

IRELAND AND FRANCE

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Ireland and France by Alfred Duquet

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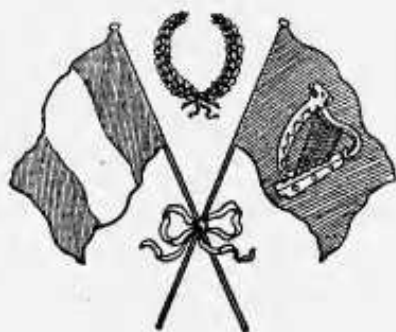
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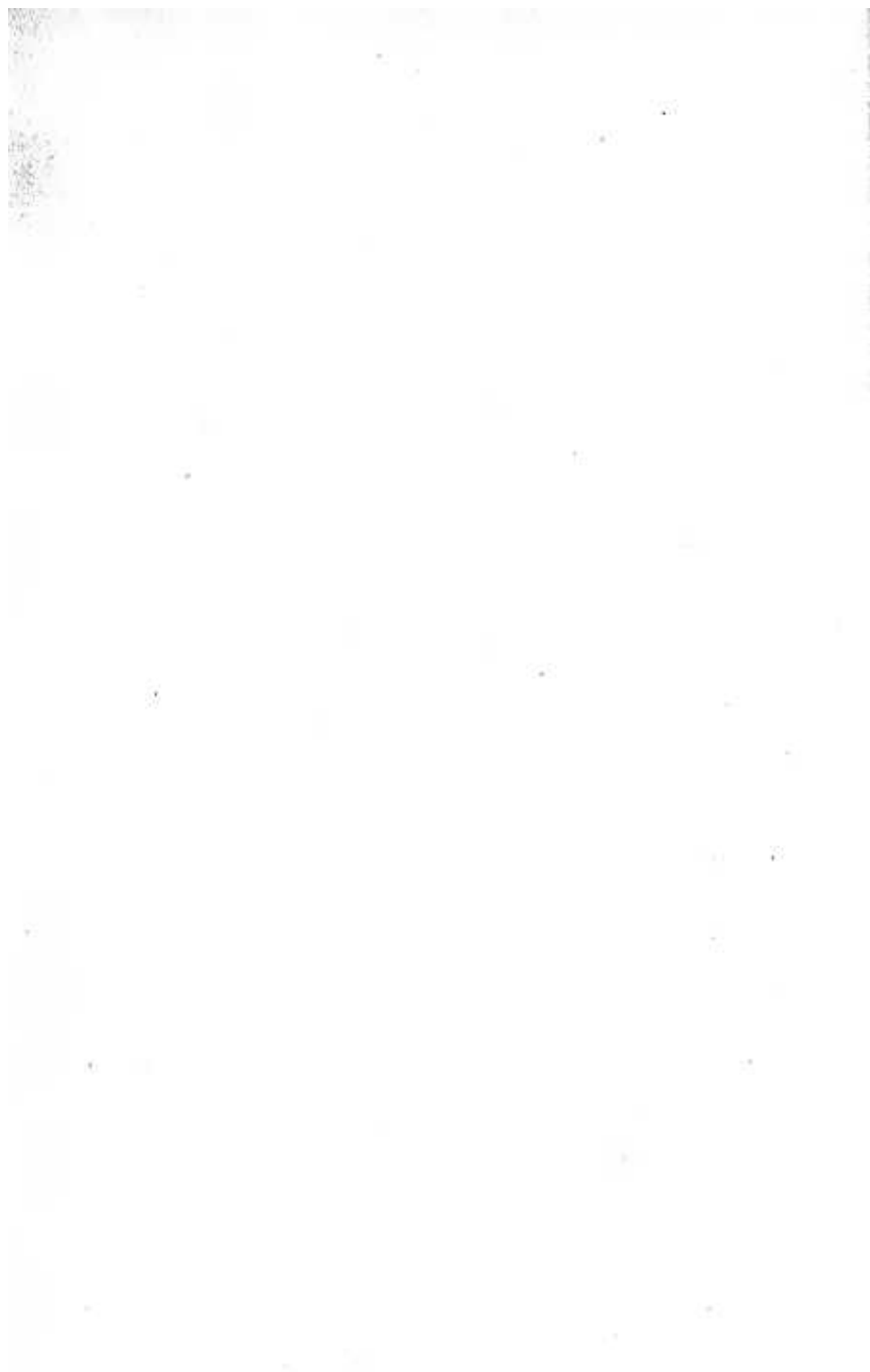
ALFRED DUQUET

