

**GENERAL HISTORY OF THE REBELLION
OF 1798. WITH MANY INTERESTING
OCCURRENCES OF THE TWO
PRECEDING YEARS. ALSO, A BRIEF
ACCOUNT OF THE INSURRECTION IN
1803, WILL BE SUBJOINED; PP. 1-192**

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BY P. O'KELLY, Esq.
Translator and Publisher of Abbe MacGeoghegan's History of Ireland.

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MDCCCXIII.

PREFACE.

IRISHMEN who feel for their country, must take a deep interest in all that has arisen to her within the last half century. To develope, therefore, the most important period of the history of Ireland, within that short space of time, we go back to '98, a year and epoch never to be forgotten, in the mind of every lover of his country. The disasters which overspread the land of Erin, and her green fields, during the short lapse of a few months, will be described in the following sheets, with accuracy and truth. There will be facts made known, which have not hitherto come to light, and such as will surprise and affect every heart that feels for the miseries of mankind, but more especially for those born on the same soil with themselves, and to whom a bountiful Providence imparted blessings that have been blighted by the evil genius of party-strife, impregnated and produced from the machinations of designing men.

Every man who has witnessed the scenes of '98, and is still living, must shudder when he thinks of the miseries and heavy visitations that have befallen innumerable localities and their inhabitants, at that disastrous epoch: "*animus meminisse horret luctuque refugit.*"*

* The mind shudders to remember it, and recoils upon itself with grief.

It has been the lot of the author of this work, though extremely young at the time, (being then in his 17th year,) to make peace, between the people and Generals Lake and Dundas, on Whit-Monday of '98. The number of men assembled on Knockallen-hill, county Kildare, when the occurrence took place, amounted to 6,000: the situation of every man who appeared, was most perilous. The war between the army and people had commenced; several battles had already taken place, in some of which his Majesty's troops suffered a defeat, and in others the people were defeated and repulsed. All these will be faithfully described, in their fit place and time.

Nothing will tend more efficaciously to impress the minds of youth with prudence, throughout every stage of life, than examples such as our small history will supply. "*Oriente tempora notis instruet exemplis.*"* The love of country is one of the national characteristics of Irishmen, and a love for information forms a distinguishing feature in the nobleness of mind with which (as it is admitted even by foreigners,) the Irish are endowed. To suffer, then, the developement of facts so intimately interwoven with the affairs of Ireland, during one of the most interesting years in the annals of our country, to lie dormant and untold, would bespeak a torpor and indifference of soul, which have no real abode in the hearts of the Irish of either sex.

In order that all our countrymen may fancy to learn what things are proposed to be set forth, it is affirmed,

* It will supply the rising periods of time, with examples that have been made known.

