such a one ... to prefer true religion (whereunto he is well addicted)' (Loftus to Burghley, 26 September 1571 [P.R.O., SP 63/34, no. 13]; Loftus, Brady and Fitzwilliam to Burghley, 1 October 1572 [P.R.O., SP 63/38, no. 2]). The chances of getting Browne to reside in the north and thus to deprive him of his cathedral prebend would have been higher than normal with the advent of Smith's colony.

Loftus's failure to get Browne removed to Down was frustrating, because it left *in situ* one of the leading conservatives in St Patrick's, a man who was clearly emerging as the most likely successor to Thomas Creef as the leader of the group, and whose native intelligence and local connections revealed just how formidable an opposition they provided to the archbishop's plans. This became particularly apparent in the following years when, aided by the death of Robert Weston, the conservative prebendaries once again secured a prominent place in the diocesan administration and helped bring the Loftus-Weston reform strategy to a virtual standstill.

Although long expected, Weston's death was a devastating blow for Loftus and his reform strategy on the ground. The first problem which emerged concerned the ecclesiastical commission. Without Weston's leadership and support, Loftus found that he was unable to keep the ecclesiastical commission going on the permanent footing upon which it had been established during the previous five years. Few of the existing commissioners had Weston's enthusiasm for the work and were soon unwilling to assist the archbishop.[96] Thus, despite a genuine attempt to regain the momentum by appointing John Ball to the office of registrar and receiver of the fines, the 1568 commission reverted to type and became an *ad hoc* body which sat irregularly. The fall off in activity was reflected in a drop in the total of fines imposed, from an annual average of *IR*£88 9*s*. 5*d*. during the period of Weston's leadership (Michaelmas 1568-Michaelamas 1573), to c. *IR*£65 in the 3¼ years which followed his death (October 1573-February 1577).[97] This decline in the ecclesiastical commission's activity seriously undermined one of the key elements in the Loftus-Weston reform strategy. Devoid of its regular sittings, the archbishop found it increasingly difficult to maintain the visibility of his protestant, ecclesiastical establishment, an essential prerequisite of a strategy which sought to install this group in the place of the old catholic clerical élite.

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96 Loftus to Burghley, 14 November 1573 (P.R.O., SP 63/42, no. 76).

97 Brief declaration of the account of William Fludde; Brief of the account of John Ball (P.R.O., SP 63/94, no. 109).

Instead, it was Robert Wellesley, the conservative archdeacon of Dublin, who increasingly found himself as the main dispenser of ecclesiastical justice, and the main representative of the diocesan administration, in the intervening periods between Loftus's archiepiscopal visitations.

The conservative revival was even more marked in St Patrick's cathedral, a development which was deepened by the privy council's delay in appointing a successor dean to Weston. Archbishop Loftus had been understandably eager that the deanery should go to one of the godly mininsters whom he had brought into the chapter since his accession to the see in 1567. But the privy council insisted that it be used again as a sinecure for a new lord chancellor. The council's determination was not matched by a similar decisiveness, however, with the result that the deanery remained vacant between May 1573 and the nomination of a new chancellor, Sir William Gerrard, in the spring of 1576.[98] The main beneficiaries of this hiatus were the 'papist faction' in St Patrick's. It provided them with a pretext, for example, to embarrass their archbishop publicly, through the staging of a traditional election, in which one of their number, Christopher Browne, was canonically elected to the deanery in the spring of 1574.[99] More significantly, even after the archbishop had refused to confirm this election, the continuing vacancy gave them a *de facto* leadership of the cathedral. In the absence of a dean, and to the obvious disgruntlement of Loftus, the headship of St Patrick's passed to the ubiquitous Precentor Creef as president of the chapter, 'a man of this country birth,

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98 Loftus to Burghley, 26 September 1571 (P.R.O., SP 63/34, no. 13);); privy council to Lord Deputy Fitzwilliam, 9 July 1572 (Bodl., Carte MS, vol. 57, ff 390, 398r); Lawlor, *Fasti of St Patrick's*, p 46.

99 Loftus to Burgley, 23 April 1574 (P.R.O., SP 63/45, no. 81 and enclosure). According to Loftus, the election was organised by Creef and 'their dean elect' a 'man of this country birth'. Loftus clearly disapproved of the candidate and advised Burghley 'that there should be placed someone of our own country birth so qualified with wit, sobriety and learning as might stand her majesty instead to be employed to other services'. All of this, in particular the fact that Loftus was now willing to countenance the use of the deanery as a sinecure for a royal servant, rather than confirm the election, suggests that the dean elect was a conservative. Christopher Browne, a Creef ally, and someone who had already attempted to secure the deanery for himself, and who had already received the chapter's approbation in his nomination as their emissary on the 1571 mission, seems the most probable candidate.

well spent in years and corrupt in religion'.[100] Little is known about Creef's stewardship of the cathedral in these years, apart from the fact that he was the moving force behind the 'election' of Browne to the deanery. However, it is reasonable to assume that the anti-conservative visitations carried out by Robert Weston during his incumbency of the deanery came to an end. With the High Commission languishing, and Creef ruling the cathedral, the initial successes of the Loftus-Weston ceased.

Yet another legacy of Weston's untimely death was the appointment of Loftus as keeper of the great seal in May 1573. As acting lord chancellor until May 1576, Loftus was called upon to undertake onerous and time consuming administrative tasks for the Dublin Castle administration, including a spell 'holding the government of the English Pale' while Lord Deputy Fitzwilliam was on progress in Munster in the late summer of 1574.[101] Demands like these deflected his attention away from local ecclesiastical affairs, to such an extent in fact that he was even forced into utilising the legal experience and services of Thomas Creef in the spring of 1574 when faced with the task of appointing judges-delegates out of chancery to hear appeals from Irish ecclesiastical courts. Although, rather pointedly, Creef was only appointed as a judge-delegate to hear appeals from ecclesiastical courts outside the diocese of Dublin, the very fact that he was being brought in from the cold at this juncture - in the immediate aftermath, moreover, of his insubordinate action in organising the 'election' of Browne to the deanery - is indicative of the difficulties that the Loftus-Weston strategy had run into. Such a compromise would have been inconceivable only a few years earlier, when the reformers were fully engaged with the task of humiliating and subjugating the conservative clergy, especially Precentor Creef.[102]

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100 Loftus to Burgley, 23 April 1574 (P.R.O., SP 63/45, no. 81 and enclosure).

101 *Fiants. Ire., Eliz.*, nos. 2280, 2444, 2445; Account of Sir Edward Fitton, knight, treasurer at wars in Ireland, 1 April 1573 -30 September 1575 (P.R.O., SP 65/8, f 27). Loftus was paid *IR*£246 13*s.* 4*d.* for his costs and expenses sutained in the government of the Pale. For other secular tasks undertaken by Loftus in this period see *Fiants. Ire., Eliz.*, nos. 2575, 2623, 2764.

102 *Fiants. Ire., Eliz.*, nos. 2375, 2377, 2384. Creef had never received such a commission before nor would he again until Loftus ended his spell as lord keeper.

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Loftus's involvement in secular government, however, was to have even more damaging repercussions for his reform strategy than the dilution of his own energies. His association with Lord Deputy Fitzwilliam's régime laid all his endeavours, ecclesiastical or otherwise, open to the negative effects of the political competition that was so characteristic of the viceregal mode of government in Elizabethan Ireland. Fitzwilliam's régime came to an end in the summer of 1575 after his predecessor Sir Henry Sidney successfully campaigned at court to discredit it, and after Sidney himself had convinced the crown that he would be able, through the newly conceived 'composition' strategy, to make the government of Ireland self-sufficient within three years at a low cost to the crown.[103] The reappointment of Sidney as deputy at this particular time was singularly unfortunate for Loftus. Unlike Fitzwilliam, who had left the direction of religious reform in the hands of the archbishop, and had supported his endeavours unquestioningly, Sidney had a personal and abiding interest in the progress of the reformation, demonstrated in earlier efforts to found a university, and to secure the enactment of legislation in his parliament for the establishment of free schools in each diocese, and for the reparation of parish churches.[104] Given this interest and the association of the Loftus-Weston reform strategy with Fitzwilliam's government, it was inevitable that the archbishop's efforts would be subjected to a rigorous appraisal by the incoming deputy. More importantly, given Loftus's recent difficulties in maintaining the early momentum of his reform strategy, it was inevitable that they would be found wanting.

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103 On the circumstances surrounding Sidney's reappointment as lord deputy in 1575 and the origins of the 'composition' stategy see Brady, *Chief Governors*, pp 136-46.

104 Fitzwilliam's support for Loftus and Weston was no doubt helped by the part they played in securing him a long and favourable lease of the Court of Lessinhall, the prebendary of Sword's large glebe estate, in north Co. Dublin (J. Murray, 'Sources of clerical income', p 155). On Sidney's earlier efforts on behalf of the reformation see Treadwell, 'Irish Parliament of 1569-71'.

Sidney's judgement on the Loftus years appeared in April 1576 in a damning and oft-quoted memorandum to the queen on the 'lamentable estate' of the Irish church. The deputy described in graphic detail an institution which was in such a confused state that no one was prepared to pay for the upkeep of the 'very temples themselves', an institution which was ministered to by poorly paid, unlearned curates who lived 'upon the gain of masses, dirges, shrivings and such like trumpery, godly abolished by your majesty'. Although this description was based primarily on information provided by Bishop Brady of Meath on the state of his own diocese, Sidney was at pains to emphasize that such conditions were typical of the church as a whole, including the diocese of Dublin. More importantly, implicit in his analysis of the causes of the church's problems, and in the most radical of his proposals for solving them, was the view that the blame for this sorry state of affairs lay firmly with the Irish episcopal bench. Whether through inaction or incompetence, the deputy contended that Loftus and his colleagues had failed to provide for some of the church's most basic needs, in particular the maintenance of a competent, reformed ministry, and the reparation of its decrepid fabric. Thus he recommended that the queen should bypass them altogether and send over 'three or four grave, learned and venerable personages' from England, an 'apostleship' to be supported by the English bishops, 'who in short space, being here, would sensibly perceive the enormities of this overthrown church and easily prescribe orders for the repair and upholding of the same'.[105]

Sidney's critique was a devastating indictment of the bishops and of Loftus in particular. Moreover, with his carefully constructed reform strategy in abeyance, and the conservative prebendaries once again a seemingly immoveable object in the cathedral, the archbishop was in no position to rebut it. In this context, talk of gradualist,

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105 Sidney to the queen, 28 April 1576 (P.R.O., SP 63/55, no. 38) Other copies of the letter are printed in A. Collins, *Letters and memorials of state - from the De Lisle and Dudley papers* (2 vols., London, 1746), i, pp 112-4 and Brady, *Ir. ch. Eliz.*, pp 14-9.

conciliatory reform, talk of supplanting the old clerical guard at some future indeterminate date, would have seemed facile. The archbishop, as the queen and her advisers now knew, presided over a crumbling institution, and had signally failed to fulfil the early prediction that his promotion to Dublin would hasten its regeneration and reformation. His position, therefore, was quite untenable and, with Sidney's eager support, he attempted to secure an honourable discharge from Irish ecclesiastical service after 'sixteen years pilgrimage', by seeking preferment to an English bishopric.[106]

Loftus's request for a translation to an English bishopric was not granted. Although the precise reasons for this are unknown, it is likely that the queen's secretary, Sir Francis Walsingham, and others on the privy council, like Lord Burghley, regarded Loftus's experience of Irish affairs, both secular and ecclesiastical, as a valuable commodity in its own right, and as a source of stability in the midst of the great administrative fluctuations that accompanied viceregal government. Thus in July 1576 Burghley and the privy council responded to Sidney's memo on the state of the church by informing him that he should discuss the matter further with the Irish council, reduce his opinion into a number of specific action points, and send over some officials for further consultation with the English council. In such a cautious atmosphere, the council's desire to keep Loftus on in Dublin is easily explicable.[107]

Yet, if the rejection of Loftus's request for a translation can be construed as a vote of confidence in his ministry in Ireland, it was at best a tentative one, and certainly did nothing to regain him the leadership of the protestant reform party, nor indeed any significant influence on the origination and implementation of policy. On the contrary, the reforming initiative had now passed firmly into the grip of Lord Deputy Sidney, a

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106 Sidney to Walsingham, 15 June 1576 (P.R.O., SP 63/55, no. 59); Loftus to Walsingham, 14 September 1576 (P.R.O., SP 63/56, no. 27); Sidney to Walsingham, 20 September 1576 (P.R.O., SP 63/56, no. 33).

107 Brady, *Ir. ch. Eliz.*, pp 20-1. On Sidney's political difficulties at this time see Brady, *Chief Governors*, pp 146-58.

fact which would become painfully apparent to Loftus throughout the year 1577. As instructed, Sidney did indeed talk to his conciliar colleagues about the state of religion in Ireland, but what he presented to them, and to the archbishop of Dublin in particular, was not so much a series of points for discussion, as a series of measures and initiatives which he expected them to accept, and for which he was already well advanced in securing privy council support. Like his cess policy, these ecclesiastical initiatives were grounded upon his own highly personal conception and utilization of the royal prerogative; while their intended end was nothing less than the deconstruction of Loftus's discredited reform strategy and its replacement by a more forward religious policy which would seek to reform the parochial clergy, to repair church fabric and to enforce all the religious and ecclesiastical legislation passed since the accession of Elizabeth.

The first of Sidney's measures was the recruitment of Dr George Acworth, a noted intellectual, civil lawyer, and apologist for English protestantism, who the deputy had long admired, and who was now in a position to join his staff as his chief ecclesiastical official following the death in 1575 of his erstwhile patron, Matthew Parker, the archbishop of Canterbury.[108] In February or early March 1577, the deputy forced Loftus to appoint Acworth as official principal and vicar general of Dublin at the

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108 Acworth was a graduate of the universities of Padua and Cambridge. He came to prominence in the latter institution when, as public orator, a position to which he was presented by the future archbishop of Canterbury, Matthew Parker, he delivered a famous speech in 1560 in memory of the reformers Martin Bucer and Paul Fagius. After taking his LL. D. at Cambridge in 1561 he served the zealous protestant Bishop Horne of Winchester as his diocesan chancellor, before resuming his relationship with Parker, from whom he received various preferments, including an advocateship in the Court of Arches and a spell as an episcopal commissary in Canterbury. Side by side with this diocesan work, he also acted as a visitor of various Oxford colleges throughout the 1560s. In the 1570s he retired to Parker's household where he helped the archbishop compile his famous *De Antiquitate Brittanicae Ecclesiae* (published in 1572) and where he wrote a response to Sanders' catholic treatise *De Visibili Monarchia Ecclesiae* (Louvain, 1571) entitled *De Visibili Rom'anarchia* (London, 1573). Acworth's career is conveniently and accurately summarised in L. Graham Horton-Smith, *George Acworth. A full account of his life together with a translation of his letters written in latin and a complete refutation of all aspersions* (St Alban's, 1953). According to Campion, a 'Mr Acworth' was lined up to become the first provost of Sidney's projected university of 1569-70 (Campion, 'Hist. Ire.', ed. Vossen, pp 17-18, 94; Hammerstein-Robinson, 'Erzchbischof Adam Loftus', pp 208-9).

expense of John Ball.[109] Thus, with Sir William Gerrard, his colleague from the Council of Wales, already ensconced as dean of St Patrick's, it became apparent that Sidney was fully intent on establishing a controlling influence over the Dublin diocesan administration, an influence which was extended even further when Acworth himself, in a remarkable display of independence from his archbishop, oversaw the judicial sacking of Loftus's favoured diocesan registrar, John Bird, and his replacement by one Nicholas Cuskelly.[110]

Sidney was not content, however, with subverting Loftus's authority from the inside. He also sought to override it externally through two spectacular viceregal executions of the royal prerogative. On 18 March 1577 he erected a new court of faculties in Ireland, to which he appointed Acworth and the Irish civilian, Robert Garvey, as judges. The new court, an amalgamated imitation of the archbishop of Canterbury's Faculty Office and Prerogative Court, was ceded substantial parts of the bishops' ordinary jurisdiction, including the right to visit all clergy and search for defects in their titles; the right to prove and insinuate wills and testaments, and to hear all testamentary causes; and the right to give dispensations for a wide variety of defects and ecclesiastical offences.

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109 According to Loftus, Ball was removed from the registrarship of the High Commission at the same time as he lost the official-principalship of Dublin. His tenure of the registrarship ended on 31 January 1577. Thus Acworth's appointment dates to February or early March 1577. He was certainly in place by the 24 March 1577 when he proved the will of Laurence Casse (Loftus to Sussex, 20 November 1577 [B.L., Cotton MS, Vespasian F XII, ff 149r-150v]; Brief of the account of John Ball [P.R.O., SP 63/94, no. 109]; N.L.I., D. 2891). The evidence for Loftus being forced into making the appointment is circumstantial. Acworth's appointment to the vicar generalship and official principalship coincided with a number of other measures instituted by Sidney, and involving Acworth, which sought to undermine and usurp Loftus's authority. In addition, there is no evidence to suggest that Loftus was dissatisfied with Ball's performance at this point. Finally, it is corroborated by the fact that Loftus sacked Acworth in the winter of 1578, soon after Sidney's tour of duty in Ireland ended (*Fiants Ire., Eliz.*, nos. 3510, 3512).

110 *Acts privy council, 1592,* pp 85-7 (the editor incorrectly rendered 'Cosley' in the original [P.R.O., PC 2/19, p 519], itself a scribal error for Coskelly or Cuskelly, as 'Oosley'); N.A.I., Chancery Bills, D/73. For a later commendation of Bird by Loftus see Loftus to Walsingham, 25 March 1584 (P.R.O., SP 63/108, no. 52). Cuskelly had received a reversionary life term in the office from Archbishop Curwen as long ago as October 1566, but had subsequently lost it when Loftus appointed Bird. Bird, an English born notary who acquired his notarial faculties from the archbishop of Canterbury in 1570, probably joined the Dublin diocesan administration soon after, possibly at the behest of Robert Weston (*Cal. pat. rolls Ire., Eliz*, p 68).

With the creation of the court of faculties, and the appointment of Acworth as one of its judges, Loftus found himself in the unprecedented situation that his vicar general superseded his own ordinary jurisdictional authority in a number of vital areas.[111] Yet the erection of the court of faculties did not mark the end of his discomfiture. In May, Sidney disbanded the Loftus-Weston ecclesiastical commission of 1568, on the grounds significantly 'that her majesty had not been anything answered of the fines assessed by those commissioners'. Furthermore, under his own fiat, he established a new High Commission, a commission in which he ensured he would be the dominant influence by packing it with supporters like Gerrard, Acworth, Jacques Wingfield, President Malby of Connaught and Sir Edward Fitton.[112] Finally, in November 1577, Sidney graphically demonstrated his newly acquired mastery over Loftus by extracting from the archbishop a favourable lease of his chief country residence, the manor of Tallaght, to last as long as his tour of duty in Ireland.[113]

There is little doubt, then, that Sidney deliberately set out to undermine the Loftus-Weston reform strategy, and the personal authority and jurisdiction of the archbishop upon which it rested. Not only did his initiatives bring to an end the gradualist, conciliatory approach to reform favoured by Loftus and Weston - a development which would soon become apparent in an upsurge in the coercive activity of the High Commission - but they also cut across their carefully modulated efforts to present the reformation in non-innovatory, traditionalist, canonical terms. The fact that a viceroy -

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111 *Fiants Ire., Eliz.*, no. 2996; 'The contents of certain letters patent granted to George Acworth, doctor of the civil law, and Robert Garvey, for ecclesiastical jurisdiction, by them, and the survivor of them for the term of life to be exercised in Ireland', c. December 1578 (P.R.O., SP 63/63, nos. 49, 50).

112 *Fiants Ire., Eliz.*, no. 3047; 'The opinion of her majesty's learned council in the laws touching the validity of the ecclesiastical commission in Ireland', n.d., c. winter 1579-80 (P.R.O., SP 63/71, no 12).

113 'Certain articles and covenants between Sir Henry Sidney, knight of the most noble order, lord deputy of Ireland, and the lord archbishop of Dublin, being fully agreed upon between them, touching the manor of Tallaght, the xviiith of November 1577' (Kent Record Office (Maidstone), De L'Isle and Dudley MSS, U1475, 015/5).

a man who, as Loftus argued, only exercised his office during the queen's pleasure - could create such august bodies as a High Commission and a court of faculties, gave the lie to the essential Loftus-Weston contention that the reformation was built upon the same ancient and authentic ground that the conservatives claimed for the old religion.[114] The archbishop himself recognised this danger from an early stage and made one bold attempt, prior to the passing of the patents for Sidney's commissions, to stave it off. Sometime prior to March 1577, he petitioned the archbishop of Canterbury to grant him and 'certain others' a new ecclesiastical commission covering 'only ... my own diocese and province'. Had he secured this commission, it would have made him virtually an independent ecclesiastical authority in Ireland, as well as enabling him to attempt the reconstruction of his reform strategy untroubled by Sidney's designs and depredations.[115] The archbishop's plea fell on deaf ears however. By the time it was dispatched, it was already superfluous as the deputy's supporters had revealed to the queen and the council the extent to which the Loftus-Weston commission of 1568 had failed to collect the fines it imposed. Their horrified reaction to this precluded any possibility that they would make Loftus the master of his own personal ecclesiastical fiefdom.[116]

Yet Sidney's actions in 1576-7 did more than just deconstruct the machinery and mechanisms through which Loftus and Weston had attempted to reform the church. They also established a set of conditions which, even after Sidney's final departure from Ireland in 1578, were so far reaching and so damaging psychologically, that they

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114 Loftus later voiced his concern about the novelty of Sidney's commissions and challenged their legality ('The contents of certain letters patent granted to George Acworth, doctor of the civil law, and Robert Garvey, for ecclesiastical jurisdiction, by them, and the survivor of them for the term of life to be exercised in Ireland', 20 December 1578 [P.R.O., SP 63/63, nos. 49, 50]; Loftus to the privy council, 20 February 1579 [P.R.O., SP 63/65, no. 42]).

115 Loftus to Walsingham, 16 March 1577 (P.R.O., SP 63/57, no. 36).

116 *Cal. Carew MSS 1575-88*, p 58. Substantial progress had also been made toward securing conciliar approval for the court of faculties (see, for example, the privy council's own instructions and working papers on the court, dateable to the summer of 1576: P.R.O., SP 63/55, nos. 63, 64).

destroyed any possibility that the archbishop would ever again be able to institute such a progressive reform policy. The psychological damage done to Loftus stemmed not only from the humiliations that he suffered directly at the hands of the deputy, but from the manner in which others - especially the conservative clergy of his diocese - exploited his discomfiture to settle old scores. It was no accident that at this very time the archbishop had to answer accusations that he was a puritan, accusations which were based on his early association with Thomas Cartwright, and which to his 'great anxiety' had been brought to the notice of the queen. While the source of these charges is not now documented, it is highly likely that they were forwarded by the 'papist faction' in St Patrick's - a group who were always alive to the possibility of turning a changing political climate to their advantage - in an effort to topple the archbishop. On this particular occasion, however, Loftus successfully evaded their challenge by playing down the significance of his earlier friendship with Cartwight, by stressing the fact that he had not met with him since the controversies over his doctrine and beliefs had erupted, by expressing sorrow that Cartwright had 'offended the state' and by pleading 'ignorance of what the term and accusation of a puritan meaneth'.[117]

Yet so complete was Loftus's discomfiture at this juncture that the conservatives were determined not to let it pass without gaining some advantage from it. In the summer of 1577, only a few months after the Cartwright accusations were made, an event occurred which suggests very strongly that they finally exacted their long-awaited revenge. This was the ejection of the hated John Ball from St Patrick's cathedral. In the end, the plot to remove Ball was deceptively simple. It would appear that the machinations of 1571-2 were replayed, but with one subtle twist. Instead of launching a generalised attack on him across many fronts, some conservative prebendaries, it may be conjectured, fanned the interest of one of Ball's first victims, Dr John Vulp, and his patron, the earl of Sussex, in restaking the physician's claim to the archdeaconry of Glendalough. In this,

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117 Loftus to Walsingham, 16 March 1577(P.R.O., SP 63/57, no. 36).

of course, they were aided by the fact that Ball, following his enforced sacking from the diocesan administration by Lord Deputy Sidney, was a much more expendable figure than he had been in the early 1570s. Appraised of this development, and of the cloud of suspicion which was then hanging over Loftus because of his association with Cartwright, the former lieutenant of Ireland thus went to the queen and acquired letters from her ordering the archbishop to restore Dr Vulp to the archdeaconry, on the grounds, it seems, that Ball was 'a meer lay man, and for his incapacity can lay no claim or make himself a party for an archdeaconry or any spiritual promotion'. For Thomas Creef, Christopher Browne, and the other surviving conservatives in St Patrick's, a group who would have retained bitter memories of how Ball had effected a purge of their fellow conservatives in the 1569-70 visitations by exploiting analagous canonical irregularities, the irony must have been deliciously sweet. For Loftus, on the other hand, it must have seemed that all of his worst nightmares had come true. Following so soon after the Cartwright scare, the sight of the queen's signature on the letters acquired by Sussex sent the archbishop into a panic. He called Ball in, summarily deprived him of his archdeaconry, restored Vulp and forced Ball to take an oath renouncing 'all appeals and quarrels from anything that in the ... restitution I should arbitrate or decree'.[118]

1577, then, was truly Loftus's *annus horribilis*. The deprivation of Ball, in particular, marked the lowest point of his career in Ireland and, in a very profound way, was a reluctant acknowledgment that his reformist endeavours of the late 1560s and 1570s had finally come to an end. The death knell of the Loftus-Weston strategy resounded

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118 Loftus to Sussex, 20 November 1577 (B.L., Cotton MS, Vespasian F XII, ff 149r-150v); Lambeth Muniment Book F1/B, ff 127r-128r. Loftus's reason for sacking Ball, that he was a lay man, was also applicable to Dr Vulp. Evidence for the involvement of the conservative prebendaries is circumstantial. As a group, they probably knew Sussex from his earlier viceroyalty in Ireland (Sussex was received, blessed by and dined with Archbishop Curwen in St Patrick's cathedral on 3 July 1556, two days after he was sworn in as lord lieutenant of Ireland [*Cal. Carew MSS, 1515-1574*, p 258]). Sussex was also a member of the privy council when they attempted to unseat Ball in 1571-2. They more, than any other party or interest group, had the motivation to seek Ball's deprivation and would have appreciated more than most that Archbishop Loftus's difficulties with Sidney provided an ideal opportunity to effect it. Above all, however, they had already tried to secure Ball's deprivation on at least two previous occasions.

particularly in the way that the archbishop was forced into denying all that had gone before, and the part that he had played in it, cynically contending, in private correspondence with Sussex, that Ball had 'subtly ... procured the deprivation of Doctor Vulp by his uncle Doctor Weston ... for his own private gain, to intrude himself into another man's living'. Ball, for his part, was understandably furious at Loftus's apparent betrayal. Despite his oath, he attempted to appeal his deprivation in the Irish and English chanceries, both of which attempts Loftus had to make strenuous efforts to block; while, to sting the conscience of the archbishop even further, he claimed that he would go to England and seek the revocation of the new ecclesiastical commission, and have it 'committed to such as he will name, and him to be assumed register therein'. Ball, at least, did not wish to abandon the work that he and his uncle had commenced in the late 1560s, not even if it meant having to compete against some of the most powerful interests in the land to rescue it.[119]

In reality, however, and as Loftus grimly realised, Ball was naive. It was precisely because of their inability to compete with such interests - indeed they had not even successfully competed against the 'papist faction' in St Patrick's cathedral - that their carefully constructed reform strategy lay in tatters. The salutary lesson to be drawn from the shambles of 1577, then, was that to survive in Elizabethan public life, let alone achieve anything, it was not enough to rely on one's religious principles, no matter how godly and true they were. Rather, one needed connections, connections built upon connections and connections within connections. Without them, power and authority were illusory. Thus as Loftus contemplated the wreckage of a near decade's work, he resolved that he would never be held hostage again to the workings and intrigues of the personal connections and factional groupings of others, whether they were headed by a great aristocrat like Sussex or a professional politician like Sidney, or manipulated by a group such as the conservative prebendaries of St Patrick's cathedral. It was from this

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119 Loftus to Sussex, 20 November 1577 (B.L., Cotton MS, Vespasian F XII, ff 149r-150v).

point on, therefore, that he set about creating - both through the marriage of his children to new English protestant settlers in Ireland,[120] and through the bestowal of the lucrative prebends of St Patrick's on anybody capable of furthering his interests - his own, soon to be notorious, personal affinity. In this way he built up a connection with foundations in his cathedral, but which reached out into the countryside and ultimately to the court of Queen Elizabeth. This process was neatly illustrated in the action he took on the death of his longstanding adversary, Thomas Creef, the precentor of St Patrick's, in the summer of 1579. Had this death occurred in the early 1570s at the height of the implementation of the Loftus-Weston reform strategy, there is little doubt that the archbishop would have bestowed the precentorship on a godly minister of the word. Post 1577, however, Loftus's concerns were different. In September 1579 he gave the advowson of the precentorship to the earl of Leicester *pro hac vice*. Leicester in turn appointed his personal secretary, Arthur Atye, to the living, a man who would inevitably be a non-resident absentee and who would later convey the living to his master. It was clear from this, an action which had no pretensions to any godly ends, that Loftus was now in the business of unadulterated networking.[121]

The creation of this battle-hardened, more cynical personality, however, was not the only legacy left to Loftus by Sidney's unwelome intervention in Irish ecclesiastical affairs. More profound still, both for Loftus and the country, was the deputy's re-establishment of a tough, coercive alternative to the Loftus-Weston strategy for enforcing the reformation. It was this re-emergence of religious coercion, something which had not been seen in Ireland for over a decade, that would finally and irrevocably crystallise the Pale community's rejection of the reformation in the late 1570s and early

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120 *Cal. Carew MSS, 1575-88*, p 197; D. Jackson, *Intermarriage in Ireland, 1550-1650* (Montreal, 1970), pp 20-28; Andrew Trollop to Walsingham, 12 September 1581 (P.R.O., SP 63/85, no 39); *Cal. S. P. Ire., 1586-88*, pp 252-3.

121 *Cal. pat. rolls Ire., Eliz.*, pp 17, 31; J. Bruce, ed., *Correspondence of Robert Dudley, earl of Leycester, during his government of the Low Countries, in the years 1585 and 1586* (Camden Society, 27, London, 1844), pp 50, 261, 289, 313-4.

1580s. Yet, ironically, following Sidney's revocation from the deputyship in the summer of 1578, and despite the fact that his strategy had been consciously put in place as an alternative to the archbishop's discredited efforts, the responsibility for its implementation would ultimately fall on Adam Loftus.

VI

Initially, at any rate, it appeared that Sidney's fall from power offered a genuine opportunity to dismantle his ecclesiastical settlement in all its various aspects. It was arguable that this settlement - whether in its attack on episcopal jurisdiction, or in its rigorous application of the reformation statutes - was both similarly conceived, and likely to arouse the same negative reaction, as the overly ambitious and uncompromising secular policies which had led to his recall.[122] No sooner, then, had Sidney set sail for England, towards the end of September 1578, than Loftus and the other bishops sought a conference with the English privy council to discuss 'certain causes concerning the state of religion' in Ireland. These causes, of course, were Sidney's religious initiatives, and what the bishops wanted to achieve was their wholesale destruction. Thus, when the council responded by requesting that they send over just one of their number to put forward their case, it was Adam Loftus, the man who had suffered most from the deputy's depredations, who was chosen to be their spokesman.[123]

Loftus arrived in England in December 1578 and immediately set to work to overturn the former deputy's ecclesiastical settlement. One of his main targets was the hated court of faculties, the body which Sidney had instituted with the express purpose of overriding the bishops' jurisdiction. Over the course of a ten to twelve week stay in

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122 On the circumstances surrounding Sidney's revocation in 1578 see Brady, *Chief Governors*, pp 148-58.

123 *Acts privy council, 1577-78*, p 420.

