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**Irish immigration to the United States of America
1815- 1850**

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DECLARATION OF A PERSON SUPERVISING THE Ph.D THESIS

I declare that the thesis written by Ms. **Antsar A. Abed** has been prepared under my supervision. This thesis meets all the conditions required to submit it for the proceedings related with obtaining the professional title.

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DECLARATION OF AN AUTHOR OF THE Ph.D THESIS

Aware of legal liability I hereby declare that I have written this dissertation myself and all the contents of the dissertation have been obtained by legal means.

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Dedication

I dedicate this research to God for granting me the strength and the endurance to carry out this project and overcoming the challenges I encountered.

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List of Abbreviation

ARPLC	Annual Reports of the Poor Law Commissioners
British Library	BL
E.S.I.	Emigration Statistics of Ireland
GRC	General Reports of the Colonial Land and Emigration Commissions
H.C.	House of Commons
NA (UK)	National Archives in UK
NAI	National Archives of Ireland (Dublin)
NLI	National Library of Ireland (Dublin)
NYPA	Nativist New York Protestant Association
OS	Ordnance Survey
P.P.	Parliamentary Papers
P.R.	Parliamentary Reports
PRO	Public Record Office of United Kingdom
PRONI	Public Record Office of Northern Ireland
R.S.C.	Report from the Select Committee
Ref	Reference
RRC	Reports of Royal Commissions
RSC	Report from the Select Committee

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Abstract

The dissertation investigates the Irish emigration to the United States of America within the period of 1815-1850. Irish have migrated to America at different periods of time, under various reasons, they left their homeland escaping a religious and political persecution, poverty, war, famine and other myriad hardships. So, for centuries the Irish crossed the Atlantic heading to the United States in pursuit of new opportunities - work, prosperity and freedom. The political unrest at home pushed many Irish to leave, whereas others were sent unwillingly.

It was not until the late eighteenth century, however, that the great grassland frontiers became of importance to the growing European mercantile and industrial powers. So, those conditions behind that mass Irish emigration did not occur until then. By the end of the eighteenth century, emigration from Ireland to the grassland regions of Canada and New England had become well established, especially, among the Scotch-Irish around the ports of Derry and Belfast. And in the early nineteenth century, this type of emigration started to occur among growing numbers of the Catholic Irish population, especially among those of similar class to that of Scotch-Irish, the relatively prosperous tenant farmers.

The image of America which conjured up in Irish minds, was the lure that tempted young people westward across the Atlantic Ocean. It was an image made all things look more attractive, if compared with the unpromising status of economic life in nineteenth-century Ireland. An alluring impression of America formed from much information which was predominant throughout the Irish countryside. Sometimes, these stories were gotten from travellers or “returned Yanks” or newspaper accounts, but for the vast majority of the population the greatest single source of information was the myriad letters which flooded back from the emigrants in the “New World”. All these letters confirmed on the good economic opportunities in America, where, the prospect of high wages and constant employment became by far the two main key pulling factors, in addition to the social equality prevailing there.

The Irish movement to the United States during the early nineteenth century initiated the most important era of migration to America although by the second decade from this century a series of events took place which greatly affected Irish immigration to the “New World”. England was involved in a European war against Napoleon (1793-1815). One major impact of this war was the growing emigration from Ireland to the “New World”, almost completely halted. However, after 1815 the pace of Irish immigration to America rapidly increased, and continued at a steady

pace until 1845 when a terrible famine occurred in Ireland and its people, hungry and desperate, fled in influxes. So, during that period, the number of Irish population kept decreasing due to immigration which was directed largely to the United States of America. Having this fact, this dissertation describes the trials of Irish immigrants upon arriving in America before and during the time of the great Irish famine and it reveals historical details about —where they settled, the jobs they obtained and the difficulties they faced. So, in this dissertation one could explore how the choices people made meant the difference between life and death.

Introduction

Emigration since the early nineteenth century has, in fact, been a key feature in shaping the history of Ireland. The Irish emigrants¹ settled in various places—Great Britain, Australia, Canada, however the preferred destination for the greater majority was United States of America.

Why the Irish immigrated to America is a complex story, rooted in the centuries old conflict with England and this story may also have a larger significance. The first chapters in their story tell us a lot about difficulty and deprivation which forced most of Irish to leave their country, so understanding the situation of Ireland in the early 19th century and all the political, economic, and social conditions, implicit in that, are vital to understand their integration journey. This dissertation seeks to assess the Journey of Irish immigrants from desperation in Ireland to their assimilation in United States in the first half of the nineteenth century, in particular, it focuses on those immigrants who arrived from Ireland before and during the Great Famine (1845-1850), and will track their progress in the United States during this period. Although, their sufferance in their homeland, leaving their land did not really mean an immediate abscond from suffering, they had to face in a series of difficulties and obstacles starting from leaving their home till their settlement and integration in America. These different obstacles were so great that they prevented a vast proportion of them from achieving their aim, which was mostly to have a better quality of life in America because the situation in Ireland at that time was so desperate. Thus, through examining the situation of Irish immigrants after their arrival to the United States; who had to figure out how to fit into a foreign and strange society, we can learn much about the society itself. Thence, the Irish emigration to the United States in the first half of the 19th century has unique features which are worth studying and investigating.

Furthermore, this study is of importance for many reasons. First of all, the Irish were the most prolific immigrant groups during this timeframe and the United States was their primary destination, so it fills a gap in the historiography of Irish-America. Although, there are major studies about this immigration, this study could provide an opportunity for more investigation behind its reasons, consequences and

¹The nouns “immigrant” and “emigrant” and the verbs “immigrate” and “emigrate” are often used interchangeably in the literature cited, and will appear in the quotes as used by each author. An “emigrant” is a person that leaves their homeland never to return to live there permanently, whereas an “immigrant” is a person entering a new country to take up permanent residence. For the purposes of this historiography, the nouns emigrant and emigration and the verb emigrate will be used.

Sinon J. Talty, *Into the Melting Pot: The Assimilation of Irish Potato Famine Emigrants in the United States*, Thesis Presented to the Faculty of Humboldt State University in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree Master of Arts, May 2006, p.1.

effects on both Ireland and America. The main significance had been attributed to the Irish exodus to the United States in the nineteenth century because of the influence it had in determining the future of both American and Irish societies, just as it affected the families and lives of millions of Irish people. Even nowadays many Irish and Irish descendants still have bitter sentiments concerning the history of Ireland in the nineteenth century, especially during the period of the great famine, which opened the influx gates of the later immigration to that country. Thus, this study helps to gain a more extensive and comprehensive understanding of the Irish immigration movement through analyzing all the conditions surrounded it, then, shedding light on its effects on both countries.

This dissertation investigates the Irish immigration to the United States of America during the period 1815-1850, through focusing on all the Irish-born who immigrated to the United States in the first half of the 19th century. Historically it might be said that the Irish immigration movement to the United States during the early nineteenth century initiated the most important era of immigration to there. The year 1800 is remarkable in Irish history because in this year the Act of Union was passed between Ireland and Britain, and followed it, many events and humanitarian catastrophes in Ireland represented in social, economic and political conditions prevalent in country which forced later most of the Irish to leave the country and immigrate to many countries, particularly, to the United States. However, by the second decade of the nineteenth century a series of events took place, as we previously mentioned, which greatly affected on this immigration, where, England was involved in a European war against Napoleon(1793-1815), and one major impact of this war was the growing emigration from Ireland to the “New World” was almost completely halted. But after 1815 the pace of Irish immigration to America rapidly increased, so it one can say that the year 1815 is a turning point in both the Irish and American histories, where, it was the starting point of the massive Irish emigration to America, moreover, the contrast between the confident and growing America and the depressed and declining Ireland came to the fore after this year. Thus Irish immigration movement to the United States during this timeframe of study initiated the most important era of immigration to there.

This immigration continued nearly at a steady pace until 1845 when a terrible famine occurred in Ireland and led to a great immigration which was directed largely to the United States of America. Most of the Irish, who came to the United States between 1815 and 1850, were Catholic, although large numbers of the "Scots Irish" Presbyterians from the northern province of Ulster continued to arrive. A few Anglo-Irish Protestants also joined the great nineteenth-century exodus from Ireland. The year 1850 was the beginning of the post-famine era, where the ‘Great Famine’ finished in Ireland, and Irish America entered a new phase in its history, so after 1850, the Irish emigrants in the

United States played a major role in shaping the future of Irish America and they, in particular, their American-born children, took advantage of the opportunities available there.

This study aims at proving that the movement of Irish immigration to the United States of America was crucial in determining the extent to which the Irish responded to the challenges which their country faced since the beginning of the 19th century until 1850. So, it was important analyze the circumstances surrounding their departure on all levels: the political, economic and social ones. Whatever those circumstances were, the immigrants' journey was always made more difficult via the awareness that they left a family, friends and a familiar way of life behind. But, nevertheless, immigrants continued moving to America because, for many, the United States represents something they could not find at home: freedom and an opportunity of good life for themselves and their children. However, almost, all immigrants faced considerable challenges in adapting and making the United States their new home. There were many hurdles like; language barriers, unfamiliar surroundings, and sometimes hostile neighbours, made it difficult for immigrants to assimilate into the American society. So, another purpose of this study is to shed light on the challenges the Irish immigrants faced in the United States and examine the factors which made those immigrants work hard and find a place for themselves there. Thus, my study investigates the various steps in the emigration process starting from making the decision of leaving their country, emigrants' arrival at their port of departure; get on ships boards, crossing the Atlantic and the eventual arrival in United States. Therefore, the results of this study would be of significant benefit to understand the emigrants' experience by making several questions: what were the factors which motivated the Irish emigrants' departure to the United States? How did they manage to cross the Atlantic? What were the obstacles which they had to overcome? How was the status of the Irish immigrants after their arrival to the United States? And how was the attitude of Native Americans towards them?

Following the above objectives, there might be difficulties in writing such subject, but such a thing can be tackled through concentrating on the main issues and benefit from the concerned references, especially, the American and British ones relevant to the topic. Thus, a variety of sources are available for the study of the Irish emigration. To tackle all aspects of this emigration, the data are derived from both primary and secondary sources. The primary ones consist of unpublished scripts and documents from various collections obtained from the National Archives in United Kingdom and the British Library. The documents that proved most useful for the study of Irish emigration were those done by the House of Commons, which include a wide variety of reports that enriched the dissertation's chapters with valuable information. Most valuable sources for my purposes presented in Reports of the

Colonial Land and Emigration Commissions, the Annual Reports of the Poor Law Commissioners, Agricultural Statistics of Ireland, Reports of Royal Commissions and Census of Ireland 1841 and 1851, they do provide information that is not available elsewhere. Particularly valuable for a study of the Irish Emigration was the reports of the Colonial Land and Emigration Commissions, which frequently published annual reports about the Irish Emigration to the British colonies and United States, they contain information on conditions of emigration, especially during the great famine and also provide a summary of the contents of each document. Annual Reports of the Poor Law Commissioners provide valuable material related to state of the Irish poor and their housing and living conditions before and after Emigration to the United States. These reports are essential for anyone studying the relief of the poor in Ireland and help them by money or find employment.

Moreover, the primary sources consist of published documents in the form of documentary books and articles. Those documents form a documentary history about the most important events that occurred in Ireland in the first half of the nineteenth century. To provide a variety of information about political, economic and social history of Irish, M. R. O'Connell, "The Correspondence of Daniel O'Connell", Vol. 1 (New York 1888); John O'Connell, "The life and speeches of Daniel O'Connell", Vol. 1 (Dublin 1846), were included. For the Irish Emigration, William Smith, "An Emigrants Narrative or A voice From the Steerage", (New York 1850); The Rt. Hon. Lord Dufferin, K.P., Irish Emigration and the Tenure of Land in Ireland (London 1867); Edward E. Hale, "Letters on Irish Emigration", (Boston 1852), were most helpful.

As for the secondary sources, they are in the form of published works in books, journals and other historical sources as well as the World Wide Web. Much of the data for the thesis was taken from books, letters and government publications. This gives a general background to understand the various concepts and theme in this work. Important modern references adopted during research included: William Forbes Adams: "Ireland and Irish emigration to the new world from 1815 to the famine" (2004). This book provides a detailed account of the economic, social and political factors underlying the early migrations; an examination of the emigrant trade and its links with American shipping interests; and a history of government policy regarding assisted and unassisted emigration. So, this book helped to give an excellent insight into emigration and the conditions experienced by Irish emigrants who left Ireland for United States up to and including the famine in 1845.

Lawrence McCaffrey's "The Irish Catholic Diaspora in America" (1997). This book is called as the (best short history of the Irish in America). It explores the history of Ireland from its early times when England ruled it and other countries

invaded its people down to the twentieth century. It examines the people and their fate in America. McCaffrey's work traced the experience of Irish-American Catholics from their beginnings as detested, unskilled pioneers of the urban ghetto to their rise as an essentially affluent, powerful, middle-class suburban community. This book focuses on a number of topics, including the significance of Catholicism as the core of Irish ethnicity and the source of nativist attacks on their presence in the United States; the impact of Irish America on the course of Irish nationalism.

The methodological framework is a push-pull theory predominantly adopted from Timothy Paulson's "Irish Immigrants: Immigration in the United States" (2005). In line with it the main factors motivated the Irish people to emigrate might be of two kinds: what they flee in home country (as push factors) and what they lure in new country (as pull factors consequently).

Jay P. Dolan, "The Irish Americans" (2008), and "The Immigrant Church: New York's and German Catholics 1815-1865" (1975); Kerby A. Miller's *Emigrants and Exiles: Ireland and the Irish Exodus to North America* (1985). Most of these books deal with political, social, economic issues and the Catholic Church. They show successful acculturation to America. For specific Irish regional and urban case studies in the US, the following are the most famous scholarly studies. These books were of tremendous value in interpreting the Irish urban environment and ascertaining assimilation and acceptance: Oscar Handlin's *Boston's Immigrants: A Study of Acculturation* (1941); Dennis Clark's *The Irish in Philadelphia* (1973); Fallows, Marjorie R., *Irish Americans Identity and Assimilation* (1979).

This study consists of an introduction, four chapters and a conclusion. As structure of the dissertation suggests that it is possible to indicate the fourfold division of the research: 1) the historical background of socio-political and economic situation in Ireland under harsh control of Great Britain; 2) Pre-famine emigrations and its politico-economic motifs and human costs; 3) the causes and consequences of the Great Famine (1845-1850) desperately motivated Irishmen to leave home country in massive flux; 4) the Irish Americans struggling for their better life after arrival to America against religious discrimination, nationalistic biases, economic deprivation and unemployment.

In this dissertation, the lives of these immigrants will be tracked to uncover the extent of their adaptability in America and making a place for themselves there through patience and determination. Through the available data in documentary reports, especially from House of Commons, together with relevant data drawn from other sources, I will focus on the socio-economic characteristics of Irish immigrants. Of these various characteristics, the one which will receive particular attention is the work of these immigrants, and their occupational mobility over the course of this time period.