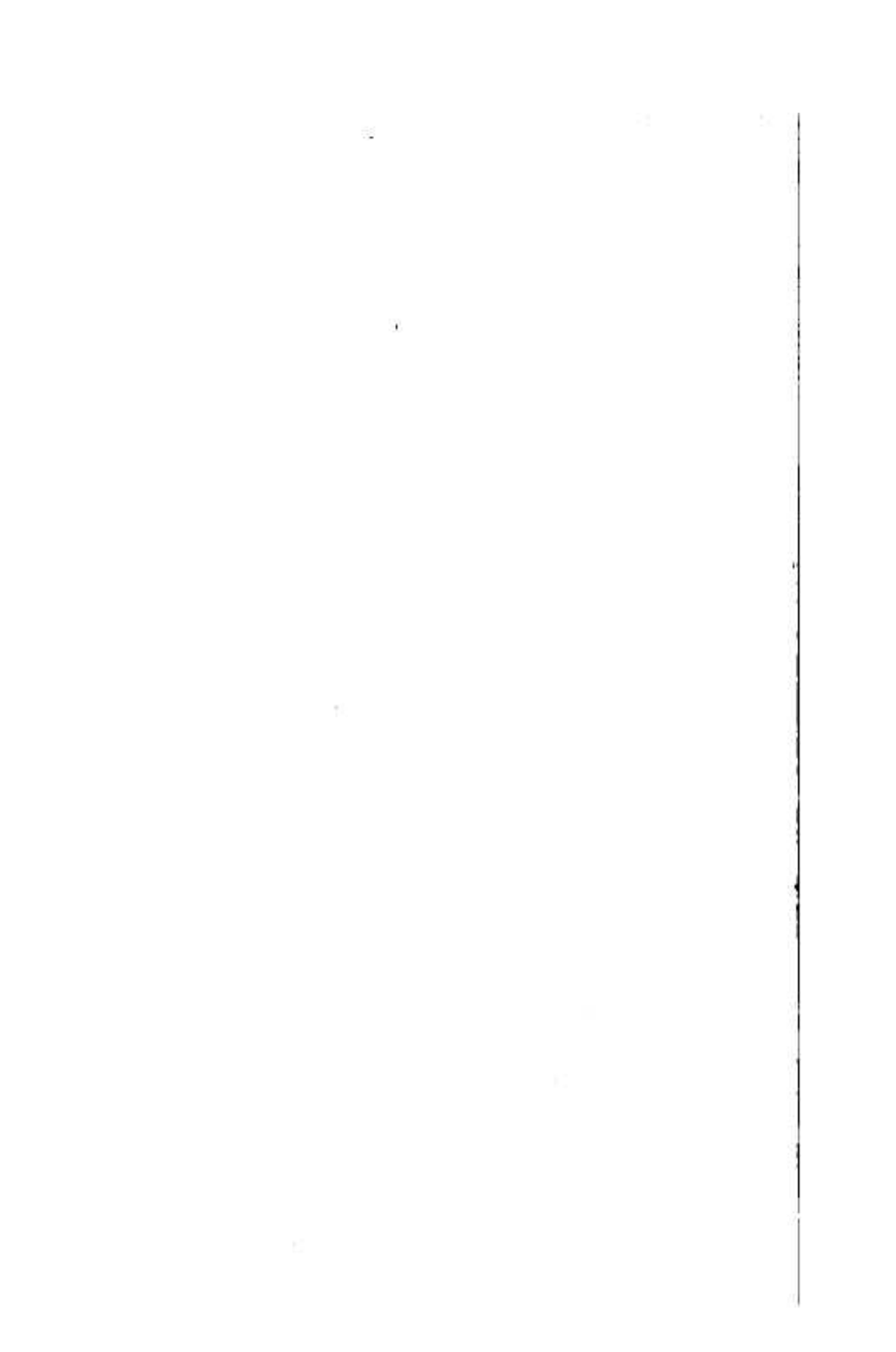
that nothing devoid of truth and justice (as must appear to every impartial reader,) will be admitted into our pages. Every portion and part of the Irish people, of every sect and creed, will admit, after reading our production, that nothing of party-spirit manifests itself throughout; that on the contrary, the author wishes, that peace, harmony, and concord may ever reign in this fair portion of the globe; and that the present age and posterity, may never again witness a recurrence of the scenes of '98.

With devotedness to my countrymen,

I remain their faithful and obedient servant,

P. O'KELLY.

Dublin, June, 1842.



GENERAL HISTORY

OF

THE REBELLION OF 1798.

1796.—The affairs of Ireland were, at this time, in a great measure, under the guidance of the men of Ulster, who were the first among their countrymen to evince a desire of procuring an equality of rights for their Catholic brethren.

After the departure of Earl Fitzwilliam from the government of Ireland in '95, through the policy of the British Cabinet, it was seen, that a disposition to right the oppressions of the Irish, and to loose the fetters under which their claims had lain dormant and prostrate, began now to manifest itself. Ulster became indignant at the conduct of the English Minister, and its people feeling, that they possessed within themselves, strength and means to establish the independence of their country, and save it from utter degradation and ruin, resolved to be the leaders of their countrymen the Catholics, in demanding a resto-

ration of what nature had given them—a common country to defend against every invader.

The character of the men of Ulster, in their struggles for freedom, and for the emancipation of their Catholic countrymen, was truly patriotic, though tinged in the commencement with a spirit of an intolerant turn. After the assembling of the volunteers at Dungannon, and avowing their determination to obtain from England the full measure of justice for Ireland, and that all restrictions on her commerce should henceforth cease; the prospects of improvement in her manufactures and national productions, were brightened, and every species of industry was invigorated, and flourished accordingly.

Ireland's destiny, in a state of improvement, did not long suit the views of a British Minister. Pitt therefore plotted her subservency to England, and to accomplish this, division and distrust were resorted to, as the most efficacious instruments, in the hands of that wily minister to devise.

Two powerful classes in the north of the kingdom, were to be then tampered with; and a third, though much inferior in number to either of the other two, was pointed out to be essential, in the grand drama about to be played off, for the aggrandizement of British domination.

Besides the apprehensions of superior greatness arising to Ireland from a free and unrestricted trade, the English could not at any period of their