England, then, he presented a battery of legal arguments, interspersed with charges of corruption directed against Sidney's commissioners, George Acworth and Robert Garvey, in a bid to impress upon the council the flawed legal basis of the commission, and the neccessity of restraining it for the moral and spiritual welfare of the church. The commissioners, however, did not let the archbishop take the field alone. Garvey followed Loftus to England, and he presented an equally voluminous collection of arguments to the councillors, which contended that the commission was both legitimate, and successfully engaged in the task of reforming the ministry of the Church of Ireland.[124]

The privy council gave a full hearing to the two protagonists and, in the end, concluded that there were some merits to be found in both cases. While they had no doubts that the bishops suffered great 'inconveniences' as a result of the commission's usurpation of episcopal jurisdiction, they also believed that the commission was legally valid, a view which was corroborated by the queen's own learned counsel. They thus proposed compromise. The first significant step along these lines was taken on 25 February 1579, when the council commanded the new lord justice of Ireland, Sir William Drury, to take order with Acworth and Garvey to forbear the exercise of their commission until further notice. Thereafter they entered into negotiations with the parties towards renewing it. However, there was to be one major difference in the commission proposed by the councillors and that passed by Sidney two years previously. Garvey's partner would not be Sidney's old favourite, George Acworth, but the archbishop of Dublin, Adam Loftus. Agreement on this was reached towards the end of March or early April, and the

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124 See inter alia 'The contents of certain letters patent granted to George Acworth, doctor of the civil law, and Robert Garvey, for ecclesiastical jurisdiction, by them, and the survivor of them for the term of life to be exercised in Ireland', 20 December 1578 (P.R.O., SP 63/63, nos. 49, 50); 'A note delivered by Robert Garvey of such part of the statutes of Ireland as giveth the governor of that realm authority to pass commission to grant dispensations and faculties within the said realm, with an answer to such objections as are made by certain bishops of that land against that commission, and the exercise thereof', 2 January 1579 (P.R.O., SP 63/65, no 2); 'The answer of Adam, archbishop of Dublin, to Mr Garvey's justification of the commission for faculties and other jurisdiction granted to him and to Dr Acworth', 6 January 1579 (P.R.O., SP 63/65, no. 8); Garvey to Burghley, 7 January 1579 (P.R.O., SP 63/65, no. 9).

commission was issued on 25 May. By the time Loftus returned to Dublin, then, in March or early April 1579, he had become the leader designate of a body which he had originally set out to destroy.[125]

Yet, as disappointing as this outcome was, it did not mark the full extent of the failure of his mission. On his return from England, Loftus also found himself taking up an almost identical position in relation to Sidney's High Commission. From the moment Sidney sent his critique on the state of the church to the queen in April 1576, he had envisaged establishing a commission which would rigorously enforce all the Elizabethan legislation pertaining to religion, from the Act of Uniformity to the dashed bill for the reparation of churches. Unlike Loftus, who had come to believe that an over zealous enforcement of such legislation would alienate even further an already estranged community, the deputy held the view that it was the lax enforcement of the same which had created the conditions in which the nobility, gentry and commons of the Pale felt no compunction to attend the services of the state church, to provide decent salaries for its ministers, or to keep its fabric in order. Thus, even in the short period between the establishment of his ecclesiastical commission in the summer of 1577 and his recall one year later, Sidney had pushed Loftus hard, as a member of the commission, to toughen up his approach to enforcement, especially against openly aberrant Pale gentlemen like James Eustace, the son of Viscount Baltinglass, who was suspected of hearing mass publicly. Throughout June and July 1578, therefore, even as he prepared to leave Ireland for the last time, Sidney gave his constant attention to the commission's process

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125 *Acts privy council, 1578-80*, pp 16, 58; learned counsel to privy council, n.d., c. end of January 1579 (P.R.O., SP 63/63, no 53); privy council to Drury, 25 February 1579 (P.R.O., SP 63/65, no 48); queen to Drury, 14 March 1579 (P.R.O., SP 63/66, no. 7); 'The special points contained in the commission to be granted by her majesty to the most reverend father Adam, archbishop of Dublin and Mr Garvey, for passing of faculties within her highness's realm of Ireland', n.d., c March/April 1579; (P.R.O., SP 63/63, no. 56); 'Instructions given by her majesty xiiith day of April 1579 to the right reverend father in god Adam, archbishop of Dublin, and Robert Garvey, bachelor of civil law, her highness's comissioners for faculties within her realm of Ireland, thought convenient to be observed by them in executing their commission and annexed to the same' (P.R.O., SP 63/66, no. 35); P.R.O., C 82/1243, includes signed bill by the queen for granting of commission to Loftus and Garvey, 25 May 1579.

against Eustace, frequently urging Loftus to secure his conformity by threatening him with the full statutory penalty of a hundred mark fine. After many years of promoting the reformation in a conciliatory manner, however, such intimidatory tactics sat uneasily on Loftus's shoulders, and, despite Sidney's attentions, he tried desperately to win Eustace's heart 'by persuasion' and 'dealing in truth with over much lenity towards him'.[126]

Sidney's removal from Ireland, then, presented Loftus with an opportunity of securing the reversal of his hardline policy on enforcement. While in England, therefore, and, as in his attack on the court of faculties, he questioned the legal validity of Sidney's ecclesiastical commission before the privy council, a challenge conducted on the particular grounds that the earlier commission of 1568 had been personally sanctioned by the queen, and had not been specifically revoked, and that it was doubtful whether an officer of the crown apppointed during the monarch's pleasure had the requisite authority to establish a new commission in its place. At first, it appeared that Loftus had made his case persuasively, for, once again, the council showed some sympathy towards his position. On 22 February 1579 they wrote to Lord Justice Drury, decreeing that the Loftus-Weston commission of 1568 'should be duly executed, and none other until her majesty should expressly revoke the same'.[127] Yet what seemed like a victory for the archbishop was in reality a move to help him save face. On his arrival in England, Loftus soon discovered that Sidney's ecclesiastical measures, and, in particular, his underlying belief in the necessity of enforcing existing religious legislation, was the one part of his programme for government which the privy council, and former supporters,

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126 Loftus to Walsingham, 11 September 1580 (P.R.O., SP 63/76, no. 26 and enclosures); *Stat. Ire.*, i, pp 286-7.

127 'The contents of certain letters patent granted to George Acworth, doctor of the civil law, and Robert Garvey, for ecclesiastical jurisdiction, by them, and the survivor of them for the term of life to be exercised in Ireland', 20 December 1578 (P.R.O., SP 63/63, nos. 49, 50); Loftus to privy council, 22 February 1579 (P.R.O., SP 63/65, no. 42); *Acts privy council, 1578-80*, p 56; 'A minute to the lord justice of Ireland for some order to be taken in matters touching the pastoral charge of that realm', 22 February 1579 (P.R.O., SP 63/65, no. 43).

like Lord Chancellor Gerrard, wished to retain. Such a policy actually conformed to the modest, post-Sidney aims of English government in Ireland, aims which sought to reform the country not by the grandiose, expansionist schemes of the programmatic governors, but through the regeneration of the Pale and the gradual extension of the common law throughout the country.[128] There would be no better way of achieving this regeneration than by ensuring that the legislation of the Irish parliament on religious matters was respected and obeyed by the queen's most loyal subjects, nor than by furthering the cause of true protestant religion in English-Ireland.

A strong hint that the council was already thinking along these lines had been given in the instructions to the new lord justice of Ireland, Sir William Drury, in the previous May. He was commanded to enforce two measures which Sidney had previously identified as essential to the reform of the church: the re-edification of church fabric and the compulsion of impropriators to maintain proper curates. Now, however, the council's wish to implement the Sidney strategy, and their desire that Loftus should do so too, was made explicit. On 22 February the archbishop was forced to put his name to a petition requesting the lord justice and council of Ireland to take order for the reparation of decayed churches and chancels, to compel the farmers of impropriate benefices 'to find sufficient and able curates' and to execute the statute for the erection of schools. Although this petition had all the appearances of being spontaneous, the fact that it was comprised of staple Sidney reforms, that Loftus combined it with his request to allow the continuance of the 1568 ecclesiastical commission, and that the council drafted its own identical instructions to the lord justice on the very same day, clearly shows that a deal had been struck between Loftus and the queen's advisers. In short, the archbishop had signed up to what was effectively Sidney's programme of ecclesiastical reform in return for the concession on the High Commission.[129]

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128 For the conception and development of these aims, and Gerrard's role in this process, see Brady, *Chief Governors*, pp 155-8.

129 'Instructions' for Drury, 29 May 1578 (P.R.O., SP 12/134 p 610, another copy calendared in *Cal. Carew MSS 1575-88*, pp 130-3); Loftus to privy council, 22 February 1579 (P.R.O., SP 63/65, no.

Yet even this, by now rather meaningless, concession would be denied to him. The impracticality of enforcing Sidney's programme through a commission in which much of the membership was dead, soon had Lord Chancellor Gerrard on the case, the man who had become the effective leader of the government's religious reform programme after the deputy's revocation. Gerrard visited England in the autumn and winter of 1579. While there he secured the opinion of the queen's learned counsel that Sidney's 1577 commission was legally valid. Thus there soon followed a memo from the privy council to the Irish council commanding them to give the Sidney commission full effect and affirming 'that execution of the commission granted in the tenth year of her majesty's reign [1568] is taken away by the grant of the latter'. Loftus had no choice but to accept this final confirmation of a reality which he had already conceded in principle.[130]

Loftus's recognition of the Sidney programme of church reform was not merely theoretical however. Even before the 1577 commission received its final validation, the archbishop was perceived by old Sidney hands like Sir Edward Waterhouse to have joined in spirit with Lord Chancellor Gerrard in seeking to enforce the reformation with the required rigour. Waterhouse put this down to the fact that both men 'held their places with no less authority than now', a happy occurrence due in no small part - and here the contrast with Sidney was marked - to the disposition of Lord Justice Drury. Thus, under the supportive gaze of Drury, and secure in the knowledge that Archbishop Loftus was on the verge of giving his full support to the government's reform programme, Gerrard ensured that Sidney's commission worked assiduously during the summer of 1579 to enforce outward conformity to the reformation throughout the

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42); 'A minute to the lord justice of Ireland for some order to be taken in matters touching the pastoral charge of that realm', 22 February 1579 (P.R.O., SP 63/65, no. 43).

130 'The opinion of her majesty's learned council in the laws touching the validity of the ecclesiastical commission in Ireland', n.d., c. November-January 1579-80 (P.R.O., SP 63/71, no 12); 'The draft of letter to the lords of the council in Ireland', n.d., c. November-January 1579-80 (P.R.O., SP 63/60, no. 71). Gerrard arrived in England in October 1579 (P.R.O., SP 63/69, nos. 29,73).

English Pale. Indeed, according to Waterhouse, the chancellor-dean did it so effectively that in Dublin he found

> that which I never hoped of, namely, that the whole inhabitants being in effect all noted to be obstinate papists in times past do now all repair to the church and show themselves obedient in the substance of religion. Most of the nobility (amongst which one who hath been noted to be a Jesuit) cometh to sermons and show themselves examples to others.

In addition, Gerrard also had pews made, presumably in his own cathedral of St Patrick, 'for the nobility, for lawyers, for captains, and all of the better sort, so as the citizens and all being under his eye never dare be absent'.[131]

Loftus joined this crusade formally towards the close of 1579 or in early 1580 after Gerrard confirmed the legality of Sidney's High Commission. Moreover, he immediately sought to put his own personal stamp on it by securing the appointment, as the commission's registrar, of one of his cadre of Dublin diocesan administrators. According to Loftus, Gerrard had 'placed in that room a man of his own unable to execute it by himself, but by substitutes either of small skill or little credit, whereby almost for two years not only little good was done, but also a greater gap of liberty and courage left open to the enemies of the truth'. Loftus's initial commendation of John Ball as a better alternative appears to have been turned down by the chancellor, presumably on account of Ball's poor record in collecting the fines imposed by the Loftus-Weston commission. Nevertheless, Gerrard did see the value of reconciling the Loftus-Weston régime with Sidney's commission. Thus it appears that he accepted the nomination of a second Loftus associate, John Bird, the former diocesan registrar of Dublin whom George Acworth had sacked shortly after his arrival in Ireland, and who immediately assumed responsibility for the collection of all fines imposed by the High Commission since the removal of Ball in January 1577. With Bird's appointment,

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131 Waterhouse to Walsingham, 31 May 1579 (P.R.O., SP 63/66, no. 66).

Loftus's reconciliation with the official crown-sponsored reform programme was completed.[132]

This reconciliation was hugely significant for the diocese of Dublin and the English Pale generally. What it meant, effectively, was that for virtually the first time since Henry VIII broke with Rome nearly fifty years previously, the agencies of both church and state shared a common commitment and resolve to enforce the reformation by means of the penal clauses contained in the crown's ecclesiastical legislation. Moreover, there is little doubt that they put this common purpose to real effect. From the spring of 1577 to the spring of 1582, a period which covered the first five years of the Sidney commission's existence, fines totalling £604 17*s*. 8*d*. are known to have been levied by the commission throughout the Pale. The annual average was thus c. £121, a figure which represented an 86% increase on the period immediately preceding it (October 1573 - January 1577), and a 35% increase on the annual average levied by the Loftus-Weston commission in its heyday (Michaelmas 1568 - Michaelmas 1573). There is little doubt that this increase in fines represented a substantial escalation in the level of the commission's activity between the earlier and later periods, an increase which is attributable to the divergent concerns of the 1568 and 1577 versions. Loftus and Weston had used the 1568 commission as a support mechanism for a gradualist and conciliatory reform programme which was conducted primarily by the Dublin diocesan administration. The Sidney commission, by contrast, was intent on securing rapid outward conformity to the established church, and the thorough discharge of all attendant communal responsibilities to the institution. This difference in approach would make a major impact on the Pale community's attitude to the reformation. Despite Gerrard's success in bolstering attendance at the Prayer Book services in the Pale, such coercion - particularly as it came on the back of years of disgruntlement with the cess - was deeply resented by the indigenous population, and hastened its final

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132 Loftus to Burghley, 6 January 1580 (P.R.O., SP 63/71, no 9); Brief estimate of the account of John Bird (P.R.O., SP 63/94, no. 109).

and irrevocable alienation from the established church and the English government which supported it.[133]

The signs of this growing alienation were everywhere apparant in the early 1580s. One of the most common complaints of the period, a complaint voiced by those who supported the church, was that the court of faculties under Loftus was overly liberal in its granting of dispensations, allegedly because of the archbishop's desire to share in the profits of the faculties. According to such complainants the court corrupted the clergy, creating a situation where the holding of three or more benefices by individual ministers, and a consequent decline in the quality of pastoral service, was the norm. Yet such complainants neglected to consider one pertinent fact. The increased granting of dispensations was in reality an indicator of a problem in the supply of clergymen. Thus to the extent that it reflected an ongoing reduction in the numbers going forward for ordination, and the need to spread the pastoral burden on a declining pool of ministers, its real significance had less to do with Adam Loftus's alleged cupidity, than the unpalatable reality that indigenous sympathy for the state church was haemorraging at an alarming rate. Such reluctance to serve the established church, a longstanding reluctance now exacerbated by its self-consciously coercive policies, was otherwise reflected in the growing numbers of students from the Pale who went to the continent, instead of the protestant seminaries of Oxford and Cambridge, for a specifically catholic education at this time.[134]

There were, however, even more direct signs of disenchantment with the government's religious policy, especially in relation to the High Commission's activities. One of the

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133 Brief declaration of the account of William Fludde; Brief of the account of John Ball; Brief estimate of the account of John Bird (P.R.O., SP 63/94, no. 109).

134 Trollope to Walsingham, 12 September 1581 (P.R.O., SP 63/85, no 39); Archbishop Long to Walsingham, 20 January, 4 June 1585 (P.R.O., SP 63/114, no. 39, SP 63/117, no 39); H. Hammerstein, 'Aspects of the continental education of Irish students in the reign of Queen Elizabeth I', in *Hist studies*, viii (1971), pp 137-54.

commission's avowed aims from 1577 onwards was to secure the re-edification of decayed churches and chancels. Yet, despite the application of pressure to ensure that impropriators and churchwardens fulfilled their responsibilities in this regard, little progress was made. Nearly eight years after the Sidney commission commenced its campaign to rebuild the Church of Ireland's decrepid ecclesiastical fabric, the lord deputy of Ireland, Sir John Perrot, concluded that it was generally in 'pitiful decay' virtually all the way to the gates of Dublin. So 'ruinated and broken down' were the churches, in fact, and so little had the commission achieved in its attempt to have them re-edified, that the deputy rejected the commission as an agency of change and commenced his own alternative initiative to try and rescue the situation. There is little doubt that that the commission's failure in this matter signified nothing less than a communal rejection of its authority and aims, and a genuine distaste for the personnel charged with implementing them. Such distaste was otherwise evident in the growth of 'malicious reports' and plots which sought to blacken the character of its registrar, John Bird. For Adam Loftus, the hatching of such plots against the godly were all too familiar, and he defended Bird on the grounds that the office of registrar was 'subject greatly to envy'. The reality, as he saw it, was that Bird had done much valuable service 'to her highness in discovering many wicked practises and treasons of the papists here'.[135]

Yet the most disturbing sign of the Pale community's alienation was not its refusal to repair parish churches, or the plotting of the papists against commission officials, but the outbreak of rebellion in the heart of loyalist English-Ireland. The Baltinglass revolt, led by James Eustace, third viscount Baltinglass, was one of a number of rebellions which broke out in Ireland at this time, and which reflected a wider disenchantment with

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135 *Cal. S. P. Ire., 1588-92*, p 82; 'A copy of such commissions as were sent to every county and country for enquiry of decayed churches, chancels, bridges and schools', 4 March 1585 (P.R.O., SP 63/115, no. 11); certificate of the High Commissioners to Lord Grey, testifying the upright conduct of John Bird, their registrar, 29 August 1582 (P.R.O., SP 63/94, no.107); 'An abstract of certain private letters touching John Bird' (P.R.O., SP 63/94, no.108); Loftus to Walsingham, 25 March 1584 (P.R.O., SP 63/108, no. 52).

English government in Ireland. Unlike the other rebellions, however, all of which had some religious dimension to them, the Baltinglass conspiracy was motivated almost exclusively by religious concerns. Baltinglass and his small band of supporters rose up in the summer of 1580 in radical defiance of the state religion and in an attempt to assert a new, militant brand of catholicism imported from the continent.[136] However, while its motives were apparant, its full significance is less easily appreciated, especially as militarily it carried very little threat to Tudor rule in Ireland; and politically it commanded relatively little support amongst the wider Pale community. Nevertheless, despite its limited appeal, the revolt was still a barometer of the declining relationship between the established church and the Englishry, a decline directly attributable to the ecclesiastical programme introduced by Lord Deputy Sidney in the late 1570s.

There are good grounds for arguing that Baltinglass entered on his fateful course in direct response to the upsurge in religious coercion that accompanied the erection of Sidney's High Commission. Baltinglass, while still the heir to the family title, had been hauled before the commission in the summer of 1578 for openly practising catholicism. And the treatment he received, treatment which was meted out by Archbishop Loftus under direct instruction from Sidney himself - a day in prison, the threat of a large fine and the possibility of an extended spell of incarceration - forced him into what amounted to a public recantation of his catholicism. While we can only speculate now on the extent to which this experience affected Baltinglass psychologically, it must have played a formative role in leading him into rebellion two years later. The link between the two events was certainly considered to be important by the government in the aftermath of the revolt, so much so in fact that Adam Loftus went to great lengths to explain that he was not personally responsible for the rough treatment handed out to

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136 On the revolt generally see Brady, *Chief Governors*, pp 204-7, 209-13; Edwards, *Church & State*, pp 256-60; H. Coburn Walshe, 'The rebellion of William Nugent, 1581', in R.V.Comerford et al, eds., *Religion, conflict and co-existence in Ireland* (Dublin, 1990), pp 26-52; Lennon, *Lords of Dublin*, pp 150-5.

Baltinglass.[137] A similar link might also be posited between the treatment meted out by the commission to Alderman James Bellew of Dublin and the decision of certain members of two fellow aldermanic families, the Sedgraves and Fitzsimons, to aid Baltinglass in 1580. In 1578, Bellew had been forced by the commissioners to stand barefoot before the altar in Christ Church cathedral and renounce his many errors, including his denial of the queen's supremacy.[138] The real likelihood that such religious coercion led traditionally loyal and socially important figures like Baltinglass and his cohorts into armed rebellion, strongly suggests that it must also have hardened the religious attitudes of many more in a community already predisposed towards the old religion.

Yet the Baltinglass revolt, and the related Nugent conspiracy, was a watershed in other respects also. One of the main implications of the revolt was that it created an indelible link in the minds of the officials of church and state between religious dissidence and treason, and thus added a new dimension of fear and suspicion to their perceptions of papistry. In the short term, under the deputyship of Lord Grey de Wilton (1580-2), this had the effect of ushering in a period of ferocious religious repression which both shook the Pale community to its core and, through its creation of martyrs and heroes for the cause of catholicism, hardened even further its conservative religious values. The spectacle of witnessing Pale gentlemen like George Netterville, Robert and John Scurlock, and Christopher Eustace, steadfastly processing to the scaffold in unmistakably catholic prayer, and rejecting the admonitions and taunts of ministers of the established church, must have had a profound effect on the inherently sympathetic populace of Dublin, whether it was witnessed in person or recounted in conversation thereafter.[139]

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137 Loftus to Walsingham, 11 September 1580 (P.R.O., SP 63/76, no. 26 and enclosures).

138 On Bellew, and the involvement of the Sedgraves and Fitzsimons in the revolt, see Lennon, *Lords of Dublin*, pp 118-9, 150-7, 231-2, 250, 267-9.

139 Brady, 'Conservative subversives', pp 26-8; Report of Thomas Jones, preacher, on the deaths of Robert Scurlock, John Scurlock, George Netterville and Christopher Eustace, 18 November 1581

More importantly, in the longer term, the fear of traitorous papistry convinced many in the officialdom of church and state that severe, coercive policies would need to continue in order to win the conformity of the Irish populace to the Elizabethan settlement. This was certainly the case with Archbishop Loftus. Following the death of Lord Chancellor Gerrard, and his own promotion to the chancellorship in 1581, Loftus willingly assumed Gerrard's mantle as the leader of Sidney's coercive reform programme. Thus, in a few short years, he passed from being an episcopal governor intent on winning adherents to the reformation through a conciliatory ecclesiastical programme, to being an unwilling and, finally, willing accomplice in a coercive reform strategy that not only failed to win the conformity of the loyal Englishry to the reformation; but, unwittingly, began to sever whatever tenuous bonds existed between that community and the established church before this time. Loftus's own particular situation was a paradigm for this breakdown in relations. Where in the past, he had sent his officials to give the 'Pope's absolution' in the fields, he would now send his minions to extract recantations from catholics on the scaffold.[140] Where in the past he was willing to argue the case for protestantism, he would now find himself at the centre of the events surrounding the torture and execution of popular religious dissidents, like the catholic archbishop of Cashel, Dermot O'Hurley.[141] Where in the past he was once 'greatly liked' by the Pale community, he now felt so hated that he feared for his life.[142] In fine, from the early 1580s on, the Pale community's full disengagement from the established church led by Adam Loftus was

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(P.R.O., SP 63/86, no. 69, calendared in Brady, *Ir. ch. Eliz.*, pp 56-7).

140 Report of Thomas Jones, preacher, on the deaths of Robert Scurlock, John Scurlock, George Netterville and Christopher Eustace, 18 November 1581 (P.R.O., SP 63/86, no. 69). Jones was closely allied to Loftus and eventually became his son-in-law. He was also appointed dean of St Patrick's shortly after penning this report and he eventually succeeded Loftus as archbishop of Dublin on the latter's death in 1605 (*D.N.B.*; Lawlor, *Fasti of St Patrick's*, p 46).

141 Brady, *Ir. ch. Eliz.*, pp 68-80, 83-5.

142 Lord deputy and council to Walsingham, 3 July 1581 (P.R.O., SP 63/84, no.1); Lords Justices Wallop and Loftus, and Sir Edward Waterhouse to Burghley and Walsingham, 23 August 1583 (P.R.O., SP 63/104, no. 38).

inevitable. The only uncertainties to be resolved were when the process would be finally completed, and when officials like Loftus would come to admit it.

VII

The resolution of both of these uncertainties came swiftly, hastened by the stormy political events of the viceroyalty of the last of the great programmatic governors in Elizabethan Ireland, Sir John Perrot (1584-8).[143] In terms of religion, Perrot's viceroyalty began conventionally enough. A precisian protestant by nature,[144] the new deputy was content to allow the coercive reform strategy which Sidney had originated, and which Loftus had the responsibility of executing, to continue unabated. Indeed, Perrot himself was only too willing to lend this strategy his full suport. In October 1584, for example, following the apprehension of three 'notorious massing priests', presumably by the High Commission, he reported to the privy council that 'there is a great nest discovered of massmongers ... whereof some lawyers in places of credit, merchants, ladies and gentlewomen of good sort, with whom I mean to take a fit time, and to deal as shall be meet'. The deputy's intentions in this regard were soon revealed. Shortly after the discovery of the 'massmongers', he tendered the oath of supremacy to all the justices of the peace and other legal officers, threatening those who refused to subscribe with proceedings in Castle Chamber. Moreover, an obscure entry in the Irish council book from this time suggests that he was even contemplating swearing-in the entire adult populations of Irish counties under English jurisdiction.[145]

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143 On Perrot's deputyship see Brady, *Chief Governors*, pp 291-300;V. Treadwell, 'Sir John Perrot and the Irish Parliament of 1585-6' in *R.I.A. Proc.*, lxxxv, C, pp 259-308.

144 On Perrot's religious attitudes see chapter 8 below.

145 Perrot to privy council, 25 Oct 1584, and to Burgley, 24 September 1585 (Bodl., Perrot MS 1, ff 42v-43r, 144r-157v, calendared in C. McNeill, ed., 'The Perrot Papers: the letter-book of Lord Deputy Perrot between 9 July, 1585 and 26 May, 1586' in *Anal. Hib.*, 12 [1943], pp 23-4); D.B. Quinn, ed., 'Calendar of the Irish Council Book, 1581-1586', in *Anal. Hib.*, 24, p 163; Edwards, *Church & state*, pp 270-1; Treadwell, 'Irish Parliament of 1585-6', p 274.

Perrot's support of this tough and thorough line in religion made sense in terms of his own ideological preferences. Yet in terms of his own political aims it most certainly did not. From the outset of his viceroyalty, the new deputy had preached about the virtues of conciliation, and of bringing about political and social harmony in Ireland. Indeed, his chosen method of implementing his wide-ranging reform programme - through a series of new statutes to be enacted in a specially convened parliament - was actually predicated upon the notion of achieving consensus, especially with the Palesmen.[146] His support for the High Commission's tough line on religion, therefore, support otherwise evident in his inclusion of a compendious bill to enact English statutes in the proposed legislation of the upcoming parliament - including recent English penal legislation against catholics - was a profound political misjudgement.[147] Just how misconceived became apparent in May 1585 when, during the opening session of the parliament, and despite advice from the English Irish master of the rolls, Sir Nicholas White - that leniency on the religious question would help secure indigenous support for the deputy's programme of legislation - he chose to press ahead with the penal laws, thus provoking what would prove to be very a serious and politically damaging opposition against his entire parliamentary programme from the representatives of the Pale community.[148]

This parliamentary opposition was very significant on a number of counts. In the first instance, it provided a clear and unambiguous statement both of the importance of the religious question to the Pale community, and the deep frustration and anger they felt over the government's hardline enforcement policies of the recent past. In addition, it also provided a rare insight into the kind of catholicism espoused by the majority of the

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146 Ibid., p 266

147 Ibid., pp 270-2. Archbishop Loftus headed the committee charged with preparing the bills for the parliament.

148 *Cal. S. P. Ire., 1586-8*, pp 100-1; Brady, *Ir. ch. Eliz.*, p 125; Treadwell, , 'Irish Parliament of 1585-6', pp 284-6.

community. Despite the growing presence of Jesuits and seminary trained priests in the country, this was not the continental brand of militant, counter-reformation catholicism espoused by the likes of James Fitzmaurice Fitzgerald or Baltinglass, but the old religion of the medieval English Pale, a religion which lay at the heart of the political, social and cultural identity of the Englishry, and which they longed to hold on to for these very reasons. No one articulated this sentiment as clearly, nor as pithily, as the lawyer Edward Nugent who 'said openly in parliament that things prospered in Henry V's and other kings' times when mass was up'. Perrot, Loftus and other committed protestants, by contrast, were appalled by this 'seditious' behaviour, and, showing a deep lack of understanding of the community's values, withdrew from the house 'thinking we could not but be guilty of a weighty crime if we should afford our presence at the overthrowing of an act that imported her majesty's supremacy and safety of her royal person'.[149] This gesture was compounded in the following month when the deputy, exasperated by the opposition he had encountered in parliament, allowed Loftus, Archbishop Long of Armagh and Bishop Jones of Meath to recommence proceedings against the recalcitrant JPs and other legal officers.[150]

Yet if the queen's officials in Ireland were unsympathetic to the strange and archaic values of the Pale community, political developments on the international scene ensured that they got a more favourable hearing in London. England's alliance with the Dutch, sealed in the Treaty of Nonsuch in August 1585, raised the spectre of open war against Catholic Spain, a development which had very profound implications for Irish affairs. In this context, with the threat of a Spanish invasion of Ireland hanging over the queen's and privy council's heads, and the great absorption of English treasure by the Dutch Alliance precluding any possibility of financing any extra Irish defence, the professed

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149 Perrot and Irish council to privy council, 12 June 1585 (Bodl., Perrot MS 1, ff 100r-101v); Brady, *Ir. ch. Eliz.*, pp 125-6; Treadwell,, 'Irish Parliament of 1585-6', p 285.

150 D.B. Quinn, ed., 'Calendar of the Irish Council Book, 1581-1586', in *Anal. Hib.*, 24, pp 166, 178; Treadwell, , 'Irish Parliament of 1585-6', p 286.

political loyalty of the Pale community was perceived as a genuine boon, while Perrot's disruptive and antagonistic methods of government were regarded as harmful and unacceptable. Thus throughout the latter half of 1585, the queen and privy council directed Perrot to refrain from executing a whole host of measures, including the promotion and execution of any laws against religious dissidents, which might drive loyal English Irishmen into the hands of the Spaniards. As a result, all religious persecution ceased for the remainder of Perrot's viceroyalty.[151]

The Palesmen's constitutional victory against the forces of religious repression, like the Baltinglass rebellion, was a major turning point in Irish religious affairs during the sixteenth century. It is possible, as Archbishop Loftus later contended, that the 'general defection of this country['s] people in causes of religion', a defection particularly apparent in the general and open recusancy practised by the community in the late 1580s and early 1590s, was due directly to the 'encouragement which they received in Sir John Perrot's government'.[152] Yet Loftus's analysis is not wholly convincing. While it was certainly true that open and general recusancy had not been apparent before the events of the 1585 parliament, there is little doubt that communal anger against the state religion, and the coercive methods used by its agents to win the community's conformity, was running very high at this time, finding expression in events like the Baltinglass rebellion or, more importantly, in the parliamentary opposition itself. In reality, therefore, it was this anger and alienation, rather than the muzzling of the High Commissioners, as Loftus liked to believe, which gave rise to the general recusancy of the mid to late 1580s. At best, the curbing of coercion accelerated the defection of the Pale community, a defection which spiritually, if not temporally, was already completed by the time parliament sat.

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151 Walsingham to Archbishop Long, December 1585 (P.R.O., SP 63/121, no. 50); Treadwell, , 'Irish Parliament of 1585-6', pp 291-3; Brady, *Ir. ch. Eliz.*, pp 101-3; Brady, 'Conservative subversives', p 29.

152 Loftus and Bishop Jones of Meath to Archbishop Whitgift of Canterbury, 12 March 1591 (P.R.O., SP 63/157, no. 35); see also Loftus to Burgley, 12 September 1590 (Brady, *Ir. ch. Eliz.*, pp 124-8).

In conclusion, then, Loftus's argument about the period of Perrot's government was less a description of an objective reality, than a self-justifying explanation of the now, very patent and unpalatable fact that the reformation had failed. In stressing the importance of the reduction of religious coercion, Loftus was in reality seeking to deflect attention from the equally unpalatable fact that it was religious coercion itself - the government's tough enforcement policies of the late 1570s and early 1580s which Loftus was intimately associated with - that had decisively alienated the Pale community, and set in motion the process which culminated in the general defection of the late 1580s which he so vividly described in his correspondence.

Part III
The foundations of failure

Chapter Seven

Parochial appropriation, clerical finance and evangelical failure

By the early 1590s the reformation had failed in the diocese of Dublin and elsewhere in the English Pale. Writing to the archbishop of Canterbury in March 1591, Archbishop Loftus of Dublin and Bishop Jones of Meath lamented the fact that the inhabitants of the region were now 'grown into such obstinacy and disobedience that we ... find it a matter almost impossible either to reclaim them or to draw them to any good conformity'.[1] The main reason for this failure was the English-Irish community's attachment to the old religion, an attachment that had been actively and effectively fostered by the corporate clerical élite of the Pale throughout the sixteenth century, especially during the Marian period and the opening decade of Elizabeth's reign.[2]

Yet even as the influence of this group waned from the late 1560s on - because of natural wastage and the efforts of the reformers to remove them from positions of power in the local church - they left behind one major legacy which would severely curtail the reformers' ability to break their community's allegiance to the old religion. This was the medieval parochial structure and, in particular, the system for financing the parochial clergy. Put in place originally to provide the clergy with adequate financial support for serving their respective cures, it had subsequently evolved into a system which was used almost exclusively for supporting the religious corporations and cathedrals of Dublin and the Pale. And in this largely unreformed condition, it was inherited by the established church, where it proved to be a major obstacle to the reformers in their efforts to create a protestant preaching ministry capable of evangelizing the local community. To understand why this was so, it is necessary to examine in some detail

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1 Loftus and Jones to the archbishop of Canterbury, 12 March 1591 (P.R.O., SP 63/157, no. 35).

2 Above chapters 4 and 5.

the unusual character of the late medieval parochial system, and how it evolved during the course of the reformation.

I

On the eve of the reformation, c. 1530, there were about 192 parishes in the diocese of Dublin. The most striking feature about them was the remarkably high number that were appropriated to ecclesiastical corporations based within and without the diocese. In all, 84% of Dublin parishes were annexed in this way (*Table 7.1*). 53% of these were appropriated to monastic or regular houses, including one of Dublin's two cathedrals, the Arroasian priory of Holy Trinity or Christ Church; and a further 31% were annexed to the component members of Dublin's secular cathedral, the college of St Patrick.[3]

Table 7.1: Division of parochial rectories in the diocese of Dublin c. 1530[4]

Rectors	*No. of rectories*	*%*
Monastic	89	46
St Patrick's cathedral	60	31
Christ Church cathedral	13	7
Archbishop	9	5
'Entire' or unappropriated	21	11

Thus, although their involvement in servicing the spiritual needs of their parishes would have been minimal, the corporate clergy invariably received the greater and more valuable part of the revenue of parochial benefices, the rectorial interest, which

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3 The corps of the six dignitaries and 20 of the 22 prebendaries consisted of interests in 45½ parishes. The properties of the dean and chapter or common fund, and of the petty canons and vicars choral, included interests in another 14½ parishes (see Appendix below).

4 See Appendix below.

generally consisted of all or most of the 'great' tithes of corn, hay and wood, and full possession of the glebe.[5]

There was nothing unusual in this practice *per se*. Appropriation was widespread throughout Western Christendom on the eve of the reformation.[6] But where Dublin did depart from the norm, and especially from the English norm, was in the extent of its appropriation. In England, about one third of all parish churches were appropriated by the beginning of the reformation.[7] In the localities the rate was sometimes higher. The rates of appropriation in the cathedral counties of the archdiocese of York and the diocese of Lincoln, for example, were 63% and 53% respectively.[8] Yet even allowing for these local variations, the level of appropriation in the diocese of Dublin was much greater than in England. The main reason for this was the inordinate endowment of St Patrick's cathedral with parish churches.

On account of its relatively late foundation, St Patrick's received little landed property from its patrons in the Middle Ages. In the modern county of Dublin, for example, it only held 1,832 acres of land, compared to the 10,538 acres held by its sister cathedral, Christ Church.[9] Yet the medieval archbishops of Dublin compensated for this lack of landed property by endowing the cathedral liberally with rectorial interests in some 60 Dublin parishes. Christ Church, by contrast, only received tithe income from 13 parishes (*Table 7.1*, above p 297). The appropriated rectories held by St Patrick's, especially the livings of the dignitaries and prebendaries, were the cream of Dublin's

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5 On the levying of 'great' tithes in Dublin and for a descriptive discussion of parochial glebes see Murray, 'Sources of clerical income', pp 140-6, 155-7.

6 Cameron, *European Reformation*, pp 25-6.

7 M. Zell, 'Economic problems of the parochial clergy in the sixteenth century', in F. Heal and R. O'Day , eds., *Princes and paupers in the English church 1500-1800* (Leicester, 1981), p 33.