So, the first chapter examines the canvass of the political, economic and social background of time span of 1800-1850 in Ireland. The centuries long lasting Britain control over Ireland has been intensified in the 17th century: religious tension between Catholics and Protestants caused a number of rebellions, 1649 rebellion was suppressed by Oliver Cromwell and as a result forty per cent of rebel's land were confiscated and distributed to so-called absentee English landlords who never stepped on the land of their possessions. Ireland was treated as resource-providing area in the zenith of industrialisation in England. From what infers that agrarian Ireland as a part of Great Britain paid a heavy price for industrial ambitions of the British government, especially after the British government passed the Act of Union in that year, a matter that reflected on the different aspects of life in Ireland and introduced a fundamental change into the political situation of Ireland led to the destruction of the self-rule in the country. At the same time, this chapter concentrate on the emergence of Irish Nationalism led by Daniel O'Connell through focusing on the successful struggle for Catholic Emancipation in 1820s. And the unsuccessful struggle for repeal of the union with Britain in the 1840s, which formed central issues helped in rise the Irish nationalism . And the chapter shows how the economic background in Ireland largely dominated by the question of land and this had an effect on the nature of Irish society and the Irish life during the first half of the 19th century. So, it proves that, almost, every civil war, rebellion, insurrection and disturbance in Ireland, arose more or less directly from questions relevant to the possession of lands.

This situation in Ireland led to immigration to the United States before the Great Famine which is dealt with in chapter two after giving a brief overview of the early immigration to this destination. Furthermore, it shedding light on other reasons encouraged the Irish immigration in this timeframe. The servant trade had been ceased during the War of Independence (1775-1783), but had not been eliminated as a practice. In opposite in 1780s New York and Pennsylvania passed the laws promoted the growth of the servant trade. And some decades later Britain passed statute of 1788 on reducing the servant trade, but in fact on reducing the number of Irish skilled workers legible to emigrate to America. Next statute of 1803 cut down the number of passengers legible to carry on the board again had not been in favour of Irish emigrants. Albeit, this unpopular and illogical statute sooner had been replaced by the Passenger Act of 1819. Actually, this Act put an end to the phenomenon of indentured servants. Thus this chapter will examine the Passenger Acts 1803-1823, these acts contributed to change the course of passage to the United States.

During 1820-1822, famine took place in Ireland which was an important factor for the immigration to the United States, where, the situation of the potato crop in 1821 was different from that of 1818, that is, it was local. But in 1821, the failure was far more complete and the consequent famine more disastrous. So, with the

coming of acute distress in 1822, a revival of Irish immigration to America appeared likely. Thus, the same chapter discusses this famine and look at the combination of social and economic evils, with special causes in certain years which produced a total immigration from Ireland in the thirties of the nineteenth century whom most of them went to America, where, from 1830 onwards the Irish emigrant becomes a recognised and important factor in American economic and social history.

The Great Famine 1845-1850 was the most dramatic and decisive event in modern Irish history and it is seen by some historians as a turning point in Ireland's history. A potato blight ruined the crop that was the main source of food for the nation. One million Irish died of starvation and relevant diseases, and the population declined even more drastically as huge numbers, 1,500,000, came to America, especially in 1847, one of the worst years in Irish history, known to this day as Black 47. So, chapter three highlights in details, the Irish famine through investigating the reasons of potato blight and the British government's policies towards famine and its impact on the Irish immigration by focusing on famine's relief during the rule of Prime Minister Sir Robert Peel (Tory) and Lord John Russell (Whig). But, the efforts of the famine relief failed in dealing with Irish poverty, so this dissertation focuses on the government decision after failure of these efforts, where, the government decided that the best way to deal with the Irish poverty was by improving the existing poor law machinery. Thus, Parliament enacted the Irish Poor Law Extension in 1848, and then they reached a conclusion that the only way to deal with the excess of poor was to encourage the emigration.

Moreover, this dissertation examines the sailing to the America during the great famine, which will be tackled in this chapter through answering the following principal questions: What were the sources of funding the immigrants? And how was the sailing by Coffin Ships? What were the reasons which led to the tide of the Irish emigration from the United Kingdom to the United States by sailing from Liverpool? One way to limit immigration was to make it more expensive to get to America, so, Passenger fares to the United States in 1847 became higher than fares to Canada, but economic opportunities in Canada were not as attractive as in the United States. As a result, many Irish bought a cheap ticket to Canada, only to travel on to the United States. However, in 1847 and 1848 the majority of those arrivals in the quarantine stations in Grosse Isle and New York were either sick or destitute, or both, having brought few resources to make a start in the new country. To better understand the situation of Ireland 1848-1850, it is essential to focus on, the insurrection of the Young Irelanders in 1848, and the British government's stance towards it and its impact on Ireland. Then the famine of 1848, where, in this year, the blight returned in full and once again destroyed the entire potato crop. So, the potato disaster in this year had sparked a new exodus to America.

The horrifying nightmare of the previous five years (1845-1850) had caused some radical changes in the structure and size of the Irish society and then affected American society through the immigrants who arrived to the United States of America in this timeframe. So, focusing on features of the great famine immigration would be of significance to give overview about the characteristics of those immigrants which is discussed at the end of this chapter. One of these characteristics, which received a particular attention, is the work of these immigrants, and their occupational mobility over the course of this time period.

A broader study of the Irish in the United States provides greater opportunities to examine individual experiences and gives details about the Irish presence in the United States and how was their situation there. Thus, chapter four deals with these issues through describing the immigrants' first few hours after their arrival to the United States, a situation that made them confused and frightened. Exploring the regions of settlement of the Irish immigrants there, explaining why the Irish immigrants were forced into the poorest neighbourhoods, and why showed little interest in settling in rural areas even though conditions in the cities were appalling. When they arrived, found towns more conducive to create or join vibrant ethnic communities and along with family and contact with home. These Irish neighbourhoods gave many immigrants a sense of security in a strange and volatile world in which they found themselves they were forced to take menial, sometimes dangerous, jobs. So, this chapter shows how they located a niche at the bottom of the urban labour market and far progress was made from there.

The chapter also examines the political and religious troubles of the Irish in America. To better understand those troubles, it is essential to know more about the Catholic Church in America through focusing on the role of the Irish in establishing this Church and its importance to the Irish immigrant community. The Catholic Church was the most important institution for Irish in the United States; as a consequence, it grew tremendously there. The church served not only as a religious center but also as a center for all aspects of life for many Irish. The chapter also attempts to explain relationship between Irish American and Natives.

In my conclusion, I attempt to account for this transformation from "stranger" to "Irish American." The Irish were indeed strangers but the patience and determination were the basic elements for Irish immigrants in America, they worked hard and made a place for themselves there.

Keywords:

Immigration, Immigrants, United States of America, Ireland, Irish Americans, potato famine

CHAPTER ONE

Changing Conditions in Ireland 1800-1850

Chapter 1

Changing Conditions in Ireland 1800-1850

In order to understand why the Irish left their country between 1815 and 1850 and what influenced them in the making of the decision to go to United States of America, we must firstly analyse the situation in Ireland and the conditions that were prevalent at the time, because better understanding to those conditions would be essential to know more about the various factors contributing to the “push”. Whatever those conditions, political, economic and social, they have great importance when attempting to explain or understand the Irish immigration. In fact features which prompted the departure of many Irish people date back too long before 1800.

1.1 Changing political Conditions

1.1.1 An Overview of the British Occupation to Ireland and its impact on the Ireland Status

Although the English were in Ireland as early as the twelfth century, they never gained effective control until Hugh O'Neill, the Earl of Tyrone and leader of Ulster resistance, surrendered to Lord Mountjoy, Queen Elizabeth's deputy (1533-1603)², on March 30, 1603.

Since 1534 England's King Henry VIII (1491 –1547)³ broke away from the Catholic Church to form the Church of England. After declaring himself king of Ireland in 1541, he and his daughter, Elizabeth I, tried to force the Irish to accept

²For more details about Queen Elizabeth see: Jane Resh Thomas, *Behind the Mask: The Life of Queen Elizabeth I*, New York 1998, pp. vii-xi; Kate Havelin, *Queen Elizabeth I*, Minneapolis 2002, pp.7-19; Elizabeth I (1558-1603 AD): <http://www.britannia.com/history/monarchs/mon45.html>. 22/01/2012,09:40am; Queen Elizabeth I: <http://englishhistory.net/tudor/monarchs/eliz1.html>. 22/01/2012,09:50am.

³For more details about Henry VIII see: Eric Ives, *Henry VIII*, New York 2007, pp.1-7; J. J. Scarisbrick, *Henry VIII*, California 1968, pp.3-20; Henry VIII (1491 - 1547): http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/historic_figures/henry_viii_king.shtml. 23/ 01/ 2012, 08:50pm.

Protestantism, where, they felt a shared religion would make their control of Ireland easier and therefore they favored Protestants with land and political power. Thus Elizabeth introduced the most important factor, religion, into the complexity of the Irish Question. Elizabeth's church was Protestant in doctrine and worship, and she planted Protestants on lands seized from Catholic rebels. Catholics, heretofore lukewarm papists, began to defend their religion against Protestantism as a dimension of English conquest and colonisation. So, since early in the seventeenth century, religion in Ireland has symbolised culture and nationality.⁴

There were only a small number of English and Scottish settlers, before 1607, when O'Neill, Hugh O'Donnell and other northern clan chiefs fled Ireland in fear of their lives (the "Flight of the Earls"), Ulster was the most Gaelic, and therefore the most potentially rebellious Irish province, to remedy this situation, Elizabeth's successor, James I, went one step further. Although his wife was Catholic, in order to keep control of the monarchy, he planted the support of Scottish Presbyterians by granting them lands in Ulster in 1609. Thus, he planted colonies of English Protestants and Scottish Presbyterians on lands confiscated from departed clan chiefs. Local Protestant landlords passed laws to increase their control of Irish land, and Catholics were forbidden to attend school or be hired for jobs in this Ulster region.⁵

The political unrest at home made many Irish eager to leave Ireland, while others were expelled against their will. Tension between Protestants and Catholics mounted and resulted in several rebellions. In the 1640s, England's ruler, Oliver Cromwell (1599-1658), suppressed the Irish when in the summer of 1649 was sent to Ireland with two objectives: to place it firmly under English control and to superintend the confiscation of the land of all 'rebels'. As a result almost forty per cent of the land of Ireland was redistributed from Catholics born in Ireland to Protestants born in Britain. He exterminated thousands and sent Irish political prisoners over to the West Indies as slave labour. Many of these forced immigrants eventually made their way to British colonies in the Americas. Cromwell granted vast portions of farmland throughout Ireland to his supporters, who became landlords to the Irish farm families. Most of these "absentee" landlords continued to live in England, with their

⁴Lawrence J. M cCaffrey, *The Irish Question: Two centuries of Conflict*, Kentucky 1995, p.13; Kerry A. Graves, *Irish Americans (Immigrants in America)*, Philadelphia 2003p.22; A. G. Richey, *The Irish people, down to the date of the plantation of Ulster*, Dublin 1887, pp.591-592; Emily Lawless, *The Story of Ireland*, New York 1888, pp.164-166 ; Denny Hatch, "The Irish Emigrant Trade to North America 1845-1855", p.7 in: <http://www.dennyhatch.com/jackcorbett/doc/IrishEmigration.02/10/2013,03:45pm>. Further details are giving in Jurgen Kramer, *British and Ireland: a concise history*, London and New York 2007, pp.73-77.

⁵Lawrence J. M cCaffrey, Op.Cit., p.13; A. G. Richey, Op.Cit., pp.596-597; Kerry A. Graves, Op.Cit., p.22; Albert Cook Myers, *Immigration of the Irish Quakers into Pennsylvania, 1682-1750*, Pennsylvania 1902, pp.7-8; Emily Lawless, Op.Cit., pp.167-168. For more details about (James I) see: John Butler, James I of England (1566-1625): <http://www.luminarium.org/sevenlit/james/jamesbio.htm>. 28/08/2011, 11:10am; James I (1603-25 AD): <http://www.britannia.com/history/monarchs/mon46.html>. 28/08/2011,11:20am; James I and VI (1566 – 1625): http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/historic_figures/james_i_vi.shtml. 28/08/2011, 11:40am.

only ties to Ireland shown in account books through the rents and taxes they collected.⁶

Catholicism returned to the throne of England in 1669 when the Stuart family was restored to the monarchy. However, the English people were strongly Protestant, and by 1688 rule was granted to the Protestant William of Orange of the Netherlands. His deposed father-in-law, King James II, fled to Ireland, where his Catholic supporters defended him against William's invading troops. The Catholics were defeated at the Battle of the Boyne in July 1690 along the Boyne River, two miles west of Drogheda in Ireland. But the war would continue for another year, laying waste to the countryside of Ireland, leaving death and destruction in its path. When a truce was finally declared in October 1691, the Protestant triumph was complete. A Protestant minority would rule Ireland. Thus after the Battle of the Boyne, England took control of Ireland completely, and the British government imposed a system of social, political and economic control: The Protestant Ascendancy. It can say that English occupation to Ireland had two dimensions: The first one was a political—simply, foreign occupation, and the second one was the economic dimension, looting of the country's resources, especially agricultural lands which was distributed to the English landlords—most of whom never saw that land, so they were known as the Absent Landlords. Hence, it can say that the Protestant victory in the Battle of the Boyne not only shaped the modern history of Ireland, but also laid the groundwork for the emigration of thousands of Irish mostly from the province of Ulster, in the north of Ireland to North America while the life became restrictive for Catholics who remained in Ireland—roughly 80 percent of the island's population.⁷

⁶ Kem Knapp Sawyer, *Irish Americans*, Carlisle 1998, p. 4; Kerry A. Graves, Op.Cit., p.24; Lawrence J. McCaffrey, Op.Cit., p.14; Kerby A. Miller, Arnold Schrier, Bruce D. Boling, David N. Doyle, *Irish Immigrants in the Land of Canaan: Letters and Memoirs from Colonial and Revolutionary America 1675-1815*, New York 2003, p.13; William D. Griffin, ed., *The Irish in America : A Chronology and Fact Book 550-1972*, 1972, pp.2-8; Paul Milner, Irish Emigration to North America: Before, During, and After the Famine: [broadcast.lds.org/.../Paul Milner/Irish Migration to North America](http://broadcast.lds.org/.../Paul_Milner/Irish_Migration_to_North_America). 21/12/2013,09:20am; Amy Hackney Blackwell and Ryan Hackney, *The Immigrant Experience in the United States*: <http://www.netplaces.com/irish-history/the-immigrant-experience/the-immigrant-experience-in-the-unitedstates.htm>. 05/03/2013,02:20pm; John Morrill, Oliver Cromwell: http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/british/civil_war_revolution/cromwell_01.shtml. 24/08/2011,01:15pm; Oliver Cromwell :<http://www.spartacus.schoolnet.co.uk/STUcromwellO.htm>. 24/08/2011,11:30am; Life in England under Oliver Cromwell: http://www.historylearningsite.co.uk/cromwell_england.htm. 24/08/2011, 02:30 pm. Further details are giving in: Philip H. Bagenal, *The American Irish and their influence on Irish politics*, Boston 1882, pp.3-5; Emily Lawless, Op.Cit., pp.261-272.

⁷ Kerry A. Graves, Op.Cit., p.24; Emily Lawless, Op.Cit., pp.288-294; Lawrence J. McCaffrey, Op.Cit., p.14; Jay P. Dolan, *The Irish Americans*, New York 2008, pp.3-4; Kem Knapp Sawyer, Op.Cit., p.4; Timothy J. Paulson, *Immigration to the United States: Irish Immigrants*, New York 2005, p.21; Kerby Miller and Paul Wagner, *Out of Ireland: The story of Irish Emigration to America*, Washington 1989, pp.17-21; Albert Cook Myers, Op.Cit., p.30; Irish Potato famine, Gone to America: <http://www.historyplace.com/worldhistory/famine/before.htm>. 15/04/2011, 08:32 pm.