IRELAND & FRANCE
TRANSLATED FROM THE
FRENCH OF ALFRED DUQUET
INTRODUCTION NOTES AND
APPENDIX BY J. DE L. SMYTH, M.A.



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FOREWORD

IN August, 1871, France sent a Deputation to Ireland to convey to the Irish people her gratitude and thanks for their sympathy and help in the Franco-Prussian war, which had ended some months before. One of the members of that Deputation was Monsieur Alfred Duquet, Advocate in the Court of Appeal, Paris. From the outset of the visit of the French representatives he wrote accounts from day to day, and contributed them in a series of letters to the Paris journal, *Le Francais*, in which they appeared as *Lettres d'Irlande*. These were translated into English and published in *The Irishman* of September 9, 1871, and following dates. The original letters were afterwards revised by Alfred Duquet, and, with alterations and additions, were published the following year in book form, under the title *Irlande et France*.

An English translation of this finished work has not hitherto been published. It appears to me that never can a more fitting time be chosen for presenting such a translation than the present, when no Irishman can remain unaffected by the death struggle of France in the War now convulsing the world.

The war of 1870-71 was the forerunner of the greater war forty-five years after. The consequences foreshadowed then have come to pass. The subjugation of France was necessary before

Teutonic aspirations could be realised. She fought at that time for her national life and honour, and for the integrity of her soil. Her cause is now the same. When Prussia dictated her terms of peace and took Alsace and Lorraine, with the French frontier on the Rhine, France lay dismembered and prostrate. But the end had not yet come, and the triumph then was perhaps designed to be but an augury of the retribution of the future.

Alfred Duquet had heard the voice from Ireland of sympathy and cheer to France, he knew of all the efforts of the Irish people to help his country, and, in the progress of the Deputation, he had witnessed the enthusiasm for France and her representatives.

It is hoped, therefore, that this translation of *Irlande et France* will be of interest and value as a faithful contemporary account of events which have left cherished memories to both countries.

I have thought it better that a complete *verbatim* translation should be given, rather than a reproduction from which any passages, or expressions of opinion by the author, were omitted. This has been done designedly, though I am aware that objection may be taken to some of the sentiments expressed by Alfred Duquet, as, for instance, his remarks on that great corps, recruited from the *élite* of the Irish peasantry, the Royal Irish Constabulary, of which all Irishmen are proud. I have been unwilling that anything be added to, or taken from, the text, believing that it would be an unjustifiable liberty with the

author's work, which would be of greater value if his sentiments were faithfully reproduced, and that the reader would appreciate the natural feelings of the Frenchman who wrote out of the tragic circumstances of the Franco-Prussian war, in which France was isolated and her hopes were shattered.

In publishing this work I have taken advantage of the opportunity to give an account of the leading part taken by my father—Mr. P. J. Smyth—in furtherance, especially, of his cherished project for the revival of the Irish Brigade in the service of France. Readers will judge whether I need any excuse for so doing. To me, my own feelings of natural and, I believe, justifiable pride are sufficient.

The facts connected with the formation of an Irish Legion, though they were known at the time, have never hitherto been published in a detailed and connected form. I hope to examine at a future time, in the places in France where they were deposited, other official documents than those to which I have referred, and to supplement the account I have given.

I must acknowledge my indebtedness to many friends in the preparation of this book, especially to my friend Mr. W. S. Norwood, K.C., who undertook the greater part of the translation of the original work.

I regret that I was unable to obtain, for illustration, portraits of the Comte de Flavigny and of others of the French Deputation.

J. de L. S.