8 The percentages are derived from A.G. Dickens' figures in *English Reformation*, p 75.

9 Otway-Ruthven, 'Medieval church lands', pp 59, 61.

parochial benefices, and included valuable rectories like Lusk (c. *IR*£120 in value in the late 1540s), Clondalkin (*IR*£87), Castleknock (*IR*£61) and Tallaght (c. *IR*£47).[10] The rectories held by Christ Church, in comparison, were much less valuable and included three poor city parishes - St John's, St Michan's and St Michael's - which Lord Deputy St Leger described as 'no livings' in the early 1540s, and which he recommended should be turned to other uses.[11] They also included the poor marcher parishes of Clonkeen (now Kill o' the Grange), Stillorgan, Tully, Dalkey and Killiney. Some indication of the comparatively low value of these livings is afforded by the fact that the entire endowment of Christ Church cathedral, which was worth about *IR*£260 net in the early 1540s and which also included all the cathedral's landed property, was less than the combined value of the four St Patrick's rectories mentioned above.[12]

St Patrick's large and bountiful parochial endowment was unusual by English standards. As Archbishop Loftus explained to Lord Burghley in 1585, the cathedral church stood 'not upon temporalities, as all [cathedral] churches in England do, but every dignity and every prebend is a parsonage with cure of souls, saving only a little demesne lands in the country for the dean and chantor'.[13] Theoretically, then, the dignitaries and prebendaries of St Patrick's were rectors or beneficed parochial clergy with cure of souls. In practice, however, the discharge of these parochial responsibilities came a very poor second to the performance of their cathedral duties. In accordance with the cathedral's statutes, the dean and chapter and the other cathedral clergy were obliged, in the words of Archbishop Curwen, 'to give their due attendance on that collegiate church, daily doing divine service and devotion with due reverence and harmony convenient'.[14] Indeed, as

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10 St Patrick's cathedral, Muniments, no 112: survey of possessions 1547 (Mason, *History of St Patrick's*, pp 27-31, 35-7, 59, 81).

11 *S.P. Hen. VIII*, iii, p 468.

12 Ibid., p 415.

13 Archbishop Loftus to Burghley, 18 March 1585 (P.R.O., SP 63/115, no. 27).

14 Shirley, *Ch. in Ire., 1547-67*, pp 233-7.

late as 1544, Henry VIII gave his seal of approval to the cathedral statues by granting the prebendaries a royal licence to absent themselves from their cures while residing in the cathedral precinct. Thus, until well into Elizabeth's reign, the dean and chapter of St Patrick's were normally non-resident rectors who left the cure of souls in their parishes to nominated substitutes.[15]

The reforming archbishops of Dublin were very conscious of the fact that the cathedral clergy held this theoretical pastoral responsibility in almost a third of all parishes in the diocese, and felt that it should be exploited in some way to meet the evangelical needs of the established church. From its inception, and in line with the continental reformers' ideas on the primacy of scripture and the nature of the priestly ministry, it was generally held by the theorists of Tudor religious reform that the clergy should be learned expositors of the newly discovered 'word', rather than mere mediators between the individual soul and its maker via the sacramental apparatus.[16] Thus in a set of articles drawn up for the reform of his clergy in the early years of his episcopacy, Archbishop Browne enjoined the higher clergy of his diocese and province - the bulk of whom comprised the cathedral canons of St Patrick's - to 'preach and teach the word of God merely, sincerely and purely, without colour or painting, according to the true meaning and intent of the text'.[17] Browne's decree had little effect however. In the period in which he issued it, he complained bitterly to Thomas Cromwell that he could not 'persuade or induce any, either religious or secular, sithens my coming over, once to preach the Word of God, or the just title of our most illustrious prince.'[18]

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15 *Fiants Ire., Hen. VIII*, no. 432; St Patrick's cathedral, Muniments, no 112: survey of possessions 1547 (Mason, *History of St Patrick's*, pp 28-99 *passim*).

16 S. Doran and C. Durston, *Princes, Pastors and People. The Church and Religion in England 1529-1689* (London, 1991), p 147; P. Collinson, 'The Elizabethan Church and the New Religion', in C.Haigh, ed., *The Reign of Elizabeth I* (Basingstoke and London, 1984), pp 184-94; Cameron, *European Reformation*, pp 136-55.

17 *Egerton papers*, p 8.

18 *S.P. Hen. VIII*, ii, pp 539-41;

In the reign of Elizabeth Archbishop Loftus approached the same problem differently. Instead of instructing the existing and predominantly conservative clergy of St Patrick's to preach on behalf of the Elizabethan settlement, he attempted, from the early 1570s at least, to remove them from the cathedral and to replace them with an unambiguously protestant and, in many cases, graduate clergy, which he recruited from the English universities, especially Cambridge.[19] Yet there were a number of factors which mitigated the effectiveness of this policy. One of these was that the prebendal system in St Patrick's was inherently pluralistic in nature. Five of the six dignitaries, for example, had more than one parish living appropriated to their benefices. Thus it is unlikely that even the noted preacher Thomas Jones entered the pulpits of all five parish churches appropriated to the chancellorship of St Patrick's when he held it in the late 1570s.[20] Nor were other cathedral canons, whose prebends consisted of a single parochial living, averse to acquiring additional parochial livings to supplement their incomes. In the 1570s, for example, John Maguire, the prebendary of Dunlavin, also held the rectory of Usk and the vicarage of Kineagh. In the 1580s Lancelot Money was simultaneously prebendary of Wicklow and vicar of Killsallaghan, while Gilbert Purdon was prebendary of Tipper and the rector of Painstown in Meath and vicar of Narraghmore in Kildare. Again, it is doubtful that these clergymen, all of whom were promoted to their cathedral livings by Archbishop Loftus, made any significant contribution towards evangelising the inhabitants of the various parishes from which they drew rectorial incomes, especially as these parishes were often situated at considerable distances from each other.[21]

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19 Above chapter 6; Robinson-Hammerstein, 'Erbischof Adam Loftus', pp 195-7, 255-9; Ford, *Protestant reformation*, p 21.

20 Lawlor, *Fasti of St Patrick's*, p 63. The parishes were Finglas, Artane, Ward, Dunsoghly and St Werburgh's.

21 Lawlor, *Fasti of St Patrick's*, pp 110, 169, 181; N.A.I., RC 6/1, pp 65-6, 185, Chancery Bills, E/250; *Fiants Ire., Eliz.*, no. 740; N.L.I., D. 9964; T.C.D., MS 567, f 2v; 'The state of St Patrick's church by Dublin', n.d., summer of 1585 (P.R.O., SP 63/118, no. 46).

Pluralism was not the only factor which mitigated the effectiveness of Loftus's strategy. The archbishop's need to bolster his own standing and to ensure that he had effective political support at court, in his cathedral or in the local community, often led him to bestow cathedral prebends on individuals who possessed dubious evangelical credentials. One such appointee was Arthur Athie, the earl of Leicester's private secretary, who held the precentorship of St Patrick's from 1579 until the early 1600s. While this appointment would certainly have gone some way towards guaranteeing Loftus the support of the influential earl at court, it did absolutely nothing towards establishing the protestant message in the parishes appropriated to the precentorship - Lusk, Burgage, St Andrew's and Ardree - given that Athie was both a layman and never set foot in the diocese.[22] The same was true of the appointment of Gilbert Purdon, Archbishop Loftus's brother-in-law, to the prebend of Tipper in 1582. As his kinsman, Loftus could have counted on Purdon's support in all of his proceedings in St Patrick's cathedral, an important consideration for the archbishop given the difficulties that he had earlier experienced from subversive conservative prebendaries like Thomas Creef and Christopher Browne. Yet, for all the support he gave Loftus, Purdon and his like cannot really be said to have represented the ideal of the godly pastor. Rather, he was a clerical entrepreneur who, according to one observer, 'liveth like a secular man'. His wife, it was said, baked and brewed his tithe corn 'to be put to sale', he himself was engaged in money lending activities, while in July 1588 he confirmed his secular aspirations by securing a patent from the Ulster King at Arms, granting him and his family - 'the ancient house of Purdon' - heraldic arms.[23]

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22 'The state of St Patrick's church by Dublin', n.d., summer of 1585 (P.R.O., SP 63/118, no. 46); *Return of all appeals in causes of doctrine or discipline made to the High Court of Delegates*, House of Commons Sessional Papers, lvii (1867-8); Lawlor, *Fasti of St Patrick's*, p 56.

23 Lawlor, *Fasti of St Patrick's*, p 169; 'The state of St Patrick's church by Dublin', n.d., summer of 1585 (P.R.O., SP 63/118, no. 46); N.A.I., Chancery Bills, I/248, K/308; T.C.D., MS 663, p 20.

The final factor which mitigated the effectiveness of Loftus's strategy was the use made of the dignities and prebends of St Patrick's to supplement the incomes of Irish bishops in the later sixteenth century. Loftus, himself, held the chancellorship of St Patrick's *in commendam* with his archbishopric from the early 1580s until his death in 1605. Edward Edgeworth, while bishop of Down, was granted a licence to hold one of the prebends of Tipperkevin in 1593. Richard Meredith, held the deanery of St Patrick's with its five Dublin rectories - Clondalkin, Esker, Rathcoole, Tallaght and Kilberry - while bishop of Leighlin in the 1590s, and Thomas Jones was prebendary of Clonmethan while bishop of Meath in 1591.[24] Here again the rectorial revenues of Dublin parishes were being used for purposes which had no direct bearing on the parishes themselves. Thus it is clear that throughout the sixteenth century the parishes appropriated to the dignities and prebends of St Patrick's cathedral functioned in much the same way as parishes appropriated to the religious houses before their dissolution. For much of the period, they were served by priests who were denied a share in the most substantive part of the ecclesiastical dues donated by the laity for their upkeep.[25] The question naturally arises, therefore, as to what provisions were made for the upkeep of these priests.

II

Canon 32 of the Fourth Lateran Council of 1215 - which emerged in response to the enormous growth of monastic appropriation in the twelfth century and described by one historian as the 'Magna Carta of the parish priest' - had stipulated that all non-serving rectors were 'to have a perpetual vicar canonically instituted' in their churches to serve in their stead. Further, this perpetual vicar was 'to have a fit portion of the profits of the

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24 Lawlor, *Fasti of St Patrick's*, pp 46, 63, 102, 174.

25 As late as the summer of 1585 Lord Deputy Perrott complained to Lord Burghley that 'such of the prebendaries as are capable of cures must be turned to serve upon the same, which now none of these do, except one poor man' (Bodl., Perrott MS 1, f 104v).

church' as a perpetual endowment in recompense for his services.[26] Unfortunately, this 'Magna Carta' never worked to the benefit of Dublin's parochial clergy. Few perpetual vicarages were endowed as a result of the Lateran Council's ruling, while some of those vicarages which had been established disappeared before the beginning of the sixteenth century. Thus in the early 1530s only 22 parishes or just under 25% of parishes appropriated to religious houses were endowed with a perpetual vicar; while a mere 10, or 17%, of the appropriations of St Patrick's, and only one of the 13 Christ Church benefices, provided for one.[27] There were also a further nine churches, described by Archbishop Alen in the early 1530s as very poor and pertaining to the archiepiscopal *mensa*, and thus effectively appropriated, which had no perpetual vicars.[28] In all, then, there were 171 parishes appropriated in the diocese, of which a mere 33 or 19% had provision for a perpetual vicar. The remaining 138 parishes were served by unbeneficed clergy, a group who constituted about 70% of the entire clerical workforce in the parishes at the outset of the reformation (*Table 7.2*).

Table 7.2 Division of parochial rectories and incidence of vicarages c. 1530[29]

Rectors	*No. of rectories*	*Endowed vicarages*
Monastic	89	22
St. Patrick's cathedral	60	10
Holy Trinity cathedral	13	1
Archbishop	9	0
'Entire' or unappropriated	21	4

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26 R.A.R. Hartridge, *A history of vicarages in the Middle Ages* (Cambridge, 1930), pp 20-1.

27 See Appendix below.

28 Ibid., p 202 *sub nomine* 'Kilbodan'. Alen stated that there were ten such churches. However, he included the church of Glendalough in his reckoning. Although theoretically appropriated to the archbishopric, it did not function as such as it lay among the Irishry.

29 See Appendix below.

In canon and common law not one of these clerics had any legal entitlement to any of the parochial revenues donated by the laity on their behalf. The responsibility for their upkeep normally lay with the rector of the parish who discharged it in one of two ways. Some rectors, especially among the cathedral clergy, allowed their deputies a small portion of their parochial endowments - usually the alterages[30] and, perhaps, a parcel of the glebe - as a reward for their services. Most of the unbeneficed clergy, however, were paid small monetary stipends by the rector, or his assigns, out of the profits of his rectorial possessions. Either way, the salaries of the unbeneficed clergy rarely exceeded *IR£5*.[31]

The predominance of unbeneficed over beneficed clergy in Dublin contrasted markedly with the prevailing situation in England. In the heartland of the Tudor dominions, the unbeneficed clergy formed a 'distinct layer in the clerical hierarchy below the class of parochial incumbents'.[32] This clerical proletariat, if employed at all, were normally assistants to parochial incumbents or chaplains in chapels of ease, and paid low salaries for their services. In Dublin, however, because of the very high level of appropriation and the very low level of endowed perpetual vicarages, there were very few *de jure* parochial incumbents. Thus the unbeneficed cleric formed the front line of the parochial clergy. This was in sharp contrast to the areas of England where an unbeneficed clergy predominated. In Northern England, and especially Lancashire, where the underdeveloped nature of the parochial system ensured that the number of chapels of ease far outweighed the number of parochial churches, there was a higher ratio of unbeneficed clergy to beneficed clergy. Only 10% of Lancashire's 400 secular priests, for example, were beneficed in the 1540s. Yet where fully parochial churches did exist,

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30 For the alterages, which consisted of 'small' tithes, tithes on fish and the 'oblations' see Murray, 'Sources of clerical income', pp 146-55.

31 St Patrick's cathedral, Muniments, no 112: survey of possessions 1547 (Mason, *History of St Patrick's*, pp 28-99 *passim*); *Extents Ir. Mon. possessions, passim.*

32 Zell, 'Economic problems of the parochial clergy', p 29.

they were normally served by beneficed incumbents, unless the latter were pluralists.[33] In Dublin, even if we exclude the impact of pluralism and chapels of ease on our calculations, there remained a very significant majority of unbeneficed over beneficed clergy working in the parishes throughout the sixteenth century.

At base, the paucity of vicarages, and the resultant predominance of unbeneficed over beneficed clergy, was a function of the very uneven yields of parochial dues that were produced throughout the diocese. Many parishes were simply not rich enough to provide both a parson and an endowed vicar with adequate remuneration. Yet some parishes were so rich that their proprietors, predominantly the cathedral clergy of St Patrick's, jealously guarded their revenue rights and successfully shunned any attempts to reduce their inheritance by endowing vicarages. The underlying causes of the uneven distribution of parochial dues were varied and depended on the socio-economic condition and physical extent of individual parishes. A useful paradigm for examining these variations is afforded by the parochial system that obtained in the rural deanery of Taney.

The deanery of Taney was situated almost entirely in what is now Co. Dublin. It surrounded Dublin city on all sides, saving the coast, and its northern and southern limits were the parishes of Finglas and Tallaght respectively. Taney contained the two extremes of parochial economy that existed in the diocese. Much of it lay in the heart of the Pale Maghery and, as a result, it contained a number of rich parishes centred on well-ordered manorial economies. However, the south-eastern tip of the deanery, consisting of the parishes of Kilgobbin, Cruagh, Whitechurch, Templeogue and part of Tallaght, lay in the marches on the southern border of the Pale. The unsettled political conditions in this region - the parishes concerned were frequently raided by the Gaelic

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33 Ibid., p 21; Haigh, *Reformation and resistance*, pp 31-3.

clans living in the Wicklow mountains - led to great social and economic dislocation, with the result that the parochial revenues were correspondingly meagre.

In regard to the number of parishes it contained, 38, Taney was the largest deanery in the diocese. At the commencement of the reformation, all 38 parishes were appropriated to a religious house or cathedral interest, yet only four vicarages - Tallaght, Lucan, Coolock and Castleknock - were endowed in the entire deanery.[34] An examination of the value of the rectories in the 1540s shows why this was so (*Table 7.3*).

Table 7.3 Rectorial values in the deanery of Taney 1540-7[35]

Above £50	3
£40+ to £50	3
£30+ to £40	2
£20+ to £30	2
£10+ to £20	8
Zero to £10	15

Fifteen of the rectories valued *IR*£10 or less including nine which valued *IR*£5 or less. To these we can add the rectory of Clogran Hiddert which in the 1530s, according to Archbishop Alen, 'hardly deserved to be called a chapel on account of its poverty'.[36] The poorest of these rectories lay in the marches of south Co. Dublin where they suffered much economic dislocation because of the unruly behaviour of marcher families like the Walshes and Harolds and the Gaelic clans of O'Byrne and O'Toole. Kilgobbin, for example, which was part of the archdeacon of Dublin's endowment and

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34 See Appendix below.

35 The table is largely compiled from two sources: the inquisitions taken by crown commissioners on the dissolution of the monasteries in 1540-1 and on the dissolution of St Patrick's cathedral in 1547 (*Extents Ir. Mon. possessions*, pp 9-10, 15-16, 30, 59, 72, 86-89, 124, 316; St Patrick's cathedral, Muniments, no 112: survey of possessions 1547 [Mason, *History of St Patrick's*, pp 28-99 *passim*]). The valuation for Coolock given in the extents, *IR*£5, was only the rent paid by the leasee of the rectory. The vicarage of Coolock was endowed with one third of the rectorial profits, which was returned at *IR*£5 1*s*. 8*d*. in 1539. Therefore, the real value of the rectory must have been £10+ and has been included in the £10-£20 category (E. St John Brooks, ed., *The Irish cartularies of Llanthony Prima and Secunda* [I.M.C., Dublin, 1953], p 306; *Valor beneficiorum*, p 9). There are no extent valuations for 5 Taney rectories.

36 'Et licet hec ob exilitatem vix meretur dici capella ...' (White, ed., 'Alen's Reportorium Viride', p 191).

inhabited by the 'Walshemen', only valued *IR*£3 1*s*. 4*d*. in 1547.[37] Similarly, before its suppression in 1539, St Mary's abbey only received *IR*£2 13*s*. 4*d*. from the rectory of Whitechurch; while the Knights Hospitallers of Kilmainham and the common fund of St Patrick's received, respectively, a mere 20 shillings from the rectory of Cruagh in Harold's country, and *IR*£4 13s. 4d. from the parish of Templeogue.[38] As vicars normally received one third, at most, of the issues of a parish, it is clear that the revenues of these marcher parishes would have been quite insufficient to provide support for permanently instituted vicars.[39]

It would be wrong to assume, however, that the political disorder and social dislocation prevalent in the marches was the only cause of parochial poverty in the diocese. Many livings ensconced well within the boundaries of the Pale in the heart of Co. Dublin were also poor and, as a result, devoid of vicarages. One reason for this was the manner in which parishes had been formed in the diocese in the twelfth century. From the outset of the process parochial formation was based on land ownership. Most parishes in the diocese were composed of lands which at the time of their formation were the property of a single lord.[40] The vagaries of this system had a number of far-reaching

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37 St Patrick's cathedral, Muniments, no 112: survey of possessions 1547 (Mason, *History of St Patrick's*, p 46); White, ed., 'Alen's Reportorium Viride', p 186.

38 *Extents Ir. Mon. possessions*, pp 10, 88; St Patrick's cathedral, Muniments, no 112: survey of possessions 1547 (Mason, *History of St Patrick's*, p 79).

39 The disturbed conditions in the marches also lead in some instances to the disappearance of vicarages which had been established in the Middle Ages. Such was the case with the vicarage of Fassagh Reban in the deanery of Omurthy (modern civil parish of Churchtown, Narragh and Reban West barony). According to the monastic commissioners, writing in 1540, the rectory of Fassagh Reban valued *IR*£19 'in time of peace' but in 'the time of war' was taken over by the O'Mores and was then worth nothing. This instability made a lasting impact on the structural make-up of the parish for, as Archbishop Alen recounted, there had been a perpetual vicarage until the mid-fifteenth century but 'on account of waste, wars and in respect of poverty this ... became extinct, and it is now endured although the laws of the Kingdom of England do not permit it' (*Extents Ir. Mon. possessions*, p 23; White, ed., 'Alen's Reportorium Viride' p 211: 'propter vasta guerras et paupertatis intuitu tunc fiebat illa extinctio, et modo tolleratur, attamen iura regni Anglie id non permittunt'). Alen was referring to a statute of 4 Henry II which stipulated that all appropriated parishes were to be provided with a perpetual vicarage.

40 Otway-Ruthven, 'Medieval church lands', p 56; idem, *A history of medieval Ireland*, pp 118-21.

consequences for the endowment of parishes in the sixteenth century. Some were formed in the smallest of land holdings and had correspondingly small populations with the result that the parishioners cultivated or kept little tithable agricultural produce. Such was the case with the parish of Kilmahuddrick in Taney deanery, which was founded by St Mary's abbey in an area covering only 181 modern acres. When the monastic commissioners surveyed it in 1540 it was found that the rectorial revenue only consisted of 12 measures of wheat and barley-malt and 12 measures of oat-malt worth a meagre 24 shillings. This was clearly an insufficient revenue for the maintenance of a priest and, in March of the following year, Archbishop Browne united it to the contiguous parish of Clondalkin.[41] This problem of small parish size might be exacerbated or, indeed, artificially created in cases where monastic estates existed within the boundaries of parishes which were not appropriated to the proprietors of these estates. From the twelth century canon law had stipulated that the monks should be exempt from paying tithes on their own lands to the rector of the parish church in which they lay. An example of this from the deanery of Taney was the parish of Clonturk. Here, the rector received no tithes from St Mary's abbey for the vill of Drishogue, a practice which was maintained even after the dissolution of the monasteries, when the exemption passed to the new lay proprietor of the estate.[42]

The effect of morphological factors on tithe yields was most keenly felt in the parishes of the city of Dublin. Like its equivalents in Tudor England - the ancient urban foundations of York, Stamford, Lincoln and Winchester - Dublin inherited a multiplicity of parishes from the Middle Ages, many of which were physically very

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41 *Extents Ir. Mon. possessions*, p 9; *Dignitus decani*, p 125. Other similarly-sized parishes with similarly low revenues included Stillorgan and Kilamacud, which Archbishop Browne amalgamated to the parish of Clonkeen in August 1551 (R.C.B., C.6.1.6, Registrum Novum of Christ Church cathedral, iii, p 1180 ['Christ Church deeds', no. 444]).

42 G. Constable, *Monastic Tithes* (Cambridge, 1964), chapter III; *Extents Ir. Mon. possessions*, p 2; R.C. Simington, ed., *The Civil Survey, A.D. 1654-56.* (I.M.C., 10 vols., Dublin, 1931-61), vii, p 180.

small and, as a consequence, lowly populated and badly endowed.[43] The parishes of St Olave and St Mary de la Dam were typical. The former covered an area of just over 8 acres within the walled city and its parishioners comprised the inhabitants of a single street, Fishamble Street. St Mary's, located in Castle Street, was not much larger and according to Archbishop Alen, its parishioners were confined to 'the inhabitants of the castle ... with few others'.[44] In addition, parishes such as St Olave's and St Mary's had little or no extra-mural land for the cultivation of grain crops, with the result that the most lucrative category of tithes - the 'great' tithes of corn, hay and wood - were unavailable to their rectors. Instead, tithes were levied on the produce of small gardens and on the few animals kept by town dwellers which, in monetary terms, did not amount to much. In July 1549, for example, it was reported that the tithes of the small suburban parish of St Andrew were levied on 3 orchards, 15 gardens and a dove-house which were leased for an annual rent of *IR*24*s*. 4*d*.[45]

In theory, the absence of 'great' tithes in the urban parishes should have been offset by personal or private tithes - offerings on the profits of the business of merchants and the wages of artisans - which are known to have been levied in Dublin.[46] In practice, however, personal tithes were a far from adequate substitute as they were extremely difficult to collect. This is borne out by contemporary opinion and the surviving valuations of Dublin city rectories, both of which attest to the fact that the urban parishes were notoriously poor in the sixteenth century. According to Archbishop Alen, for example, the parish of St Olave was 'hardly able to support one chaplain at this present day'. He also reported that the suburban parish of St Peter on the Mount was

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43 C.Cross, 'The incomes provincial urban clergy, 1520-1645', in Heal and O'Day, eds., *Princes and Paupers*, p 66.

44 J.K.Clarke, 'The parish of St Olave', in *D.H.R.*, xi (1949-50), 4, p 119; Ordnance Survey, *Dublin c. 840-c. 1540*; White, ed., 'Alen's Reportorium Viride', p 181 ('inhabitantes castellum ... cum aliis paucis').

45 Murray, 'Sources of clerical income', p 150.

46 Ibid, pp 150-1; A.G. Little, 'Personal tithes', in *E.H.R.*, lx (1945), pp 67-88.

'poor and exile', an observation confirmed by crown commissioners in the late 1530s who valued it at *IR*£1 6s. 8d. The same commissioners also valued another city parish, St Mary de la Dam, at a mere *IR*20*s*. 4*d*.,[47] while we have already seen what Lord Deputy St Leger thought of the city parishes belonging to Christ Church cathedral. According to him, they were 'no livings'.

In reality, then, most of the city parishes were not viable as economic units, a feature which was recognised by Archbishop Browne who, in the 1540s and 1550s, endeavoured to rationalise the parochial structure of the city by amalgamating poor, underpopulated and contiguous parishes. During the period he united St Olave's to St John's; the parishes of St James, and St John, Kilmainham, to St Catherine's; and the parishes of St Mary de la Dam and St Andrew to St Werburgh's. These unifications, together with the disappearance of certain parishes following the dissolution of the monasteries and the clampdown on religious gilds, reduced the number of parishes in the deanery of Christianity - the deanery which comprehended Dublin city and its suburbs - from 19 to 13 between 1530 and 1570. In reality, however, Archbishop Browne's reforms were quite modest, especially by English standards where the rationalisation of urban parochial structures was proceeded with in a more vigorous manner. York's parochial complement, for example, was reduced from 50 to 25 by the end of the sixteenth century, while Lincoln's came down from 24 to 9 and Stamford's from 11 to 6. In reality, then, Browne's reforms failed to address the economic problems of urban parishes adequately and, even at the death of Queen Elizabeth, a sizeable number of economically weak parishes remained in being in the city of Dublin, including St Peter on the Mount, the parish of St Nicholas Within, St Bride's and St Michael of the Pool. More resolute reform of the economic condition of the city parishes had to await the reign of James I, when a new cess on city householders was introduced by the state to support the parochial clergy.[48]

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47 Murray, 'Sources of clerical income', pp 150-1.

48 Ibid., p 152; *Acts privy council, 1615-16*, pp 447-54.

Yet another problem which affected the capacity of parishes in the diocese to support endowed vicarages was the generally poor condition of the economy of the Irish lordship, a feature which lay at the root of or exacerbated the structural problems. When the reformation began in Ireland in the 1530s, the local economy was still a long way from recovering from the great plague and war generated crisis it had suffered in the mid-fourteenth century, especially in regard to its population.[49] This demographic problem, and the economic decline and dilapidation that it entailed, was not only evident in the city but in many of the villages of its rural hinterland, being especially acute in the manorial village of Kilmainham, which lay to the south-west of the city. In 1540, for example, the north, west and south towers of the quadrant wall of the manor place of Kilmainham were ruined, while the roof of the barn, which was destroyed by fire c. 1533, was still in disrepair. Crown commissioners, who surveyed the manor in 1540, reported that large tracts of land were not under tillage, while its inhabitants were so poor that they were unable to maintain the fabric of their parish church. The steeple of St Mark's chapel, in fact, had fallen down about five years previously and had not been rebuilt. Similarly, the nearby bridge over the river Liffey, which linked the village to the city of Dublin, was very ruinous and required repairs estimated at 100 marks. Such poverty was reflected in the lowly value of the rectory of Kilmainham, *IR*£7 6s. 8d. in 1540, and had long precluded any possibility that its monastic appropriator, the Knights Hospitallers of Kilmainham, would endow a perpetual vicar to serve the cure of souls. Indeed, the diocesan authorities came to the conclusion that the manor was so poor that it did not warrant its parochial status at all. Thus, in March 1546, Archbishop Browne united it to the contiguous suburban parishes of St Catherine and St James, citing the thiness of its population as one of the main reasons for his action.[50]

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49 Lydon, *Ireland in the later Middle Ages*, pp 47-80; Nicholls, *Land, law and society*, p 9; Canny, *Elizabethan Conquest*, pp 10-3.

50 'The particular and total sums of the waste and decays of the manor place of Kilmainham ... and in what times the same happened ... by Michael Fitzwilliams, surveyor' (P.R.O., SP 63/14, no. 57 [ii]); *Extents Ir. Mon. possessions*, pp 81-2, 86; *Cal. pat. rolls Ire., Hen. VIII-Eliz*, p 122 (hand

There is little doubt, then, that structural deficiencies in the parishes themselves, and the wider political and socio-economic problems of the late medieval lordship, go a long way towards explaining the absence of vicarages, and the predominance of an unbeneficed clergy, in the diocese of Dublin during the sixteenth century. They do not explain the phenomenon fully however. Side by side with the poorly endowed parishes, there also existed a significant number of livings which yielded very good incomes for their rectors. In the deanery of Taney, for example, 8 parishes valued more than *IR*£30 per annum in the 1540s: Finglas and Kilmactalway, both *IR*£33 6*s*. 8*d*; Rathfarnham *IR*£41 6*s*. 8*d*.; Tallaght *IR*£46 10s. 4d.; Newcastle Lyons *IR*£46 10*s*.; Clondalkin £86 13*s*. 4d.; Castleknock *IR*£61 6*s*. 8*d*.; and Mulhuddart *IR*£30 9s.[51] Generally speaking, these richer rectories were centred on large, decently populated and undivided manors. Tallaght, Finglas and Clondalkin, for example, were part of the archbishop of Dublin's patrimony, and covered territorial areas amounting to c. 14,330 acres, 4,487 acres and 4,055 acres respectively.[52] The most striking feature about the rich rectories of Taney deanery, however, is that they were all appropriated to St Patrick's cathedral, a pattern which prevailed throughout the diocese generally. Seven of the £30+ rectories belonged to individual dignitaries and prebendaries in the cathedral; the remaining one, Castleknock, being divided between the prebendary of Castleknock and the economy of St Patrick's. Further, despite their relative prosperity, only two of these parishes had endowed vicarages, Tallaght and Castleknock. The reason for this emerges clearly from

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corrected edition held in the library of the Public Record Office, London, which emends 'tenuity' to read 'thiness of population'. This corrected formula agrees with the other surviving unification instruments issued by Archbishop Browne and is more reliable than Morrin's version. On the inaccuracies in Morrin's calendaring of the patent rolls see Anonymous [J.T.Gilbert], *On the history, position and treatment of the Public Records of Ireland by an Irish Archivist* [London, 1864]).

51 St Patrick's cathedral, Muniments, no 112: survey of possessions 1547 (Mason, *History of St Patrick's*, pp 29-59).

52 Otway-Ruthven, 'Medieval church lands', p 57.

an examination of the policy of Dublin's last pre-reformation archbishop, John Alen, with regard to parochial benefices.

It is clear from his writings and actions that Archbishop Alen was unhappy with the small number of endowed vicarages in his diocese. On nine occasions in his 'Reportorium Viride' he drew attention to the fact that the parishes about which he was writing had no vicar and, on at least two occasions, he actually revived two extinct vicarages, Howth and Straffan.[53] Yet even he had to allow that the maintenance of a secular cathedral modelled on its English counterparts, and the preservation of its prestige, necessitated, in the absence of good real estate, the annexation of the richer parochial churches of the diocese to the officers and canons of the same establishment. Moreover, the notion and practice of maximising these parochial revenues on behalf of the cathedral - by not endowing perpetual vicars - was inherent in this line of thought. Writing about the parish of Finglas in the deanery of Taney, for example, Alen noted and implicitly condoned the fact that it was without the ordination of a perpetual vicar because it had to bear another 'charge', the 'continuous incumbency' of the chancellor of St Patrick's within the cathedral precinct. To support the chancellor's office and dignity, then, Finglas had to do without a vicar.[54]

Throughout the diocese as a whole only 4 of the 45½ rectories appropriated to the dignities and prebendaries of St Patrick's had an endowed vicar at the outset of the reformation. Two of these, Lusk and Swords, were the richest parishes in the diocese, both worth over £100 per annum in the 1540s, and were thus wealthy enough to support endowed vicars beyond the fat portions settled upon their illustrious rectors. The rest of

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53 White, ed., 'Alen's Reportorium Viride', pp 189-90, 194, 196-7, 199, 216. When Alen suppressed the convent of Timolin in the early 1530s he also endowed seven livings for parochial clergy - 5 rectories and 2 vicarages - in the nuns' six appropriated parish churches (ibid., pp 199, 207-8, 212-3).

54 Ibid., p 190, 'sed absque vicarii ordinacione perpetui propter alia onera pretaxata eidem continue incumbentia ... '.

the prebendaries, however, did not consider it desirable to provide such support. A good example of this prebendal protectionism is afforded by the actions of the prebendary of Howth in the early 1530s. Howth, a prebendal parish in the deanery of Swords, had originally been endowed with a perpetual vicar, but the vicarage had disappeared many years before the arrival of Archbishop Alen in 1529. The previous existence of a vicarage in the parish, however, provided the legally minded Alen with a good precedent for re-establishing it, and in 1532 he provided one Nicholas Carney, an Oxford MA graduate, to the revived benefice. Despite Alen's efforts, however, the vicarage did not endure long after his death. This is evident from the fact that it was absent from the valuation of ecclesiastical benefices made by crown commissioners in 1539 for taxation purposes. It is likely that one of the prebendaries of Howth suppressed it between 1534 and 1539, probably the pluralist Simon Jeffrey.[55] Overall, then, the material interests of St Patrick's cathedral, interests which were dedicated to preserving the cathedral's status as the most perfect embodiment of English Irish ecclesiastical order, were as significant a factor in accounting for the small number of endowed vicarages which existed in the diocese, as the structural make-up and economic condition of individual Dublin parishes.

III

The established church's inheritance of a parochial system in which the vast majority of rectories were appropriated, in which there were very few endowed vicarages and in which the work of serving the cure of souls fell largely upon the shoulders of unbeneficed clergy, did not augur well for Dublin's reformation archbishops as they set about the task of winning the hearts and minds of their flock to the Tudors' religious dispensations. In what was a strictly hierarchical society, the unbeneficed clergy formed the lowest tier of the clerical estate. Their small monetary stipends, rarely rising above

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55 Ibid., p 196; *Valor beneficiorum*, pp 9-10.