For more details about James II see: Jay P. Dolan, Op.Cit., p.3.

Ulster had long been a citadel of Gaelic Catholic culture, but the English government wanted to change that. To accomplish their goal they began establishing plantations in the province by having loyal Protestants from Scotland and England settle on land confiscated from the native Catholic Irish. In this manner they hoped to civilise the province by establishing in Ulster what they believed to be the true religion. From the early seventeenth century to 1640, as many as one hundred thousand Scots settled in Ulster. They continued to arrive throughout the rest of the seventeenth century, settling mostly in the eastern half of Ulster, carrying with them a distinctive brand of Protestantism, Scottish Presbyterianism. By 1715 about six hundred thousand people lived in Ulster, where about half of them were Catholic, one third were Presbyterian and the rest belonged to the Church of Ireland (Anglican) or other Protestant denominations. Nevertheless, the Church of Ireland, made up primarily of the elite landowning class, ruled the province. By law the Church of Ireland was the established church in Ireland. All Irish, Protestants as well as Catholics had to pay taxes to support the Church of Ireland.⁸ To curb the growth and as a state power of both Presbyterians and Catholics, the English government also passed a series of laws, known as the Penal Laws in 1695, that victimised Catholics as well as those Protestants dissidents who did not belong to the Anglican Church. The penal laws were the worst ordeals that the people of Ireland suffered from. These laws punished Catholics for their beliefs, and prevented their participation — and all Protestant dissidents— in wield public offices or employment in the army, and civil employment. The Catholics also could not vote and it even became illegal for Catholics to go to school or attend church. Officials lightly enforced the religious aspects of the Penal Laws, but rigidly imposed their political and property clauses. Anti-Catholic legislation obliged most members of the Catholic aristocracy and gentry to either leave the country or to turn Protestant in order to protect their property and retain political and social status. Middle- and lower-class Catholics remained true to their faith.⁹

It is worth mentioning that, the most damaging of the Penal Laws had to do with land ownership, where, to weaken the power of Catholic landowners, Parliament also enacted laws forbidding Catholics to purchase land, inherit it, or retain ownership of their current property and forcing those who owned land to divide it up at their death among their sons. British laws ensured the transfer of lands owned by Irish Catholics to Protestants who were loyal to Britain. In this manner the English sought to destroy the wealth of Catholics, since in those days land was the major source of a person's wealth. In this endeavor they were fairly successful. So, by the early 18th century, Catholics owned only 14 percent of the land in Ireland even though they made up 75 percent of the population, whereas in the end of the 18th century Irish

⁸Jay P. Dolan, *Op.Cit.*, pp. 4-5; Kerry A. Graves, *Op.Cit.*, pp.22-24.

⁹For more details about the Penal Laws see: Sir Henry Parnell, *A History of the Penal Laws against the Irish Catholics: From the Year 1689 to the Union*, London 1825, pp.15-20; Emily Lawless, *Op.Cit.*, pp.299-310; Richard B. Finnegan, *Ireland: The Challenge of Conflict and Change*, Boulder, Colo 1983, pp.11-12; Kerry A. Graves, *Op.Cit.*, p.24; T.W Moody and F.X. Martin, *The Course of Irish History*, Cork, Ireland 1967, p.205; Kem Knapp Sawyer, *Op.Cit.*,p.4; Jay P. Dolan, *Op.Cit.*, pp.4-6; Timothy J. Paulson, *Op.Cit.*, p.21; Denny Hatch, *Op.Cit.*, p.7; Lawrence J. M cCaffrey, *Op.Cit.*, p. 14; Irish Potato famine, *Gone to America*: <http://www.historyplace.com/worldhistory/famine/before.htm>. 15/04/2011, 08:32 pm.

Catholics only owned 5 percent of Ireland's land. Thus, the Penal Laws divided Ireland between a virtually propertyless and powerless 75 percent Catholic majority and a 25 percent protestant Ascendancy and dissident minority. Like Catholics, dissidents, largely Presbyterian, were less than first-class citizens, a fact that drove hundreds of thousands of them to North America. But the protestant Ascendancy Irish Parliament passed toleration acts for Nonconformists and shared with them an intense hatred and suspicion of Catholics.¹⁰

A majority of Dublin parliamentary insisted on maintaining catholic exclusion from the Irish nation. In the late eighteenth century the Irish parliament repealed most of the severe Penal Laws, but the Protestant Ascendancy still held control, both of land and in government. The Parliament removed penalties involving—mixed marriages, permitted Catholics to have schools, to enter the legal profession, to vote on an equal footing with Protestants, to bear arms and to be eligible for minor civil and military positions. Despite these concessions, the Irish Parliament still denied Catholics access to political office. Nonetheless, they did have a psychological impact by reminding Catholics of their inferior status in the land of their birth, where they comprised the majority of the population. The Protestant triumph at the Battle of the Boyne had sealed their fate.¹¹

A number of Protestants and Nonconformist in 1791 organized the Society of United Irishmen, inspired by the liberal tenets of the Enlightenment and the French Revolution, to promote parliamentary and political reform, including Catholic Emancipation. The United Irishmen in alliance with Catholic agrarian radicals, frustrated by government oppression, turned from reform to revolutionary republicanism. The United Irishmen flourished in Ulster, providing subsequent republican movements with a once-upon-a-time myth of Catholic-Protestant unity against the English oppressor. But the Orange Order founded in 1795—the product of a bloody skirmish in County Armagh (the Battle of the Diamond) between two agrarian secret societies, the Catholic Defenders and the Protestant Peep O'Day Boys—was probably a more accurate proof of Ulster Protestant sentiment than the United Irishmen. Orangemen then have been dedicated to a never-ending war against popery and Catholic nationalism.¹²

British authorities suppressed all Irish attempts to do revolutions or uprisings against it, one of those revolutions shortly before the beginning of the 19th century was the rebellion in 1798, led by Leopold Walf Tone, this rebellion was suppressed. England then took decisive actions to end all hope for the patriotic Irish independence. The unsuccessful destructive 1798 rebellion confirmed British anxieties, shared by many members of the Irish Protestant Ascendancy, that French-

¹⁰Lawrence J. McCaffrey, *Op.Cit.*, p.14; Timothy J. Paulson, *Op.Cit.*, p.23; Jay P. Dolan, *Op.Cit.*, pp. 4-6.

¹¹*See:* Lawrence J. McCaffrey, *Op.Cit.*, pp.14-15; Emily Lawless, *Op.Cit.*, pp.349-353; Jay P. Dolan, *Op.Cit.*, p. 6; Denny Hatch, *Op.Cit.*, p.7.

¹²Mike Cronin and Daryl Adair, *The Wearing of the Green: A History of St Patrick's Day*, London; New York 2002, p. 5; Lawrence J. McCaffrey, *Op.Cit.*, p.15; Emily Lawless, *Op.Cit.*, pp.346; Denny Hatch, *Denny Hatch, Op.Cit.*, p.7.

inspired political radicalism and an aggressive Catholicism endangered the stability of Ireland and the security of Britain. So, the impact resulting from the failure of this rebellion was, the English government headed by Prime Minister William Pitt seized the opportunity to take it as a pretext to introduce fundamental change to the political situation of the country, and presented the change to liquidate the self-rule in Ireland and the introduction of the Act of Union in 1800.¹³

1.1.2 The Act of Union

After the rebellion in 1798, William Pitt, the British prime minister, and his Cabinet decided that the Irish Parliament lacked the public confidence and the financial resources to insure Ireland's stability or its immunity from French schemes. Lord Cornwallis, the lord lieutenant, and Lord Castlereigh, the chief secretary, approached John Fitzgibbon, the earl of Clare, and other Irish Protestant leaders with an offer suggesting a union with Britain.

Many members of the Protestant Ascendancy were attracted by the British offer, believing that a uniting of the two islands would prove economic situation be useful to Ireland while at the same time protect their privileged position against any threats. Thus, Protestant landlords and their supporting social groups—Anglican clergy, judicial officials and civil officers—generally favored the Act of Union as the best means to keep their continued dominance. But many rural and urban working-class Protestants, particularly Presbyterians in Ulster were strongly opposed Pitt's plan, fearing that British Parliament would be more inclined than the old Irish legislature to grant Catholics complete equality. That is, they felt that the British Parliament might make concessions to Catholic agitation and that the transfer of power to Westminster would diminish the political influence of the Irish aristocracy and threaten Irish economic interests, especially the Union meant would for the Protestant that they become part of a religious majority within the United Kingdom. However, the fear of growing Catholic self-confidence persuaded the great majority of Protestants of all classes—including Presbyterians—to become passionate supporters of the United Kingdom. The Protestant patriots, however, argued that union would subordinate Ireland's interests to Britain's and relegate Ireland to the status of a mere province. The Protestant patriots could always be found in the nationalist camp, such as Robert Emmet, Thomas Davis, John Mitchel, Isaac Butt and Charles Stewart Parnell. They were all members of the intellectuals class. Thus, the

¹³For more details about the rebellion of 1798 see: Philip Harwood, *History of the Irish rebellion of 1798*, London 1844, pp.136-211; Emily Lawless, *Op.Cit.*, pp.354-367; Richard B. Finnegan, *Op.Cit.*, p.15; Jurgen Kramer, *Op.Cit.*, pp.112-113; Lawrence J. M cCaffrey, *Op.Cit.*, pp.15-16; Denny Hatch, *Op.Cit.*, p.7; Mike Cronin and Daryl Adair, *Op.Cit.*, p.5; Daniel O'Connell and Catholic Emancipation:

http://www.irishhistorylinks.net/History_Links/Catholic_Emanicipation.html. 11/01/2010, 08:20am; Jonathan Bardon, The Act of Union: <http://www.actofunion.ac.uk/actofunion.htm>. 24/08/2010,11:15pm;

For more details about William Pitt see: William Hague, *William Pitt the Younger: A Biography*, London 2005, pp.136-177; George Pretyman, *Memoirs of the life of the Right Honorable William Pitt*, Vol.1, London 1821, p.p.1-43, 236-237; Jonathan Bardon, The Act of Union: <http://www.actofunion.ac.uk/actofunion.htm>. 24/08/2010, 11:15pm.

Irish entered the union greatly divided. The rebellion of 1798 bitterly split Protestants into rebels and supporters to the British government.¹⁴

For Catholics, the Catholic Church in Ireland remained the only institution that patriotic or nationalist life in Ireland could rely on. Church was forced at first to submit to the British policy. It was persecuted, it had no churches, only small chapels, even bishops were mostly forced to practice their worship in open places or inside shacks which most of them were due to collapse. Catholics themselves were not convinced to the usefulness of political rights, some feel that the only immediate beneficiaries would be the small group of wealthy merchants, landowners and professionals who could hope for a seat in the new union Parliament. But the church victimization was one of the reasons that made some of the Catholic bishops and some of the middle class to believe the English Prime Minister William Pitt promises, that after merging with English Catholics they will have their rights and will be liberated from the limitations enforced upon them. Thus, British negotiators won substantial support from Catholic bishops, especially, Dublin's archbishop, John Thomas Troy, by suggesting to them, with the approval of Pitt, an advocate of Catholic Emancipation, that a Westminster Parliament would deal more objectively with their claims than the Protestant Ascendancy Parliament in Dublin.¹⁵

Irish Catholics were possibly even less united politically, socially and economically than Irish Protestant. On one hand, lower-class Catholics retained the exclusivist identity that had characterized them for centuries, harboring long-nurtured resentments and looking still for deliverance from oppressive rule. On the other hand, many among the middle classes sought to work within the system as a means to improve their situation. They believed that if they could win political equality within the British constitutional regime, the opportunities afforded by free market capitalism would offer them the chance to acquire equal economic status. For many patriotic Catholic lay leaders preferred to place their hopes for a better Irish future in an Irish Protestant Parliament than in an alien British legislature.¹⁶ Although the many prominent lay and clerical Catholic spokesmen had denounced the rebellion of 1798 for the violent track it had taken, they supported the Act of Union as a safeguard against revolution, and some of them were persuaded that the English Parliament would grant Catholic emancipation, but substantial transformations in society in the

¹⁴Lawrence J. McCaffrey, Op.Cit., p.16; Paul F. State, *A Brief History of Ireland*, New York 2009, pp.164-165; Richard B. Finnegan, Op.Cit., p.15; The Act of Union:

<http://www.actofunion.ac.uk/actofunion.htm>. 24/08/2010,11:15pm; Ireland: politics and administration, 1815–1870: http://multitext.ucc.ie/d/Ireland_politics_and_administration_1815ndash1870. 23/04/2010 ,12:10pm; Daniel O'Connell and Catholic Emancipation:

http://www.irishhistorylinks.net/History_Links/Catholic_Emanicipation.html. 11/01/2010, 08:20 am.

Further details are giving in: E mily Lawless, Op.Cit., pp.367-373.

¹⁵Karl S. Bottigheimer, *Ireland and the Irish: A Short History*, New York 1982, p.158; Paul F. State, Op. Cit., p.175; Patrick M. Geoghegan, *King Dan: The Rise of Daniel O'Connell 1775-1829*, Dublin 2008, p.86; Paul F. State, Op. Cit., p.175; John O'Beirne Ranelagh, *A short History of Ireland*, Cambridge 1983, p.95; T.W Moody and F. X. Martin, Op. Cit., p.205; Daniel O'Connell and Catholic Emancipation:

http://www.irishhistorylinks.net/History_Links/Catholic_Emanicipation.html. 11/01/2010, 08:20am

¹⁶Paul F. State, Op.Cit., p.166; Lawrence J. McCaffrey, Op.Cit., p.16.

early 19th century would lead these same conservative Catholic middle classes and their clergymen supporters to change their attitudes.¹⁷

The Parliament of Ireland was founded in the thirteenth century as the supreme legislative body of the lordship of Ireland. It consisted of the King of Ireland, who was the same person as the King of England, a House of the Lords and a House of Commons. Constitutionally, it was necessary for the Act of Union to be passed by both the British and Irish parliaments before it could become law. In 1799, the British Parliament approved the principle of Union with Ireland, but a majority of the Irish House of Commons remained either opposed or uncommitted on the subject. A year later, after strong debate in Ireland, considerable pressure from the British government, and a generous application of funds and Crown patronage, the Irish Parliament by a narrow majority finally agreed to its own abolition after the government practicing several methods to persuade Irish MPs to agree to the Union. Among these methods in addition to use the threats and bribery, were promises given to Catholics by giving them all rights that they required as soon as the union between Ireland and England. The government succeeded through these methods to win the support of some Irish leaders—as we pointed out—such as the Archbishop of Dublin, and they has made the greatest success, thanks to the Majority of British supporters who were in Irish Parliament. This majority forced the Parliament to vote in favour of the Union Law, which won ratification in English Parliament in Westminster, where, the Parliament resolution was provided on the first of August 1800 and led to annexation of Ireland with Britain and formed the real union between these two countries.¹⁸

The Union decree entered into force on the first of January 1801, and under this decree cancelled the old Irish Parliament, and came with it the creation of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland. Thus, the British government replaced the Irish Parliament, representation of Irish at Westminster where Ireland had the right to send 100 members to the House of Commons out of 658 members and thirty-two places in the House of Lords (four bishops and twenty-eight lay peers), and these became representatives of the Irish in the English Parliament, however their representation was only symbolic. In addition to that under the Union decree, both

¹⁷Paul F. State, *Op.Cit.*, p.166; Richard B. Finnegan, *Op.Cit.*, p.15; James Lydon, *The Making of Ireland: From Ancient Times to the Present*, London 1998, p.282; Daniel O'Connell and Catholic Emancipation: http://www.irishhistorylinks.net/History_Links/Catholic_Emanicipation.html. 11/01/2010, 08: 20am.