IR£5 in the diocese of Dublin throughout the sixteenth century, reflected their lowly status. Among humanist and protestant intellectuals it was a commonly held view that such unbeneficed and badly-paid clergy were by definition inadequate, being ill-equipped intellectually to proclaim and spread a protestant, bibliocentric vision of Christianity, whatever its particular hue.[56] Certainly, it was a view with which Archbishop Browne concurred. It was no accident that when he enjoined his clergy to preach in the late 1530s he had in mind 'all Abbots, Priors, Deans, Collegians, Prebendaries, or Masters of Hospitals', and not the mainstream, unbeneficed parochial clergy.[57] The same view also underpinned Archbishop Loftus's efforts to use the cathedral livings of St Patrick's as the basis for recruiting his learned, preaching clergy. It is apparent, then, that the harbingers of Tudor religious reform recognised at an early stage that the marked paucity of vicarages and the predominance of unbeneficed over beneficed clergy were destined to hamper its evangelical aspects. The dissolution of the religious houses between 1536 and 1540 offered, therefore, a unique and historic opportunity of rectifying this imbalance by ordaining vicarages in the many monastic rectories which devolved to the crown after the eclipse of the religious orders.

In the diocese of Dublin 67 monastic rectories, over a third of all parishes within the see, had no endowed vicar on the eve of the dissolution. In some of these parishes the monks elected to serve the cure of souls themselves rather than hire what would inavariably be poorly paid stipendiary clerks. To ameliorate this situation in the wake of the dissolution the Irish parliament passed an act for erecting vicarages in 1541. Nine officers of the crown including the lord deputy, Sir Anthony St Leger, and the lord chancellor, John Alen, were empowered to erect vicarages as they 'shall think convenient' in those parish churches appropriated to monasteries

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56 Zell, 'Economic problems of the clergy', p 35; Collinson, 'The Church and the New Religion', p 186.

57 *Egerton papers*, p 8.

> now dissolved, having no vicar endowed within the same ... within which parish churches divine service was done, maintained and kept, and the cure served by the late religious persons of the same ... to the intent that the king's subjects, inhabiting within every of the said parishes, should be hereafter, from time to time, instructed, with the true, perfect and sincere word of Almighty God.[58]

To this end they were also given power to 'limit and assign unto every such vicar such manses, portions of tithes, alterages, and oblations, of the possessions coming to the king's highness, by the dissolution of the same monasteries ... for the maintenance of divine service (and) keeping of good hospitality within their said parishes'.[59] Had this act been fully implemented, some progress would have been made towards eradicating the imbalance between unbeneficed and beneficed clergy in the diocese. In practice, however, the laudable intentions of the act were sacrificed to the dictates of self-interest. The government clique charged with enforcing the statute were themselves the beneficiaries of much of the redistribution of monastic property after the dissolution, including the monastic rectories, and it was not thought 'convenient' to depreciate its value by voluntarily releasing rectorial parcels for the upkeep of the parochial clergy. Thus, during the years immediately preceding and following the enactment of the statute, Lord Deputy St Leger, Lord Chancellor Alen, Chief Justice Luttrell and Sergeant-at-law Barnewall received 21 Dublin rectories between them. Thirteen of these had no perpetual vicars, yet not a single vicarage was created in any of them.[60]

The dictates of self-interest, in fact, had been enshrined in one of the clauses of the act which protected 'all such right, title, interest, claim, possession, remainder, offices, annuities, real charge or commons' which any person or corporate body might have in

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58 *Stat. Ire.*, i, pp 193-5.

59 Ibid.

60 *Fiants Ire., Hen. VIII*, nos. 235, 304, 374; Bradshaw, *Dissolution of religious orders*, pp 233, 235 (grant of St Wolstan's priory to John Alen; its appropriated rectories are delineated in the appendix below); *Extents Ir. Mon. possessions*, p 88.

any of the revenues intended for the erection of these vicarages.[61] The beneficiaries of this clause included those who had received long leases from the religious during the widespread panic that gripped the monasteries and their inmates on the eve of the dissolution. Again, members and associates of the government coterie charged with enforcing the statute stood to gain from it. Lord Chancellor Alen, for instance, held the rectory of Ballyfermot on one of these pre-dissolution long leases while his brother Thomas secured the rectory of Kilteel in 1539 on a 99 year lease.[62] By the time these leases fell in during the Elizabethan and Stuart periods the act of 1541 was a dead letter, and vicarages were never endowed in either parish. Indeed, only one vicarage was created according to the terms of the 1541 act in the diocese of Dublin. This was the vicarage of St Catherine which was erected in 1546.[63]

The Henrician government's lack of interest in tackling the problem of clerical finance in 1541 was unsurprising and was was made manifest again when it had its disposal the numerous and lucrative livings of St Patrick's cathedral, following the institution's suppression in January 1547. The suppression of St Patrick's, and the crown's acquisition of the proprietorial interest in the cathedral's parochial livings, were undertaken purely for political ends. Again, no vicarages were endowed in these prebendal parishes. Instead, the eagerly sought after tithes were dispersed among leading officials in the Dublin administration and leading gentry in the Pale, in an effort to retain their allegiance to the Tudor political reformation as conceived by Lord Deputy St Leger. Like the cathedral clergy before them, the new lessees continued the practice of finding lowly paid curates to serve in the parishes until the cathedral's restoration in 1555.[64] Overall, then, government aid directed towards improving the lot of Dublin's

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61 *Stat. Ire.*, i, pp 193-5.

62 *Extents Ir. Mon. possessions*, pp 88, 91.

63 *Cal. pat. rolls Ire. Hen. VIII-Eliz.*, p 123.

64 *Fiants Ire. Edw. VI*, nos. 32-111 *passim*.

parochial clergy throughout the sixteenth century was characterised by its imperfect conception, meagre content and, above all, its low incidence. The handful of clergy who benefited included the vicar of Hollywood, whose vicarage was augmented by 40 shillings in 1537 and the curate of Clonsilla who, from the 1560s, was allowed two couples of corn out of the rectory for his upkeep.[65]

The extremely limited impact of the 1541 statute and other government interventions on behalf of the clergy, as well as the crown's transference of monastic rectories to the laity *en masse*, whether as freehold or leasehold property, meant, effectively, that the overall patterns of a high level of appropriation and the service of most parochial cures by unbeneficed clergy did not alter significantly during the reformation period. In 1530 the total percentage of appropriated parishes in the diocese (a composite total of monastic, cathedral and archiepiscopal appropriations) was fixed at around 89%. In 1560 and 1603, substituting the lay impropriators for the monastic impropriators, it stood at 90% and 92% respectively, the small fluctuations arising from the disappearance of certain parishes in the intervening periods due to officially sanctioned parochial unifications. Similarly, the percentage rate of those parishes which had provision for an endowed cleric to serve the cure also remained fairly static. In 1530, as we have seen, it stood at 28% of all parishes. The endowment of a mere handful of vicarages thereafter[66] ensured that in 1560 and 1603 it had only risen to 29% and 32% respectively. Thus the percentage of those parishes which were served by unbeneficed clergy only dropped a few points during the reformation period, from 72% to 68% (*Table 7.4*, p 320). It was not only the percentage of parishes served by unbeneficed clergy which remained static

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65 *Extents Ir. Mon. possessions*, p 317; *Fiants Ire., Eliz*, no. 943.

66 Three of these, Clondalkin, Esker and Rathcoole were established by Sir Robert Weston while dean of St Patrick's in the early 1570s (above pp 229-30). The forth and final additional vicarage was established in the parish of Burgage to cover for Arthur Athie's absenteeism in the early 1580s ('The state of St Patrick's church by Dublin', n.d., summer of 1585 [P.R.O., SP 63/118, no. 46]; T.C.D., MS 567, f 2r, 'Vicaria de Downhenlock').

however. More significantly, the manner and the rate at which these clergy were paid would also remain unchanged until well after the century's end.

Table 7.4:Division of parochial rectories and incidence of vicarages in the Diocese of Dublin c. 1560-1603[67]

Rectors	*1560*		*1603*	
	Rectories	*Vicarages*	*Rectories*	*Vicarages*
Lay Impropriators	78	23	74	23
St. Patrick's cathedral	57	10	56	14
Holy Trinity Cathedral	12	1	12	1
Archbishop	8	0	10	2
Entire	16	3	13	1

At the outset of our period, about 26 of the 138 or so unbeneficed clergy serving in Dublin parishes are known to have received some form of revenue from the offerings of their parishioners, all of which were allowed to them under compliment of their rectors. Twenty of these 'endowed' curates served in parishes appropriated to St Patrick's cathedral, and the remaining six in parishes appropriated to Thomascourt abbey (3), Baltinglass abbey, the priory of Holmpatrick and St Mary's abbey.[68] The basic staple of these 'endowed' curates was the 'alterages' (*alteragium*). Strictly speaking, the term designated only those voluntary offerings made upon or which arose by reason of the altar, but in common usage it came to be employed as a collective description for all the remaining ecclesiastical dues exclusive of the great tithes; namely, the 'small' tithes, tithe of fish and the 'oblations'.[69] It would appear that all of the 'endowed' curates appointed by the clergy of St Patrick's were in receipt of the 'small' tithes and oblations. These offerings were the traditional vicarial dues, so, in reality, such curates were quasi-vicars. This is borne out by comparing the values of these curacies with contemporary

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67 See Appendix below.

68 *Extents Ir. Mon. possessions*, pp 15, 28-9, 43, 51, 130; St Patrick's cathedral, Muniments, no 112: survey of possessions 1547 (Mason, *History of St Patrick's*, pp 28-99 *passim*).

69 On these offerings generally see Murray, 'Sources of clerical income', pp 146-55.

valuations of Dublin vicarages. The curates of Clondalkin, Rathcoole and Esker received 'alterages' (small tithes and oblations) of £6, £4 and £5 respectively in 1546. In the 1539 valuation of parochial benefices in the diocese of Dublin, 26 livings valued *IR*£6 or below, of which 16 were vicarages, endowed predominantly with small tithes and oblations.[70]

In some respects, then, this small group of curates were more fortunate than their stipendiary brethren. The second half of the sixtreenth century saw a significant rise in the price of consumables and receiving agricultural produce in kind was more beneficial to a priest than receiving a fixed monetary stipend.[71] Nevertheless, it is also clear that their salaries were still quite low. It is probable that Clondalkin, Rathcoole and Esker were three of the more valuable curacies in existence at the time, as all three were raised by Dean Weston to the status of vicarages in the 1570s. Yet even these were still well below the rate of pay of Irish footsoldiers in Henry VIII's armies serving in France and Scotland in the 1540s. These soldiers received 6d. per day which worked out at an annual salary of £9 2s. 6d.[72] Indeed, some of these 'endowed' curates or quasi-vicars needed monetary stipends to supplement their alterage-based incomes. The prebendary of Kilmactalway, for example, paid the curate of his parish church 24s. over and above the alterages in the 1540s, while the vicars choral of St Patrick's allowed the curate of Aderrig *IR*£3 6s. 8d. out of their rectorial issues.[73]

The curate of Aderrig was one of the more fortunate curates in the diocese as he was also allowed to hold the glebe land - two messuages and a 'park called Roosecroft' - by his rector, the vicars choral of St Patrick's.[74] However, curates with glebe were

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70 Mason, *History of St Patrick's*, pp 29-31; *Valor beneficiorum*, pp 9-10.

71 On inflation see below pp 323-4.

72 W. G. Strickland, 'Irish soldiers in the service of Henry VIII', in *R.S.A.I.Jn.*, liii (1923), p 96.

73 Mason, *History of St Patrick's*, pp 51, 95.

74 Ibid., p 95.

extremely thin on the ground. Only six curates in rectories annexed to St Patrick's[75] and one in a monastic rectory are known to have held glebe land at any point during the sixteenth century. Before the dissolution of St Mary's abbey, the Cistercians allowed the curate serving in Raheny one messuage, 30 acres of land and the small tithes and alterages of the parish. However, as an unbeneficed cleric his title to these was not protected by common or canon law and after the dissolution of the monasteries the new lay impropriators dropped these provisions. More importantly, the pre-dissolution curate of Raheny had been an exception, even among among the six curates who received part of their monastic rectors' parochial endowment. The rest of them only held the bare alterage, or the oblations, which ranged from a mere 13s. 4d. to four marks annually. In reality, they were effectively stipendiary priests. The curates of Holmpatrick and Castledillon, for instance, needed stipends to supplement their 'alterage' salaries.[76]

The position of these stipendiary curates, who made up the vast majority of the 138 or so unbeneficed clergy required to serve in Dublin parishes, was much worse than the comparatively select band of 'vicarial' curates supported by the clergy of St Patrick's. They were paid fixed annual stipends either by the rectors themselves or the lessees of their tithes, stipends which would remain stagnant or, in some cases, were even reduced in the century or so before the 1641 rebellion. It is arguable that many of these incomes were wholly inadequate before the onset of inflation, but in the 1560s, 1570s and 1580s, they would have been impossible to live on alone. In 1584, for example, the prebendaries of St Patrick's, complaining to the English privy council about lay impropriation, stated that for the most part these ministers received little above £2 or £3 yearly. In 1587, Andrew Trollope informed Secretary Walsingham that most ministers in Ireland were 'stipendiary men' and that few had '£5 a year to live on - the most not

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75 Clondalkin, Rathfarnham, Tipper, Clonmethan, Taney and Aderrig.

76 *Extents Ir. Mon. possessions*, pp 15, 51.

above 53s. 4d.'[77] Although information on the salaries received by individual stipendiaries is limited, what we do know tends to confirm the observations of Trollope and the prebendaries. After the dissolution of the priory of All Hallows and the Hospital of St John without the Newgate, the curate of Palmerstown, Robert Sex, and the curate of Cloghran Hiddert, Robert Dowling, were paid stipends of 40s. and 53s. 4d. respectively by the crown before the rectories were leased out. 53s. 4d. was also the fee that the curate of the conventual parish church of Grace Dieu received from the nuns before they were dissolved.[78] The curate of Tubber received a mark less from the same rector, although they paid the curate of Westpalston a more generous wage of £5 6s. 8d. per annum. However, after the dissolution of the nunnery the rate of pay in this cure dropped to a more typical figure. As late as 1630, the curate William Tedder, only had 'but thirty or forty shillings a year for serving the cure'.[79] Similarly, the two priests who were hired by the city of Dublin in the 1540s and 1550s to serve the cures of the former appropriations of All Hallows priory - Baldoyle and Cloghran Hiddert - were better paid than their counterparts of the 1630s. Each of the former received IR£4 13s. 4d., while the latter received a mere 34 and 45 shillings respectively.[80]

While the stipends of many unbeneficed clergy remained fixed or declined in the second half of the sixteenth century, the price of consumables rose considerably in Ireland. An important indicator of this inflationary growth is provided by the rise in value of the parochial livings of St Patrick's cathedral between 1547 and 1584. As we have seen, the prebendaries and corporations were endowed with the great tithes of corn. The dean of

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77 Petition of the prebendaries of St Patrick's, delivered to the privy council c. December 1584 (P.R.O., SP 63/113, no. 56 [iii]); Trollope to Burghley, 26 October 1587 (P.R.O., SP 63/131, no. 64).

78 *Extents Ir. Mon. possessions*, pp 67, 77; C. McNeill, ed., 'Accounts of sums realised by sales of chattels of some suppressed Irish monasteries', in *R.S.A.I.Jn.*, lii (1922), p 37.

79 *Extents Ir. Mon. possessions*, p 77; M.V. Ronan, ed., 'Archbishop Bulkeley's visitation of Dublin, 1630', in *Archiv. Hib.*, viii (1941), pp 68-9.

80 D.C.A., MR/35, pp 12, 36, 42, 53, 60, 63, 70-1, 80-1, 90, 99, 100, 104, 116; Ronan, ed., 'Bulkeley's visitation', pp 65, 77.

St Patrick's, for instance, received 2,500 pecks of tithe corn on average each year while the chancellor received 1,800.[81] Thus the rise in their value is a rough guide to the rise in grain prices over the period. In 1547 the combined value of these livings was £1,370 15s. 10d. Lord Deputy Perrot informed Burghley in 1584 that they were worth about 4,000 marks sterling or *IR*£4,000 which represents a percentage rise in their value in the period of nearly 300%. It is possible, then, that the price of grain may have tripled between the 1540s and 1580s, though a smaller price rise, somewhere in the region of 150-200%, is more likely.[82] A letter of Archbishop Curwen written in 1564 to the earl of Pembroke corroborates the existence of this massive price rice. He wrote of the prebends that 'the whole profit of them standeth in tithes, without any temporal land, which now, corn being extremely dear, be somewhat worth'.[83] It is also confirmed by surviving data on the price of a peck of wheat. In the early 1540s, a peck of wheat was leased by St Mary's abbey at a shilling or less. By the 1560s, the cess price on a peck of wheat imposed by the government was 4s., and this was way below the market value of 20s. a peck.[84]

In this inflationary context, the freeze on or decline in the wages of stipendiary priests, who made up the vast majority of Dublin's parochial clergy, was catastrophic. One result was an enormous rise in pluralism during the period. The prebendaries of St Patrick's informed the privy council of how the stipendiary wishing 'to make his stipend as he may live upon travelleth like a lackey to three or four churches in a morning; every church a mile or two miles asunder, and there once a week readeth only a Gospel in Latin, and so away, and so the poor people are deluded'.[85] Unfortunately, there are no

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81 Murray, 'Sources of clerical income', p 142.

82 Ronan, *Reformation in Dublin*, p 315; Perrot to Burghley, 21 August 1584 (Bodl., MS Perrott 1, ff 24v-25v). See also Murray, 'Sources of clerical income', pp 145-6.

83 Shirley, *Ch. in Ire., 1547-67*, pp 151-3

84 *Extents Ir. Mon. possessions*, pp 10-3; Canny, *Old English elite*, p 35.

85 Petition of the prebendaries of St Patrick's, delivered to the privy council c. December 1584 (P.R.O., SP 63/113, no. 56 [iii]).

extant sources from the sixteenth century to provide a systematic demonstration of the prebendaries' point. However, early seventeenth century visitations of the diocese of Dublin provide us with important guidelines to the pattern obtaining there in the later decades of the sixteenth century. In 1610 a visitation conducted under the aegis of the court of Faculties revealed that 104 churches in Co. Dublin and the Wicklow deaneries of Bray and Ballymore were served by a mere 43 clergymen. Five years later the regal visitors surveyed the diocese and found that 137 churches and chapels were served by only 58 priests.[86] The prebendaries' observation that the pluralist curates served in contiguous parishes is also borne out by these surveys.

Even if we ignore the impact of inflation upon the unbeneficed clergy, their very existence in such numbers ensured that a very low standard of pastoral service would be on offer at the parochial level. Further, their preponderant position in the parochial clergy nullified the evangelical capability of the state church, as the stipendiaries were invariably men of little educational background, certainly uninitiated in the tenets of Elizabethan protestantism and often imbued with a distinctly conservative temperament. The prebendaries of St Patrick's were unmincing in their criticism of them: 'there is scant a minister to be found amongst them but rather a company of Irish rogues and Romish runagate priests, teaching nothing but traitorous practices; all in a manner enemies by profession to God's true religion'.[87] Archbishop Loftus was equally denigratory of their abilities. In 1585, when plans were afoot to turn St Patrick's into a university he protested against it vigorously on the grounds that while the university was training its divines the cures of the various prebends would 'in the mean season ..... be left to the unlearned stipendiaries.'[88] After a prolonged vituperation on their moral

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86 T.C.D., MS 566, ff 27r-29r; B.L., Add. MS 19836, ff 6v-14r.

87 Petition of the prebendaries of St Patrick's, delivered to the privy council c. December 1584 (P.R.O., SP 63/113, no. 56 [iii]).

88 Loftus to Burghley, 18 March 1585 (P.R.O., SP 63/115, no. 27).

character, Andrew Trollope wrote an equally-enraged account of their pastoral abilities and its effects: 'they carry with them a book in Latin of the Common Prayer set forth and allowed by her majesty. But they read little or nothing of it or can well read it, but they tell the people a tale of our Lady or St Patrick or some other saint, horrible to be spoken or heard, and intolerable to be suffered'.[89] In reality, however, the English government did not need to be informed of the 'miserable confusion and disorder'[90] affecting the parochial system and clergy in Dublin and elsewhere in the Pale. Its own representatives on the spot also communicated the same lamentable analysis.

Central to Lord Deputy Sidney's plans for reforming the church was the creation of a ministry able and willing to disseminate protestantism, a task which was greatly hampered by the inherited system for financing the clergy. In 1565, for example, he wrote that the reformation 'goeth slowly forward' in the dioceses of Dublin, Armagh and Meath by reason of 'want of livings sufficient for fit entertainment of well chosen and learned curates amongst them, for that those livings of cure being most part appropriated benefices in the Queen's majesties possession, are letten by leases unto farmers with allowance of reservation of very small stipends or entertainments for the vicars or curates'.[91] Ten years later Sidney was still trying to press home the urgency of the situation to Queen Elizabeth, emphasising that the Church of Ireland in the Pale and outside was 'foul-deformed' because of 'the want of good ministers' and 'competent living for the ministers being well chosen'.[92] Worse, the lowly salaries they received actually encouraged the unbeneficed clergy of the established church to maintain catholic ceremonies. According to Sidney they made their living 'upon the gain of

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89 Trollope to Burghley (P.R.O., SP 63/131, no. 64).

90 Johnes to Walsingham, 14 July 1584 (P.R.O., SP 63/111, no. 31).

91 Shirley, *Ch. in Ire., 1547-67*, pp 233-7.

92 Sidney to the queen, 28 April 1576 (P.R.O., SP 63/55, no. 38) Other copies of the letter are printed in Collins, *Letters and memorials of state - from the De Lisle and Dudley papers*, i, pp 112-4 and Brady, *Ir. ch. Eliz.*, pp 14-9

masses, dirges, shrivings and such like trumpery, godly abolished by your majesty'. The deputy recommended drastic action to ameliorate the situation: 'And for the ministry of the churches of the English Pale of your own inheritance, be contented, most virtuous queen, that some convenient portion for a minister may be allowed to him out of the farmers rent, it will not be much loss to you in your revenue, but gain otherwise inestimable'. Echoes of the act of 1541, and there were echoes of 1541 in the crown's response. Sidney's plan was politely rebuffed. He was told by Burghley to consult the Irish council on these matters.[93] The lord deputy probably did so, but to no avail. No portions were allotted to the curates, which is not surprising as virtually all new Irish councillors on entering office, were granted lucrative leases on monastic rectories. In Ireland, at any rate, patronage rather than protestantism, was dearer to the crown's heart.

Although many commentators would continue to criticize this continuing state of affairs, the medieval parochial structure - a parochial structure which had been set in place to sustain the corporate clergy and their values - would remain unreformed at the death of the queen. The implications of this were disastrous for the established church. Not only did it prevent the church from mounting a serious evangelical campaign to convert the indigenous population to protestantism, but it actually enabled, indeed almost impelled, catholicism to survive and thrive within the parishes. This was evident, for example, in the economic imperative which underpinned the Elizabethan clergy's maintenance of catholic ceremonies. It was also evident, as the century progressed, in the use made by catholic lay impropriators of parochial resources to support, in a less ambiguous manner, the emerging counter-reformation church in the Pale.[94] In both of these ways, the culture and belief system of the corporate clergy, who had effectively established this parochial structure, lived on. The damage which the unreformed parochial system did to the reformers' cause, however, was not confined to these areas alone. On a much deeper level, it sapped their morale and their capacity to

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93 Brady, *Ir. ch. Eliz.*, pp 20-1.

94 On this point see Lennon, *Lords of Dublin*, pp 161-2.

think clearly and act independently and decisively. Nowhere was this more evident than in the protracted debate they conducted over the foundation of a university, a debate whose terms of reference, like so many aspects of the reformation in Ireland, were framed not by the reformers, but by the institutional imperatives of the corporate clergy and the medieval church.

Chapter Eight

St Patrick's cathedral and the university question in Ireland, c. 1547 - 1585

The transformation of the clergy from priests who dutifully performed mass and the rest of the liturgical round, into a preaching ministry capable of expounding in a compelling manner the 'word of God', was one of the central ideals of protestant reformers in the sixteenth century. All of them recognised that the way to achieve this was to ensure that prospective ministers would be exposed to a more prolonged education, usually in a university, than had been the norm for the average parish priest in the Middle Ages. Protestant reformers in Ireland were no exception to this rule. From an early stage, they too recognised that the creation of a learned, expository ministry would require just such an educational initiative and that this would only begin when Ireland secured a university of its own. But, despite the undoubted enthusiasm for the foundation of a new college, it did not materialise until the end of the sixteenth century, with the foundation of Trinity College in 1592.[1]

The main cause of this delay was the fact that the efforts of the reformers were dominated by and subsumed under a state-sponsored, ostensibly attractive, but ultimately unworkable plan for founding a university in Ireland. Derived from an earlier proposal put forward by Archbishop Browne of Dublin, the plan was founded upon the notion that the exploitation of the property and revenues of St Patrick's cathedral would provide the most advantageous means of endowing the new academy. Yet, despite its recurring attractiveness, the thinking behind this policy was inherently flawed. Blinded by the self-evident truth of its central proposition, its formulators were guilty of two basic oversights. In the first instance, no

1 On the foundation of Trinity see C. Lennon, ' "The bowels of the city's bounty": the municipality of Dublin and the foundation of Trinity College in 1592', in *Long Room*, 37 (1992), pp 10-6.

allowance was made for the fact that the implementation of the policy would inevitably disrupt the life of the local institutional church. Secondly, little cognizance was taken of the opposition that this was likely to arouse from within the same quarter. More so than other prevailing factors, it was these oversights that ultimately led to the long delay in founding a university in Ireland. To appreciate this fully, it is necessary to examine in some detail the origins of the official policy

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The idea of endowing a college with the property and revenues of St Patrick's cathedral was first expounded by Archbishop Browne in a 'Device' or petition to King Edward VI, written in the winter of 1547-8.[2] There is something anomalous about the archbishop's proposal, however, because nobody - apart from the cathedral clergy - stood to lose so much from its disappearance than he. For centuries the cathedral had been situated beside his main Dublin residence, the palace of St Sepulchre, in the southern suburbs of the city. The precincts of the cathedral and the palace formed the administrative nerve-centre of the diocese from which the archbishop's ordinary and secular jurisidictions were supervised and executed. The cathedral was concerned solely with the process of spiritual government; and provided financial support for the archbishop's officials in the form of rich prebendal livings. Thus the archdeacon of Dublin, the officer responsible for maintaining moral discipline throughout the diocesan heartland, was beneficed there as a canon and one of the six dignitaries of the cathedral. So too was his partner, the official-principal, who, as the archbishop's principal legist, presided over his consistory court and despatched much of the see's record business such as the granting of probate on wills.[3]

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2 P.R.O., SP 61/1, no 10 (printed *in extenso* in Shirley, *Ch. in Ire., 1547-67*, pp 5-14.

3 Above pp 41-3.

Given the importance of the cathedral's role in local episcopal government, Archbishop Browne's promotion of a scheme which effectively sanctioned its destruction, calls for some explanation. The apparent incongruity, however, has gone largely unnoticed by historians. This is due to the fact that Browne's 'Device' has been examined only within the context of his efforts - as a favourer of learning and as a dutiful civil servant - to further the protestant reformation, rather than as a text prepared by an archbishop on an issue which had major ramifications for the administration of his diocese. As a result, it has been variously portrayed as the 'great' and 'enlightened' vision of a protestant patriarch; and as the somewhat desultory attempt of a scrupulously obedient cleric to highlight his reformist credentials before the new, religiously radical régime of Edward VI.[4] While elements of both of these interpretations are certainly plausible, they have been highlighted at the expense of what was arguably Browne's major preoccupation in his 'Device'. Far from sanctioning the destruction of his cathedral for the greater good of Irish education, and far from being the work of one bent solely on winning the new king's recognition, Browne's 'Device' was a retrospective and pointed critique of what was, by then, the officially approved and already accomplished dissolution of St Patrick's cathedral, and the man who initiated it, Lord Deputy St Leger.

The dissolution of St Patrick's cathedral in January 1547 provided the main stimulus for the writing of Archbishop Browne's 'Device', a text which set out in detail the principle and the manner in which the resources of the dissolved cathedral might be redirected to endow a college, and which provided thereafter a written authority for those who thought that this was the most desirable way to proceed with the establishment of a local university. Yet the evident concern for Irish educational matters shown by the archbishop in his 'Device' was not the only preoccupation of his proposal to Edward VI. A close reading of the text

4 J.P. Mahaffy, *An Epoch in Irish History* (London, 1903), p 57; Phillips, *Ch. of Ire.*, ii, p 247; Bradshaw, 'George Browne', pp 316-8.

reveals that he was equally, if not more, concerned with the immediate problems that the cathedral's abolition posed for the government of his see. At different points, even in the detailed provisions laid down for the establishment of the college, Browne interpolated a number of suggestions which, collectively, show not only his basic antipathy to the act of suppression and the manner in which it was executed, but also his determination to counteract the worst effects of the attendant administrative disruption. Indeed, given the likelihood that Browne's idea of using the cathedral for educational purposes owed much to the crown's decision in March 1547 to endow a grammar school in the cathedral precincts,[5] it is arguable that this sub-text was the most personal element in the petition; and that the university proposal was only a stratagem to make his critique of recent crown policy, and his desired objectives, more palatable to the new king.

Whether this was the case or not, there is no denying that the 'Device' portrays the archbishop as an episcopal governor deeply concerned with preserving the traditional administrative structures of his diocese. The biggest casualty of the cathedral's fall was the administration of ecclesiastical discipline, because the office of the see's most important overseer and corrector of morals, the archdeacon of Dublin, was done away with when his apendant freehold benefice disappeared with the cathedral. Faced with this problem, the archbishop included in his 'Device' a direct appeal for the restoration of 'two archdeacons of Dublin' because 'there is no bishop in Christendom without an archdeacon, but only Dublin, and so the said archbishop the worse able to supply his charge'.[6] Potential difficulties concerning the conduct of the see's record and instance business also resulted from the

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5 *Mason, History of St Patrick's,* p 153.

6 Shirley, *Ch. in Ire., 1547-67*, p 9. The indispensability of the archdeacon as the main ecclesiastical visitor and corrector of morals was also attested to by Browne's successor, Archbishop Loftus, in a letter to Lord Burghley in 1585 (*Cal. S. P. Ire., 1574-85*, pp cxxxi-cxxxiii). Browne and Loftus must have been referring primarily to the archdeacon of Dublin, for the jurisdiction of their other archdeacon (of Glendalough) was largely inoperable throughout the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, because most of his territory lay amongst the Irishry.

dissolution however. Although the other major diocesan offices were not tied to the cathedral establishment in the same direct manner as the archdeaconry, they too were similarly affected by it. The archbishops' customary practice of supporting the combined offices of official principal and vicar general through the bestowal of cathedral prebends was now at a virtual end. The practice would cease once the final residue of pensioned ex-prebendaries died out. Alternative means of support would eventually have to be found, particularly as the fees generated by instance suits and the issuing of licences were insufficient to finance this side of the see's administrative work.[7] And there was still one final discomforting feature of the dissolution which Archbishop Browne had to consider. What would become of his consistory court? Would it have to move elsewhere, away from its former and favourable location close to the archbishop's own residence? And, if not, how would it cope with having the generally inimical common lawyers so close to hand, an imminent eventuality from March 1547 when Edward VI sanctioned the relocation of the four courts of judicature to a certain portion of the dissolved church of St Patrick.[8]

It was to counteract problems such as these that Browne interwove into his text his most subtly executed, but also most far-reaching, suggestion. He proposed, in effect, that St Patrick's should be refounded under another name and in a different guise, and that it should retain its traditional role as the administrative hub of the diocese. This was to be achieved by removing the dean and chapter of Christ Church to the precincts of the dissolved cathedral where they would perform divine service for the new college in the old cathedral church; a church which was to be renamed the church of Holy Trinity, Christ Church's more

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7 On this point see the comment of Archbishop Alen, Browne's immediate predecessor in the see of Dublin, concerning the lack of business processed by the consistory in the 1530s. According to Alen this was due to the poverty of its clients ('statuta consistorii Dublin ... 1530', R.C.B., Dublin Diocesan Registry collection, MS 4, p 39: the relevant section was omitted by Charles McNeill in his calendar of Alen's register).

8 Mason, *History of St Patrick's*, p 153. On the competition afforded by the common law courts to the ecclesiastical courts in Ireland see Ellis, *Reform and Revival,* pp 107, 128-9, 133.

formal title. It was not to be their sole function however. Browne also recommended that the same dean and chapter should 'be incorporated by such name as shall please the king's majesty, with honest livings to them appointed', and that they should have a 'common seal to assist the archbishop for the time being, in common matters as the king's laws shall permit'.[9] A church with a chapter and a common seal which assisted an archbishop in common matters - for which read administrative matters - would have functioned in the manner of a cathedral no matter what King Edward chose to call it. Thus Browne was attempting to resurrect his cathedral under the disguise of an incorporated university church, which was to have the ancillary function of assisting the local diocesan in governing his see. Far from being an innovatory scheme, then, Browne's plan for the erection of a university in Dublin resembled previous attempts, dating from the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, to establish a university in conjunction with, but not at the expense of, the suburban cathedral church.[10]

Browne's attempt to save his cathedral as an incorporated university church indicates that he did not support the official decision to suppress it. This attitude was also evident in the detailed provisions he laid down for the college establishment, provisions which reveal a real distaste on the archbishop's part for the motives which underpinned the cathedral's dissolution and for the man who instigated it, Sir Anthony St Leger. In particular, he lamented the fact that the cathedral's parochial benefices had been frittered away by St Leger and not made to serve a worthier cause such as the financing of a university, even though the deputy had declared that it was the king's pleasure 'that the ... church should be converted to a better use ... which much the rather provoked the dean and fellows there to

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9 Shirley, *Ch. in Ire., 1547-67*, p 10. Variations on this theme are mentioned at two other points in the 'Device' (*ibid.*, pp 7, 12).

10 L.R. Mooney, 'An English record of the founding of a university in Dublin in 1358' in *I.H.S.*, xxviii (1993), pp 225-7; Watt, *Church in Medieval Ireland,* pp 127-9; E. Curtis, *A History of Medieval Ireland from 1110 to 1513* (London, 1923), pp 414-5; *Alen's Reg.*, p 260.

condescend to the surrender thereof'.[11] Clearly, the archbishop did not take the view that the deputy's need to pay off his debts and to maintain his patronage network was a 'better use'. For Browne, St Leger's instigation of the suppression without episcopal consent,[12] coupled with his illegal detention of most of the cathedral's plate, jewels and ornaments,[13] and his involvement in similarly motivated initiatives to procure the archbishop's palace of St Sepulchre and some of his see lands[14] revealed him as a scheming and acquisitive politician. It was thus the initial cause of the intense hatred which he felt for St Leger, a hatred which manifested itself soon after when, in the early 1550s, he launched a vigorous campaign to discredit him before the king and English privy council. Not surprisingly, one of the charges levelled by Browne against St Leger was that his governorship was

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11 Shirley, *Ch. in Ire., 1547-67*, p 13.

12 For evidence that Browne never assented to the deputy's policy see the opinion of the English judges in 1569 concerning the legality of a lease he made after the dissolution (Sir James Dyer, *Les reports des divers select matters et resolutions ... en le several reignes de ... Hen. 8 et Edw. 6 et ... Mar. et Eliz.* (London, 1688), f 282v; *Dignitus Decani*, pp 147-80). According to the judges, 'one [of two] churches, namely St Patrick's, with the consent of the dean and the most part of the chapter of the same ... did yield and give up *without the assent of the bishop* into the king's possession the said church with all thereto belonging ... [my italics]'.

13 In March 1547 Edward VI ordered St Leger to make a full inventory of the plate and jewels of St Patrick's as a prelude to their distribution between Christ Church cathedral, the parish church of St Nicholas Without, and the king himself. No such inventory was ever returned into the English Exchequer. Indeed, almost six months after the re-establishment of the cathedral in March 1555, Queen Mary had to issue a letter of rebuke to the deputy, commanding him to restore this illegally held booty to the cathedral clergy. Thus, an aside by Archbishop Browne in a letter to the earl of Warwick, dated 6 August 1551 - that St Leger 'hath plenty in store of gold and silver had to homely here' - appears to be an allusion to this hoard of ill-gotten gains. These gains may also have included the household stuff of his attainted predecessor Lord Leonard Grey. St Leger was appointed to oversee these goods on behalf of the crown but again failed to return the requisite inventory (Mason, *History of St Patrick's*, p 152; P.R.O., LR 6/154/6; *ibid.*, SP 61/3, no 45; N.A.I., Ferguson MSS, v, pp 21-4).

14 In March 1547 St Leger was granted permission by the king to negotiate with the archbishop to secure his assent to the exchange of the palace of St Sepulchre for the former residence of the dean of St Patrick's (Mason, *History of St Patrick's*, 152). On 13 July 1548 he petitioned Cecil for a licence to exchange his impropriated benefices in Ireland for temporal lands of the value of £50, with either Archbishop Browne, the dean of Christ Church or the bishop of Meath. He intended to sell the lands to pay off his debts (P.R.O., SP 10/4, no 27). Neither initiative appears to have come to anything.

characterised by an unprecedented squandering of the crown's resources, and by a general level of corruption which enabled him to become 'wonderous rich'.[15]

The quick alienation of the benefices and resources of St Patrick's meant that the erection of Browne's proposed college - with its master and 'seniors', its four lectureships, an unspecified number of readers, and a student body of 200 indivduals - would require, if it was to take immediate effect, investment from non-cathedral resources. He petitioned the king, therefore, to sanction the appropriation to the college of six valuable rectories lying outside the diocese of Dublin. He also recommended that the archdeacon of Meath and the restored archdeacons of Dublin should support additional lecturers, and that all of the Irish chantries should be supppressed to provide supplementary income. What he really desired, however, was that the former cathedral prebends - as a group the richest concentration of ecclesiastical benefices on the island - would be devoted to the university. Thus he directed his final appeal to the king, their current proprietor, imploring him to unite 'the benefices late appending to the said church to the said university', the revenues of which were traditionally paid in corn and 'now demised in money to the king's majesty's use'. If this was granted, and Browne stated that he, as archbishop of Dublin, and the mayor of Dublin, would be prepared to pay a fixed rent to the crown in recompense, then the master and students would be able 'to have corn at a reasonable price for their better maintenance'.[16]

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15 P.R.O., SP 61/3, no 45, Browne to the earl of Warwick, 6 August 1551; W.K. Jordan, ed., *The Chronicle and Political Papers of King Edward VI* (London, 1966), pp 102, 119; C. S. Knighton, ed., *Calendar of State Papers Domestic Series of the reign of Edward VI 1547-1553* (London, revised edn., 1992), nos. 594, 609; *Acts privy council, 1550-2*, pp 456, 466. The main thrust of this campaign, however, was that St Leger was a papist.

16 Shirley, *Ch. in Ire., 1547-67*, pp 6-14. Browne put forward his own name as the one best suited to receive this property on behalf of the university. This would have given him additional authority to ensure that some of these resources found their way to individuals associated both with the university and the university church which he intended to use as a surrogate cathedral.

It was this final proposal - the funding of a university from the cathedral's appropriated livings - which was to prove the most influential in the longer term, for it was the most eagerly embraced by the Elizabethan proponents of the university. Browne, however, put it forward more in hope than in the expectation that it would be implemented. The fact that the property was already legally alienated, and that the services of St Leger as lord deputy were retained by the new king, determined that the scheme would not be adopted by the Edwardian régime. In essence, then, the archbishop's proposal was a rearguard action against secularization, a forlorn attempt to recover an ecclesiastical resource and reinvest it in an undertaking which would continue to benefit the church. Had St Patrick's not been dissolved, it is inconceivable that Browne would have recommended such a course of action. His 'Device' clearly reveals that he disagreed fundamentally with the policy because it posed insuperable problems for the day to day government of his diocese. It is ironic, therefore, that the document served as a blueprint for subsequent schemes to found a university in Ireland, given that the advocates of these schemes had no such qualms about destroying the administrative machinery of the see of Dublin.

II

The enactment of the Elizabethan religious settlement by the Irish parliament in 1560 provided the spur for the revival of plans to found a university in Ireland. Although nothing concrete had materialized by the time parliament sat, both the perceived need for a university to create a reformed ministry, and the intention of establishing it, were clearly a part of official thinking. Thus the act for the restoration to the crown of the 'ancient jurisdiction over the State Ecclesiastical and Spiritual' allowed for its foundation by stipulating that any 'persons ... promoted or preferred to any degree of learning, *in any university that hereafter shall be within this ... realm*' would be obliged to take the oath of

supremacy.[17] A specific proposal for the university, however, was not put together until the autumn of 1563, when, on 20 October, instructions were issued by the queen to her special commissioners for Ireland, Sir Thomas Wroth and Sir Nicholas Arnold, commanding them, among other things, to survey the precincts and possessions of St Patrick's cathedral with a view to converting it into a university. The instructions also reveal the identities of the two men who were responsible for the proposal. These were Sir William Cecil, the queen's secretary, who, as part of his brief of overseeing the crown's Irish policy, drafted the commissioners' instructions; and Hugh Brady, a native born protestant and graduate of Oxford, who was appointed bishop of Meath the day after they were issued. The commissioners were specifically advised to confer with Brady on the matter of the university.[18]

The initial planning for the college by Cecil and Brady was carried out at some point between the spring of 1561 and the issuing of the instructions to the commissioners over two years later. During this time Brady was the resident rector of the parish of All Hallows in Honey Lane, London, a post which, in geographical terms, gave him easy access to the queen's secretary.[19] Brady's entry into Cecil's service, however, would have depended upon more than the mere proximity of his parochial cure to the seat of Tudor government. A formal introduction or commendation would also have been a prerequisite, the source of which is likely to have been his ordinary Edmund Grindal, the bishop of London, who was not only a protege, close adviser and personal friend of the queen's secretary, but also

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17 *Stat. Ire.*, i, p 281. The italics are mine.

18 *Cal. Carew MSS, 1515-74*, pp 359-60; *Cal. pat. rolls Ire., Hen VIII-Eliz*, pp 484-5. On Cecil's connection with the mission of Wroth and Arnold see P.R.O. SP 63/9, no 45, which is an early draft of the first set of instructions issued to the commissioners. It is endorsed in his hand.

19 G. Hennessy, *Novum Repertorium Ecclesiasticum Parochiale Londinense* (London, 1898), p 77; P.R.O., E 334/7, f 109v (First Fruits Composition Book, June 1559-December 1563); Guildhall Library London, MS 9537/2, f 32r (Call book of 1561 visitation: Brady appeared before Bishop Grindal on 23 April 1561 in the parish church of St Stephen Walbrook).

Brady's first benefactor in England. In February 1561 the bishop recommended him to the patrons of All Hallows, the Grocers' Company of London, as one fit 'for the function of the same parsonage'. It seems natural, therefore, that when Cecil disclosed his intention of proceeding with the establishment of a college in Ireland, Grindal would have alerted him to the existence of the parson of All Hallows; for here was a man whose Irish background, graduate status and protestant sympathies marked him out as an ideal sounding board for the development and testing of the secretary's plan.[20]

The planning process was simple in its conception and execution. Armed with Browne's 'Device', Cecil and Brady adopted the archbishop's core idea of using the revenues of St Patrick's cathedral to endow the new college.[21] They also produced a 'plat' for the erection of a college at Dublin, which, again, appears to have been based upon the supposition that virtually all of the revenues of St Patrick's would be used to endow the new establishment. In essence, the 'plat' was a costed account of the future college's requirements and proposed that it should have a principal or provost; two preachers; readers in divinty, logic and philosophy; twelve fellows (one of which was to act as college burser); twelve bachelors; forty scholars; an appendant grammar school with a master and usher; and a variety of domestic servants. All told it was estimated that the running costs of this establishment, including outlay on staff and expenditure upon provisions, would amount to £1,270 12s. per annum, a sum which was almost equal to the value of St Patrick's total endowment

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20 Guildhall Library London, MS 11588/1, f 46v (Court Minute Book of the Grocers' Company, 1556-1591). Brady's appointment to All Hallows is instructive. It was a parish with a strong protestant tradition. On this tradition see Brigden, *London and the Reformation,* pp 113-6, 128, 160, 384, 387-8, 402, 635. On Grindal's relationship with Cecil see P. Collinson, *Archbishop Grindal 1519-1583. The Struggle for a Reformed Church* (London, 1979), pp 38, 46, 89, 91, 106.

21 The one surviving copy of Browne's 'Device' is endorsed by Cecil (P.R.O., SP 61/1, no 10). Although it was bound up with the State Papers Ireland Edward VI in the nineteenth century, this version may be a later office copy dateable to the early 1560s. Cecil's awareness of the document, however, is likely to have stemmed from the earlier period when he served as Edward VI's principal secretary between 1550 and the king's death in 1553.

when it was suppressed in 1547.[22] Yet while the influence of Browne's 'Device' is discernible within the first Elizabethan scheme for a university in Ireland, it is also clear that the latter was conceived in an entirely different context. Browne's 'Device' was written against the background of the Henrician attack on the church's wealth, and was a defiant, though politic, gesture against the secularization of his own see's resources. Between the penning of his proposal and its adoption by Cecil and Brady, however, two crucial developments occurred which determined that the later scheme was animated by new concerns that made the projected dissolution of St Patrick's an ideologically desirable act in itself.

The first of these was the refoundation of St Patrick's by Mary Tudor as an act of catholic restoration. Not only did the cathedral become a symbol of catholicism as a result, but it also came to be perceived as an agent of the same restoration; for the cathedral resumed its traditional administrative role in the diocese of Dublin, a function which was quickly dedicated to the task of achieving catholic uniformity.[23] In the wake of the enactment of the Elizabethan settlement, the survival of such an institution with many of its Marian personnel intact was a highly suspect and questionable prospect; and it gave added ammunition to protestant activists who sought its abolition for the 'godly' purpose of founding a university in Ireland.

The second development was the emergence of puritanism within the English church, a movement which grew in part out of the experience of continental exile which befell a small but influential coterie of English protestant emigrés during the Marian period. One implication of this was the growth of a vociferous demand for a more radical programme of

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22 P.R.O., SP 63/9, no 49 (Shirley, *Ch. in Ire., 1547-67*, pp 126-8). The document is endorsed by Cecil.

23 See above chapters 4 and 5.

protestant liturgical reform, a demand which, if not espoused by Queen Elizabeth, was supported by enough influential politicians to facilitate the public airing of criticisms of institutions like the secular cathedral which seemed to harbour an attachment to outmoded and quasi-catholic liturgical practices.[24] Radical protestant thinking of this sort also added some weight to the call for the dissolution of St Patrick's cathedral and the redirection of its revenues to the projected university. Thus, from being a relatively straightforward question in the reigns of Henry VIII and Edward VI about how best to use surplus spiritual revenues - for the administration of a single diocese, for the support of crown government or for the training of a local ministry - the question of St Patrick's cathedral and the projected university evolved into a complex debate suffused with new ideological nuances. Despite this, the original question remained central to the argument, while its ultimate resolution would prove to be the deciding factor in determining the fate of the cathedral.

When the news broke in the winter of 1563-4 that the government intended to proceed with the dissolution of the cathedral it immediately caused some disquiet. Sir Thomas Cusack, the former chancellor of Ireland, cautioned Cecil that the proposed alteration be suspended until the political disorders of the moment were redressed. Such caution was undoubtedly influenced by Cusack's bad experiences in the previous reign when his efforts to salvage some of the property of St Patrick's for the supporters of the administration of Lord Deputy St Leger, following the cathedral's restoration in 1555, lead directly to his removal from the chancellorship by Queen Mary.[25] These memories were brought vivdly to light by a meeting with one of the cathedral clergy at Chester who was no doubt on his way to court to plead St Patrick's case, just as his fellows had done so successfully, and to Cusack's great cost, in the summer of 1555. Thus it is likely that Cusack was more fearful of the potential

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24 Lehmberg, *Reformation of Cathedrals*, pp 154-6, 268-71.

25 Above pp 196-99.

resentment that the plan might arouse amongst the indigenous clergy, during what was still an early and delicate stage in the implementation of the Elizabethan religious settlement, than by any real fear that the implementation of the university scheme would deflect reforming energies away from Ireland's political problems. In what appears as a cunning move, therefore, he appointed the cleric as his letter bearer to the court, crediting him as an 'honest man' who was to be given credence in all that he said, and one who 'should declare unto your honour the doings of those things in Ireland', including no doubt local misgivings about the university scheme. Thus, if Cusack was personally reluctant to become the voice of protest himself, he did not shun the opportunity of ensuring that that same voice got a proper hearing.[26]

The implementation of the scheme was not, in any case, given immediate priority by the English privy council. Although Wroth and Arnold duly completed their survey of the cathedral soon after their arrival in Dublin in February 1564, the council appear not to have examined their findings until the spring or early summer of 1566.[27] In the interim the most prominent ecclesiastics in Ireland entered into a regular correspondence with English politicians either to ensure that there would be no slackening of resolve to see the enterprise through or to attempt to discourage its implementation altogether. Those for the university scheme included Bishop Brady of Meath and the then archbishop of Armagh, Adam Loftus, the two most vocal protestant ecclesiastics in Ireland.[28] Against them stood the archbishop

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26 Cusack to Cecil, 2 February 1564 (P.R.O., SP 63/10, no. 12).

27 According to Arnold the survey was brought over to the English privy council by Wroth, presumably on his recall by the Queen in October 1564 (Shirley, *Ch. in Ire., 1547-67*, pp 235-6). The council had not examined it - indeed they were unaware that it had been completed - as late as July 1565 (ibid., p 208). However, both the fact that they made no further enquiries about it after they had been informed of its existence by the Irish council in April 1566, and that they had come to a final decision about the cathedral's future by the middle of June 1566, suggests that they located it, consulted it and acted upon it in the interim (ibid., pp 235-6, 258-9). The survey is not now extant.

28 For general studies of the careers of Brady and Loftus see H. Coburn Walshe, 'Enforcing the Elizabethan Settlement: the vicissitudes of Hugh Brady, bishop of Meath, 1563-84', in *I.H.S.*, xxvi (1989), pp 352-76; and Hammerstein, 'Erzbischof Adam Loftus'. Apart from Cecil, Loftus and Brady

of Dublin and lord chancellor of Ireland, the religious conservative Hugh Curwen, who had been handpicked in Mary Tudor's's reign to oversee the implementation of the strategy for catholic restoration that had been conceived and promoted by Archbishop Dowdall of Armagh and the clergy of the English Pale.[29] While it would be wrong to ignore the fact that Brady and Loftus's support for the scheme was animated both by the current protestant thinking on the role of education in the training of a preaching ministry, and by the renaissance notion that education was a civilizing influence in society, their arguments for the university consolidated around what to them was one obvious and pertinent fact: the dissolution of St Patrick's was an essential undertaking because the cathedral was an emblem of the religious conservatism that plagued the diocese of Dublin in the early years of Elizabeth's reign. This insular perspective did not reduce the intellectual force of their argument however. By extending their attack on St Patrick's to include the conservative Archbishop Curwen, they were effectively attempting to extinguish the old catholic order which had survived in Dublin because Curwen and many of his cathedral clergy had been prepared to take the oath of supremacy in 1560. For Brady and Loftus, therefore, the prosecution of the university scheme was wholly and unambiguously identified with the successful progress of the protestant reformation in the English Pale. Failure to prosecute the scheme would impede its progress, not just because it would hamper the reformation of the ministry, but because it would lead to the preservation of a conservative, time-serving and obstructive element in what was strategically the most important diocese in Ireland.

The most eloquent exposition of this theme emanated from Bishop Brady in a letter written to Cecil in January 1565, which expressed his deeply felt anxiety at the slow progress the

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also solicited and secured the support of the earl of Leicester (A. Kendall, *Robert Dudley Earl of Leicester* [London, 1980], p 67).

29 Above chapter 4.

university scheme was making.[30] Interestingly, he spent little time justifying the need for, or the benefits that would be derived from, educating Ireland's 'tender youth'. This was taken as read. His main concern was to inform the queen's secretary of the imperative need to rid the Irish church of the cathedral of St Patrick. For Brady, it performed no useful function. On the contrary, it maintained a body of clergy who through their wilful resistance to the spirit of the reformed religion - 'they say themselves they be old bottles, and cannot away with this new wine' - were hampering its progress. As 'a sort of dumb dogs', they were neither capable of teaching nor preaching to their flocks. Yet as 'disguised dissemblers', as practitioners of a survivalist catholic faith within the reformed church, all of them - from Archbishop Curwen to the humblest petty canon - were 'living enemies to the truth, and all setters forth therof'. For these reasons, the suppression of the cathedral could not be subjected to any further delay.

Where Bishop Brady urged upon Cecil the absolute necessity of converting the cathedral into a university by a rhetorically powerful description of the ills inherent therein, his ally in the cause, Archbishop Loftus of Armagh, offered the secretary a practical means of moving the project forward. In the same month that Brady addressed his appeal to Cecil, Loftus acquired the deanery of St Patrick's *in commendam*. Thus, when he wrote to the secretary in the following October, he was able to put forward a plan to execute the scheme, involving the use of his insider's position as the senior dignitary in St Patrick's. Loftus's main recommendation to Cecil was that Archbishop Curwen, the 'old bishop', should be translated to an English see because he was 'a man ... as unwilling to this as to further any other our business'. In his stead a new archbishop was to be appointed who would work with Dean Loftus in securing, as joint ordinaries of the cathedral, the replacement by resignation or deprivation of all the cathedral clergy who opposed the university scheme.

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30 P.R.O., SP 63/12, no 7 (Shirley, *Ch. in Ire., 1547-67*, p 162).

The intention thereafter was that they would then proceed to pack the cathedral with 'favourers of the matter', from which there would follow 'the full resignation in to her highness's hands of the bishop, the dean and the chapter, to do withall what her gracious will shall be'.[31]

It is clear from the foregoing that both Brady and Loftus hoped to use the implementation of the university scheme as a vehicle for destroying the Dublin diocesan establishment as it was then constituted. They sought the removal of the conservative Archbishop Curwen, and the suppression of his cathedral church which they believed harboured a crypto-catholic clergy. There is considerable evidence, in fact, that their analysis of the situation in Dublin was correct, as can be seen from the religious dispositions of the cathedral dignitaries Thomas Creef and Robert Wellesley, who, as official-principal and archdeacon of Dublin respectively, served as Curwen's leading diocesan officials at the time the university question arose. Creef began his cathedral career in the1520s as a vicar choral. Thereafter, he steadily rose up the ranks acquiring the prebend of Saggard in the mid-1530s, which he held until the suppression of the cathedral in 1547; and the precentorship which he obtained in 1555 when the cathedral was re-erected by Queen Mary. His conservatism is sufficiently well attested in the fact that Curwen chose him as his leading legist during the era of catholic restoration. It is also evident in the testimony of the latter's predecessor in the see, George Browne. In the 1530s, Creef had been a steward of Archbishop Browne but was sacked 'for his popishness', an orientation which was manifested soon after when on a visit to England he went on pilgrimage to Canterbury and Walsingham.[32] This conservative streak remained with Creef throughout his long career in the cathedral, although he subscribed to all of the Tudor religious settlements. In the early 1570s, by which time

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31 Lawlor, *Fasti of St Patrick's*, p 45; P.R.O., SP 63/15, no. 12 (Shirley, *Ch. in Ire., 1547-67*, p 226).

32 Above pp 136-7, chapter 4. Apart from being his patron, Archbishop Curwen also chose Creef to witness his will on 20 November 1564 (P.R.O., PROB 11/50, f 182v).

Adam Loftus had succeeded to the archbishopric of Dublin, he led the campaign to restore the chapter's right to freely elect their dean. In reporting the matter to lord Burghley in April 1574, the archbishop pinpointed Creef's religious conservatism as the motivation behind his campaign, describing him as 'corrupt in religion'.[33]

Robert Wellesley, the archdeacon of Dublin, was a man whose credentials, as well as the circumstances of his appointment, also mark him out as a member of the gainsayers and dissemblers so disliked by Loftus and Brady. Like Creef, he acquired his cathedral dignity as a crown nominee when St Patrick's was restored by Mary Tudor in 1555. More so than Creef, however, his appointment was symbolic of the revival of the old order; for, as the former prior of Conall in Kildare, he was one of a number of ex-monastic heads who were given prebends in the restored cathedral. Wellesley did not disappoint the crown's expectations. Soon after, he was appointed vicar-general of Dublin by the custodians of the spiritualities, the deans of Christ Church and St Patrick's, and immediately instituted disciplinary proceedings against married clergy in the diocese, including a fellow canon, the English pluralist Richard Johnson.[34]

The existence of men like Creef and Wellesley in St Patrick's, particularly as they were responsible for administering the see of Dublin, was disturbing in the extreme for protestants like Loftus and Brady. As the existing diocesan authorities were charged with enforcing a number of important provisions from the statutes comprising the Elizabethan religious settlement, it meant that the fate of protestantism in Dublin was in the hands of crypto-catholics. Not surprisingly, their efforts on behalf of the new religious dispensation were negligable, a state of affairs which became public knowledge after a visitation of the

33 *Fiants Ire. Eliz.*, nos 225-6; above chapter 6.

34 Above chapters 4, 5.

English Pale was undertaken by the crown's ecclesiastical commissioners in the spring of 1565. According to Archbishop Loftus, who headed the commission, they found many grave offences against the crown's religious laws being committed in the heartland of English Ireland - including continual frequenting of the mass - a situation which in Dublin must have been encouraged by the diocesan administration's lack of willing to enforce the state's religious dictates.[35]

These highly visible failings presented the old archbishop of Dublin, Hugh Curwen, with enormous difficulties in his endeavours to construct an argument which would successfully defend his cathedral from a renewed and probably final dissolution. One approach that was definitely out of bounds was a defence - like that of his predecessor George Browne's - based on the central position of the cathedral in the administrative framework of his diocese; for it was in its administative role that the cathedral's flaws were at their most glaring. Indeed, the exposure of these flaws by Brady and Loftus appeared, by the autumn of 1565, to have brought St Patrick's to the very brink of extinction. In a set of instructions issued by the English privy council for the incoming lord deputy, Sir Henry Sidney, and the Irish council, Curwen was forbidden to make any further appointments to prebends becoming vacant thereafter; and ordered to examine in conjunction with Loftus and Brady, the best means of reforming the cathedral for 'the public benefit of learning in that realm'.[36] There was, as it had always been envisaged, only one such means of reformation - the transferral of the bulk of cathedral's revenues to the new university - and, in April 1566, the archbishop responded by informing the privy council that he and the other bishops had treated with the existing prebendaries in the intervening months, and that the latter had

35 Shirley, *Ch. in Ire., 1547-67*, pp 194-7.

36 P.R.O., SP 63/14, no. 2 (Shirley, *Ch. in Ire., 1547-67*, pp 206-9).

agreed to give up whatever portion of their livings was thought necessary for the support of the new academy.[37]

Given the gravity of the situation, Curwen's defence strategy apears at first sight as an unfocussed amalgam of specious and cogent arguments for staying the dissolution. This eclecticism, however, probably owes much to the fact that the arguments were put together in committee by the archbishop and his cathedral prebendaries; and that the fullest surviving version of the same - a letter to the earl of Pembroke written in June 1564 - may also have been its earliest exposition.[38] The specious arguments put forward by Curwen included the proposition that a university would be of little use to Ireland as there were very few adequately endowed ecclesiastical benefices in the country to accomodate prospective graduates. This unduly pessimistic prognosis was accompanied by the exaggerated suggestion - made perhaps at the insistence of xenophobic English Irish members of his cathedral chapter - that the university would be inevitably infiltrated by Gaelic students who, learning the secrets of the Englishry while based in Dublin, would advertize the Irish rebels of the same with all the attendant dangers that this would entail for the English Pale.

The more weighty arguments in favour of the cathedral's preservation were concerned with the patronage and constitution of its prebendal livings. These livings made up virtually the entire complement of ecclesiastical benefices in the archbishop of Dublin's gift. Without them, Curwen argued, he would be unable to have 'one learned man to preach god's word in his diocese'. Although he had signally failed hitherto to do much in the way of appointing learned and 'godly' preachers, the argument was of a more general application; for, as his

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37 Irish council to the English privy council 13 April 1566, P.R.O., SP 63/17, no. 8, (Shirley, *Ch. in Ire., 1547-67*, pp 233-7).

38 P.R.O., SP 63/11, no. 13 (Shirley, *Ch. in Ire., 1547-67*, pp 151-3).

use of the third person deliberately indicated, any attempt to meddle with the fund of archiepiscopal advowsons would have major repercussions beyond the period of his conservatively inclined episcopate. Future, more overtly protestant archbishops of Dublin would face the same difficulty. Without any advowsons they too would be unable to play any part in the appointment of 'godly' preachers in their diocese.

It was another argument in Curwen's defence strategy, however, which ultimately proved to be the most telling. The archbishop informed the earl of Pembroke that the cathedral prebends were parochial cures whose main source of revenue was the predial tithes of corn. He went on to argue that such a source of revenue would be a very unstable foundation upon which to build the college because it would be subject to the vagaries of inflation and deflation. More importantly, he argued that it would be inappropriate to bestow these parochial cures upon young scholars as they were intended for older and wiser men who, theoretically, would play some pastoral role within the parishes which donated the tithes. This was the crucial point in St Patrick's favour. Unlike the secular cathedrals of England, whose prebendal livings were financed almost exclusively by landed property or temporalties,[39] the endowment of the cathedral of St Patrick consisted almost entirely of parochial benefices whose income was derived from tithes or spiritualties, and whose incumbents bore the responsibility for maintaining the *cura animarum*. For Curwen, this was the quintessential characteristic of his cathedral and the cornerstone of all the arguments he advanced to save it. The archbishop let no opportunity pass whereby he might reiterate it, including the Irish council's letter of April 1566, the point at which he resignedly informed the English privy council that his clergy were willing to accept the inevitability of the cathedral's demise.[40] His tactic was fully justified on this occasion

39 Lehmberg, *Reformation of Cathedrals*, pp 165-6; O'Day, *English Clergy*, pp 148-52.

40 P.R.O., SP 63/17, no. 8 (Shirley, *Ch. in Ire., 1547-67*, p 236).

however. Belatedly and unexpectedly, his argument had the desired effect. By 10 June 1566, it had become apparent that Sir William Cecil, the orchestrator of the university project, was prepared to relinquish it. He was now against, as Archbishop Loftus regrettably acknowledged, 'the conversion of the tithes, contrary to the institution, from the use of their pastors'.[41]

Cecil's new sensitivity about appropriating the livings of St Patrick's was a remarkable turnabout, particularly when it is viewed against the forceful and persuasive argument for suppression advanced by Loftus and Brady. Even Loftus's counterblast against the supposed impropriety of appropriating the prebendaries' tithes - according to the archbishop the way these parishes were served left their inhabitants 'much fleeced and nothing at all fed' - had little effect.[42] How, then, do we explain it? Given the fact that Cecil had been aware from the outset, through Browne's 'Device', that the cathedral's resources were mainly tithe-based, it seems likely that in reaching his decision he was subjected to a persuasive pressure other than Curwen's correspondence, though we should not underestimate the latter, especially as it was probably backed up by the presence of experienced cathedral lobbyists at court. Another likely source of persuasion, although not directly connected to the progress of the university scheme, would have been the emerging critique of lay impropriations. At the time Cecil revived the scheme, public criticism about the way monastic tithes had been diverted from the church to lay impropriators since Henry VIII's day was gathering strength among forward protestants. In England, it had found expression in a key paper put before the 1563 convocation of the Canterbury clergy.[43] In

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41 Archbishop Loftus to Cecil, 10 June 1566, P.R.O., SP 63/18, no. 13, (Shirley, *Ch. in Ire., 1547-67*, pp 257-9).

42 *Ibid.*

43 Haugaard, *Elizabeth and the English Reformation*, pp 178-9. The convocation paper was entitled 'General notes of matters to be moved by the clergy in the next parliament and synod' and is printed in J. Strype, *Annals of the Reformation ... during Queen Elizabeth's Reign* (4 Vols, Oxford, 1824), i, pt 1, pp 473-84. On the problem of impropriations in early modern England generally see C. Hill, *The*

Ireland, it was given voice by the queen's council who, in their letter of 15 April 1566, declared that the widescale impropriation of tithes was one of the main obstacles hindering the progress of reformed religion throughout the island. It was possible to construe the diversion of the tithes of St Patrick's prebendal livings towards the foundation of a university as a similar act of secular plunder. The implications of such an act - the laicization of the rectorial tithes of 57 or 33% of all Dublin parishes - would have been particularly vivid after the results of Wroth and Arnold's survey were finally examined and digested in the late spring or early summer of 1566.[44] Thus, although he undoutedly favoured the university enterprise, the secretary's fear of falling prey to the charge of sanctioning even more lay encroachment upon spiritual resources lay at the root of his decision to abandon the project.

There was as great a sense of irony, therefore, in the circumstances which brought about the university scheme's demise, than in those which surrounded its conception. Initially, the scheme was inspired by the writings of a man who would have disagreed with the fundamental premise upon which it was built, the destruction of St Patrick's cathedral. Now, it was abandoned because of the influence of the thinking of men who would have sympathised deeply with the views of its main proponents, Hugh Brady and Adam Loftus. Indeed, Loftus himself was one of the signatories to the Irish council's letter which condemned impropriations. Although he could not have foreseen it, it was this defence of the clergy's traditional proprietorial interest in parochial tithes, a stance which was becoming increasingly appealing to radically-minded protestant clergy on both sides of the Irish sea, that ultimately secured a future for the popish cathedral of St Patrick.

Economic Problems of the Clergy from Archbishop Whitgift to the Long Parliament (Oxford, 1956), pp 132-167.

44 Shirley, *Ch. in Ire., 1547-67*, pp 234-5; see Appendix below.

III

The failure of the first Elizabethan scheme for a university was a major blow to the protestant reform party in Ireland. The achievement of two of its avowed objectives - the destruction of the conservative clerical élite in Dublin, and the creation of a protestant seminary to train the Church of Ireland's ministry - were delayed as a result. Despite this, an opportunity soon emerged to restore the flagging momentum of the movement when the aged and sickly archbishop of Dublin, Hugh Curwen, left Ireland in the late autumn or winter of 1567 to take up residence in England as the newly appointed bishop of Oxford. Although Curwen's long sought after translation had been resolved upon by the queen before the university scheme was abandoned, the timing of its execution and the spate of personnel changes that were ushered in in its wake, boosted the morale and political strength of the reform faction and encouraged it to pursue its aims with renewed vigour.[45]

The most important of these personnel changes concerned the replacement of Curwen in his dual capacity as archbishop of Dublin and lord chancellor of Ireland. Adam Loftus, the unambiguously protestant archbishop of Armagh, was nominated in his stead to bring sound religious leadership to the strategically important diocese of Dublin. In the court of chancery, Curwen was replaced by Dr Robert Weston, the dean of the Arches, an eminent civil lawyer and an exemplar of protestant virtue and piety. Weston was also granted the deanery of St Patrick's cathedral as a sinecure by the queen. Although he was not in orders, the new lord chancellor took his spiritual charge seriously and signalled his devotion to the principles of 'godly' religion by endowing a number of perpetual vicarages on his prebendal livings. Taken together with the already ensconced bishop of Meath, Hugh Brady, and the protestant lord deputy, Sir Henry Sidney, the promotion of Loftus and Weston created, in

45 Shirley, *Ch. in Ire., 1547-67*, pp 142-5, 240-1, 300-3. The temporalties of the see of Oxford were restored to Curwen on 3 December 1567 (*Cal. pat. rolls, 1566-1569*, nos 1630-32).

theory, the strongest and most powerfully placed reforming nexus in Irish officialdom since the beginning of the reformation. Yet the reformers did not work in harmony with each other. Although Loftus and Weston worked closely together in the planning and implementation of a new reform strategy which sought to neutralise the ongoing opposition of the local clergy to the reformation, they do not appear to have involved Sidney in their plans.[46] Nowhere was this lack of co-ordination and communication more clearly visible than in the lord deputy's ill-fated attempt to revive the government's moribund university policy in the parliament of 1569-71.

The erection of a university never figured in the legislative programme of the 1569-71 parliament. In the autumn session of 1569, however, the lords and commons made a 'motion ... for the founding of an university'. Talk of establishing a university immediately sent alarm bells ringing in Archbishop Loftus's diocesan administration. It appears that he and Lord Chancellor Weston feared that St Patrick's might be drawn once again into the fray and that their plans for governing the diocese of Dublin through the conventional diocesan structures might be imperilled as a result. Thus they enrolled in chancery the charter of restitution which the cathedral had acquired in 1555, a clear signal that they were prepared to fight any university campaigners who had designs on St Patrick's.[47]

Lord Deputy Sidney, who appears from Edmund Campion's account of the proceedings to have been the prime mover behind the discussions which gave rise to the parliamentary motion, had other plans for financing the new college. He hoped to capitalize on the fact that the principle commanded general support throughout the political community at large - according to Lord Chancellor Weston it was 'well liked universally of all here'[48] and

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46 Above chapter 6.

47 *Cal. pat. rolls Ire., Hen. VIII-Eliz.*, pp 524-6.