¹⁸P.R: R.S.C, Second Report from the Committee on orders respecting Ireland, 1801, p.3; Lawrence J. McCaffrey, *The Irish Diaspora in America*, London 1976, p.29; Patrick M. Geoghegan, *Op.Cit.*, p.86; Lawrence J. McCaffrey, *The Irish Question*, p.16; Karl S. Bottigheimer, *Op.Cit.*, p.158; John O'Beirne Ranelagh, *Op.Cit.*, p.95; T. W Moody and F.X. Martin, *Op.Cit.*, p.204; Emily Lawless, *Op.Cit.*, pp.371-376; House of Lords Commons, "The London Chronicle" From Thursday, February 13, to Saturday, February 15, 1800, Vol.87: <http://www.yale.edu/glc/archive/918.htmIrish>. 05/02/2010, 10:22 am; The Act of Union: <http://www.actofunion.ac.uk/actofunion.htm>. 24/08/2010, 11:15pm; Daniel O'Connell and Catholic Emancipation: http://www.irishhistorylinks.net/History_Links/Catholic_Emanicipation.html. 11/01/2010, 08: 20am.

churches of England and Ireland were united,¹⁹ where, the fifth article of Union stated that “the Churches of England and Ireland, as now by Law established, be united into One Protestant Episcopal Church, to be called, the united church of England and Ireland and that the doctrine, Worship, Discipline, and Government of the said United Church shall be, and shall remain in full force for ever, as the same are now by Law established for the Church of England; and that the Continuance and Preservation of the said United Church, as the Established Church of England and Ireland, shall be deemed and taken to be an essential and fundamental Part of the Union.”²⁰ Moreover, free trade was enacted between the countries with certain qualifications. Thus Ireland and Britain were united legislatively, and then Ireland lost its own parliament and a viceroy who was appointed in Ireland and hold the title Lord (Lieutenant) who resided in Dublin.²¹

Therefore, one can notice that the so-called Parliamentary representation to which Ireland was given did not meet the respective purpose, because Ireland had not any real representation in the United Kingdom Parliament. That was insured by the fact that most members of the Irish representation were English, not Irish. So the legislative and executive authorities remained under the control of the English themselves. Furthermore, there was not any kind of political protection which could immune the Irish from a total English control, because there was a secretary of Irish affairs in the English Ministry on one hand, and the linkage of the church and the army in Ireland to the English laws on other hand.²²

Thus, throughout the nineteenth century law-and-order mandates show, from a British perspective, that Ireland was more a colony than an integral part of the United Kingdom. To curb agrarian violence and to prevent insurrection the Westminster Parliament frequently passed coercion bills that temporarily suspended the British Constitution in Ireland by suspending habeas corpus, imposing curfews, and allowing arms searches campaigns. As Irish chief secretary (1812-18), and later

¹⁹William J. O'Neill Daunt, *Personal Recollections of the late Daniel O'Connell*, Vol. 1, London 1848, p.203; James Lydon, *Op.Cit.*, p.278; T.A. Jackson, *Ireland Her Own*, London 1973, p.188; Patrick M. Geoghegan, *Op.Cit.*, p.93; R. F. Foster, *The Oxford Illustrated History of Ireland*, New York 1989, p.184; Karl S. Bottigheimer, *Op. Cit.*, pp.168 – 169; T. W Moody F. X. Martin, *Op.Cit.*, p.204; Lawrence J. McCaffrey, *The Irish Diaspora in America*, p.30; Lawrence J. McCaffrey, *The Irish Question*, p.17; The Act of Union: <http://www.actofunion.ac.uk/actofunion.htm>. 24/08/2010,11:15 pm; House of Lords Commons, "The London Chronicle" From Thursday, February 13, to Saturday, February 15, 1800 Vol.87: <http://www.yale.edu/glc/archive/918.htmlIrish>. 05/02/2010,10:22am; Daniel O'Connell and Catholic Emancipation; <http://www.irishhistorylinks.net/History Links/Catholic Emancipation.html>. 11/01/2010, 08: 20 am.

²⁰Quoted in: P.R: E.S.I, 1867-68(169) Fifth article of the act for the union of Great Britain and Ireland, 1800, p.1.

²¹Karl S. Bottigheimer, *Op.Cit.*, p.169. See: House of Lords Commons, "The London Chronicle" From Thursday, February 13, to Saturday, February 15, 1800, Vol. 87: <http://www.yale.edu/glc/archive/918.htmlIrish>. 05/02/2010, 10:22 am.

²²Karl S. Bottigheimer, *Op.Cit.*, p.168; Paul F. State, *Op.Cit.*, p.164; Daniel O'Connell and Catholic Emancipation: <http://www.irishhistorylinks.net/History Links/Catholic Emancipation.html>. 11/01/2010, 08: 20 am.

as British home secretary, Sir Robert Peel (1788–1850),²³ formed police forces on both islands. Policemen in Britain functioned quite differently from those in Ireland. In England, Scotland and Wales, constables served and protected their communities. In Ireland they not only prevented and punished crime and disorder, but they also acted as a security force sustaining British rule.²⁴

1.1.3 Ireland after the Union and the emergence of O'Connell

The Dublin Parliament held its last session on 2 August 1800. On 28 January 1801, Irish representatives took their places at Westminster. Now, as Ireland was part of the United Kingdom, the Irish Question took centre stage in British politics. After the Union Act issuing, the United Kingdom intensified rather than diminished ethnic and cultural tensions between Anglo-Saxon Protestants and Irish Catholics. For that the United Kingdom Parliament fulfilled the pessimistic prophecy of anti-Union Anglo-Irish patriots, it governed the two islands in the interests of industrial Britain and at the expense of agrarian Ireland.²⁵

While the Act of Union was not responsible for the social, religious, economic, or even all of the political dimensions of the Irish Question, it complicated an already difficult situation, and religion was the most obvious area of tension in Irish society. Due to the opposition of the king George III, the House of Lords, and the British public, Pitt could not keep his promise to emancipate Catholics. That is, when Pitt attempted to keep his pledge of civil right to the leaders of Catholic Ireland, George III flew into a rage, he pointed out that he would never violate coronation oath or Protestant conscience by consenting to equal citizenship for papists,²⁶ and declared: "I shall reckon any man my personal enemy who proposes any such measure."²⁷ So, opposition from the king and from British ministers, proved too strong, and the Pitt's plan was dropped. Pitt, who was convinced that emancipation was essential to ensure the success of the Union, resigned on 3 February 1801. Over the next couple of

²³ For more details about Robert Peel: See: W. Cooke Taylor, *Life and times of Sir Robert Peel*, Vol. III, London 1848; Justin McCarthy, *Sir Robert Peel*, New York 1891, pp.1-12; Francis Charles Montague, *Life of Sir Robert Peel*, London 1888, pp.1-12; J. R. Thursfield, *Peel*, London 1891, pp.1-17;

²⁴ Lawrence J. McCaffrey, *The Irish Question*, p.17.

²⁵ Ibid, p.17; Lawrence J. McCaffrey, *The Irish Diaspora in America*, p. 30; Emily Lawless, Op.Cit., pp.377-379.

²⁶ Lawrence J. McCaffrey, *The Irish Question*, p.17; Lawrence J. McCaffrey, *The Irish Diaspora in America*, p. 31; Karl S. Bottigheimer, Op.Cit., p.158; Paul F. State, Op.Cit., p.176; Richard B. Finnegan, Op.Cit., p.18; James Lydon, Op.Cit., p.278; John O'Beirne Ranelagh, Op.Cit., p.95; T.W Moody and F.X. Martin, Op. Cit., pp.205-206; Daniel O'Connell and Catholic Emancipation: http://www.irishhistorylinks.net/History_Links/Catholic_Emanicipation.html. 11/01/2010, 08:20 am; The Act of Union: <http://www.actofunion.ac.uk/actofunion.htm>. 24/08/2010, 11:15pm.

²⁷ Quoted in: The Act of Union: <http://www.actofunion.ac.uk/actofunion.htm>. 24/08/2010, 11:15pm.

decades resolutions and bills in favour of emancipation were debated at Westminster but failed to gain sufficient support.²⁸

Hopes were raised again in August 1821 when King George IV visited Ireland, suggested that the country's problems should be taken seriously, but George IV has the same hostility of his father towards Catholic Emancipation and his determination to preserve the remnants of the Penal Laws the previously mentioned. Also the politicians in Westminster showed no interest in considering Catholic claims. So, expectations of change among Irish Catholics decreased, especially after the British government's announcement which states that Catholic should swear an oath denouncing their religion as false and idolatrous, or they would be kept away from holding high offices.²⁹

While the Union failed to achieve harmony in Ireland for a number of reasons, the religion issue was the most important factor. When Britain politicians refused to concede Catholic emancipation as a package deal with the union, they sealed the doom of the United Kingdom. Since the Irish-Catholic majority entered the new constitutional arrangement as far less than first-class citizens, it became impossible for them to develop British loyalties like Scottish or Welsh Protestants, where, the Irish majority entered the Union as second-class citizens. In addition, they were taxed to support the established church, which ministered to the spiritual needs of only about 13 percent of Ireland's people. The Protestant minority not only enjoyed a favored religious position but also owned most of the property in the country and occupied a monopoly of Irish seats in Parliament and positions in government. Thus, throughout the nineteenth century Protestants in Ireland had allied with the English government against the Catholic Irish, therefore any potential possibility to establish a united Irish country had disappeared when most of the Irish people who are Catholics stood on one side, and those of the North West provinces who are Protestants stood on the other side. As a result of that, the Catholic church had immediately gather to join its forces, to be ready for the struggle against the British control after the Irish Catholics became confident that the English would refuse, with no doubt, any demands they may request to get their freedom and their rights. Thus, clear nationalist development took place among the Catholic bishops and Irish Nationalism emerged from the failure of the union to confirm Catholic civil rights and alleviate Irish poverty.³⁰

The debate surrounding the Act of Union gave rise to great outpouring of pamphlets, speeches and poems injecting lively to Irish written arts. Ireland's Legislative Union with Great Britain created a new context in which they considered

²⁸T.W Moody and F.X. Martin, *Op.Cit.*, pp.205-206; The Act of Union:
<http://www.actofunion.ac.uk/actofunion.htm>. 24/ 08/ 2010, 11:15pm.

²⁹P.R, A bill to abolish the Catholic oath as a qualification for voters at elections in Ireland, 1843[255], pp.1-2; Paul F. State, *Op.Cit.*, p.176; John O'Beirne Ranelagh, *Op.Cit.*, p.97; Lawrence J. McCaffrey, *The Irish Diaspora in America*, pp.31.

³⁰Lawrence J. McCaffrey, *The Irish Diaspora in America*, pp.31-32; Lawrence J. McCaffrey, *The Irish Question*, p.18.

the idea of a separate Irish nation. And in the first half of the nineteenth century, three men—Robert Emmet, Daniel O’Connell and Thomas Osborne Davis—respectively represented the myth, reality, and ideology of the Irish struggle for freedom.³¹

Emmet a Protestant patriot tried to keep the spirit of Republican Democracy alive in post-union Ireland when he led an abortive insurrection of United Irishmen in Dublin in 23 July 1803, to take over Dublin castle. But that was a revolution that he planned, degenerated into a Dublin street brawl, and he was arrested under the conviction of treason and sentenced to death in the same year. Before receiving the death sentence, Emmet made a speech from the dock that transformed a pathetic failure of a revolution into a glorious legend. He defended his revolutionary nationalism, condemned Britain oppression, and called on future generations of Irishmen to take up his burden. The imagination of the Irish masses was captured by his youth, idealism, zeal and oratory. Emmet’s portrait was enshrined in many Irish homes, parents memorized his speech from the dock and recited it to their children. Many fathers and mothers, particularly in Irish–American communities named their sons “Report Emmet” or just “Emmet”.³² Moreover, the attempted rebellion of Emmet was a continuing inspiration for nationalist balladeers, set the tone of rhetoric which claimed the right of Ireland to “take her place among the nations of the earth.”³³ Thus, his speech has become a classic expression of Irish nationalism. After Emmett’s rebellion, Ireland was ruled under martial law, and harsh laws dominated most of annual legislations concerning Ireland. But Irish politics and Anglo-Irish relations had been transformed by a brilliant Irish Catholic barrister, Daniel O’Connell.³⁴

O’Connell was born on 6th of august in 1775, country Kerry, to a once – wealthy Roman Catholic family. He was adopted by his wealthy bachelor uncle Maurice who took, in a great measure, the charge of their education upon himself. In 1791 he sent to the Irish college at Lige and to St. Omer’s. In 1792, he left St Omer, arriving at Douai in France to finish his education. But at Douai his stay was short, for owing to the French Revolution. So, he returned to Ireland in 1793. In 1794 he became a law student at Lincoln’s Inn in London and two years later transferred to the King’s Inn in Dublin, till the time he qualified as a lawyer in 1798. On 19 May in this year he called to the Irish bar, and became one of the most successful junior counsels in Ireland. Thus, he was one of the first Catholics allowed to practice law under the terms of a Catholic Relief Act in 1793 which allowed Irish Catholics to enter the professions.³⁵ In the context of European history, is regarded as the most

³¹ Paul F. State, *Op.Cit.*, p.171; Lawrence J. McCaffrey, *The Irish Diaspora in America*, p. 32.

³² Lawrence J. McCaffrey, *The Irish Diaspora in America*, pp. 32-33; William J. O’Neill Daunt, *Personal Recollections of the late Daniel O’Connell*, Vol. 2, London 1848, p.99; John O’Beirne Ranelagh, *Op.Cit.*, pp. 94-95; James Lydon, *Op.Cit.*, pp.278-280; Patrick M. Geoghegan, *Op.Cit.*, p.99; Karl S. Bottgheimer, *Op.Cit.*, p.169; T. A. Jackson, *Op.Cit.*, pp.192-193.

³³ Quoted in: John O’Beirne Ranelagh, *Op.Cit.*, p.94; R. F. Foster, *Op.Cit.*, p.148; James Lydon, *Op.Cit.*, p.280.

³⁴ John O’Beirne Ranelagh, *Op.Cit.*, pp. 94-95.

³⁵ Further details are giving in: John O’Connell (ed), *The life and speeches of Daniel O’Connell M.P.*, Vol. 1, Dublin 1846, p.p1-8,12; W. J. Fitzpatrick (ed), *Correspondence of Daniel O’Connell :The Liberator*, Vol. 1,

important and prominent politician among the subsequent adherents of what is classified as political Catholicism. At the same time he organized part of the Irish nation in a democratic mass campaign directed against the policy of the British government. O'Connell controlled the political life in Ireland during the first 50 years of the 19th century, to an extent that probably unmatched by any other figure at any other period in the modern Irish history. So some people call this period "the age of Daniel O'Connell",³⁶ especially after Daniel led calling in Ireland to obtain national rights by peaceful ways, which had effect in rise of the Irish Nationalism.