48 P.R.O., SP 63/30, no 29, Weston to Cecil 12 March 1570; Campion, 'Hist. Ire.', ed. Vossen, pp 94-5,

comprehended the important reforming constituency of the English Pale, including such diverse adherents as Rowland White,[49] James Stanyhurst[50] and John Ussher.[51] Further, he personally demonstrated the kind of civic spirit that would be required and which he expected, by pledging to donate £20 in lands and £100 in money for the university's endowment. For Sidney, therefore, it provided an opportunity of instituting a policy which would have the virtue of satisfying the aspirations of various interest groups - political reformers and religious reformers alike - and of binding them together for the general good of the Irish commonwealth.[52]

Paradoxically, it was precisely this general level of support which the principle of establishing a university commanded that ultimately brought about the demise of Sidney's scheme. This was because the different groups and individuals who supported the principle held divergent and incompatible views concerning the university's future aims and development. Although these views were not openly articulated - on the contrary, the parliamentary motion gave the appearance of a unity which Lord Deputy Sidney hoped to harness - the suspicion that they existed led to a division of opinion in parliament concerning the most appropriate manner of funding the projected college. And it was upon

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145-6. On the 1569-71 parliament generally see V. Treadwell, 'The Irish Parliament of 1569-71', *R.I.A.Proc.*, lxv, C (1966-7), pp 55-89.

49 On White's career, his reforming views and his advocacy of the need for an Irish university see N. Canny, 'Rowland White's 'Discors touching Ireland', c. 1569', *I.H.S.*, xx, pp 439-65, especially pp 460-1.

50 On James Stanihurst's career, his intellectual and reforming preferences and his support for Sidney's university scheme see C. Lennon, *Richard Stanihurst the Dubliner 1547-1618* (Dublin, 1981), pp 19-34 *passim*.

51 On Ussher and his proposal to found a university from the profits of the Staple after the parliamentary scheme failed in 1570 see J.T. Gilbert, *History of the City of Dublin* (3 vols, Dublin, 1834-9), i, pp 383-5, and Treadwell, 'Irish Parliament', p 84.

52 On the reforming milieu generally at this time see N. Canny, *The formation of the Old English Elite in Ireland* (O'Donnell lecture, Dublin, 1975).

this division of opinion that the scheme eventually floundered. Sidney hoped to endow the university through an assortment of private donations of money and land on the model of his own proffer and, according to a letter of the Irish privy council of 4 March 1570, the scheme was 'so well liked' that it 'hath provoked many good men to offer very liberally to help it forward'.[53] Yet in a letter written only eight days later, Lord Chancellor Weston contradicted this view by informing Cecil that without the queen's financial support 'our bareness and poverty in this realm is not able to support such a work of charge'.[54] Here was the division of opinion over funding in its starkest terms. What did it signify?

In reality, it had nothing to do with finance. The point at issue was the question of who would exercise ideological control over the university. When recounting the doings of the autumn session of parliament to Cecil in March 1570, Weston drew a careful distinction between the emergence of the motion for a university, and the simultaneous work that he and the bishops had undertaken on the drafting of reformist bills for the erection of free schools, for curbing clerical non-residence and for repairing ruined churches and chapels.[55] The chancellor, in fact, was distancing himself ever so slightly from the motion, the implication being that he and the bishops played no active part in bringing it forward. On the contrary, with the active encouragement of their speaker, James Stanyhurst, the motion appears to have emanated from the commons.[56] Nevertheless, Weston and the bishops had to, and genuinely did, support the principle underlying the motion, for these were the men who had only recently campaigned for the establishment of a university in St Patrick's. What they did not, nor were bound to, agree to was Sidney's idea of endowing the college

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53 *Acts privy council, Ire., 1556-71*, pp 246-7.

54 P.R.O., SP 63/30, no 29, Weston to Cecil 12 March 1570.

55 Ibid.

56 Campion, 'Hist. Ire.', ed. Vossen, pp 144-6; Lennon, *Richard Stanihurst*, pp 28, 30-1, 87.

through private donations, for this would have meant that power and influence over the shaping of the university's religious orientation would devolve upon the donors, not all of whom - including Speaker Stanyhurst - could be counted upon to give full and unqualified support to the protestant cause.[57] Hence Weston's insistence that 'the device, direction and foundation of ... so godly a deed' should reside with the queen alone and that it should 'consecrate to perpetual memory her majesty's godly zeal to true religion and learning'. If the foundation and direction of the college were to reside elsewhere - with trimmimg or even papistically inclined laymen - then such a consecration to true religion would not be guaranteed.[58] It is evident that the lord deputy did not share this view. In contrast to Weston and the bishops, his greatest anxiety was that if parliament failed at this juncture to get the university established, the general goodwill to establish the new foundation would become dissipated and ultimately lead to nothing. At this point, Sidney was also more tolerant on religious matters than the bishops, and may have felt that his munificence and his willingness to include the local community in the work of creating an indigenous seat of learning would do more to convert papists and religious trimmers to protestantism, than the establishment of the exclusivist institution that the hierarchy had in mind.[59]

Faced with the deputy's determined enthusiasm, the opponents of a privately funded university attacked the scheme on the grounds that it would lead necessarily to the creation of a poor and niggardly institution. They contended that a sufficient sum would not 'arise to

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57 Although Stanyhurst's credal leanings were probably not fully defined at this point, they are likely to have been closer to the old faith than to the protestantism espoused by Weston and the bishops. In March 1571 he showed sympathies for the catholic leanings held by Edmund Campion when he helped him escape the clutches of the Elizabethan government. His son Richard later described him as 'very Catholic' and claimed that he had once refused the chancellorship of Ireland for reasons of conscience (Lennon, *Richard Stanihurst*, pp 31-4).

58 Weston to Cecil, 12 March 1570 (P.R.O., SP 63/30, no 29).

59 On Sidney's tolerance at this juncture see Treadwell, 'Irish Parliament', pp 63-4.

make a muster of colleges', that the university would be 'a feeble and raw foundation' and that the projected location of the college would 'be not all so commodious'. His exasperated counter-argument - 'that time must ripen a weak beginning, that other universities began with less' - made little impression upon the doubters.[60] Weston and the bishops brought the entire project to an impasse.[61] In doing so, it is likely that they had the support of other groupings in parliament who had their own private fears about the ramifications of the scheme. These may have included those who would have been fearful that the deputy's call for private donations might evolve into the enactment of legislation involving the imposition of direct taxation on behalf of the university. The parliament was particularly notable for the tetchiness and deep suspicion with which it viewed the government's economic motives on a whole range of issues, including bills for the abolition of coign and livery and the regulation of Irish trade.[62] The opposition may even have included, as Sidney later intimated, some active papists who, unlike the chancellor and the bishops, did not believe that they would have any influence on the university's religious orientation but, rather, that it would become a wellspring for breeding protestant evangelists in Ireland.[63] Whatever the case, no agreement on the means for funding the university was achievable in parliament and a compromise solution was adopted to bring the squabbling to an end. This was the Irish council's letter of 4 March 1570 to the English Privy council, which highlighted, *à la* Sidney, native enthusiasm for the project and the willingness of the local

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60 Campion, 'Hist. Ire.', ed. Vossen, p 146.

61 These probably included Archbishop Loftus of Dublin and Bishop Brady of Meath, neither of whom went on record to voice their support for Sidney's university scheme. This, of course, was in stark contrast to their forceful advocacy of the earlier scheme involving the conversion of St Patrick's. For another example from this parliament of the prelates' willingness and ability to fight their corner against the wishes of the executive, see their resistance to the financially unfavourable early drafts of the bill for the erection of free schools (Treadwell, 'Irish Parliament', pp 74, 78; P.R.O., SP 63/27, no. 48, Weston to Cecil, 18 March 1569).

62 Treadwell, 'Irish Parliament', *passim.*

63 N. Canny, *The Elizabethan conquest of Ireland* (Hassocks, 1976), p 140.

community to contribute towards its funding. Side by side with this, however, the letter also contained the Weston viewpoint: the English council were petitioned to solicit the queen 'to devise, order and direct' the establishment of the university and to 'further it with her most bounteous liberality'.[64] It was a risky strategy which failed to pay off. The parsimonious queen's unwillingness to sponsor and finance the university led to its disappearance from the order of business transacted in the subsequent sessions of the parliament.

IV

The failure of Sidney's university initiative in 1570, coming so soon after the failure of the Cecil-Brady scheme, severely blunted the régime's enthusiasm for proceeding with the establishment of an Irish university. And, despite the revelations which emerged in the intervening years that the all too evident inadequacies of the Church of Ireland's clergy stemmed from their lack of a good, protestant education;[65] and the continued belief among would-be reformers of Ireland that a local university was a necessary prerequisite for bringing civility into the country;[66] fourteen years were to pass before the régime regained sufficient confidence and motivation to try again. Even at this juncture, the winter of 1583-4, it was an external pressure, rather than a spontaneous gesture on the part of the English privy council, which helped put the foundation of an Irish university back upon the political agenda. In a series of tough negotiations conducted between the incoming lord deputy, Sir John Perrot, and the council, to determine the final content of an ambitiously conceived vice-regal reform programme, it was Perrot who broached the possibility of

64 *Acts privy council, Ire., 1556-71*, pp 246-7.

65 See, for example, the reports and observations collected in Brady, *Ir. ch. Eliz.*, pp 14-19, 29-33, 39-42.

66 P.R.O., SP 63/110, no. 34, Robert Draper, parson of Trim, to Burghley May 15 1584; Sir William Herbert, *Croftus sive de Hibernia Liber*, ed. A. Keaveney and J. Madden (Dublin, 1992), pp 97-105, 163.

including the foundation of a university as a policy objective.[67] Initially, however, even he did not rank the university question among the major issues to be addressed by his new government, with the result that it did not figure very prominently in his deliberations with the council. Indeed, in December 1583, it was completely excluded from the first batch of instructions which were issued to him on his appointment as deputy.[68]

That Perrot was ultimately enjoined to pursue the foundation of an Irish university afresh, was due in large measure to the renewed interest which his initial suggestion aroused in Lord Treasurer Burghley. Burghley, of course, was the man who had sought in the 1560s to make Archbishop Browne's earlier university proposal a reality. Now, in the 1580s, he clearly saw in Perrot's pro-university stance an opportunity to revive a policy whose implementation he still evidently hankered after. By the time the final content of Perrot's reform programme was resolved upon, in December 1583, his thoughts on the matter had fully crystallized. In a working paper entitled 'The heads of the instructions for the lord deputy of Ireland' Burghley added in his own hand one further objective: that the new deputy should 'certify the state of St Patrick's, and how it might be a college of learning'.[69] Soon after, he secured his fellow councillors' support for the scheme who, in a supplementary 'memorial' issued to Perrot on 19 January 1584, commanded him to consider how St Patrick's and its revenues might serve the erection of a college 'as heretofore hath been intended'.[70] In hindsight, the sanctioning of the revived university scheme by Burghley and the privy council is inexplicable, given that the arguments which had led to the cathedral's reprieve the first time round were still applicable in the 1580s. Viewed from the

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67 P.R.O., SP 63/108, no 87 'Necessary considerations for the causes of Ireland' (item 17), n.d., c. 1583. On the negotiations generally see Morgan, *Tyrone's Rebellion*, p 30.

68 *Desid. cur. Hib.*, i, pp 35-49.

69 P.R.O., SP 63/106, no 43.

70 *Desid. cur. Hib.*, i, p 28.

vantage point which Burghley then occupied, however, there were still some convincing arguments for proceeding in this manner. In the first place, there was a patent need for a university and, as Sidney's ill-fated parliamentary initiative had so graphically illustrated, there were few easy alternatives to the St Patrick's option. More importantly, there were good grounds for assuming that local opposition to the scheme would not be as pronounced nor as influential as it had been in the 1560s. The current occupant of the archbishopric of Dublin, Adam Loftus, had been one of the most vocal supporters of the earlier attempt to implement the scheme, and Burghley probably counted upon receiving his continued support, presuming that he would use his office to facilitate the smooth transformation of cathedral into college, in much the same way as he had proposed to use his position as dean of St Patrick's to achieve the same ends in the 1560s.[71]

The most dominant consideration which prompted Burghley's decision to revive the old university scheme, however, was the internal logic of the scheme itself. As in the 1560s, the lord treasurer was driven on by an inspirational, but largely untrue, belief that the crown's underlying intention had always been to use Dublin's supernumerary cathedral for the godly purpose of erecting a college. Based upon an apocryphal notion ultimately attributable to Archbishop Browne's 'Device', this belief had achieved mythical status by the 1580s, positing that it was King Edward VI who had originally taken surrender of St Patrick's and that, had he lived longer, he would have proceeded to convert it into a university.[72] The St

71 See above pp 342-7.

72 Bodl., Perrot MS 1, ff 93v-94r, Perrot to the queen, 18 June 1585. In reality, it was Henry VIII who had taken the original surrender. The idea that the crown wanted to convert it into a university may have been born out of Archbishop Browne's recollection of an allegedly dishonest ploy by Henry's lord deputy, Sir Anthony St Leger, to win the accedence of the dean and chapter to the surrender. According to Browne, St Leger had maintained that Henry VIII intended to put the cathedral to a godly use which moved its clergy to submit to the royal will. It was the archbishop himself, however, who had suggested in his later petition to Edward VI that this godly purpose might be the foundation of a university. In the retelling of the story over time these events and their chronology appear to have become confused.

Patrick's scheme, therefore, was not merely an accessible policy option, which had been held on file in the offices of the monarch's secretaries for close on forty years, but a piece of unfinished business pertaining to Edward VI's reformation of the Tudor churches. Thus, for the lord treasurer, a man whose spiritual outlook had been shaped in King Edward's court, there was a deeply compelling, almost moral, imperative to see it through to its conclusion.

It seems likely that Burghley also used the existence of this appealing protestant mythos to convert Perrot to the belief that St Patrick's was the best means of funding the erection of the college; for, initially at least, the deputy had favoured endowing it with some of the recently escheated lands of the Desmond and Baltinglas rebels, to be supplemented by a series of money and labour fines to be imposed upon those rebels 'thought fit to be pardoned'.[73] It is unlikely, however, that he bargained for Perrot's response. As a former Edwardian courtier himself, the mythos had a profound effect upon the new lord deputy. It fired his imagination and determined that he brought to the task of founding the university a sense of mission which exceeded even the zeal evinced by the most ardent supporters of the project in the 1560s, Hugh Brady and Adam Loftus. Like them, he believed that the dissolution of St Patrick's was much more than just a means of securing the erection of a college. For Perrot, it was nothing less than a means of purifying the Irish church of the remnants of its popish past, a task which cried out for fulfilment so that the memory of the protestant boy king would be properly honoured.[74]

Perrot's radical protestant vision of his mission was implicit in his blueprint for the new university, copies of which were despatched to Burghley and the queen's secretary, Sir

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73 B.L., Harl. MS 3292 ff 10rv ('A discourse for the repressing of the rebellion stirred up in Ireland by the earl of Desmond and Viscount Baltinglass ... and for the reforming that realm written by Sir John Perrot Knight at her majesty's commandment..', July 1581); P.R.O., SP 63/108, no 87.

74 Bodl., Perrot MS 1, ff 95v-96r, 111r, Perrot to Walsingham, n.d., c. June 1585, and to the earl of Leicester, 10 June 1585.

Francis Walsingham, on 21 August 1584.[75] Although these communications were concerned ostensibly with the intended structure and organization of the college, they also contained a subtext which reveals the nature and depth of the lord deputy's ideological commitment to the project. Perrot effectively re-endorsed the privy council's plan on the grounds that it would rid Dublin of the excesses of its medieval ecclesiastical heritage; for here 'in this little city' were two 'great', 'richly endowed' cathedrals 'too near together for any good they do'. And to leave his political masters in no doubt that there were compelling religious reasons for following their instructions, he commended the scheme further because it would contribute to the abolition of one of the main foci of religious idolatry within the local church. The mere fact that St Patrick's cathedral was dedicated to Ireland's patron saint meant necessarily that it was held 'in more superstitious reputation than the other dedicated to the name of Christ' and was thus 'fitter to be suppressed than continued'. In Perrot's eye's, therefore, the work which the council had committed to him was not merely the foundation of a university, but the right to execute an act of protestant iconoclasm. Thus he eagerly looked forward to the appealing prospects of Christ being allowed to 'devour' St Patrick and his followers, and of his own government stripping the Irish church of a hateful secular cathedral which served no other purpose than to maintain absentee prebendaries and unimpressive vicars choral, 'a sort of idle singing men that cannot aptly pronounce an English word or readily read the lesson appointed for public prayers'.

Burghley's successful conversion of Perrot to favouring the old university policy soon created unanticipated difficulties for its successful implementation. Far from being a boon to the scheme, Perrot's passionate espousal of the cause cut across the lord treasurer's carefully designed plan to pre-empt and counteract prospective opposition to it. Burghley

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75 Bodl., Perrot Ms 1, ff 24v-25v; P.R.O., SP 63/111, no 71. There are calendared versions of Perrot's blueprint in McNeill, ed.,'Perrot Papers', pp 8-9, and Brady, *Ir. ch. Eliz.*, pp 90-1.

was keenly aware that the scheme had foundered in the 1560s because its opponents had persuasively contended that the tithe-based revenues of St Patrick's could not be justifiably diverted towards the outwardly secular ends of establishing a college, given that there was such a high level of lay impropriations throughout the Irish church generally. To minimize the impact of the inevitable restatement of this argument, therefore, Burghley and the council had also enjoined Perrot to consider how parliament might introduce a tax upon the lessees of impropriated parsonages to provide futher financial aid to the incipient college. In effect, his aim was to spread the burden of responsibility for financing the college among both lay and ecclesiastical proprietors of tithes. All would be forced to contribute to the noble aim of 'training up the youth in that realm in the knowledge of god and other good learning', a disarming tactic which was designed to prevent local churchmen from taking the moral high ground through the claim that they were the exclusive victims of the government's plans.[76]

The zealous Perrot, however, would not countenance this approach. For him, his conviction that St Patrick's cathedral was a redundant, popish remnant of the medieval church - it 'serveth to little use then for singing men to meet together twice a day to sing badly, rather of custom than devotion'[77] - and that Edward VI had sanctioned its dissolution in order to establish a protestant academy, was sufficient reason for proceeding with the plan as he believed it was originally conceived, that is, without the inclusion of a sop designed to appease self-interested clergymen. Indeed, Perrot was convinced that there would be no need for additional financial resources to support the college. St Patrick's alone would suffice. Out of annual revenues reckoned by Perrot to be worth 4,000 marks sterling he believed he would establish not one but two universities, with the added bonuses that he

76 *Desid. cur. Hib.*, i, pp 28-9.

77 Bodl., Perrot MS 1, f 110v, Perrot to the earl of Leicester, 10 June 1585.

would also use the church as a site for the Irish courts and the canons' houses within the cathedral close as 'an Inn of Court to bestow the judges in'. Thus, despite the council's recommendation, he planned to press ahead with the scheme by the passing of an act concerned solely with the dissolution of St Patrick's and the 'commission of it to these good uses'.[78]

Perrot's insistence on maintaining the pristine purity of Edward VI's plan had a more profound impact on the fate of the scheme, however, than its subversion of Burghley's politic manoeuvres. His increasingly obsessive desire to destroy the cathedral and the language that he used to express it ultimately brought the scheme into disrepute. Although his pronouncements on the cathedral were unexceptional to the extent that they conformed to the type of criticism that any radical protestant would have levelled against an English secular cathedral in the sixteenth century, the fact that they emanated from one who occupied a position of high authority in the Elizabethan régime, and that they were uttered in the post-Grindalian age of the Elizabethan church, made them appear as the opinion of a subversive. In short, Perrot's views were interpretable as precisian values and were thus politically unacceptable. Surprisingly, the man who identified this and successfully exploited it on behalf of St Patrick's cathedral was once the holder of similar views himself, the erstwhile puritan and supporter of the university scheme, the lord chancellor and archbishop of Dublin, Adam Loftus.[79]

By the time Perrot embarked upon his mission to convert St Patrick's cathedral into a university in the early autumn of 1584, Adam Loftus was completing his seventeenth year

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78 Bodl., Perrot Ms 1, ff 24v-25v; P.R.O., SP 63/111, no 71. There are calendared versions of Perrot's blueprint in McNeill, ed.,'Perrot Papers', pp 8-9, and Brady, *Ir. ch. Eliz.*, pp 90-1.

79 On Loftus's earlier associations with the Puritan movement see Hammerstein, 'Erzbischof Adam Loftus', pp 70-92.

as archbishop of Dublin. His experiences during this period had brought about a great change in his views about the cathedral: he had become convinced that it was an indispensable appendage of his archbishopric. Like Archbishop Browne, he now appreciated the importance of its administrative role in the diocese. Like Archbishop Curwen, he had come to value it as the major fund of archiepiscopal patronage. He was determined, therefore, to ruin Perrot's plans for the cathedral, no matter what damage might be inflicted upon his relationship with the queen's notoriously irascible deputy. Thus, from October 1584 until June 1585, when the cathedral's reprieve was finally confirmed by the queen, he oversaw a vigorous campaign to stave off this threat through regular correspondence with the leading English privy councillors,[80] and through the despatch of emissaries from among his clergy to lobby the same councillors at court.[81]

The arguments Loftus employed were virtually a rerun of those advanced by his predecessor, Hugh Curwen, in the 1560s, when he himself had sought the suppression of the cathedral. He stressed both the inadvisability of dispensing with the fund of archiepiscopal advowsons which would be better employed in advancing protestant preachers to well endowed livings; and the impropriety of using parochial cures to finance an institution which would have no direct pastoral benefit for the parishioners who paid their ecclesiastical dues to finance the livings. Arguments of this type had saved St Patrick's in the 1560s and were of no less force and import in the mid-1580s. Indeed in some ways the cathedral's position was now even stronger. Most of the old conservative prebendaries, like Creef and Wellesley, who in the earlier period had tarnished its

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80 See, for example, Loftus to Walsingham, 4 October 1584 and 21 March 1585 (P.R.O., SP 63/112, no 4, SP 63/115, no 32); and Loftus to Burghley, 7 October 1584 and 18 March 1585 (*ibid.*, SP 63/112, no 5, SP 63/115, no 27).

81 Loftus's emissaries were Archdeacon Ussher and Richard Bancroft, prebendary of Mulhuddart. They visited the court in the winter of 1584 and in the spring of 1585 respectively (Perrot to Walsingham, 16 November 1584, P.R.O., SP 63/112, no 72; Loftus to Burghley, 18 March 1585, SP 63/115, no 27).

reputation in the eyes of protestants, had died; and Loftus had replaced them with men of impeccable reformist credentials like himself. These included their successors in the offices of official principal and archdeacon of Dublin, the Cambridge graduates Dr Robert Conway and Henry Ussher MA. Ussher, in fact, was one of a growing body of actual or prospective graduate preachers holding cathedral prebends, all of whom reflected Loftus's avowed aim of reconstructing St Patrick's along protestant lines.[82] The archbishop was not confident, however, that these selling points were sufficient in themselves to win him the support of the English privy council against the deputy. To secure this victory, he chose to take advantage of Perrot's greatest political weakness - his uncompromising religious principles - by aligning himself and his cathedral with the increasingly powerful anti-puritan wing of the Elizabethan establishment.

Loftus's move to the 'right' is evident in the stress that his cathedral prebendaries laid upon tradition in justifying the continued existence of their church. In their preamble to a petition presented to the English privy council by Archdeacon Ussher in December 1584, they confidently announced that their church was a 'body politic' founded 'about four hundred years now last past' by the queen's 'most noble progenitor King John'. The cathedral's structures and functions, they continued, were shared 'with other like worthy foundations within her majesty's noble realm of England'. Its destruction, therefore, could not be countenanced because it would deface the worthy memory of the queen's progenitors, as well as being quite unjust and against reason, given the fact that it was of 'an order of bodies politics used and allowed in this land, agreeable to her majesty's laws'. In other words, the prebendaries were electing to combat Perrot's attack on their cathedral on the grounds that such an act would be a threat to the established ecclesiastical order as enshrined in the

82 Lawlor, *Fasti of St Patrick's*, 79, 117. For a list of graduates and prospective graduates holding prebends in the cathedral at this time see Loftus's book 'A true note of the livings of St Patrick's church and of all and singular the dignities, prebends and ministers thereof, how and in what sort they are possessed and by whom and how qualified', 4 August 1585 (P.R.O., SP 63/118, no. 45[i]).

queen's religious settlement, a settlement which maintained many continuities with the medieval past. In this scenario, the deputy was, by implication, a dangerous innovator and not to be trusted, while the clergy of St Patrick's were the upholders of traditional law and order.[83] This was the kind of argument which would have appealed to the conservatively minded queen. It was also designed to appeal to the man who ultimately proved to be Loftus's and the cathedral prebendaries' most influential ally, the queen's vice-chamberlain, Sir Christopher Hatton, the 'rising star' of Elizabethan government who, like the monarch, was a favourer of tradition and a known hater of precisian values.[84]

Loftus's courting of Hatton was an astute piece of political opportunism, given that it was commonly known that the vice-chamberlain was an avowed enemy of the deputy, and that he would be only to willing to join with any cause that sought to undermine Perrot's credibility.[85] However, Loftus would not have been able to exploit this advantage so effectively had he not had so near to hand a direct line of communication to the vice-chamberlain. The medium in question was Richard Bancroft, prebendary of Mulhuddart in St Patrick's cathedral, the future bishop of London, archbishop of Canterbury and scourge of puritans, who, at this juncture, was Sir Christopher Hatton's household chaplain.[86] Bancroft was especially suitable for the task of lobbying his master on behalf of St Patrick's

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83 P.R.O., SP 63/113, no 56.

84 On the queen's religious conservatism and the reasons for it see C. Haigh, *Elizabeth I* (London and New York, 1988), pp 27-45; for Hatton's see E. St John Brooks, *Sir Christopher Hatton: Queen Elizabeth's Favourite* (London, 1946), pp 197-219; A. Gilmore Vines, *Neither Fire Nor Steel: Sir Christopher Hatton* (Nelson-Hall, Chicago, 1978), pp 48-50.

85 Although there is some inconclusive evidence to suggest that the source of this friction may have been Perrot's seduction of an illegitimate daughter of Hatton, the most likely cause was the great difference in temperament that existed between the pair. Perrot was a bluff, radically protestant soldier; Hatton a religious conservative and court sophisticate, whose favour with the queen Perrot disparagingly attributed to his abilities as a dancer. On all this see Brooks, *Sir Christopher Hatton*, pp 15, 31-2, 41, 358-9; Gilmore Vines, *Neither Fire Nor Steel*, pp xiv, 205.

86 Brooks, *Sir Christopher Hatton*, pp 333-4.

as he was a man who was both emotionally and financially beholden to the cathedral and, as a consequence, personally committed to its survival. Not only had he held the well endowed prebend of Mulhuddart for most of the preceding two decades, a prebend which served to support his post-graduate career at university, but he was also the maternal great-nephew of Hugh Curwen, the former archbishop of Dublin and defender of St Patrick's in the 1560s. It was Curwen, in fact, who had paid for Bancroft's undergraduate education at Christ's College, Cambridge, and who had presented him to his prebend in St Patrick's.[87]

Bancroft is known to have fed Hatton with information on the conflict between Loftus and Perrot[88] and there can be little doubt that it was accompanied by the gloss that the deputy's designs upon St Patrick's were inspired by patently transparent puritan inclinations. Nor can there be much doubt, given Hatton's feelings about Perrot and his religious preferences, that he was prevailed upon by his chaplain to give his backing to Archbishop Loftus. The intervention of Bancroft and his procurement of Hatton's support for St Patrick's were to prove decisive. It gave Loftus the political leverage he needed to pressurize Burghley into abandoning the scheme. The turning point came in the spring of 1585. Loftus despatched Bancroft to negotiate directly with the lord treasurer in March of that year. Emboldened by the support of Hatton, the archbishop and his envoy agressively staked out their position. Loftus's letter, which Bancroft delivered to Burghley, contained an ultimatum: he threatened to resign unless the lord treasurer procured from the queen 'private letters' forbidding any talk of the dissolution of St Patrick's in Perrot's upcoming parliament.[89] In the face of this political pressure, the consensus-seeking politician in Burghley capitulated. In April or May

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87 S.B. Babbage, *Puritanism and Richard Bancroft* (London, 1962), pp 7-8.

88 Correspondence on the matter is transcribed into Hatton's letter book. At least one of the letters (Loftus to Burghley 18 March 1585) came into Hatton's hands via Bancroft as he was the bearer (H. Nicolas, *Memoirs of the life and times of Sir Christopher Hatton K.G.* [London, 1847], pp 357-9).

89 Ibid.

1585, he wrote to Perrot to inform him in uncompromising terms that he could never allow the alteration of St Patrick's 'to any other public use whatsoever'. To save face, he declared that his decision was based on the promptings of conscience. As on the previous occasion he abandoned the university scheme, the tithe issue was singled out as the sticking point. In a solemn tone, the hypocrisy of which was not lost upon Perrot, he told the deputy that there was 'none so great an error in this our Church of England' than the conversion of parsonages with cure of souls to 'private uses'. By the end of May, Loftus had his letters of reprieve from the queen.[90]

The failure of the 1580s scheme marked the final abandonment of the Elizabethan régime's long commitment to the notion of converting St Patrick's cathedral into a university. The policy failed because this core idea was fundamentally flawed. For a variety of reasons - the misreading of Browne's 'Device', the unfamiliarity of the main policy formulators with the local church in Dublin, and the existence of a conscious bias against the secular cathedral amongst some reformers - the proponents of the university scheme failed to appreciate the importance of the cathedral within the local ecclesiastical fabric and, as a consequence, failed to make any provision for dealing with the political fall out that accompanied each successive attempt to implement the policy. The conceptual flaw in the policy had major implications which extended beyond the internal affairs of the Church of Ireland. While politicians and divines debated the efficacy or otherwise of converting the cathedral into a university, Bishop Brady's 'tender youth' sought an education on the continent, in universities and colleges where they were nourished on the doctrines and tenets of post-Tridentine catholicism. Thus when a university was finally founded in 1592 it had too much ground to make-up in the battle to prevent what Queen Elizabeth described as the infection of her Irish subjects in the universities of France, Italy and Spain with 'popery and other ill

90 P.R.O., SP 63/112, no. 68.

qualities'.[91] In fine, the protracted debate on the foundation of a university was a crucial factor in determining the ultimately unsuccessful outcome of the protestant reformation in Ireland, if for no other reason than that the Church of Ireland entered the seventeenth century with a largely unreformed ministry.[92]

91 *Cal. pat. rolls Ire. Eliz.*, p 227; H. Hammerstein, 'Aspects of the Continental Education of Irish Students in the reign of Queen Elizabeth I', in *Hist. Studies*, viii (1971), pp 137-153.

92 A. Ford, *The Protestant Reformation in Ireland, 1590-1641* (Frankfurt am Main, 1985), pp 19-41. On the crucial role played by the provision of university education in the reformation of the ministry in England see O'Day, *English Clergy*, pp 127-143; idem, 'The Anatomy of a Profession', in Prest, ed., *Professions in Early Modern England,* pp 25-63.

Chapter Nine

Christ Church cathedral during the reformation

I

At the outset of the Henrician reformation in the mid-1530s, the cathedral of the Holy and Undivided Trinity, Dublin, commonly known as Christ Church, was, as it had been for over three centuries, a monastic establishment staffed by Austin canons under the rule of Arrouaise. The cathedral's regular status was significant. Historically, it had determined the nature of its involvement in the local institutional church. Medieval bishops preferred to employ secular clerks, who were free of the restrictions imposed by the votive life, to fulfil the tasks of diocesan administration. To this end the early Norman archbishops of Dublin had erected the old parish church of St Patrick de Insula into a rival secular cathedral, from which they and their successors drew their administrative staff throughout the medieval period. As a result, Christ Church never attained a vital role in administering the local church, apart from the purely formal and honorific functions of ratifying episcopal *acta* such as the letting of episcopal property;[1] sharing in the custodianship of the see, with St Patrick's cathedral, during episcopal vacancies;[2] and keeping the archbishop's cross, mitre and ring.[3] In other respects, however, these honorific functions were important, for

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1 For some examples from Elizabeth's reign see Archbishop Loftus's leases of Cullenswood to Simon Grove, 6 March 1570, and William Ussher, 20 October 1583; and of Lambay Island to William Ussher, 17 February 1594 (N.L.I., D 9964-D 9966, all three leases were ratified by the chapters of both cathedrals). See also R.C.B., C.6.1.7 no. 1 (Chapter Act Book of Christ Church 1574-1634), *passim*.

2 The custodianship of the see was exercised jointly by the dean of St Patrick's and the prior or, from 1539, dean of Christ Church during episcopal vacancies. This gave the heads of the two cathedrals authority to exercise all aspects of the archbishop's spiritual or ordinary jurisdiction. For some examples see D.C.A., Fr/Roll/2, m. 36d (granting of probate, 1511, after the death of Archbishop Fitzsimon); *S.P. Hen. VIII*, ii, pp 205-7 (giving sentence of excommunication, 1534, after the murder of Archbishop Alen).

3 A. Gwynn and R.N. Hadcock, *Medieval religious houses: Ireland* (London, 1970), p 71.

Christ Church was perceived as the more senior of Dublin's two mother churches and, as such, was held in great reverence by the local community.

An important factor which shaped the local community's reverential sentiments for the cathedral was its location. Christ Church, as all legal instruments emanating from the cathedral proudly enunciated, was the only major religious foundation situated within the walls of the city of Dublin. Because of this, it was a focus for the civic pride of the citizens of Dublin, a sentiment which was given very strong expression by the mayor and commonalty in the late 1530s and early 1540s when the cathedral was threatened with suppression by the Dublin administration.[4] In defending Christ Church, the mayor and citizens also drew attention to the cathedral's longstanding association with the political and judicial institutions of English Ireland, an association which gave it great potency as a symbol of the anglophilic ethos of the English Pale generally. It is not surprising, therefore, that leading Pale families used the cathedral to display their rank and prestige. In 1565, for example, a member of the cathedral chapter recorded that a storm in August of that year broke the great gable over the high altar and, in the process, cast down the arms of the Plunket family of Dunsoghly. The Plunkett arms had been set in stained glass c. 1514.[5]

Underpinning the cathedral's eminent social and cultural position was its deeply-revered religious standing, representing as it did a prominent focal point for the expression of contemporary religious piety. Devoid of administrative responsibilities within the diocese, the ten to twelve canons who resided within the cathedral cloister during the early sixteenth century, served the local church by performing the daily round of liturgical observances.[6]

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4 Above pp 54-5.

5 Gillespie, ed., *Proctor's accounts of Peter Lewis*, pp 105, 124; Crosthwaite, ed., *Book of obits*, pp 6, 40.

6 The figures on residence are based on headcounts of the cathedral clergy who put their signatures to conventual leases: 'Christ Church deeds', nos. 1112, 1131, 1154, 1158.