1.1.3.1 The Rise Irish Nationalism

As Ireland became part of the United Kingdom it had a small Catholic gentry and an expanding Catholic middle class, the product of the early Penal period when Catholics, denied property purchase, had to turn their energies and ambitions to commerce and the lower ranks of the professions. Although the position of the Catholic gentry and middle class had substantially improved in the course of the eighteenth century, they were still frustrated by remaining Penal Laws, which denied them a significant role in directing Irish affairs. They agitated for relief legislation that would permit them to sit in the House of Commons and the House of Lords, hold government office, advance in the professions, and win social prestige in the Irish community. In their agitation for political rights, they had little contact with or concern for the lower classes, comprising the overwhelming majority of the Catholic population.³⁷

During the 19th century, Ireland suffered from many economic and social problems, which will explain later. Although Whigs and Radicals were willing to give the Irish a greater share in shaping their destiny through a political reform and were sympathetic to equality between Catholics and Protestants, laissez-faire dogmatism, so important in their circles, opposed suggested government public works or emigration projects. While some people on the left were prepared to consider alterations in Irish economic and social structures, Tories were adamant in opposing any concessions that might diminish Protestant Ascendancy. They considered

New York 1888, p.p. 1, 5; M. R. O'Connell (ed), *The Correspondence of Daniel O'Connell*, Vol.1, (Daniel O'Connell to Hunting Cap, 14 September 1792), Dublin 1972, p.3; Richard Killeen, *The Concise History of Modern Ireland*, Dublin 2006, p.37; Patrick M. Geoghegan, *Op.Cit.*, pp.13-53; John O'Beirne Ranelagh, *Op.Cit.*, p.96.

³⁶Angela Mickley, Daniel O'Connell and Nonviolence, pamphlet from the Dawn magazine, Nonviolence in Irish History (Nos. 38-39), April 1978, p.p. 6, 9; Lawrence J. McCaffrey, *The Irish Question*, p.21; Paul F. State, *Op.Cit.*, p.163; T.W Moody F. X. Martin, *Op.Cit.*, p. 204.

See: Lawrence J. McCaffrey, *The Irish Diaspora in America*, pp. 34-35; Richard B. Finnegan, *Op.Cit.*, p.18; James Lydon, *Op.Cit.*, p.283; John O'Connell, *The Life and Speeches of Daniel O'Connell M.P.*, Vol. 2, Dublin 1846, pp. 302-306; John O'Beirne Ranelagh, *Op.Cit.*, pp. 91-98; Daniel O'Connell: <http://www.spartacus.schodnet.co.uk/PROconnell.htm>. 22 /03/2010, 08: 40 am.

³⁷ See: Emily Lawless, *Op.Cit.*, p.379; Lawrence J. McCaffrey, *The Irish Question*, p.18.

criticisms of the privileged position of the Protestant Church and the Protestant aristocracy and gentry as an assault on property rights. They were convinced that Catholic Emancipation would encourage Irish agitation and nationalism and open the door to further demands for reform. Also they thought that radical change in Ireland would endanger the Union and ultimately the empire, and inspire assaults on the British status quo.³⁸

In Ireland, the Catholic Committee, representing the upper social and economic levels of the Catholic community, conducted the campaign for Emancipation. Before it could prevail upon Whigs and Radicals to translate good intentions into a specific policy that would defeat Tory obstinacy, the Committee, had to mobilise the peasant majority and clergy behind Emancipation. This was a difficult task because members of the Catholic upper and middle classes had little contact with or respect for the rural proletariat, and tenant farmers and agricultural laborers, oppressed by political and economic systems, were poor materials for a successful agitation.³⁹

Catholic Ireland needed a leader possessing the genius to unite and lift the spirits of its demoralized and depressed people, and to give them the hope and confidence necessary for effective political action. Daniel O'Connell, the architect of modern Irish political nationalism, answered this need as no other Irish leader has had as much local or international significance. He translated democratic theory into successful practice by mobilizing millions of illiterate Irish peasants into a disciplined, organized national force that by using it as a weapon, he compelled a powerful, aristocratic British government to make concessions to Irish-Catholic demands. So, it can say that if Emmet contributed to the inspirational myths and legends of Irish nationalism, Daniel O'Connell created its reality and he was considered by many to be the greatest figure in the Irish freedom effort. Intellectually, O'Connell was a philosophical radical, and his nationalism was extension of a liberal concern for human rights. He turned his energy to harnessing emancipation and the Church to the great motive force of Irish nationalism.⁴⁰

O'Connell was fully committed to religious tolerance, freedom of conscience, democracy and the separation of church and state. In Ireland O'Connell developed a reputation for his Radical political views. He was involved with the united Irishmen, a group that had been inspired by the French Revolution. The 1798 insurrection and the terrible massacre that followed it confirmed his horror of violence, and by considering violence negative, destructive and antagonistic to Irish freedom, he rejected revolutionary tactics, arguing that the peasant masses could not compete on the battlefield against the discipline and weapons of British soldiers. For him, revolution in Ireland meant the destruction of property, the loss of lives and the expansion of tyranny, pointing to the abortive rebellion of 1798 and 1803 to prove his thesis, insisting that organized public opinion could work as the most effective instrument of

³⁸ Lawrence J. McCaffrey, *The Irish Question*, pp. 20-21.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 21.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, pp.21-22; Lawrence J. McCaffrey, *The Irish Diaspora in America*, p.34; John O'Beirne Ranelagh, *Op.Cit.*, p.97.

Irish freedom and reform, so, he decided to mobilize the Irish masses for political action, using Catholic civil rights or (emancipation) as the issue to stimulate energy and enthusiasm.⁴¹

By 1815 he was acknowledged as the leader of the Catholic Emancipation movement. O'Connell used courtroom settings to propagate his political convictions, where in addressing juries, he often criticized British rule in Ireland, and appealed for Catholic civil rights. When O'Connell entered politics, Catholic Emancipation was the important issue, however leadership of the Catholic Committee was in the hands of a small Catholic aristocracy and gentry with the support of a larger but just as moderate middle class. At Westminster, Henry Grattan, hero of 1780s Anglo-Irish patriotism and a opponent to the Act of Union, commanded the parliamentary advocates of Catholic civil rights. The cause attracted most Whig and a few Tory MPs, and on occasion could mobilize a parliamentary majority. In defying Irish-Catholic and parliamentary opinion, Tory administrations relied on George IV's Protestant conscience, the House of Lords, and anti-Catholic British opinion.⁴²

Catholic Emancipation had a chance of success: there was proposal that could promise an arrangement limiting the independence of the Catholic Church in Britain and Ireland. Tory leaders indicated a willingness to repeal political restrictions on Catholics in exchange for government input into and veto rights over Rome's selection of bishops for the United Kingdom. O'Connell strongly opposed the proposed Government veto on the appointment of Catholic bishops; he proclaimed that the zealous opposition to the notion of a veto was result of the hereditary hatred which seven centuries of oppression have inspired in the Irish mind. He confirmed his opposition by organizing public meetings,⁴³ and in one of the Catholic Aggregate Meeting on 29th August 1815, he confirmed in one of the resolutions of meeting, the right of Ireland in the freedom particularly religious freedom, saying: "we decided condemnation of any measure, giving to the crown, or the servants of the crown, any control whatsoever over the appointment of our bishops, inasmuch as any such measure must necessarily tend to destroy our religion, and also materially injure the civil rights and liberties of the people of Ireland, of all classes and denominations."⁴⁴

O'Connell joined a number of other Catholic laymen in opposing the veto and as a supporter of separation of church and state, he argued that government

⁴¹Patrick M. Geoghegan, *Op.Cit.*, pp.49-50; Richard B. Finnegan, *Op.Cit.*, p.18; James Lydon, *Op .Ci.*, p. 283; Lawrence J. McCaffrey, *The Irish Diaspora in America*, pp. 34-35; Angela Mickley, *Op. Cit.*, p.p. 6-7, 9; <http://www.spartacus.schodnet.co.uk/PROconnell.htm>. 22/03/2010,08:40am;

⁴²Patrick M. Geoghegan, *Op.Cit.*, pp.123-124; Emily Lawless, *Op.Cit.*, pp.379-380; Lawrence J. McCaffrey, *The Irish Question*, pp.23-24; John O'Beirne Ranelagh, *Op.Cit.*, p.97; Daniel O'Connell: <http://www.spartacus.schoolnet.co.uk/PROconnell.htm>. 22/03/2010, 08:40 am.

⁴³Lawrence J. McCaffrey, *The Irish Question*, pp. 23-24; James Lydon, *Op.Cit.*, p.p.282, 284 -285; W. J. Fitzpatrick, *Op.Cit.*, p.35; Daniel O'Connell: <http://www.spartacus.schoolnet.co.uk/PROconnell.htm>. 22 /03 /2010, 08:40am.

⁴⁴Quoted in: John O'Connell, *Select Speeches of Daniel O'Connell*, Dublin, 1867, p.18.

intervention in the affairs of the Catholic Church would be detrimental to both religion and politics. His main motive in resisting a Britain—Rome compromise was his commitment to Irish nationalism. O'Connell realized that the Emancipation issue could arouse and recruit Catholics in Ireland for nationality. So, if the government gained control over the nomination of bishops, it would use them as tools of British policy in Ireland. O'Connell knew that an indifferent or hostile hierarchy would stand in the way of an effective national movement. He reasoned that it would be better to postpone Catholic Emancipation if it meant the sacrifice of the most important institution in Ireland to British influence. He succeeded in rallying a considerable segment of hierarchical and clerical opinion against the veto. Thus, His efforts delayed Catholic Emancipation, but he enlisted bishops and priests for Irish nationalism.⁴⁵

He organized the first mass campaigns to effectively challenge the government system using peaceful means. He gave organizational focus to a newfound national pride among Ireland's majority population, one drawing on socioeconomic conditions as well as age old cultural traditions that spawned, in turn, a new movement—young Ireland—whose adherents supplied fresh ideas to advance Ireland's cause. O'Connell's long career was a packed and many-sided one, and we shall here be concerned with what were undoubtedly the two most important movements associated with it: the successful struggle for Catholic Emancipation in the 1820s, and the unsuccessful struggle for repeal of the union with Britain in the 1840s,⁴⁶ which formed central issues helped in rise the Irish nationalism.

1.1.3.2 Campaign for Catholic Emancipation

The strength and organization of the Catholic Church was the key to O'Connell's campaign for emancipation in the 1820s. So, his letters continued to the Catholic of Ireland in 1821 which describe the system of British rule in Ireland based on encouraging the conflicts and divisions and practice the hardest kinds injustice and insult to the Irish people. Also those letters were urging the Catholics to the need to achieve emancipation. He began a political movement for Catholic rights, strongly believing that Catholics should not be required to take oaths which insulted their religious beliefs before they could assume public office, sit in parliament, or hold governmental positions. He and his followers disliked the fact that the vast majority of Irish Catholics did not have the right to vote. However, the veto issue split Catholic ranks and for years the Emancipation Cause drifted. But as part of O'Connell's Campaign for Catholic Emancipation, he founded the Catholic Association in 1823 as prototype popular mass movement, this organization acted as a pressure group against the British government to achieve Emancipation. In 1824 O'Connell formulated the

⁴⁵ Lawrence J. McCaffrey, *The Irish Question*, p. 24.

⁴⁶ Paul F. State, *Op.Cit.*, p.163; T.W Moody and F.X. Martin, *Op.Cit.*, p.206.

strategy that made the Catholic Association the model for all popular agitations in Britain and Ireland during the nineteenth century.⁴⁷

There was an important difference between his association and previous attempts at Catholic organization. The association was not confined to a clique of well-to-do Catholics, other than it aimed at a mass membership, which was to be secured in two ways: Firstly, the association called in the aid of the Catholic clergy. The clergymen did not play a great role in the Catholic movement so far, but distributed as they were all over the country, knowing their people, and being trusted by them – they were splendidly placed to play the role of local leaders of the agitation. Secondly, and perhaps more important, the association inaugurated what was known as the 'Catholic rent'. This was a subscription of penny a month, donated by the Irish people and collected by the bishops, as that was so small contribution that even poor people could pay it. In 1824 association membership was opened to anyone who contributes a penny a month in dues, rate which brought membership within the reach of hundreds of thousands of Catholic.⁴⁸

The Catholic Association, established on so wide a popular basis, brought other elements within its sweep, including some of the aristocrats gave their names, and the Catholic priesthood gave their influence and assistance, but the biggest strength of the Catholic Association was that the Catholic Church helped in the collection of the Catholic Rent. Also Catholic priests held sermons in favour of Catholic emancipation, which meant that it was easy for the members to pay the Catholic Rent and it would attract more members as the message of Catholic emancipation was being spread throughout Ireland. So, even Sir Robert Peel believed the alliance of the Catholic Association and the Catholic Church was a "powerful

⁴⁷John O'Beirne Ranelagh, Op.Cit., pp.91-98; Angela Mickley, Op.Cit., p.8; John O'Connell, *The life and Speeches of Daniel O'Connell*, vol. 2, pp. 302-206; Lawrence J. McCaffrey, *The Irish Question*, pp.24-25; Newfoundland and Daniel O'Connell: <http://www.heritage.nf.ca/society/oconnell.html>. 16/02/2011, 05: 22 pm.

For more details about the Catholic Association see: John O'Connell, *The Select Speeches of Daniel O'Connell*, Vol. 1, p.208; John O'Connell (ed), *The Select Speeches of Daniel O'Connell*, Vol. 2, Dublin 1868, pp.189-224; Lawrence J. McCaffrey, *The Irish Question*, pp.24-25; Lawrence J. McCaffrey, *The Irish Diaspora in America*, p.37; W. J. Fitzpatrick, Op.Cit., p.88; R. F. Foster, Op.Cit., p.186; Richard B. Finnegan, Op.Cit., p.18; John O'Beirne Ranelagh, Op.Cit., p.98; T.W Moody and F.X. Martin, Op.Cit., p.206; Richard Killeen, Op.Cit., p.39; Angela Mickley, Op.Cit., pp.7-8; Ireland & O'Connell, A Pamphlet of Forty-Eight Large Pages, super-Royal Octavo, Closely printed, containing more than an ordinary 12volume, p. 28; <http://Illyria.com/Irish/irishven.html>.retrieved. 27/05/2010, 02: 30pm; Daniel O'Connell (1775-1847): <http://www.clarelibrary.ie/eolas/coclare/people/daniel.htm>. 30/05/2010, 09:50 am.