On a typical Thursday, for instance, the canons accompanied by four boy choristers would sing the divine offices at the appropriate canonical hours and assist in a daily series of four basic masses, generally sung in plain or part song with organ accompaniment. The first or 'choir' mass probably followed the short service of Terce at around 9 a.m. The final mass of the day was the high mass, and was performed at the high altar following Sext at midday. In between the mass of the Blessed Virgin was sung in the Mary chapel, and the mass of the Holy Ghost in the chapel of the Holy Ghost. On Thursday a particularly solemn version of the latter was performed by the entire convent and choir. It was instituted by one John Estrete, a former sergeant-at-law in the Dublin administration, in the late 1480s, for the benefit of himself, his family and benefactors (who included King Henry VII and Gerald, eight earl of Kildare) during their lives and after their deaths. In return he bestowed a number of properties on the cathedral. Elaborate instructions were laid down relating to the observance of this mass. The main celebrant, for example, was required to recommend Estrete's company, nineteen people in all, to the prayers of the congregation then present, and was urged to recite the psalm *De Profundis* and the orison *Inclina domine aurem tuam ad preces nostras*, before the ritual washing of his hands at the offertory. In between or during these sung masses various private masses were also recited at the side altars. These included the various obit masses of dead benefactors. They also included the customary practice whereby one of the canons would recite in 'a low voice' the mass of the Holy Cross, popularly known as the 'Rood mass'. In effect, then, Christ Church cathedral was a large chantry foundation. It is interesting that Estrete, when granting his property to the church, directed that the canons should treat him and his fellows as founders of the institution, and thus share in the spiritual benefits that this hallowed position entailed.[7]

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7 'Christ Church deeds', nos. 348-52, 357, 1090-5; R.C.B., C.6.1.6, no. 3 (Registrum Novum of Christ Church), pp 1104-21 *passim*.

The role and function of Christ Church in relation to the local church and community were important determinants in the development of its economy throughout the medieval period. The fact that it only played a minor role in diocesan administration ensured that Dublin's archbishops were relatively unconcerned about its economic wellbeing. This was in sharp contrast to their attitude towards the economy of St Patrick's cathedral. The archbishops financed their household staff and court judges by appointing clerics to prebends in the latter, and it was the archbishops themselves, from the inception of St Patrick's in the late twelfth century until the latter half of the fifteenth century, who endowed these prebends by appropriating the most lucrative rectorial tithes of Dublin parishes.[8] Christ Church, on the other hand, did not receive similar benefits from its diocesan. A considerable part of its endowment accrued to the cathedral on or just after its foundation in the eleventh century, through the pious donations of its founder Sitric and other laymen. This endowment was primarily land-based and located in the modern county of Dublin, where it included the manors of Grangegorman and Oxmantown, Clonkeen or Kill-of-the-Grange, Drumcondra, Glasnevin, Balscaddan and Balgriffin.[9] Unfortunately for the cathedral, the value of this land had been adversely affected by the great economic and demographic crisis of the mid-fourteenth century and would only show signs of recovery, and these were very uneven, from the mid-sixteenth century on.[10] The abundant tithe revenues of St Patrick's, by contrast, the nucleus of which were derived from the large archiepiscopal manor parishes in

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8 Above pp 41-3.

9 Otway-Ruthven, 'Medieval church lands', pp 59-61.

10 For an example of a property that recovered, see the case of the townlands of Newtown, Balgaddy, Tobertown and Priorland in the manor of Balscaddan. In the early fourteenth century, the rental on this property was £10 8*s*. 5*d*. Thereafter it went into decline, yielding only £5 6*s*. 8*d*. in the period 1476-1503. From the late 1530s on, however, the rental began to recover, reaching a total yield of £11 16s. 8d. by the early 1550s (J. Mills, ed., *Account roll of the priory of Holy Trinity, Dublin, 1337-1346* [Dublin, 1891], pp 198-200; 'Christ Church deeds', nos. 1008, 1166, 1212, 1253, 1258). The farm of Clonkeen, by contrast, remained below its early fourteenth century level, £14 14*s*. 9½*d*., for the duration of the sixteenth century, yielding only £3 18*s*. 8*d*. on a lease passed as late as 1592 (*Account roll of Holy Trinity, Dublin*, p 27; 'Christ Church deeds', no. 1406).

the baronies of Uppercross and Nethercross, ensured that its annual cash income far exceeded that of Christ Church. The net revenue of St Patrick's in the late 1530s, c. *IR*£978, was just over 3½ times that of Christ Church which stood at c. *IR*£260. However, St Patrick's was by far the richest ecclesiastical institution in Ireland throughout the medieval and early modern periods. Thus, although the revenues of Christ Church had declined - by as much as a half on some manors - from their early fourteenth century level, it still remained a moderately rich institution by Irish standards as can be seen from a comparison of its net annual income with those of the larger Irish religious houses on the eve of their dissolution (*Table 9.1*).

Table 9.1 Net revenues of major Irish religious foundations c. 1539[11]

Foundation	**Income (IR£)**
St Patrick's cathedral, Dublin	978
Knight Hospitallers of Kilmainham, Dublin	651
St Mary's abbey, Dublin	504
St Thomas's abbey, Dublin	405
Christ Church cathedral, Dublin	260
Mellifont abbey, Louth	240
Louth priory	135
Abbey of B.V. Mary, Navan, Meath	120
Priory of Tristernagh, Meath	107
Priory of Selskar, Wexford	106
Priory of St Catherine, Waterford	101
St Mary's abbey, Trim, Co. Meath	100
Priory of Kells, Kilkenny	95
Priory of Connall, Kildare	86
Hospital of St John, Newgate, Dublin	85
Priory of All Hallows, Dublin	84

The popularity of Christ Church among the local community, a popularity which endured until the early years of Elizabeth's reign, guaranteed the cathedral new, if somewhat small, sources of endowment, and a steady flow of casual revenues in the form of bequests of

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11 *Extents Ir. Mon. possessions*, pp 24, 46, 67, 117, 122, 163, 193, 221, 233, 254, 279, 306, 346, 370; *S.P. Hen. VIII*, iii, p 415; *Valor beneficiorum*, p 9; Mason, *History of St Patrick's*, App. XVI, pp xxvii-xxxi. The figures have been rounded to the nearest pound.

money and other gifts. The interesting feature of these bequests is that they were made by representatives from a wide variety of social classes and backgrounds. In 1477, for example, the heiress of a former mayor of Dublin, Joneta Chamber, and her husband Robert Noryce, esquire, enfeoffed the cathedral in two houses and gardens attached to the manor of Lucan.[12] Geoffrey Fyche, dean of St Patrick's from 1530 to 1537, and a member of a leaseholding family from Glasnevin which held its land from Christ Church, gave twenty pounds towards the work of the cathedral and to ensure that the canons' prayers sent him safely into the next life.[13] In 1534 Richard Fremen, a small husbandman from Cottrellstown in the parish of Palmerstown, granted the cathedral his house and twenty acres of land, as well as a farm in Jordanstown in the parish of Clonmethan and six acres in Ballymadun. When the cathedral clergy started leasing these premises in the late 1550s they yielded an annual rent of £3 6*s*. plus customs, which they reciprocated by keeping the obits of Freman and his wife, Katherine Nott, after their deaths.[14] At the other end of the social scale Rosina Hollywood, a member of the gentry family of Hollywood from Artane, and wife of Arland Usher, merchant and alderman of Dublin, bequeathed a valuable silver goblet, weighing 27 ounces, to the common table of the cathedral clergy before she died in 1558.[15] Thus, although Christ Church did not benefit from its diocesan's largesse, its popularity as a focus for the expression of communal piety - from the yeoman farmer to the richest gentlewoman - ensured that this economic loss was somewhat offset.

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12 'Christ Church deeds', nos. 309-11.

13 Crosthwaite, ed., *Book of obits*, p 20.

14 R.C.B., C.6.1.6, no. 3 (Registrum Novum of Christ Church), pp 1080-1;'Christ Church deeds', nos. 423-5, 450, 1143, 1148-50, 1160, 1258; R.C.B., C.6.1.3 (Parvum Registrum), f 82v; Crosthwaite, ed., *Book of obits*, pp 9, 54.

15 Ibid., p 29.

The economic importance of the cathedral's popularity was seen to good effect in 1562 when a large part of its fabric collapsed. Substantial 'gifts and legacies' were granted to the church by the local community to help in the rebuilding. Although the document from which this information is derived only records those gifts granted during Michaelmas term 1564, totalling £10 10*s*. 5¾*d*. sterling, it shows once again that concern for the cathedral spanned the various levels of Pale society. A 'Mistress Cusake', probably the wife of Sir Thomas, a leading English Irish government official, left legacies worth £3 as well as two pecks of dredge-malt. Chief Baron Bathe's wife gave two pecks of wheat and two pecks of oat malt. Christopher Fagan, a rich Dublin merchant, gave 1,000 slates for the repair of the roof, while Laurence Ennos, a yeoman from Oxmantown, and Richard Donoghe, a Dublin baker, each donated four pence.[16]

It should not be imagined, however, that the local community's concern for the cathedral emanated from purely charitable and pious motives. The citizens of Dublin, in particular, had a vested economic interest in their relations with Christ Church. The cathedral was the most prominent landlord in the city and suburbs. About one hundred and eight premises in total, mostly houses, though including some gardens, parks and orchards, were held of the cathedral in leasehold, excepting the fourteen premises in Oxmantown Green, north of the Liffey, which were held by customary tenures.[17] When it came to the disposal of the city property, prominent merchants and citizens were the major beneficiaries. Of twelve city premises let in the 1530s, for example, four of them consisted of long terms of 59 to 61 years, all of which were granted to leading merchants who figured prominently in municipal government, including two former mayors, Walter Fitzsimons and Thomas Barby. During the same period Nicholas Stanyhurst, merchant, alderman and future mayor of Dublin, and

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16 Gillespie, ed., *Proctor's accounts of Peter Lewis*, pp 22-3.

17 For the cathedral's city properties in the early sixteenth century see R.C.B., C.6.1.26, no. 3 (Procters' accounts, 1541-1688), account of John Moss, 1542.

grandfather of the famour chronicler Richard, was granted a house in St Werburgh Street to be held in fee. Not only did Christ Church offer favourable terms to the citizenry, they also offered favourable locations. Three of the long leases were on premises situated in High Street in the parish of St Audoen, one of the more fashionable residential sites in the city, and they were granted to the aforesaid Fitzsimons, and the merchants Richard Hancock and John Pyppard.[18] Other merchants held business premises from the cathedral. Thomas Ussher, Thomas Stephens and Hancock rented wine taverns in the street of the same name during the 1530s and 1540s.[19] The intimate relationship of the city merchant community with the cathedral is nicely illustrated by the case of Richard Hancock. As well as his holdings in High Street and Winetavern Street, he was appointed keeper of the convent garden in 1536 by Prior Payneswick, for which he was bound to supply herbs for the convent kitchen throughout the year, leeks during Lent, and two pecks of onions at the nativity of the Blessed Virgin. It is likely that Brother Laurence Hancock, a member of the cathedral community at the time, was his kinsman.[20]

While other prominent city families like the Balls and Stanihursts also had sons who joined the cathedral community, the majority of the canons, like the clergy of Dublin generally, were recruited from more humble stock, i.e. from the families of small country husbandmen and small yeomen freeholders as well as the city's artisan classes. The family connections of most of these men are difficult to trace, as they tend to leave little imprint in the surviving sources. However, the occasional document shows some light on their particular origins. John Herman, for instance, who served in the cathedral from the late 1540s until 1560, probably hailed from a small farming family from Clonmethan in north county

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18 'Christ Church deeds', nos. 1154-5, 1158-9, 1171; Stanyhurst, *Holinshed's Irish Chronicle*, p 44.

19 R.C.B., C.6.1.26, no. 3 (Procters' accounts, 1541-1688), account of John Moss, 1542; 'Christ Church deeds', no. 1165.

20 Ibid., nos. 1154, 1158, 1162.

Dublin; for in 1559 it appears that he was instrumental in securing a lease on cathedral property in Clonmethan for another John Herman, probably his father, who was described as a husbandman of the same parish.[21] It is probable that his confrère, Nicholas Dardis, was the son of a Dublin waxmaker. Again the cathedral displayed social and economic ties with these families. Nicholas' father, Laurence, rented two houses in High Street and one in Trinity Lane from Christ Church during the 1530s, 40s and 50s. A note in an account of the table expenses of the cathedral from 1541 reveals that Dardis also shared commons with the cathedral clergy, consuming ale and fish to the value of 8*d*., while he was employed making wax for the upcoming Easter celebrations of that year.[22] Finally, it also appears that John More, a yeoman farmer from county Meath, acquired his leasehold interest in a townland called the Portan, through the good graces of his kinsman, Christopher More, who served in Christ Church between 1547 and 1561.[23]

The web of economic and social relations ties which the cathedral maintained with the local community was also evident in the way it disposed of its larger country holdings. These were traditionally demised to prominent landholding families from the districts in which the cathedral's own lands were located. In the more settled areas of county Dublin, in manors like Balcadden, for example, the cathedral took on tenants like the Bellings and Finglas's who were based in the nearby vill of Tobersool. In the Marches in the extreme south of modern Co. Dublin, farms and other property in Killiney, Ballyogan and Kilmashogue were demised to local, hardy marchers from the Walsh, Archebold and Harold families.[24] By managing its estates in this manner, the cathedral completed its total integration into the

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21 Ibid., no. 1257.

22 Ibid., nos. 439, 1165, 1250, 1264, 1271, 1274; R.C.B., C.6.1.26, no. 3 (Procters' accounts, 1541-1688), account of table expenses, 1541, account of John Moss, 1542.

23 'Christ Church deeds', nos. 1246, 1257, 1265, 1269, 1271, 1273, 1278-9.

24 Ibid., nos. 1131, 1157, 1166-8, 1253

fabric of local economic and social relations, both in town and country, and comprehending all social levels. This mutually beneficial interdependence of Christ Church and the local community ensured that the somewhat fragile nature of its economy - fragile in the sense that it was a subsistence economy and did no more than keep the institution ticking over from one year to the next - was securely buttressed against the danger of collapse. If the cost of maintaining the institution could not be met from the cathedral's ordinary revenues, especially in times when the cathedral fabric needed extra repairs, extra economic support could always be counted on in the form of pious donations from the local community.

Prior to the changes wrought upon the cathedral's structure during the reformation, its revenues were handled and distributed each year by the monastic seneschal, a position which was filled by one of the monks.[25] In normal times, four broad categories of expenditure had to be met annually, the first of which was an allocation of *IR*£70 to *IR*£80 for the upkeep of the prior's chamber.[26] The prior lived apart from the rest of the community and functioned as a kind of spiritual nobleman who, until at the least the mid-fourteenth century, took his place among the lords when the Irish parliament met. Although by the early sixteenth century he had ceased to attend parliament, the prior of Christ Church was still expected to maintain his own household and exercise 'hospitality' which in effect meant entertaining state dignitaries and other members of the local political community.

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25 *Account roll of Holy Trinity, Dublin*, passim; 'Christ Church deeds', no. 431.

26 The estimates for the categories of expenditure in this and the following paragraphs are proportionate reckonings based upon the cathedral's known income in the late 1530s, its expenditure on the common fund in the early 1540s (after it was altered into a secular cathedral), and its mid-fourteenth century accounts (*Account roll of Holy Trinity, Dublin*, passim; R.C.B., C.6.1.26, no. 3 [Procters' accounts, 1541-1688], account of John Moss, 1542).

In the fourteenth century the feeding and clothing of the rest of the canons was the responsibility of the cellarer.[27] By the sixteenth century, however, the office had disappeared and, presumably, the duties attached to it were then appropriated to the seneschal. £80 to £90 pounds annually were expended upon the common table of the monks. An interesting account of the diet of the cathedral clergy for 15 weeks during 1541, which we may assume to be reasonably typical of the first half of the century as a whole, survives among the cathedral archives, and it provides a rare and intimate glimpse into an aspect of the social history of Tudor Ireland which is relatively sparsely documented.[28] The listed expenses cover the seven weeks of Lent in 1541 and the eight weeks in ordinary time prior to this. The canons had a reasonably varied diet which exhibited little in the way of asceticism. In ordinary time the staple was a mixture of meat (mainly pork and beef with occasional mutton, lamb and rabbit); and a large selection of fish (salmon, herring, haddock, ray, hake, ling, plaice and, on one occasion, congar eel). During Lent the meat was replaced by a further selection of fish, especially shellfish - cockles, mussels and razors - and the occasional gurnard. Poultry did not figure very highly as a purchaseable item. However, this was probably due to the fact that the convent received a regular supply of capons and geese in the form of customary payments from its tenants. The absence of vegetables and bread as table expenses are also explicable. The convent's vegetables were supplied from its own garden and certain port-corn was retained from its appropriated tithes which were ground and baked in the cathedral precincts. Butter and eggs were purchased and more specialized baking skills such as those required for the making of pasties were paid for. On Holy Thursday 1541, the cathedral paid 4*d.* for the baking of four pasties. Fruit was probably home-grown in the cathedral orchards, though honey was purchased regularly. On special occasions, however, raisins and prunes were bought; as were

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27 *Account roll of Holy Trinity, Dublin*, pp 4, 8, 48, 50-1, 147, 158, 173, 202.

28 R.C.B., C.6.1.26, no. 3 (Procters' accounts, 1541-1688), account of table expenses, 1541.

flavourings and preservatives including salt, mustard and saffron. The main beverage was, of course, ale for which regular payments were made though there were occasional purchases of wine.

The third main area of expense was handled by the monastic sacrist who looked after the liturgical requirements of the cathedral and the church fabric as well as the altars and shrines. £70 to £100 pounds was set aside each year for this purpose. Payments included the wages of the various tradesmen engaged in repair work throughout the cathedral precincts - glaziers, carpenters, heliers, plumbers and masons - who were paid 10*d.* to 12*d.* per day in the first half of the sixteenth century, as well as receiving payments in food and drink. Their journeymen and apprentices also received cash payments, 8*d.* and 6*d.* per day respectively, and shared in their masters' refections. Building materials including such items as lead, rosin, oil, timber, tiles, stained-glass and various nails and spikes were regularly entered payments in the cathedral accounts, as was the cost of their carriage to the precincts. On the liturgical side expenses might include payments to the embroiderer for the fixing of maniples on liturgical vestments, the making of chalice cloths which cost 5*d.* each, the purchase of mass breads at 20*d.* per thousand, the cleaning of the lectern, the laying of rushes in the rood loft and the purchase of large quantities of wax to light the church.[29]

Finally there was a group of miscellaneous annual expenses which were handled by the seneschal. These included such items as the payment of attorneys for doing suit of court for the prior and convent at the manor courts of Lucan, Castleknock and Finglas; the payment of procurations to the archbishop and archdeacon of Dublin for appropriated parishes, 46*s.* 8*d.* and 26*s.* 8*d.* per annum respectively; and the customary entertainment of the archbishop

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29 R.C.B., C.6.1.26, no. 3 (Procters' accounts, 1541-1688), account of John Moss, 1542.

over Christmas, for which 3*s*. 6*d*. was spent in 1541 for the purchase of food for a meal on Christmas Eve night, and breakfast and dinner on Christmas Day.[30]

In the daily enactment of the religious practices of the cathedral, and in the regulation of its economy which was designed to ensure their continuation, there was a certain timelessness and a continuity with the past, witnessed by the stained-glass representation of St Laurence O'Toole on the south side of the church, the man who first introduced the Arroasian rule into the cathedral in the twelfth century. The introduction of the various Tudor religious settlements ultimately broke this continuity and drove a wedge between the cathedral and the local community which supported it. There was nothing inevitable about this process however. Certainly, throughout the Henrician period, though changes occurred, there was a real continuity with the medieval past, and even at the start of Elizabeth's reign, after five years of Marian catholicism, the cathedral operated on much the same lines as it had done for centuries. It thus remains to examine the impact of the Tudor reformation upon Christ Church, and to examine the process whereby the local community, hitherto deeply committed to the cathedral, withdrew its support during Elizabeth's reign.

II

Perhaps the most characteristic feature of the Henrician reformation was the antipathy displayed by the régime towards the monastic order. The regular status of Christ Church, of course, rendered it liable to suppression when the crown's campaign to abolish Irish monasticism reached its climax in the Pale during 1539. For nearly six years, from that date until 1544, the threat of suppression, in varying degrees of intensity, was an ever-present reality, especially as the diocese of Dublin boasted another cathedral church, St Patrick's, of

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30 Ibid.

more favoured secular status. In England the two dioceses, Bath and Wells and Coventry and Lichfield, which had a monastic and secular cathedral side by side before the reformation, shed their regular foundations during the dissolution of the monastries, a fact which did not augur well for the future of Christ Church. The cause of Christ Church was helped considerably, however, by its popularity among the local community. In July 1539 the Irish council, including leading English Irish officials and led by Lord Deputy Grey, appealed to Thomas Cromwell to preserve six religious houses in the Pale, including Christ Church, on account of their social utility as educational establishments and hostelries.[31] Almost as an aside they also argued that their suppression would strike off a number of exchequer revenues, namely the annual subsidy and the newly-instituted clerical taxes, the twentieth part and first fruits. In this respect the councellors' argument exhibited a degree of ingenuousness for they noted that the taxes would arise from what they could only describe as the 'small revenue' of the religious houses in question. In the case of Christ Church the subsidy yielded a mere 45*s*. Irish per annum, and the twentieth part only £14.[32] It is unlikely that the lord privy seal was impressed by this argument. However, the counsellors' description was indicative of the relatively poor economic showing of the Irish ecclesiastical economy when placed in the broader context of the church in the Tudor dominions as a whole, a fact demonstrated by a comparison of the revenues of the Christ Church with those of the English monastic cathedrals after their refoundation as secular cathedrals (*Table 9.2*, p 385).

By English standards Christ Church possessed a paltry annual revenue and would have qualified for suppression there under the act 27 Henry VIII, c. 28 (1536), which gave to the king all religious houses under the value of £200 sterling.

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31 *S. P. Hen. VIII*, iii, pp 130-1.

32 Ibid.; P.R.O., SP 65/1 (Vice-treasurer Brabazon's account 1534-7).

Table 9.2 Net Revenues of Christ Church Cathedral and English Monastic Cathedrals, c. 1535[33]

Cathedral	**Stg£**
Canterbury	2,450
Durham	1,576
Winchester	1,508
Worcester	1,300
Ely	1,084
Norwich	875
Rochester	487
Carlisle	418
Christ Church, Dublin	173

Christ Church was preserved, however, by Lord Grey's administration. It, alone among the six religious houses petitioned for by the Irish council, received the backing of vocal popular support from the mayor and citizens of Dublin, and in an effort to avoid the potentially damaging alienation of the citizens from the new religious settlement, it was decided to forego the suppression of their beloved cathedral. In December 1539 it was altered directly into a secular cathedral with its endowment fully intact, like Norwich cathedral in England, and on the model of its younger sister St Patrick's.[34]

The arrival of a new lord deputy, Sir Anthony St Leger, in the following year again made the suppression of Christ Church a distinct possibility. Undoubtedly, he was aware of the anomalous position of the diocese of Dublin in the context of Tudor ecclesiastical policy in England, where the number of cathedrals had been reduced to one secular cathedral per diocese. St Leger sought a similar rationalization and approached the question from an unambiguously secular perspectiv, *raison d'état* and economic retrenchment. Witholding the king's charter of confirmation of their new secular status from the dean and chapter, St

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33 Lehmberg, *Reformation of cathedrals*, p 88; *S.P. Hen. VIII*, iii, p 415.

34 *S.P. Hen. VIII*, ii, pp 545-6; R.C.B., C.6.1.6, no. 3 (Registrum Novum of Christ Church), pp 1104-21 ('Christ Church deeds', no. 431). On the alteration of Norwich and other monastic cathedrals in England see Lehmberg, *Reformation of cathedrals*, pp 76-100.

Leger wrote to the king in August 1542 advancing a plan for using the revenues of the cathedral to finance a resident council in Dublin, and a free school, the latter offered as a sop to the mayor and citizens Again the relative poverty of the institution, in English eyes, was highlighted. St Leger argued that the alteration of Christ Church was inadvisable because 'as the revenues thereof pass not £260 de claro' all that could be established was 'a deane, three canons, and four vicars .... which is but a small number for a cathedral church in a city'. To drive home his point St Leger drew a comparison with its secular sister, St Patrick's, which was able to support a dean, 25 canons, 4 petty canons and a college of 16 vicars choral. The king, however, was not very enthusiastic about St Leger's plans for the appropriation of the revenues of Christ Church for secular administrative purposes. He only responded to St Leger, after a further reminder, in August 1543, over a year after the scheme was first broached, ordering a survey of the cathedral's possessions whereupon 'we shall resolve and determine that matter as we shall then think most expedient'. The king's prevarication was fatal, for the scheme was leaked to the mayor and citizens once again, and their lobbying finally convinced the politically-minded St Leger to abandon it in 1544.[35]

However, the incident was arguably more significant than its eventual results, for it marked the beginning of what was to be a series of new standards and perceptions by which Christ Church, and indeed all Irish ecclesiastical institutions, would be judged. Christ Church would not now be unequivocally accepted and lauded by merely fulfilling its traditional roles as a symbol of the local community's civic and cultural pride and maintaining its position as a focal point for their pietistic religion. The cathedral was now part of the wider Tudor ecclesiastical polity, and was more likely to be judged by the standards of the English church. For St Leger the fact that it was called a cathedral meant that it should have the bearing of one, and the standards of this bearing were those which obtained in England, and

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35 *S.P. Hen VIII*, iii, pp 412-16, 465-69, 482-84; Lord Deputy St Leger and the Irish council to the king, 20 January, 1544 (P.R.O., SP 60/11, no. 34).

not those which had accrued to itself in its own cosy local niche. While St Leger's views reflected the conservatism of Henrician catholicism, they were clearly the first encroachment of metropolitan ideas into the provincial Irish church. Later the orthodoxy of the metropolis would change, becoming more protestant in emphasis. In the 1580s for instance, the protestant Archbishop Loftus of Dublin, would decry the poverty of Christ Church not because it was unable to finance more canons but because it was unable to finance a sizeable number of protestant graduate preachers.[36]

The physical survival of the cathedral in the 1540s also comprehended the survival and continuity of its conventual personnel and much of its medieval heritage. Though the prior and convent assumed the titles of secular cathedral clergy - dean, precentor, chancellor, treasurer and vicars choral - and its revenues were split up and assigned in portions according to the rank of the individual canons, the real work of the cathedral changed very little. Most of the liturgical round was preserved intact. However, the masses for benefactors of the cathedral were reduced to three to be celebrated at the altar of the Holy Spirit on Monday, Wednesday and Saturday, and an extra mass was instituted in honour of the king to be celebrated at the High altar three times a week.[37] Another trimming operation had been undertaken earlier in 1539 before the alteration of the cathedral's status. The more excessive manifestations of popular piety, the cathedrals horde of relics and images, wre reduced to an extent. The Book of Obits of Christ Church contains a list of the pre-reformation relic collection. They included a speaking picture of Jesus, a spine from his crown of thorns, a belt and milk belonging to the Blessed Virgin, and a whole host of hallowed bones covering the entire spectrum of the community of saints, from the apostles

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36 Archbishop Loftus to Burghley, 18 March 1585 (SP 63/115, no. 27).

37 R.C.B., C.6.1.6, no. 3 (Registrum Novum of Christ Church), pp 1104-21 ('Christ Church deeds', no. 431).

Peter and Andrew to such Irish favourites as Patrick, Brigid, Columba and Laurence O'Toole.[38] The most important relic, however, was the celebrated Baculus Jesu, or staff of Jesus, which, as the story went, an angel had conferred on St Patrick. In February 1539 crown commissioners visited the cathedral, ostensibly to eradicate 'popish superstition' by destroying all trace of these relics. It has been convincingly demonstrated, however, that the operation was more limited in scope. The absence of evidence of popular outcry against the commissioners' campaign and the low monetary yield of the confiscated valuables, only £35 15s. 6*d.* in the case of Christ Church, indicates that the shrines were merely stripped rather than destroyed.[39] Certainly, many images survived in the cathedral. The commission altering the cathedral's status at the end of 1539 instructed one of the new cathedral dignitaries to celebrate the 'Jesus mass' every Friday 'before the image of the crucifix in the accustomed place'. At the accession of Elizabeth the great arch over the rood loft consisted of boards upon which 'the story of the passion was painted'.[40] The survival of this familiar landscape of devotional imagery was significant, maintaining, as it did, a general allegiance among the local community to the conservative religious settlement of Henry's régime while at the same time ensuring that the more radical settlement of his son Edward would find little in the way of popular support. Little detailed information concerning the impact of the Edwardian reformation on the cathedral survives. However, it is probably not too far from the truth to view it as a relatively short disruption of a broad continuity stretching from the medieval period right through to the end of Queen Mary's reign when the full apparatus of medieval catholicism was restored under Archbishop Curwen.[41] The conservative Henrician régime's moderate trimming of the traditional

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38 Crosthwaite, ed., *Book of Obits*, pp 3-4 .

39 Bradshaw, *Dissolution of the religious orders,* pp 104-9.

40 R.C.B., C.6.1.6, no. 3 (Registrum Novum of Christ Church), pp 1104-21 ('Christ Church deeds', no. 431); Gillespie, *Proctor's accounts of Peter Lewis*, p 39.

41 Above pp 210-12.

religion of the local community, and the failure of his son's policies to ignite anything remotely resembling popular iconoclasm in the Irish church, ensured that the medieval church maintained its visibility until it was officially restored in Mary's reign.

The re-enactment of a fully protestant settlement following the accession of Queen Elizabeth in 1558, was accompanied by a more thoroughgoing and visible enforcement campaign. Soon after the enactment of the reformation legislation in the Irish parliament in 1560 the walls of both Dublin cathedrals were whitewashed, and the images and devotional aids which were so integral a part of the appeal of Christ Church to the local community removed.[42] The realization that a definite break with the past was occurring was perhaps evinced in the refusal of four cathedral clerics to take the oath of supremacy in the spring of 1560.[43] Yet it was still a break which would only occur gradually. John Kerdiff who was deprived of the treasurership in 1560 for refusal to take the oath, still retained a link with the institution in which he had served as a monk and a secular canon for over 30 years. In 1565 he was employed by his former confréres to act as their notary. The month's mind of another deprived ex-monk, Christopher Rathe, was rung by his former colleagues in the same year. It is instructive that this remembrance of one of the pre-reformation monks was instituted by a rich merchant and mayor of Dublin, Richard Fyan, who gave half a loaf of bread and half a beef to feed masons currently employed by the cathedral, in return for the five peals rung for Rathe's soul. That this sympathy for the old ways and old clergy was general is evinced in the fact that the mayor and alderman of Dublin later presented the deprived Kerdiff to the parsonage of St Stephen's in Dublin, and employed him as a clerk. It was also evinced in the refusal of masons working on the fabric of the cathedral to forego the practice of keeping the feast of Corpus Christi a holiday in 1565, against the express

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42 Mant, *History of the Church of Ireland*, pp 256, 265.

43 *Fiants Ire. Eliz.*, nos. 225-6.

orders of the Queen's high commissioners, Archbishop Loftus of Armagh and Bishop Brady of Meath, issued the previous day.[44]

As more and more links with the past disappeared such as those occasioned by the destruction of the rood loft in the 1560s, the gradual replacement of the old clerical guard by overtly protestant clergymen throughout the 1570s, 1580s and 1590s, and the alienation of the community as a result of the coercive enforcement campiagn of the late 1570s and early 1580s, the withdrawal of local support from the cathedral became ever more pronounced. It was to have disastrous economic consequences; for, during the same period, the old medieval fabric, almost symbolically, suffered a calamitous period of destruction.

In 1562 the roof, south wall and part of the body of the church collapsed. Although extensive repairs were undertaken in the following years they appear to have been only partial, for in 1584 the archbishop of Dublin, Adam Loftus described the cathedral as being 'altogether ruinous'. Four years later Robert Richardson, proctor of the common fund from which the cathedral repairs were financed, related that the 'loft of the steeple' cracked in September while Dean Garvey was preaching.[45] During the period under review the economy fund rose overall from just under £75 Irish in the 1540s to just under £100 in the 1590s, a rise of 33% over a period of 50 years.[46] When one considers that £335 was expended on major repairs between October 1564 and October 1565, it is clear that the rent rise was totally inadequate to offset the requirements for maintaining the fabric. The traditional way in which this problem would have been countered was by recourse to local

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44 Gillespie, ed., *Proctor's accounts of Christ Church*, pp 28, 47, 86-7; 109; *Anc. rec. Dub.*, ii, pp 42, 46-7.

45 J.T. Gilbert, *History of the city of Dublin* (3 vols., Dublin, 1834-9), i, p 112; Lords Justices to Walsingham, 15 May 1584 (P.R.O., SP 63/110, no. 33); R.C.B., C.6.1.26, no. 3 (Procters' accounts, 1541-1688), account of Robert Richardson, 1588.

46 R.C.B., C.6.1.26, no. 3 (Procters' accounts, 1541-1688), passim.

charity. However, by the 1580s this was no longer possible. When the steeple cracked in 1588, only £2 10*s*. was granted by the laity in gifts for its repair during the ensuing year. There were three benefactors in all, only one of which was a member of the local community, the other two being an English soldier, Captain Keys, and an English-born government official, Sir Thomas Norris, who was later appointed president of Munster.[47] It is clear from this figure and the origin of the donors that by the 1580s Christ Church had lost its special position among the Dublin community, primarily because of its protestantism.

The cathedral, thus, had to generate internal sources of revenue. There was a marked increase in the frequency of entry fines on cathedral leases in the latter half of the sixteenth century, all of which were explicitly stated to be for the repair of the fabric. In fact, some of the entry fines consisted of building materials. Thus alderman Thomas Fitzsimon was granted a 61 year reversionary lease on a cellar in return for a gift of white Flanders stone to repair the pillars of the church in December 1562. Over ten years later, Richard Fagan, a Dublin merchant, gave 4,000 slates for his 61 year lease of a house and garden in St Michan's parish. In May 1586, his son, Christopher paid a fine of 100 crannocks of lime for an 81 year lease on a premises in St Thomas Street.[48] However, most entry fines consisted of straight cash payments. There appears to have been no standard rate for the determination of entry fines and they could vary from as little as twice the annual rent to as large a fine as 33 times the annual rent.[49] The important feature of the entry fines system is that it reveals that the relationship between the cathedral and the local community had been reduced to a purely business arrangement. Furthermore, the cathedral had to offer very

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47 Ibid., account of Robert Richardson, 1588.

48 'Christ Church deeds', nos 1284, 1338; R.C.B., C.6.1.7 no. 1 (Chapter Act Book of Christ Church 1574-1634), f. 18v.

49 Ibid., ff. 11r, 15r.

advantageous terms to intending lessees and in the process many cathedral rents were fixed for long periods extending into the mid-seventeenth century, a situation which caused great consternation for the cathedral's Stuart deans.