⁴⁸T.W Moody and F.X. Martin, Op.Cit., p.206; James Lydon, Op.Cit., p.285; Emily Lawless, Op.Cit., p.380; Angela Mickley, Op.Cit., pp.7-8; Lawrence J. McCaffrey, *The Irish Diaspora in America*, p.37; Paul F. State, Op.Cit., p.178; R. F. Foster, Op.Cit., p.186; Patrick M. Geoghegan, Op.Cit., p.202; John O'Beirne Ranelagh, Op.Cit., p.98; T. A. Jackson, Op.Cit., p. 211; Karl S. Bottigheimer, Op. Cit p.137; Richard Killeen, Op.Cit., p.40; Daniel O'Connell: <http://www.spartacus.schoolnet.co.uk/PROconnell.htm>.22/03/2010, 08: 40 am.

combination", because the Catholic Church became recruiting centres for the Emancipation agitation.⁴⁹

The response among the Irish population to O'Connell's campaign was staggering and unprecedented. O'Connell was rapidly accepted as a man of destiny, the long-awaited deliverer of Irish Catholics from the tyranny of British Protestantism. So, Irish nationalism was advanced through the demonstrated political impact of Catholics when they were united together in pursuit of a goal.⁵⁰

The association looked forward to use constitutional means to remove the remaining disabilities on Irish Catholic, the most important of which was the prohibition against sitting in Parliament, but from the beginning it was obvious that the Catholic Association was more than just a vehicle for Emancipation. While emancipation was a primary aim, it was intended that all Catholic grievances would be addressed, it mean let the grievances of the Catholics be heard in Parliament, these grievances were connected with everything, with regard to their connection with, the legislature, religion, commerce, farms and their families. So, the association embraced association other aims to better Irish Catholics, such as: electoral reform, reform of the church of Ireland, tenants' rights and economic development.⁵¹

O'Connell and his colleagues demanded a variety of reforms, including Repeal of the Union. British politicians recognized the danger to British rule in Ireland from a movement with such popular support and with such a vast income. In mass meetings O'Connell condemned violence and insisted that his followers should adopt constitutional methods to secure their civil liberties. In 1825 the association was suppressed by Act of Parliament, so, when the government outlawed the Catholic Association, O'Connell used his legal skill to reorganize and expand its activities. In meetings at the Dublin Corn Exchange, Association members protested tithes and demanded for public education, rights for tenant farmers, an expanded voting, the secret ballot, parliamentary reform and repeal of the Union. Irish newspapers paid more attention to Association proceedings than they did to Westminster debates. In fact, the Association had become an unofficial Irish-Catholic parliament. During the Catholic Emancipation agitation, O'Connell had expanded a Catholic into an Irish identity, and injected liberal-democratic principles into the bloodstream of Irish nationalism.⁵²

⁴⁹See: Ireland & O'Connell, p.30; Patrick M. Geoghegan, Op.Cit., pp. 202-203; James Lydon, Op.Cit.,p.285; John O'Beirne Ranelagh, Op.Cit., p.98; Angela Mickley, Op.Cit., pp.7-8; Lawrence J. McCaffrey, *The Irish Question*, p. 25; Daniel O'Connell and Catholic Emancipation: http://www.irishhistorylinks.net/History_Links/Catholic_Emancipation.html. 11/ 01/ 2010, 08:20 am.

⁵⁰Karl S. Bottigheimer, Op.Cit., p.173; Richard B. Finnegan, Op. Cit., p.19; Daniel O'Connell: <http://www.spartacus.schodnet.co.uk/Proconnell.htm>. 22/03/2010, 08:40am.

⁵¹Karl S. Bottigheimer, Op. Cit., p.173; Lawrence J. McCaffrey, *The Irish Question*, p.25; James Lydon, Op.Cit., p.285; Ireland &O'Connell, p.33; Russell Shortt, *Liberator of the People - Daniel O'Connell*: <http://ezinearticles.com/?Liberator-of-the-People---Daniel-OConnell>. 06/03/2010, 08:10 pm.

⁵²Lawrence J. McCaffrey, *The Irish Question*, pp.25-26; Emily Lawless, Op.Cit., p.380.

From 1826 the association began to use its wealth and influence in behalf of pro-emancipation candidates for Parliament. Victories in 1826 elated the Catholic Association, strengthened the confidence of Catholics, alarmed the Anglo-Irish Protestant Ascendancy and troubled the government. The years that followed 1826 were full of events of momentous importance to the United Kingdom, and for three years all other topics paled beside the struggle for Catholic Emancipation. No sooner was that won—and lost—than two new issues absorbed the attention of politicians: abolition of tithes and an Irish Poor Law. Both gave way before the campaign for parliamentary reform, which had the support of practically every faction in Ireland, though it yielded meager benefits there.⁵³

On 8 January 1828, Lord Goderich resigned as prime minister (1827-1828) and was succeeded by the Duke of Wellington with Robert Peel returning as home secretary.⁵⁴ Wellington appointed C.E. Vesey Fitzgerald, MP for Clare, to the presidency of the Board of Trade, forcing him to get his seat in a by election. Fitzgerald was a popular landlord and a supporter of Emancipation, but the Association decided to oppose him with a Catholic candidate. O'Connell reluctantly accepted the challenge, and got engaged in a direct struggle with the enemy, the government threw massive resources and energy into the contest, but O'Connell had the priests and the tenant farmers behind him, and together they easily defeated the government, Fitzgerald and Clare landlords. After O'Connell's victory in election to the British House of Commons for county Clare in 1828, Tories in British government—Peel and Wellington—began arguing for reform. They warned their conservative colleagues that there would be a civil war in Ireland unless the law was changed, so the election of O'Connell proved to the English public that the balance of power in Ireland had changed considerably. Even Sir Robert Peel declared in 1829 in his 'Memoirs' that the election of O'Connell for Clare proved the turning-point of the Catholic question.⁵⁵

⁵³Karl S. Bottigheimer, *Op.Cit.*, p.173; Emily Lawless, *Op.Cit.*, pp.380-381; James Lydon, *Op.Cit.*, pp. 286-287; T.W Moody and F.X. Martin, *Op.Cit.*, p.207; Lawrence J. McCaffrey, *The Irish Question*, p. 26; Daniel O'Connell: <http://www.spartacus.schodnet.co.uk/Proconnell.htm>.22/03/2010,08:40am; Daniel O'Connell and Catholic Emancipation:

<http://www.irishhistorylinks.net/History Links/Catholic Emancipation.html>. 11/01/2010, 08:20 am.

See: Patrick M. Geoghegan, *Op.Cit.*, pp.229-232.

⁵⁴Richard Lalor Sheil, *Sketches of the Irish Bar*, Vol. 2, New York 1854, p.9; Richard Lalor Sheil, *Sketches, legal and political*, Vol. 2, London 1855, p.102; Patrick M. Geoghegan, *Op.Cit.*, p. 249; T.W Moody and F.X. Martin, *Op.Cit.*, p. 209; Lawrence J. McCaffrey, *The Irish Question*, p.26.

For more details about Lord Goderich see: Frederick Robinson, Viscount Goderich (1782-1859):

<http://www.victorianweb.org/history/pms/goderich.html>. 29/08/2010, 10: 50 am; Goderich, first Viscount (1782–1859): <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/goderich-first-viscount-2103>. 08 /02/2014, 10: 10 am. For more details about Duke of Wellington see: Arthur Wellesley, 1st duke of Wellington:

<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/639392/Arthur-Wellesley-1st-duke-of-Wellington>. 29/08/2010, 11:10 am.

⁵⁵Robert Peel, *Memoirs by the r. h. Sir Robert Peel*, published by the trustees of his papers: Lord Mahon (now Earl Stanhope) and E. Cardwell. I, part I., The Roman Catholic Question, London 1856, pp. 104-106; W. J. Fitzpatrick, *Op.Cit.*, p.p.184-185,167; William John Fitzpatrick, *The Life, Times and Correspondence of the Right Rev. Dr. Doyle, Bishop of Kildare and Leighlin*, Vol. 2, Dublin 1861,pp.77-78; Lawrence J.

The opposition of the British government to the Catholic association and its campaign for Catholic emancipation was vigorous, and the hostility of George IV had long been an obstacle to the settlement of the Catholic question, but fearing rebellion, the government relented and Peel introduced his bill for Catholic emancipation in House of Commons on 10 March 1829, which the king George IV grudgingly signed. This act was ratified on 13 April 1829, and became law, that permitted Catholics to have the right of voting and electing to the Parliament and to hold all offices of state except those of regent, Lord Chancellor of England or Ireland and lord lieutenant of Ireland. So, one of the most important achievements of the catholic association were; the ratification of the catholic emancipation act and O'Connell's ability to sit in the British House of Commons in 1830 as leader of an Irish nationalist movement. It was a great victory for O'Connell and for the Catholic Association which he led it. Therefore O'Connell is known in Ireland as "the liberator" or the "great emancipator". This success made O'Connell the most prominent politician in Ireland of his generation and as a mythical figure in the minds of the great majority of the Irish people.⁵⁶

By conceding Catholic Emancipation, Peel and Wellington hoped to preserve law and order and the Union. They also intended to oppress the Irish nationalism by alleviating Irish-Catholic discontent, but Britain had delayed Catholic political rights too long, and only conceded them under force with humiliating strings attached. Instead of gratitude, Irish Catholics felt confidence in their united power, as emancipation encouraged them to use the power of mobilized and disciplined opinion to demand other changes, such as religious equality, security for tenant farmers, an expanded suffrage with a secret ballot and eventually, self-government. Thus, the agitation for Catholic Emancipation had fostered Irish nationalism, enhanced

McCaffrey, *The Irish Question*, pp.26-27; Emily Lawless, Op.Cit., pp.380-381; Patrick M. Geoghegan, Op.Cit., p.p. 261-262,269; T.W Moody and F.X. Martin, Op.Cit., p.p. 207,209; Paul F. State, Op.Cit., p.178; James Lydon, Op.Cit., pp.287-289; John O'Beirne Ranelagh, Op. Cit., p.98; Richard Killeen, Op.Cit., pp.14-24; Denny Hatch, Op.Cit., p.8; Angela Mickley, Op.Cit., p.8; Daniel O'Connell: <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/11200c.htm>. 17/07/2010, 11: 05pm; Daniel O'Connell: <http://www.spartacus.schodnet.co.uk/Proconnell.htm>. 22/03/2010,08:40am; Marjie Bloy, Daniel O'Connell : <http://www.victorianweb.org/history/oconnell.htm>.05/12/2010.10:10am; Daniel O'Connell and Catholic Emancipation:http://www.irishhistorylinks.net/History_Links/Catholic_Emanicipation.html.11/01/2010, 08:20 am.

⁵⁶M.R. O'Connell, *The Correspondence of Daniel O'Connell M.P.*, vol. 4, (Daniel O'Connell to Edward Dwyer,14 April 1829), Dublin, 1977, p.45; W. J. Fitzpatrick, *Correspondence of Daniel O'Connell*, p.p.172, 180; Emily Lawless, Op.Cit., pp.381-382;T.W Moody and F. X. Martian, Op.Cit., p.p.205-206,209-210; Lawrence J. McCaffrey, *The Irish Question*, pp. 26-28; Karl S. Bottigheimer, Op.Cit., p.174; Paul F. State, Op.Cit., p.p.177,179; John O'Beirne Ranelagh, Op.Cit., pp. 98-101; James Lydon, Op. Cit., p. 288; Lawrence J. McCaffrey, *The Irish Diaspora in America* , pp. 39-40; Denny Hatch, Op.Cit., p.8; R. F. Foster, Op.Cit., p.187; T.A. Jackson, Op.Cit., p.215; Daniel O'Connell (1775-1847): [http:// www.clarelibrary.ie/eolas/coclare/people/daniel.htm](http://www.clarelibrary.ie/eolas/coclare/people/daniel.htm). 30/05/2010, 09:50am; Daniel O'Connell and Catholic Emancipation: http://www.irishhistorylinks.net/History_Links/Catholic_Emanicipation.html. 11/01 / 2010, 08:20am; Russell Shortt, Liberator of the People - Daniel O'Connell: <http://ezinearticles.com/?Liberator-of-the-People---Daniel-OConnell>. 06/03/ 2010. 08.10pm.

O'Connell's position as leader of the Irish Catholic nation-in-waiting and launched a new era in Irish protest that would complicate British politics and alter British institutions.⁵⁷

While agitating for Catholic Emancipation, O'Connell constantly emphasized that the ultimate goal of his efforts was repealing of the union and restoration of the Irish Parliament. He had consistently adhered to his firm belief in non-sectarian politics, notwithstanding his own deep Catholic religious beliefs. So, he rejected a Catholic Ireland as an alternative to Protestant ascendancy, but the realities of the Irish situation forced him to link Catholic emancipation with Irish nationalism. He realized that most Protestants were committed to the union and that the future of Irish self-government depended on the activities of the oppressed Catholic majority. He knows that Catholic emancipation was the only issue that could overcome the torpor that pervaded the majority of community. As for Catholics, their religion was the symbol of Irish cultural identity, the only proud possession salvaged from humiliating historical experience. Nevertheless, there were some influential Catholics who opposed to combining Catholic and nationalist issues, since the Catholic Association was the result of modern Irish nationalism and served as the model for other constitutional reform movements all over the United Kingdom.⁵⁸

However, it is worth mentioning that the struggle for emancipation also had the effect of helping to make Irish nationalism more markedly Catholic and therefore sectarian in nature. As Alexis de Toqueville came to Ireland in 1835, he noticed that the Catholic bishops “were as much the leaders of a party as the representatives of a church.”⁵⁹ He found that the Clergymen and laymen were closely bound together by political as well as religious ties, so unfortunately, the rise of a Catholic peasant democracy with national aspirations heightened sectarianism in Ireland. Protestants worried about the permanence of their Ascendancy, and became more emotionally attached to the Union as their salvation. Even more than before, religion in Ireland symbolized cultural and political loyalties as well as faith and worship.⁶⁰

Although O'Connell served with energy and skill in the House of Commons, he had little confidence in the British Parliament as a means for Irish freedom and reform, so he was prepared to go to any lengths—even cooperation with British politicians—to achieve some improvement in the Irish condition. For twelve years after emancipation, O'Connell supported the English Liberal party, feeling that supporting this party was in Ireland's best interest. He thought that the Liberals were better than the Conservatives, and besides, he was able to win from them a little reforms for Ireland.⁶¹

⁵⁷Lawrence J. McCaffrey, *The Irish Question*, p. 29.

⁵⁸Lawrence J. McCaffrey, *The Irish Diaspora in America*, p.p.35-36,39; T.W Moody and F.X. Martin, *Op.Cit.*, p. 21; James Lydon, *Op.Cit.*, p.299; Angela Mickley, *Op.Cit.*, p.9 .

⁵⁹Quoted in: James Lydon, *Op. Cit.*, p.290; Lawrence J. McCaffrey, *The Irish Question*, p. 29.

⁶⁰James Lydon, *Op. Cit.*, p.290; Lawrence J. McCaffrey, *The Irish Question*, p.29.

⁶¹See: Lawrence J. McCaffrey, *The Irish Diaspora in America*, pp.40-42; W. J. Fitzpatrick, *Correspondence of Daniel O'Connell*, pp. 290-291; T.W Moody and F.X. Martin, *Op.Cit.*, p210.

The death of the king George IV in 1830 and the fall of the Wellington-Peel ministry opened the way for a number of Irish acts: national education in 1831, repeal of the subletting act in 1832, tithe reforms in 1832 and 1834, the creation of the Royal Irish Constabulary in 1835 and the investigation by parliamentary commissions of the state of the poor and of municipal corporations, both of which gave rise to important legislation a few years later. After 1832, tithes and the Poor Law again were the most prominent issues, but political activity was for the time more diffused. The alarms and excursions of the earlier six years had concealed from the view of all save those directly interested, a growth in the spirit and practice of emigration of greater significance for the future of Ireland than many of the political questions which were aroused during that time.⁶²

In 1835 O'Connell and his fellow Catholic MPs agreed to support Lord Melbourne and his Whig Government in return for significant Irish reforms, this was by a bargain known as the Lichfield House Compact in that year. While Lord Melbourne was Prime Minister the Tories, with their leader Sir Robert Peel, managed to restrict the social and economic reforms promised for Ireland, thanks to their control of the House of Lords. The tithe reform—a tax of 10% paid on crops and animals by all denominations for the upkeep of the established Church of Ireland—stood on a list of reform demands the Catholic across the socioeconomic spectrum resented compulsory payment of taxes to the church of Ireland, which counted only about one –tenth of the population among its members. The act of 1832 lifted the direct burden of tithes from year-to-year tenants and tenants at will, but its provisions for commutation of tithes unpaid in preceding years remained a source of irritation. The act of 1834 reduced all tithes by forty per cent, but by making landlords responsible for the collection of the remainder it had a most unfortunate effect in widening the breach between landlord and tenant. So, the legislative outcome was the Tithe-Rent Charge Act of 1838 which did not eliminate the exaction of tithes, but changed the manner of their collection.⁶³ However, the Whigs passed a Tithe Commutation Act (1838) and the Irish Municipal reform Act (1840), O'Connell thought this inadequate. He was also totally opposed to the passing of the Irish Poor Law Act, which will be explained later. When the Whigs refused to change it, he withdrew his support for the Government. As O'Connell and his fellow Catholic found out that there was no real hope of long-standing grievances being redressed in

⁶²William Adams, *Op.Cit.*, p.159; Emily Lawless, *Op.Cit.*, p.385.

⁶³ Denny Hatch, *Op.Cit.*, p.8; John O'Beirne Ranelagh, *Op.Cit.*, p.102; Paul F. State, *Op. Cit.*, p.179; Richard B. Finnegan, *Op.Cit.*, p.17; James Lydon, *Op.Cit.*, p.293; Karl S. Bottigheimer, *Op.Cit.*, p.193; William Adams, *Op.Cit.*, p.173; Londonderry Journal, Aug.12, 1834; Daniel O'Connell: http://www.multitext.ucc.ie/d/Daniel_OConnell.24/04/2010, 10: 15 pm; Daniel O'Connell and Catholic Emancipation: http://www.irishhistorylinks.net/History_Links/Catholic_Emanicipation.html, 11/01/2010, 08: 20 am; Daniel O'Connell: <http://www.spartacus.schoolnet.co.uk/PROconnell.htm>. 22/03/2010, 08:40 am. See: Ireland & O'Connell, pp. 44-45; W. J. Fitzpatrick, *Correspondence of Daniel O'Connell*, pp.275-277. For more details about William Lamb, Lord Melbourne see: Lord Melbourne (1779 - 1848): http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/historic_figures/melbourne_lord.shtml. 03/01/2011, 08:18pm; William Lamb, M. D., the 2nd Viscount Melbourne, 1779-1848: <http://www.victorianweb.org/history/pms/melbourne.html>. 03/01/2011, 09:00 pm.

an English parliament, they turned to agitate for a repeal of the union and a parliament of their own. A matter that had been regarded as the 'Catholic question' in England now became simply the 'Irish question'.⁶⁴

Thus we note that the Act of Union and the campaign for emancipation established much of the political framework of modern Ireland. Furthermore, the Campaign for Catholic Emancipation opened the way not only to Catholic participation in politics at the highest level, but also to more fundamental aspiration of repeal of the union.⁶⁵

1.1.3.3 Campaign for Repeal of the Union

The repeal of the union was one of the central issues of contention in the 19th century. It would be contested by resurgent Catholic nationalism that made its appearance early in the century. So, since the year 1800 and after the Act of Union entered into effect on the first of January 1801, O'Connell started Campaign for Repeal of the Union Act and called for independent Parliament in Dublin and the return to Ireland of the powers of government which had been transferred to Westminster in 1800.⁶⁶ He believed that an Irish Parliament would protect individual rights, elevate dignity of the Irish people, and promote the economic prosperity of their country. Though he admired British political theory and institutions, he doubted the possibility of complete Irish assimilation into the United Kingdom because "Britons and their Parliamentary representatives did not understand or respect Ireland or her people."⁶⁷ O'Connell's nationalism was more pragmatic than ideological, essentially pro-Irish rather than anti-British, while in contrast, young Irismen were enemies of all things British, insisting that their country must be a separate entity culturally as well as politically.⁶⁸ Moreover, the supports of some bishops for the Union help create an impression that Catholic Ireland was also in favour, so it was this impression that O'Connell and other anti-Unionists were determined to dispel. Hence O'Connell decided in 1840 to revive the popular agitation and began a vast campaign outside Parliament for repeal of the Union. Private meetings were held, the goal behind that was to create hatred against the union, show that not all Irish Catholics supported this measure and prove that Catholics were concerned with

⁶⁴John O'Beirne Ranelagh, Op.Cit., p.p.101,103; W. J. Fitzpatrick, *The Correspondence of Daniel O'Connell*, Vol. 1, p.p.229, 251-252,307; James Lydon, Op.Cit., p.291; Daniel O'Connell: http://multitext.ucc.ie/d/Daniel_OConnell.24/04/2010,10:15pm; Daniel O'Connell: <http://www.spartacus.schoolnet.co.uk/PROconnell.htm>. 22/03/2010, 08:40am; Daniel O'Connell (1775-1847): <http://www.clarelibrary.ie/eolas/coclare/people/daniel.htm>. 30/05/2010, 09:50am.

⁶⁵ Karl S. Bottigheimer, Op.Cit., p.175; James Lydon, Op.Cit., p.283.

⁶⁶Paul F. State, Op.Cit., p.163; James Lydon, Op.Cit., p.278; Patrick M. Geoghegan, Op.Cit., p.p.91,93; Karl S. Bottigheimer, Op.Cit.,p.181; W. J. Fitzpatrick, *Correspondence of Daniel O'Connell*, Vol. 1, p.17; John O'Connell, *The Life and Speeches of Daniel O'Connell*, Vol.1, pp. 20-25. Further details are giving in: John O'Connell, *The Select Speeches of Daniel O'Connell*, Vol.1, pp.15-24.

⁶⁷ Quoted in: Lawrence J. McCaffrey, *The Irish Diaspora in America*, p. 43.

⁶⁸ Ibid, pp. 43-44.

defending the Irish constitution. It was agreed to hold a public meeting at the Royal Exchange in Dublin.⁶⁹

O'Connell believed that the rights of Ireland could be gained by peaceful agitation, and he also emphasized the importance of popular participation. He had managed to depend on a major part of Irish people's sympathy and their patriotic sentiments, their personal admiration to him and the ratification programme which he promised to materialize once he get the Union Repeal, all these made the people gather round him. He began to organize the people the same way he adopted during the campaign of the Catholic emancipation. So, he established the National Repeal Association in 1840 which was managed the same way the Catholic Association was administered. Moreover, he began to collect money for repeal called it "Repeal Rent." He emphasized that the Repeal Association is a legal body because it disclaims any use of force or violence to achieve the Repeal of the Union Statute.⁷⁰

In 1841 the Liberals were defeated in the general election and the Conservatives returned to power under the leadership of Prime Minister Sir Robert Peel. And after O'Connell became the first Catholic Lord Mayor of Dublin in this year, he used the corporation as an opportunity to prove that Irishmen, and especially Catholics, were well capable of governing themselves. His term in office ended on 31 October 1842. After leaving the mayoralty O'Connell turned his attention to overhauling the organization of the repeal movement, and most of the Catholic bishops not only became members, but also an active supporters as well. On January 1843 O'Connell pledged that he would achieve repeal before the end of the year, and once again he suggested that if the Parliament did not take an action there would be possibility of a civil war. For the union repeal public meetings were held on wider frame than those of the Catholic association during the Catholic emancipation, therefore they were called Monster Meetings held all over the country, and when the Irish agitation reached its peak during 1843, more than 40 meetings of this kind had been held.⁷¹

⁶⁹Patrick. M. Geoghegan, *Op.Cit.*, pp. 86-87; Denny Hatch, *Op.Cit.*,p. 9; William J. O'Neill Daunt, *Correspondence of Daniel O'Connell: The Liberator*, Vol. 2, New York 1888, p.111.

⁷⁰Further details are giving in: William John Fitzpatrick, *Correspondence of Daniel O'Connell*, Vol.2, p.p.227-229, 247-250, 291-292; Emily Lawless, *Op.Cit.*, pp.385-386; James Lydon, *Op.Cit.*, p.292; T.W. Moody and F.X. Martin, *Op.Cit.*, pp.210-211; Paul F. State, *Op.Cit.*, p.180; Lawrence J. McCaffrey, *Op.Cit.*, pp.42-43; John O'Beirne Ranelagh , *Op.Cit.*, p.102; Marjie Bloy, *Daniel O'Connell*:
<http://www.victorianweb.org/history/oconnell.htm>. 05/12 /2010, 10: 10am; Daniel O'Connell:
<http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/11200c.htm>. 17/07 /2010, 11: 05pm.

⁷¹P.R, Return of all monies paid to Frederick Bond Hughes and other, on account of any communications made by them to government, relative to the repeal agitation in Ireland, &c, H.C,1844(157), pp.1-2; William John Fitzpatrick, *Correspondence of Daniel O'Connell*, Vol. 2, p.p.281, 292; Emily Lawless, *Op.Cit.*, p.386; T. W. Moody and F. X. Martin, *Op.Cit.*, pp. 210-211; James Lydon, *Op.Cit.*, pp.294-295; Paul F. State, *Op.Cit.*, pp.180-181; Denny Hatch, *Op.Cit.*,p. 9; T.A. Jackson, *Op.Cit.*, p. 232; "Liberation of O'Connell," *New York Herald*, Vol. 10. n, 273 whole n.3878, October 3, 1844; Karl S. Bottigheimer, *Op.Cit.*, p.182; Daniel O'Connell:
http://multitext.ucc.ie/d/Daniel_OConnell_24/04/2010, 10:15pm; Daniel O'Connell:
<http://www.spartacus.schoolnet.co.uk/PROconnell.htm>. 22/03/2010, 08:40am; Daniel O'Connell (1775-1847):

Through organizing these meetings O'Connell believed that showing the will of the Irish people would itself be enough to ensure a conversion of the British Parliament to repeal. So, accordingly he said: "The actual mode of carrying the repeal must be to augment the numbers of the Repeal Association, until it comprises four-fifths of the inhabitants of Ireland."⁷² In support of this claim, he could point to success in 1829, when Catholic emancipation had won by such means. However, his negotiating position was not that strong, because he seemed to have overlooked vital differences between the situation of 1829 and that of 1843. In 1829, as we have mentioned earlier, he already had much influential support on his side, for example, about half the House of Commons, and a substantial minority even in the House of Lords, were already convinced of the wisdom of emancipation. However, in 1843, the Parliament was almost solidly opposed to repeal, and not only the numbers of his opponents were much greater in 1843, but also so was their determination. Moreover, in the question of Catholic emancipation, as mentioned earlier, many of those politicians who disliked Catholic emancipation were prepared to withdraw their opposition rather than face a war in Ireland, but concerning question of repeal, they were ready to go further rather than yield, and this was confirmed by Prime Minister Peel on 9 May 1843.⁷³

So, the Repeal Campaign failed to fire the popular imagination, and the movement stayed alive it was the work of new young (the young Ireland movement), and more radical idealists associated with newspaper called "The Nation", which was first published in 1842 as an expression of Irish cultural nationalism. Its founders were Thomas Davis, whose nationalist writing would continue to inspire succeeding generations, John Blake Dillon and Charles Gavan Duffy. In the columns, editorials, essays and ballad poetry of the Nation, Duffy, Dillon, Davis and their associates encouraged the Irish people to be aware of their history, language and traditions. In addition to their own contributions, the editors encouraged readers to submit articles and creative literary efforts on Irish subjects.⁷⁴

When O'Connell finally realized that British politicians viewed Catholic Emancipation and repeal of the Union as completely separate issues deserving different reactions, he began to slow down the repeal agitation, pleading with his followers to obey the law and to avoid violence. The last and biggest of the monster meetings was scheduled to be held on 8 October 1843, at Clontarf, a Dublin suburb,

<http://www.clarelibrary.ie/eolas/coclare/people/daniel.htm>. 30/05/2010, 09 50 am.

⁷²Quoted in: T. W. Moody and F.X. Martin, Op.Cit., p.212.

⁷³See: Ibid, pp.213-214; Richard B. Finnegan, Op. Cit.,p.19; John O'Beirne Ranelagh,Op.Cit., pp.101-102; Daniel O'Connell:<http://www.spartacus.schodnet.co.uk/Proconnell.htm>,22/03/2010,08:40am; Daniel O'Connell (1775-1847): <http://www.clarelibrary.ie/eolas/coclare/people/daniel.htm>.30/05/2010,09:50am.

⁷⁴See: Karl S. Bottigheimer, Op.Cit., pp.181-182; Lawrence J. McCaffrey, *The Irish Diaspora in America*, pp. 43-44; T. W. Moody and F.X. Martin, Op.Cit., pp. 214-215; John O'Beirne Ranelagh, Op.Cit., pp.104-105; Paul F. State, Op.Cit., p.182; R. F. Foster, Op. Cit., pp.191-192; James Lydon, Op.Cit., pp. 296-298; Denny Hatch, Op.Cit., p. 9.

but the government banned it and O'Connell complied with the government's order and called off the meeting.⁷⁵ That was not the end of the repeal agitation, but O'Connell's retreat at Clontarf is generally, and rightly, seen as the turning point. For the government, by forbidding the meeting, even at the risk of provoking bloodshed, had proved "the falsity of O'Connell's basic assumption." "It was not true that what he called (the peaceable combination of a people) would necessarily prevail."⁷⁶

Despite the fact that O'Connell suggested that his followers should accept the meeting cancellation and obey the law, the British government arrested him along with some of his lieutenants On 16 January 1844, and prosecuted them on charges of instigation. The British government sentenced him and his lieutenants to year in prison and fine of 2000 pounds. On appeal, the law Lords reversed the decision, and the news of the reversal of the judgment on O'Connell and his companions was received in Dublin in the evening. The whole population was thrown into a state of indescribable excitement. "O'Connell is free," was uttered by thousands of voices, and after O'Connell left prison he continued with his campaign for repeal, but the turning point was already reached.⁷⁷

After the failure of repeal in 1843 which followed the failure of Monster Meetings, the Prime Minister Sir Robert Peel introduced a comprehensive program of reform in an effort to destroy nationalism. This strategy involved fragmenting the Irish nationalist movement into its component parts: priest, peasant, lawyer, merchant and shopkeeper and attempting to give each class an identity of its own that would supersede loyalty to any abstract Irish nation. He asked Rome to curtail the political activity of the clergy and promised that charitable bequests could be given to the church. But O'Connell blocked Peel's attempt to separate nationalism from its Catholic roots by frightening Irish nationalists with a warning that an alliance between

⁷⁵ Lawrence J. McCaffrey, *The Irish Diaspora in America*, pp. 45-46; Emily Lawless, Op.Cit., p.386; Seán McConville, *Irish Political Prisoners 1848-1922:Theatres of War*, London and New York 2003, pp.14-15; T. W. Moody and F.X. Martin, Op. Cit., p. 214; Paul F. State, Op.Cit., p.181; R. F. Foster, Op.Cit., p.189; John O'Beirne Ranelagh, Op.Cit., p.103; James Lydon, Op.Cit., p.295; Angela Mickley, Op.Cit., p. 6; Denny Hatch, Op.Cit., p. 9; Russell Shortt, *Liberator of the People - Daniel O'Connell*: <http://ezinearticles.com/?Liberator-of-the-People---Daniel-OConnell>. 06/ 03/ 2010, 08:10 pm.