Other contingencies adopted to deal with the crisis occasioned by the collapsed fabric, included the mortgaging of property. In 1579 and 1582, the chief rent of the manor of Mabestown in county Dublin, worth 5 marks Irish per annum, was mortgaged for lump sums of 20 marks Irish, reflecting the cathedral's need to increase its cashflow.[50] Furthermore, the cathedral clergy themselves had to dig deeply into their own pockets. The vicars choral had to pay an annual benevolance of £10 sterling from their funds 'to the use of the steeple'.[51] Archbishop Loftus and Henry Wallop, petitioning Walsingham in 1584 to allow John Garvey to retain his deanery *in commendam* with the archbishopric of Armagh, related to the Secretary that Garvey spent £20 annually out of the same in 're-edifying' the cathedral.[52] Garvey's predecessor, Thomas Lockwood, also exhibited a similar corporate spirit. In 1564 he donated his annual rent from the Poll mill 'for the building of the church'. The rent for the latter was also £20 and it is just possible that the deans of Christ Church made this a permanent gift.[53] Finally, William Dermot, the chancellor of Christ Church was so perturbed at losing his proctorial accounts that he was moved in 1580 to grant £5 Irish annually from his parsonage at Kilcullen to the use of the works of the church.[54] Yet despite the efforts made by its clergy, the cathedral entered the seventeenth century in a

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50 Ibid., f 10r; 'Christ Church deeds', nos 1359.

51 R.C.B., C.6.1.7 no. 1 (Chapter Act Book of Christ Church 1574-1634), f 20r; R.C.B., C.6.1.26, no. 3 (Procters' accounts, 1541-1688), account of Lawrence Bryan, 1589-90.

52 Lords Justices to Walsingham, 15 May 1584 (P.R.O., SP 63/110, no. 33).

53 Gillespie, ed., *Proctor's accounts of Christ Church*, p 21.

54 R.C.B., C.6.1.7 no. 1 (Chapter Act Book of Christ Church 1574-1634), f 11v.

chronic state of disrepair and indeed, it was only after its nineteenth century restoration, that the building was fully secured from the danger of total collapse.

The survival of Christ Church was in a sense an anachronism. Its proper functioning was intimately tied into the social and spiritual rhythms of the medieval world: the world of chantries and prayers for the dead. When this world was finally overturned in the Elizabethan era - symbolised by the collapse of the medieval fabric - the cathedral had, in effect, no *raison d'être*, and it lost the support of its erstwhile patrons, the local community of Dublin, who remained deeply attached to their traditional and long-standing religious culture. Paradoxically, however, it was the very conservatism of the local community which had ensured the cathedral's survival in the early 1540s. The Henrician régime preserved the institution in an effort to court popular support for what was, in reality, its own relatively catholic religious settlement. And perhaps too it was this very continuity with the past, preserved by the Henrician religious programme and reinvigorated under the restored catholicism of Mary, which steeled the resistence of the local community to Elizabethan anglicanism. In a sense then, it is arguable that the general Tudor religious reformation strategy of promoting change through the pre-existing structures of the church failed in Dublin. In the case of Christ Church, its survival, strengthened rather than diminished, conservative religious attitudes. When the pace of change quickened from 1560 onwards, the institution itself suffered rather than popular catholicism, which began to find new modes of expression in recusancy and, ultimately, in the counter-reformation.

Appendix: The parishes of the diocese of Dublin, 1530-1600

This appendix lists all the parishes that were extant in the diocese of Dublin from 1530 to 1600 and provides details of their pre-dissolution rectors and how the cures were served therein. It also records changes that were made to the status of individual parishes at different points in the sixteenth century. The basic source used was Archbishop John Alen's roll of churches, 'the Reportorium Viride', which is in print (N.B. White, ed., 'The Reportorium Viride of John Alen, archbishop of Dublin, 1533' in *Anal Hib.*, x [1941]). Alen's list of churches was copied from an earlier list written in the late thirteenth century register known as the Crede Mihi (J.T. Gilbert, ed., *Crede mihi: the most ancient register book of the archbishop of Dublin before the reformation* [Dublin, 1897], pp 134-49); and includes churches which had disappeared in the interim and some which disapeared after his death in 1534. It also designates many churches as chapels of ease which had subsequently become fully parochial. Adjustments to the data in the 'Reportorium Viride' have been made accordingly.

Three early seventeenth century visitations have also been used extensively for ascertaining which parishes survived throughout the sixteenth century: the metropolitan and prerogative court visitations of the diocese of Dublin (T.C.D., MS 566); the regal visitation of 1615 (B.L., Add. MS 19836); and Archbishop Bulkeley's visitation of 1630 (M.V. Ronan, ed., 'Archbishop Bulkeley's visitation of Dublin, 1630', in *Archiv. Hib.*, viii [1941]).

Deanery of Dublin or Christianity

	Parish	Rector	Service
1.	St Audoen	Prebend, St Patrick's	Curate
2.	St Michael	Christ Church cathedral/ sub-dean of Christ Church[1]	Curate/sub-dean (from 1539)
3.	St Peter	'Entire'	Rector
4.	St Olave[2]	Abbey of St Augustine, Bristol	Curate
5.	St Michan	Christ Church cathedral/ succentor of Christ Church[3]	Curate/succentor (from 1539)
6.	St James[4]	Thomas Court abbey	Curate
7.	St Catherine[5]	Thomas Court abbey	Curate/vicar (from 1546)
8.	St Andrew[6]	Precentor, St Patrick's	Curate
9.	St Mary de la Dam[7]	'Entire'	Rector
10.	St Bride	Economy, St Patrick's	Curate
11.	St Nicholas Within	Economy, St Patrick's	Curate
12.	St Nicholas Without	Economy, St Patrick's	Curate
13.	St John	Christ Church cathedral/ chancellor's vicar of Christ Church[8]	Curate/chancellor's vicar (from 1539)
14.	St Kevin	Economy, St Patrick's	Vicar
15.	St Werburgh	Chancellor, St Patrick's.	Curate
16.	St Michael (of the Pool)	'Entire'	Rector
17.	St Stephen[9]	'Entire'	Custos of St Stephen/chaplain

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1 As part of the alteration of Christ Church into a secular cathedral in 1539, the church of St Michael was appropriated to the dean's vicar or sub-dean, who was also made president of the vicars choral. He was enjoined to serve the cure and probably did do as the living was too poor to support more than one priest (R.C.B., C.6.1.6, no. 3 [Registrum Novum of Christ Church], pp 1111-2, Murray, 'Sources of clerical income', p 151).

2 The church of St Olave, probably on account of its small value (see 'Alen's Repertorium Viride', p 181), was united to the parish of St John (Stanyhurst, *Holinshed's Irish Chronicle*, p 45), sometime before November 1553 when it was described as the 'late church of St Tullocks' (*Fiants Ire., Ph. & M.*, no. 6). It fell into disuse and was profaned by 1577 (Stanyhurst, *op. cit.*, p 45).

3 St Michan's was appropriated to the precentor's vicar, or succentor, when Christ Church cathedral's status was altered from regular to secular in 1539. Like the sub-dean he probably served the cure personally (R.C.B., C.6.1.6, no. 3 [Registrum Novum of Christ Church], pp 1112-3; R.C.B., C.6.1.7, no. 1).

4 The church of St James was united to St Catherine's on 18 March 1546 by Archbishop Browne (*Cal. pat. rolls Ire., Hen. VIII-Eliz*, p 122). As part of this process, a new vicarage was erected in the parish. The erection of this vicarage was planned as early as 1539, as it was then valued by royal commissioners for first fruits and twentieth part taxation (*Valor beneficiorum*, p 9). The delay in putting it into effect was probably due to the fact that two old monks of Thomas Court, John Brace and John Butler, were then responsible for serving the cures of the two parishes. In the wake of the abbey's dissolution, the Henrician régime may have been reluctant to sever this continuity with the past, preferring to postpone the erection of the new vicarge until the former monks had passed away (*Fiants Ire., Hen. VIII*, no. 83; *Cal. pat. rolls Ire., Hen. VIII-Eliz*, pp 56, 60; *Extents Ir. Mon. possessions*, p 29). Brace died c. Michaelmas 1542 (R.C.B., C.6.1.26, no. 3 [Procters' accounts, 1541-1688], account of John Moss, 1542). Butler probably died in 1546.

5 As in note 4 above.

6 St Andrew's was united to St Werburgh's by Archbishop Browne on account of poverty and paucity of people (*Reg. Dioc. Dublinensis*, pp 5-6, document undated).

7 St Mary's was united to St Werburgh's by Archbishop Browne on account of poverty and paucity of people (*Reg. Dioc. Dublinensis*, pp 5-6, document undated).

8 The chancellor's vicar received the church of St John as part of the alteration of Christ church in 1539. Like the sub-dean and succentor he probably served his cure (R.C.B., C.6.1.6, no. 3 [Registrum Novum of Christ Church], pp 1113-4).

9 The church of St Stephen was appropriated to the leper hospital of the same name, but appears to have had parochial status. The custos or guardian of the hospital was responsible for serving the cure of souls and was appointed by the mayor and aldermen of Dublin, though in practice it was probably discharged by a chaplain as the custodianship was often given to aspiring Dublin clerics studying at Oxford (*Anc. rec. Dub.*, i, pp 399, 439; ii, p 145; *B.R.U.O., 1501-40*, p 536).

Deanery of Dublin (contd.)

	Parish	Rector	Service
18.	St George[10]	All Hallows priory	Curate
19.	St Glannoke[11]	St Mary's abbey	Curate

Deanery of Taney

1.	Taney	Archdeacon of Dublin	Curate
2.	Donnybrook	Archdeacon of Dublin	Curate
3.	Rathfarnham	Archdeacon of Dublin	Curate
4.	Kilgobbin	Archdeacon of Dublin	Curate
5.	Leopardstown	Custos of St Stephen's hospital	Curate
6.	Whitechurch	St Mary's abbey	Curate
7.	Cruagh	Knights Hospitallers, Kilmainham	Curate
8.	Templeogue	Economy, St Patrick's	Curate
9.	Tallaght	Dean, St Patrick's	Vicar
10.	Crumlin	Economy, St Patrick's	Curate
11.	Saggard	Prebend, St Patrick's	Curate
12.	Clondalkin	Dean, St Patrick's	Curate/vicarage endowed in the early 1570s by Dean Weston[12]
13.	Rathcoole	Dean, St Patrick's	Curate/vicarage endowed in the early 1570s by Dean Weston[13]
14.	Esker	Dean, St Patrick's	Curate/vicarage endowed in the early 1570s by Dean Weston[14]
15.	Calliaghstown	Nunnery of Hogges	Curate
16.	Newcastle	Archdeacon of Glendalough	Curate
17.	Aderrig	Vicars choral, St Patrick's	Curate
18.	Kilmahuddrick[15]	St Mary's abbey	Curate
19.	Lucan	Thomas Court abbey	Vicar
20.	Palmerstown	Hospital of St John, Newgate	Curate
21.	Ballyfermot	Knights Hospitallers, Kilmainham	Curate

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10 After the dissolution of the priory of All Hallows, the church of St George continued to function as a gild chapel under the protection of the citizens of Dublin during the reigns of Edward VI and Mary. Payments were made to the gild priest in 1550 and 1551 (D.C.A., MR/35, pp 86, 95) and reparations were made to the church in 1556-7 (ibid., pp 139, 145). The gild appears to have survived until at least 1563 (ibid, p 190). It is likely that it was suppressed soon after, however, a fact that would account for the ruination of the church by the 1570s. Writing in this period, Stanyhurst related that the 'chapel hath been of late razed, and the stones thereof by the consent of the assembly turned a common oven, converting the ancient monument of a doughty, adventurous and holy knight to the coalrake sweeping of a puffloaf baker' (Stanyhurst, *op. cit.*, 49).

11 The parish of 'St Glannoke' extended over St Mary's abbey demesne lands and is mentioned in the extents taken at the time of the dissolution and leases made of the rectory thereafter (*Extents Ir. Mon. possessions*, p 2; *Fiants Ire.,Edw. VI*, no. 1083; *Fiants Ire., Eliz.*, no. 2660). At the dissolution of the monastery the church was occupied by John Travers, master of the ordnance, for keeping artillery and other munitions within it. From this time the church fell into disuse and the parish ceased to function.

12 Bodl., Perrot MS 1, f 104r; G.O., MS 290 p 17; T.C.D., MS 567, f 1v.

13 As in note 12 above.

14 As in note 12 above.

15 Kilmahuddrick was united to Clondalkin by Archbishop Browne on 20 March 1541 on account of its poverty and low population (*Dignitus decani*, p 125).

Deanery of Taney(contd.)

	Parish	Rector	Service
22.	Kilmainham[16]	Knights Hospitallers, Kilmainham	Curate
23.	Clontarf	Knights Hospitallers, Kilmainham	Curate
24.	Raheny	St Mary's abbey	Curate
25.	Coolock	Lanthony	Vicar
26.	Glasnevin	Christ Church cathedral	Curate
27.	Clonturk	All Hallows priory	Curate
28.	Finglas	Chancellor of St Patrick's	Curate
29.	St Margaret's, Dunsoghly	Chancellor of St Patrick's	Curate
30.	Ward	Chancellor of St Patrick's	Curate
31.	Artane	Chancellor of St Patrick's	Curate
32.	Castleknock	Prebend, St Patrick's	Vicar
33.	Mulhuddart	Prebend, St Patrick's	Curate
34.	Clonsilla	St Mary's abbey	Curate
35.	Cloghran Hiddert	All Hallows priory	Curate
36.	Chapelizod	Knights Hospitallers, Kilmainham	Curate
37.	Kilmactalway	Prebend, St Patrick's	Curate
38.	Kilmacud[17]	Graney	Curate
	Killester?[18]	Christ Church Cathedral	Curate

Deanery of Swords

1.	Swords	Prebend, St Patrick's	Vicar
2.	Kinsaley	Vicar of Swords	Curate
3.	Killeek	Economy, St Patrick's	Curate
4.	Killossery	Economy, St Patrick's	Curate
5.	Malahide	Economy, St Patrick's	Curate
6.	Cloghran Swords	Entire	Rector
7.	Killsallaghan	Thomas Court abbey	Vicar
8.	Chapelmidway	Thomas Court abbey	Curate
9.	Garristown	Knights Hospitallers, Kilmainham	Vicar
10.	Palmerstown	Knights Hospitallers, Kilmainham	Curate
11.	Ballymadun	Nunnery of Grace Dieu	Vicar
12.	Ballyboghill	St Mary's abbey	Curate
13.	Naul	Priory of Lanthony	Curate
14.	Balscaddan	Christ Church cathedral	Vicar
15.	Holmpatrick	Priory of Holmpatrick	Curate
16.	Hollywood	Priory of Lanthony	Vicar
17.	Grallagh	Priory of Lanthony	Curate
18.	Balrothery	Priory of Tristernagh	Vicar

16 Kilmainham was united to St Catherine's, Dublin, on 18 March 1540, on account of the poverty and proximity of the parishes (*Cal. pat. rolls Ire., Hen. VIII-Eliz*, p 122; above p 312).

17 Kilmacud was united to the church of St Fintan of Clonkeen [Kill of the Grange] by Archbishop Browne, on account of poverty and low population on August 3 1551 ('Christ Church deeds, no. 445).

18 Killester was described as a chapel in the early sixteenth century viz., 1505, c. 1530 (*Alen's Reg.* pp 256, 258). In the redistribution of Christ Church property, after its alteration into a secular cathedral, Killester was granted to the economy. Here, and thereafter, it was described as a piece of property, i.e. the 'rectory of' or the 'tithes of' Killester, with no reference to it being a chapel. This fact, and the fact that it does not appear in any of the early-seventeenth century visitations, implies that it did not function as a parochial entity, the chapel having decayed and gone out of use in the early-sixteenth century. In the mid-seventeenth century this was certainly the case. In the Civil Survey (*Civil Survey*, vii, p 173) it was said, 'there is ... in ye towne ye walls of a decayed chapel...'.

Deanery of Swords (contd.)

	Parish	Rector	Service
19.	Lusk	Treasurer of St Patrick's/ Precentor of St Patrick's	2 vicars (treasurer's part and precentor's part)
20.	Grace Dieu[19]	Nunnery of Grace Dieu	Curate
21.	Donabate	Nunnery of Graney	Vicar
22.	Howth	Prebend, St Patrick's	Curate[20]
23.	Kilbarrack	Prebend, St Patrick's	Curate
24.	Santry	St Mary's abbey	Curate
25.	St Duileach's, Balgriffin	Christ Church cathedral	Vicar
26.	Baldongan	'Entire'	Rector
27.	Portrane	Nunnery of Grace Dieu	Curate
28.	Westpalstown	Nunnery of Grace Dieu	Curate
29.	Baldoyle	All Hallows priory	Curate
30.	Portmarnock	St Mary's abbey	Curate
31.	Clonmethan	Prebend, St Patrick's	Curate
32.	Fieldstown	Prebend, St Patrick's	Curate

Deanery of Ballymore

1.	Rathsallagh[21]	Economy, St Patrick's	Curate
2.	Dunlavin	Prebend, St Patrick's	Curate
3.	Tober[22]	Nunnery of Grace Dieu	Curate
4.	Donard	Hospital of St John, Newgate	Vicar
5.	Hollywood	'Entire'	Vicar
6.	Dunboyke[23]	'Entire'	Rector
7.	Yago	Prebend, St Patrick's	Curate
8.	Gilltown	Baltinglass abbey	Curate
9.	Brannockstown[24]	Economy, St Patrick's	Curate
10.	Coghlanstown (Ballycutland etc.)	Graney	Curate

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19 The parish of Grace Dieu seems to have disappeared after the dissolution of the nunnery of Grace Dieu on 28 October 1539. The rectory continued to be leased (*Fiants Ire.,Hen. VIII*, no. 235; *Fiants Ire., Eliz.*, no. 3319) but no returns were made for the parish in the early seventeenth-century visitations of the diocese.

20 There was a vicarage erected in the parish of Howth for a brief period in the 1530s for which see above p 315.

21 Rathsallagh was functioning c.1530 when Archbishop Alen provided Edmond Eustace to the rectory of Usk in the freechapel therein ('Alen's Repertorium Viride', p 198). In the 1547 inquisition concerning the property of St Patrick's cathedral there is no mention of the church, just a return for 'the tithes of the hamlet of Rathsallowe'. Was the church functioning then? It probably was not as no returns were made for it in the 1610, 1615 and 1630 visitations of the diocese. The cathedral proctor's account of 1606 (T.C.D., MS 788, f 87r), reveals that the dean and chapter had set its tithes and the tithes of Moone to Ambrose Forth. It is clear from this entry and a lease from the dean and chapter to Archdeacon Bulkeley in 1645 (St Patrick's cathedral, Muniments, bundle 110/38) that Rathsallagh was united to Moone, a unification which may have may have instituted in the early days of the reformation under Archbishop Browne. The lessee in 1645 was only bound to find a curate for Moone.

22 Does not appear in the 1610, 1615 or 1630 visitations of the diocese, although leases of the rectory from the crown occur in 1541 (*Fiants Ire., Hen.VIII*, no. 235), 1562, 1571 and 1575 (*Fiants Ire., Eliz.*, nos. 398, 1730, 2689). The rectory was granted to Sir Henry Harrington in tail male in 1581 (*ibid*, no. 3705) The parish, which was situated in the marches, had been devastated in the 1530s (see *Extents Ir. Mon. possessions*, p 77), and probably did not exist as a functioning entity thereafter.

23 An 'entire' rectory was established by Archbishop Alen in the parish of Dunboyke after he dissolved the nunnery of Timolin in the early 1530s ('Alen's Repertorium Viride', p 199). The archbishop said it was poor however. It appears to have disappeared soon after, probably as a result of poverty, as it was not valued by Crown commissioners in the late 1530s for first fruits and twentieth part taxation (*Valor beneficiorum*, pp 9-10). It may have been united to Hollywood, of which it is now a part, around this period..

24 Brannockstown was served jointly with Gilltown by a single curate in the early seventeenth century (see 1610, 1615 and 1630 visitations). A lease from the dean and chapter, dated 17th March 1630 (St Patrick's cathedral, Muniments, bundle 110/27), to John Pue of Dublin, gent., bound the latter to find a curate for Brannockstown which proves that it was a functioning parish.

Deanery of Ballymore (contd.)

	Parish	Rector	Service
11.	Ballymore	Treasurer, St Patrick's	Curate
12.	Tipperkevin	Double Prebend, St Patrick's	Curate
13.	Ballybaught	Archbishop	Curate
14.	Tipper	Prebend, St Patrick's	Curate
15.	Rathmore	Knights Hospitallers, Kilmainham	Vicar
16.	Kilteel	Knights Hospitallers, Kilmainham	Curate
17.	Kilbride	Knights Hospitallers, Kilmainham	Curate
18.	Burgage	Precentor, St Patrick's	Curate/Vicar (from c. 1580)[25]
19.	Templebodan (Kilbodan)	Archbishop	Curate
20.	Boystown (Kilpatrick)	Archbishop	Curate

Deanery of Bray

1.	Bray	Graney	Vicar
2.	Stagonil	Prebend, St Patrick's	Curate
3.	Delgany	'Entire'	Rector
4.	Kilmacanoge/Glencap	St Mary's abbey	Curate
5.	Newcastle	Nunnery of Grace Dieu	Vicar
6.	Kilcoole	Archbishop	Curate
7.	Oldconnaught	Archbishop.	Curate
8.	Rathmichael	Prebend, St Patrick's	Curate
9.	Kill of the Grange (Clonkeen)	Christ Church cathedral	Curate
10.	Killiney	Christ Church cathedral	Curate
11.	Tully	Christ Church cathedral	Curate
12.	Dalkey	Christ Church cathedral	Curate
13.	Stillorgan[26]	Christ Church cathedral	Curate
14.	Monkstown	St Mary's abbey.	Curate
15.	Kiltiernan	St Mary's abbey	Curate

Deaneries of Wicklow and Arklow

1.	Wicklow	Prebend, St Patrick's	Vicar
2.	Glenealy	Prebend, St Patrick's	Curate
3.	Kilcommon	Prebend, St Patrick's	Curate
4.	Ballydonnell	Prebend, St Patrick's	Curate
5.	Rathnew	Prebend, St Patrick's	Curate
6.	Killiskey	Prebend, St Patrick's	Curate
7.	Ennisboyne	'Entire'	Rector
8.	Derrylossory &	Chancellor of St Patrick's	Curate
9.	Glendalough	Archbishop	Curate
10.	Drumkay	'Entire'	Rector
11.	Castlemacadam	'Entire'	Rector

25 A vicarage was established, probably in the early 1580s, following the appointment of Arthur Athie, a lay, non-resident absentee to the precentorship of St Patrick's cathedral in 1579 (above chapter 7).

26 Stillorgan was united to the parish church of St Fintan, Clonkeen (Kill of the Grange), by Archbishop Browne on August 3 1551, on account of its low population and the exility of its revenues (R.C.B., C.6.1.6, no. 3 [Registrum Novum of Christ Church], p 1180).

Deaneries of Wicklow and Arklow (contd.)

	Parish	Rector	Service
12.	Kilpoole[27]	Knights Hospitallers, Kilmainham	Curate
13.	Arklow	Owney[28]	Vicar
14.	Killynee	Owney	Curate
15.	Templerainy	Owney	Curate
16.	Ballykine	Owney	Curate
17.	'Kilmagig'	Owney	Curate
18.	Kilgorman	'Entire'/Archbishop[29]	Rector/vicar
19.	Inch	'Entire'/Archbishop[30]	Rector/vicar
20.	Killahurler	Christ Church cathedral	Curate
21.	Macreddin[31]	All Hallows priory	Curate
22.	Rathdrum[32]	All Hallows priory	Curate
23.	Kilmacoo	Archbishop[33]	Curate
24.	Kilbride	Archbishop[34]	Curate
25.	Templemichael	Archbishop[35]	Curate
26.	Ballintemple	Glasscarig priory	Curate
27.	Ennereilly	Abbey of St Augustine, Bristol	Curate

Deanery of Omurthy

	Parish	Rector	Service
1.	Castledermot	Graney	Vicar
2.	Graney	Graney	Curate
3.	Kineagh	Graney/Vicars choral, St Patrick's	Vicar
4.	Ballaghmoon and Dunmanoge[36](Monmehenock)	Thomas Court abbey/ Prebend, St Patrick's	Curate

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27 In April 1541 it was reported that the rectory of Kilpoole could not be valued as it lay among the Irish from whence information could not be obtained. It was also reported that the late prior of the Knights Hospitallers had not received any profits from the rectory for a long time.

28 For the appropriation of Arklow to Owney abbey see *Fiants Ire., Edw. VI.*, nos. 1020 and 1078 and *Fiants Ire., Eliz.*, no. 463.

29 Kilgorman's status in our period is somewhat confused. In 1511 the vicarages of Kilgorman and Inch were said to be united to the rectory of Inch (Coleman, ed., 'Obligationes pro annatis diocesis Dublinensis', p 25). In the late 1530s it appears to have been regarded as an independent 'entire' rectory: 'Rectoria de Silbenan in patria de O'Birnes' (*Valor bneficiorum*, p 10). In the 1610 visitation it was listed as a chapel under Arklow, and served by the vicar of Arklow. In the 1630 visitation it again had its own vicar while the rectory is said to have been appropriated to the Archbishop's *mensa*. The dates when these changes in status took place are unknown.

30 Like the neighbouring parish of Kilgorman, Inch's status in our period is unclear. In 1477 Odo Okirmian bound himself to pay annates to the Roman Curia for the rectory of the parish church of Inch (Coleman, ed., 'Obligationes pro annatis diocesis Dublinensis', p 21). In 1511 the vicarages of Inch and Kilgoman were said to be united to the rectory of Inch (ibid., p 25). In the late 1530s, it was regarded as an independent 'entire' rectory: 'Rectoria de Insula (in patria de O'Birnes)' [see also N.A.I., Ferguson MSS, v, p 124, a process enrolled on the memoranda rolls of the Exchequer concerning William Tonley, Rector de Insula]. In the 1610 visitation it had its own vicarage again (T.C.D. MS 566 f 34v). In 1615, however, it was served by a curate. In the 1630 visitation, a vicar was in place again and the rectory was said to be appropriated *ad mensam archiepiscopi*.

31 Although appropriated to All Hallows priory (*Reg. All Hall.*, p lxiv), the rectory was not accessible to the monks nor their successor rectors, the city of Dublin, during the sixteenth century. Whether it functioned as parish in any meaningful sense is unknown.

32 As in note 31 above.

33 On the appropriation of this rectory to the archbishopic of Dublin see R.C.B., C.6.1.7, no. 1 (Chapter Act Book of Christ Church 1574-1634), f 21.

34 As in note 33 above.

35 As in note 33 above.

Deanery of Omurthy (contd.)

	Parish	Rector	Service
5.	Moone	Economy, St Patrick's	Curate
6.	Kilkea	Graney	Vicar
7.	Grangerosnalvan	Baltinglass abbey	Curate
8.	Timolin	'Entire'/Impropriated post 1549[37]	Rector/Curate
9.	Usk	'Entire'	Rector
10.	Killelan	Graney	Vicar
11.	Belan	Connall	Curate
12.	Donaghmore in Imaal	Double prebend, St Patrick's	Vicar
13.	Freynestown[38]	Economy, St Patrick's	Curate
14.	Kiltegan	Graney	Curate
15.	Ardree	Precentor, St Patrick's.	Curate
16.	St Michael's, Athy	Hospital of St John, Athy	Curate
17.	Churchtown (Fassaghreban)	St Mary's abbey	Curate
18.	Kilberry	Dean, St Patrick's	Curate
19.	Kilcullen	Christ Church cathedral	Curate
20.	Narraghmore	'Entire'	Vicar
21.	Tippeenan and Rathsallagh[39]	Knights Hospitallers, Kilmainham	Vicar
22.	'Rathknnys'[40]	Knights Hospitallers, Kilmainham	Curate
23.	Ballycoolan[41]	Knights Hospitallers, Kilmainham	Curate
24.	Fontstown	Knights Hospitallers, Kilmainham	Vicar
25.	Davidstown	Knights Hospitallers, Kilmainham	Vicar
26.	Dollardstown	'Entire'	Curate
27.	Nicholastown	'Entire'	Rector
28.	Dunbrin[42]	Thomas Court abbey	Curate
29.	Tankardstown	Thomas Court abbey	Curate

36 Ballaghmoon and Dunmanoge appear to have been united throughout the sixteenth century (see *Extents Ir. Mon. possessions*, p 37).

37 After Archbishop Alen's suppression of the convent of Timolin c.1530 he reversed the rectory to its pristine state instituting Sir Thomas Festam, prebendary of Dunmanoge, as 'entire' rector. After the latter's death c.1549, it was changed into an impropriate rectory by the crown (*Fiants Ire., Edw. VI.*, no. 391).

38 There is no mention of a chaplain serving in Freynestown in the inquisition taken in 1547 on the dissolution of St Patrick's caathedral, nor, indeed, in any sources thereafter. Given this, it probably fell into disuse sometime c.1530-47.

39 The vicarage of Tippeenan and Rathsallagh paid a proxy to Archbishop Alen during his visitation of 1531 (*Alen's Reg.*, p. 277). It was appropriated to the Knight's Hospitallers but was not extended in the 1540s. Presumably, it had disappeared due to the depredation caused by the O'Mores in the Omurthy area (c/f Ballycoolan). Rathsallagh was part of Fontstown in the seventeenth century. It may have been united to it in the 1530s.

40 Proxies were paid for the church of 'Rathknavys' during Alen's visitation of 1531 (*Alen's Reg.*, p 278). It was not returned in the monastic extents of 1540-1, which suggests that it went the way of Tippeenan.

41 Ballycoolan was said to be 'worth nothing, being adjacent to the marches of the Irish called the Mores' in the early 1540s. It probably ceased to function as a result.

42 Dunbrin does not appear in any other sources after 'Alen's Repertorium Viride'. This suggests that it ceased to function soon after.

Deanery of Leixlip

	Parish	Rector	Service
1.	St. Catherine's, Leixlip[43]	Thomas Court abbey	Curate
2.	Leixlip	Thomas Court abbey	Curate
3.	Confey	Thomas Court abbey	Curate
4.	Castledillon	Thomas Court abbey	Curate
5.	Kildrought	Thomas Court abbey	Vicar
6.	Stacummy[44]	St Wolstan's priory	Curate
7.	Donaghcumper	St Wolstan's priory	Curate
8.	Donaghmore[45]	St Wolstan's priory	Curate
9.	Killadoon	St Wolstan's priory	Curate
10.	Straffan	Hospital of St. John, Newgate	Vicar
11.	Taghadoe	All Hallows priory	Vicar
12.	Laraghbryan (Maynooth)	Prebend, St Patrick's	Vicar

43 St. Catherine's, Leixlip, a cell of Thomas Court abbey, appears in 'Alen's Repertorium Viride' and the monastic extents as a separate parish. Its tithes and the lands of St. Catherine's, continued to be leased by the crown throughout the sixteenth century and were finally granted to Nicholas White to hold forever by the service of a 1/40 part of a knight's fee (*Fiants Ire., Eliz.*, no. 1369). They remained in the White family until 1640 (*Civil Survey, Co. Kildare*, p 12), but were then regarded as part of Leixlip parish. The parish, as a separate entity, does not appear in 1615 or 1630 visitations and may have been formally united to Leixlip parish in the aftermath of the dissolution. By the time of the Civil Survey there was said to be 'one Parris[h] C[h]urch' in Leixlip.

44 Stacumny does not appear in the 1615 or 1630 visitations. In the Civil Survey the lands of Stacumny are included in the parish of Donaghcumper. Stacumny was part of the St Wolstan inheritenace of the Allens and is last mentioned as a separate entity in 1552 (*Fiants Ire., Edw. VI*, no. 1052). All of this suggests that Stacumny did not function as parochial entity during the latter half of the sixteenth century. It is, however, a civil parish now.

45 Donaghmore does not appear in the 1615 and 1630 visitations, nor does it appear in the Civil Survey. It was last mentioned as a separate entity in 1552 (*Fiants Ire., Edw. VI.*, no. 1052). Like Stacumny, it may not have functioned in the later sixteenth century.

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MR/25 Book of City Charters
MR/35 Account book of the city treasurer, 1534-1613
MS C1/J3/1 Recognizance Book, 1589-90

Marsh's Library

MS Z3.2.7 Dudley Loftus's annals
MS Z4.2.19 Act book of the Dublin consistory court 1596-99

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CH 1/1 Statute roll 28-9 Henry VIII
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RC 6/1 Repertory of chancery decrees 28 Henry VIII to 1624
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D 9964 - D 9966 Ussher Papers: (includes original leases of archiepiscopal property,1570-94)
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C.6.1.1 Liber Niger
C.6.1.2 Liber Albus
C.6.1.3 Parvum Registrum
C.6.1.6 Registrum Novum
no 1 1172-1325
no 2 1328-1499
no 3 1501-1709
C.6.1.7 no 1 Chapter Act Book 1574-1634
C.6.1.26 Guard Books
no 1 Copy leases and related papers, 1238-1671
no 2 Law proceedings, 1486-1684
no 3 Procters' accounts, 1541-1688
no 4 Rent rolls and related papers, 1542-1665
no 5 Copy leases, 1542-1710
no 6 Acts and orders, 1542-1715
no 7 Legal papers relating to lands, 1561-1711
no 8 Lands, 1592-1648
no 9 Acts and Decrees, 1592-1709

Dublin Diocesan Registry Collection
MS 1 Crede Mihi
MS 3 Archbishop Alen's Register (Original, c. 1530-34)
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MS 61/1 Notebooks of Biographical Succession Lists of Irish Clergy:
no 4 Christ Church Cathedral
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MS 575 The journal of Sir Peter Lewis, chantor and proctor of Christ Church cathedral, 1564-5
MS 578 Miscellaneous documents collected by Ussher including an act in favour of the archbishop of Dublin, 3 and 4 Philip and Mary
MS 663 Heraldic collections including the patent for Gilbert Purdon's Arms in 1588
MS 782 Miscellaneous documents collected by Ussher including a copy of the resignation of Lawrence Bryan, vicar of Garristown, 1570
MS 788 Account of James Ussher, chancellor of St Patrick's cathedral, for the year of his proctorship ending midsummer 1607
MS 1207 Miscellaneous charters, enfeoffments, wills and indentures of the Ashburn, Passavant and Stanihurst families, 1246-1691
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Talbot MSS
Perrot MS 1 Letter book of Lord Deputy Perrot

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Additional MSS
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Harleian MSS
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C 66 Chancery Patent Rolls
C 82 Warrants for the Great Seal Series II
DEL 4 High Court of Delegates: Acts
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E 101 King's Remembrancer: Accounts Various
E 334 Office of First Fruits and Tenths and predecessors: Composition Books
LR 6 Receivers' Accounts: Series I
PROB 11 Registered Copy Wills
SP 1 Letters and Papers Henry VIII, General Series
SP 4 Signatures by Stamp Henry VIII

SP 10 State Papers Domestic Edward VI
SP 11 State Papers Domestic Mary
SP 12 State Papers Domestic Elizabeth I
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