⁷⁶Quoted in: T. W. Moody and F.X. Martin, Op.Cit., p 214; Paul F. State, Op.Cit., p.181; James Lydon, Op.Cit., p. 295; Russell Shortt, *Liberator of the People-Daniel O'Connell*: <http://ezinearticles.com/?Liberator-of-the-People---Daniel OConnell>. 06/03/2010, 08:10 pm.

⁷⁷P.R, Return of all monies paid to Frederick Bond Hughes and other, on account of any communications made by them to government, relative to the repeal agitation in Ireland, &c, H.C, 1844(157), p. 2; Emily Lawless, Op.Cit., p.387; Seán McConville , Op.Cit., p.45; John O'Beirne Ranelagh, Op.Cit., p. 103; James Lydon, Op. Cit., p. 295; Denny Hatch, Op.Cit., p. 9; "Liberation of O'Connell," *New York Herald*, Vol. 10. N. 273. Whole N. 3873, October 3, 1844; James Lydon, Op. Cit., pp.295-296; Daniel O'Connell: http://multitext.ucc.ie/d/Daniel_OConnell. 24/04/2010, 10:15 pm; Daniel O'Connell: <http://www.spartacus.schodnet.co.uk/Proconnell.htm>. 22/03/2010,08:40am; Daniel O'Connell (1775-1847): <http://www.clarelibrary.ie/eolas/coclare/people/daniel.htm>. 30/05/2010, 09:50am.

Britain and the Vatican would endanger the freedom cause by removing Catholic bishops and priests, the agents of the movement, from the centre of agitation.⁷⁸

But in 1843 after O'Connell's decision to cool passions in ranks of Irish nationalism, the relations between the old leader and his young Ireland allies rapidly deteriorated. He insisted that the young Ireland agree that association members must never advocate revolution for Ireland or leave the organization, so, he was attacked by the young Ireland movement and leading members began describing his tactics as ineffective. Hence, disputes broke out on the Repeal Association and the young Ireland left it in 1846, led by Smith O'Brien, John Mitchell and Charles Gavan Duffy. Furthermore, in January 1847 they organized the Irish confederation primarily to promote Irish cultural nationalism and harmony between Catholics and Protestants. The political language of the repeal movement utilized a militant view of Irish history which became increasingly important in the formation of Irish nationalist ideology. Though the confederation also was split by tactical and ideological quarrels.⁷⁹

During that time, O'Connell was almost seventy, his health failing and he had no clear plan for future action. There was discontent within Repeal Association and there was also some failure in the potato crop in the 1845's, a sign of things to come in the Great Famine of 1845-1847, which led to the fall of Peel's Government in the summer of 1846, (which will be explained later). Later, O'Connell died on 15th May 1847 in Genoa, Italy, when he was on a pilgrimage to Rome.⁸⁰

Finally, we should point out that the rhetoric of the nationalist argument from history together with the phenomenon O'Connellism and the advent of the priest in politics, helped in creating the terms of future Irish political mobilization. The peaceful power of mass public action had been shown to fail, but the power of an ideal would prove to prevail. The political consciousness of Irish Catholics of all

⁷⁸Lawrence J. McCaffrey, *The Irish Diaspora in America*, pp. 46-47; Richard B. Finnegan, *Op.Cit.*, pp.19-20; Ireland: politics and administration, 1815-1870:

http://multitext.ucc.ie/d/Ireland_politics_and_administration_1815ndash1870.23/04/2010,12:10pm.

⁷⁹ See: Seán McConville, *Op.Cit.*, pp.12-21; Lawrence J. McCaffrey, *The Irish Diaspora in America*, pp. 48-49; John O'Beirne Ranelagh, *Op.Cit.*, pp.103-107; William John Fitzpatrick, *Correspondence of Daniel O'Connell*, Vol.2, p.....; Emily Lawless, *Op.Cit.*, pp.390-391; Richard B. Finnegan, *Op.Cit.*, p.20; James Lydon, *Op.Cit.*, p.p.296, 300; T. W. Moody and F. X. Martin, *Op.Cit.*, pp. 215- 216; T.A. Jackson, *Op.Cit.*, p. 247; Daniel O'Connell: http://multitext.ucc.ie/d/Daniel_OConnell.24/04/2010,10:15pm; Daniel O'Connell: <http://www.spartacus.schodnet.co.uk/Proconnell.htm.22/03/2010,08:40am>; Marjie Bloy, Daniel O'Connell: <http://www.victorianweb.org/history/oconnell.html.05/12/2010,10:10am>.

⁸⁰Emily Lawless, *Op.Cit.*, p.p.388-389, 396; John O'Beirne Ranelagh, *Op.Cit.*, p.p.103-104; T. W. Moody and F.X. Martin, *Op.Cit.*, p 214; Daniel O'Connell (1775-1847):

<http://www.clarelibrary.ie/eolas/coclare/people/daniel.htm.30/05/2010,09:50am>; Daniel O'Connell:

<http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/11200c.htm.17/07/2010,11:05pm>; Daniel O'Connell and Catholic

Emancipation: http://www.irishhistorylinks.net/History_Links/Catholic_Emancipation.html.11/01/2010,08:20am.

classes had been awakened by O'Connell's Campaigns, both successful and unsuccessful, and they established a new patriotic association of activists intent on devising means, both pacific and martial, to win Irish rights to self-government as well as improving the economic and social conditions because the people of Ireland, after thirty years of the union, were experiencing many of fundamental social and economic changes.⁸¹ And although the Catholic Emancipation was a great achievement, but later, there was a growing disillusion with results. As one priest reported a parishioner saying: "we die of starvation just the same."⁸² The harsh reality was that for the vast majority of Catholics emancipation made no difference to their daily lives.⁸³

1.2 Changing Economy Conditions

1.2.1 The land question

There were the harsh facts of economic life among the Irish, and it has been rightly observed that no realistic view of Irish history can make much progress without relating social, political and even religious facts to the economic background. In Ireland, this background was very largely dominated by the question of land. So, some knowledge of the land question is indispensable, because the Irish economy was dominated by agriculture.⁸⁴

Contributing to the desperation of Irish Catholics during the middle of the nineteenth century was a series of penal laws —as we mentioned earlier—which had systematically deprived them of their land. The laws declared with regard to land, that Catholics could no longer own land that was not already in their family, nor could they lease land. And although a landowner could, when he died, pass land he already owned to his sons, the land had to be divided equally among them. As a result, as time passed Catholics owned smaller and smaller parcels of land. And since a Catholic who wished to sell his land could sell only to Protestants, gradually more and more land went from Catholic to Protestant ownership.⁸⁵ Under British law, one of the few

⁸¹R. F. Foster, *Op.Cit.*, p.191; Paul F. State, *Op.Cit.*, p.181; Philip H. Bagenal, *Op.Cit.*, p.7; John O'Beirne Ranelagh, *Op. Cit.*, p. 99.

⁸²Quoted in: James Lydon, *Op.Cit.*, p.290; John O'Beirne Ranelagh, *Op.Cit.*, p.99.

⁸³James Lydon, *Op.Cit.*, p.290.

⁸⁴Arnold Schrier, *Ireland and the American Emigration 1850-1900*, New York 1970, p.11; Andy Bielenberg, *Ireland and the Industrial Revolution: The impact of the industrial revolution on Irish industry, 1801-1922*, London 2009, p. 55.

⁸⁵Karen Price Hossell, *The Irish Americans*, San Diego 2003, p.12; Paul Bracey, *The Great Irish Hunger: Famine, eviction and emigration*, Study at Northampton University College, Northamptonshire, 2001, p.28; Thomas N. Brown, "Nationalism and the Irish Peasant, 1800–1848", *The Review of Politics*, Vol. 15, No. 4 (Oct., 1953), p.413; Paul F. State, *Op.Cit.*, p.169; P.J. Blessing, *Irish emigration to the United States 1800-1920: an overview*, in: P. J. Drudy, *The Irish in America: emigration, assimilation, and impact*, New York

occupations were still open to Irish Catholics in Ireland was farming. In the early years of the nineteenth century, agriculture the mainstay of the Irish economy was booming and supporting directly or indirectly no less than ninety percent of the population. So, the Irish economy was, above all, an agricultural producing for its own growing population and for the rapidly increasing British market.⁸⁶

From 1793 to 1815, Britain had been at war with France, which was a matter that affected strongly on the Irish economy, with an overall increase in prosperity, reflected by a vast increase in population. In turn, this had a marked effect on the use and ownership of land, not only there was increased concern about the possession of land, but because the supply of European agricultural produce was largely denied to the British Isles during the Napoleonic Wars, the value of Irish land and its produce increased dramatically, and Irish landlords and farmers fared well.⁸⁷

During these wars, the demand for grain, particularly wheat, had brought about a considerable increase in the total acreage under grain, and the rent of all lands that could be used for such purposes reached to unprecedented figures. The British needed Irish farm products, both for food and for making cloth, so, soon the Irish began raising wheat and flax for the British. At this time, most of what Irish farmers grew of these crops went to England, moreover, the land on which these crops were raised, due to the forth mentioned Penal Laws, were belong not to the Irish farmers who planted it but to the British landlords who owned it, as the Irish could only rent the land. Over time, the number of Irish who turned to farming increased, and plots of land available for rent became scarce. Thus, all the lands were owned by upper class, and almost all of it was leased or rented to the lower classes of farmers and cotters, very little being kept in possession. So, one consequence of the penal laws was that by

1985, p.16; William Forber Adams, *Ireland and Irish emigration to the New World from 1815 to the famine*, Baltimore 2004, p.4; PRONI, 19th Century Emigration to the North Americas , The homeland: http://www.proni.gov.uk/index/exhibitions_talks_and_events/19th_century_emigration_to_the_north_america_online/the-homeland.htm. 01/05/2011, 09:10am.

⁸⁶ PRONI, 19th Century Emigration to the North Americas, The Irish poor law: http://www.proni.gov.uk/index/exhibitions_talks_and_events/19th_century_emigration_to_the_north_america_online/helping_hands/the_irish_poor_law.htm. 01/05/2011, 09:10 am; Joel Mokyr and Cormac O. Grada, "Poor and getting poorer? Living standards in Ireland before the Famine," *The Economic History Review*, New Series, Vol. 41, No. 2 (May, 1988), p. 210; Timothy J. Paulson, *Op.Cit.*, p.28; William Forber Adams, *Op.Cit.*, p.6.

⁸⁷John O'Beirne Ranelagh, *Op.Cit.*, p.99; Éamon Ó Cuív, *An Gorta Mór – the impact and legacy of the Great Irish Famine*, Lecture delivered by Mr. Éamon Ó Cuív, TD, Minister for Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs, at St. Michael's College, University of Toronto, Canada, on Friday 8 May 2009, pp.3-4; Karl S. Bottigheimer, *Op.Cit.*, pp.159-160; PRONI, 19th Century Emigration to the North Americas, The Irish poor law: http://www.proni.gov.uk/index/exhibitions_talks_and_events/19th_century_emigration_to_the_north_america_online/helping_hands/the_irish_poor_law.htm. 01/05/2011, 09:10 am.

the early part of the nineteenth century Catholics owned only 7 percent of the land in Ireland, even though they made up more than 80 percent of the population.⁸⁸

A great depression followed the peace of 1815 and damaged the traditional ways of life in rural Ireland. The price of agricultural products fell, wheat prices, for instance, dropped by 50%. So, tenants were incapable of paying increased amounts for the rent of lands, and many landlords were forced to make reductions by twenty-five or even fifty per cent, and even they found it necessary to leave off overdue payments of earlier years. This caused a serious decrease in the income. Thus, some of the largest landlords found it difficult if not impossible to keep the luxurious style of living which, they were accustomed to during the prosperous years of the war. Some landlords preferred to retain the high rentals and resorted to extreme exactions in an effort to collect them. In 1816 and 1819, they secured new acts to facilitate evictions, and increase their powers to distrain, the usual methods of forcing the payment of rent. Also, when the estate rentals declined landlords wanted to rid themselves of tenants in order to convert the small farms and potato plots into pastures because the lands which during the wars had been converted from pasture to tillage, became after wars more profitable as pasture, and canny landlords soon realized that they would have a surer, and in the end a greater, income from lands let out for grazing. Such farms were of course much larger than tillage farms and reduced the number of tenants upon a property. This change, stimulated by a number of improvements in stock breeding, was particularly evident in Limerick, Tipperary and the border counties between Leinster and Ulster which before the war had been the great grazing centres of Ireland. The natural result of this effort to get from the land a greater income than it was capable of yielding was extreme hardship for all agricultural classes.⁸⁹

Moreover, despite the decrease in the marriage rate and the already substantial rate of emigration taking place, the population continued to grow, where, throughout the last decade of the eighteenth century, the population of Ireland increased to 4.8 million in 1791 and they continued to increase, growing from about 5 million in 1800 to 6,802,000 in 1821 and it jumped to 8,175,000 in 1841, and it did so in an agrarian-based economy. In this period, the majority of people gained a living through agriculture, especially, manufacturing was little developed, and Ireland did not develop any serious industry until later in the century. So that support for the growing

⁸⁸ARPLC, Poor inquiry, Report on the city of Dublin, and supplement containing answers to queries, with addenda to appendix (A.), and communications, H.C,1836[35][36][37][38][39][40][41][42],Part II, Appendix (C.),p.554; William Forber Adams, Op.Cit., p.p.6,10,39; Andy Bielenberg, Op.Cit., p.58; Timothy J. Paulson, Op.Cit., p.28; John O'Beirne Ranelagh, Op.Cit., p.100; Jay P. Dolan, Op.Cit., pp. 35; Karen Price Hossell, Op.Cit., pp. 12-15.

⁸⁹See: William Forber Adams, Op.Cit., pp.10-12; Jay P. Dolan, Op.Cit.,pp.35-36; Denny Hatch, Op.Cit., p.8; Lawrence J. McCaffrey, *Textures of Irish America*, New York 1992, p.12.

population had to come from the land, putting tremendous pressure on a static, inefficient land system.⁹⁰

In general, four groups or classes occupied the soil of Ireland and together formed a sort of social and economic pyramid. At the top were the landlords, below the landlords were the leaseholders, they were mainly Protestant, and held the land forever. Generally speaking leaseholders as a class did not engage in tillage and to a great extent were the occupiers of large grazing farms. Either under these leaseholders or directly under the landlords were usually one or more middlemen. That is, people who made their living by renting land themselves and then letting it out in smaller holdings on short leases or annual tenancies were motivated solely by a desire for quick profits.⁹¹

Taking advantage of land shortage, the British began to raise rents and taxes on their land. So, shortly most Irish farmers could not afford to live on large farms without renting out part of the land to someone else, thus, these subdivided farms were divided yet again, as subtenants took on their own tenants. Moreover, when food prices went up during the Napoleonic wars, leaseholders found it more profitable to sublet rather than to work the land, thus, between the landlord, living perhaps in Dublin or London, and the vast swarms of Peasantry working the land, there grew up a parasitic class of middlemen who sucked the blood of both. Middlemen were the most oppressive class of all and made as much money as they could at the expense of their subtenants. When the Parliament in 1793 gave the franchise to the forty-shilling freeholder, it furnished the landlord with an additional motive for indifference toward the evil of subletting because the vote of the tenant was assumed to be the property of the landlord. So, most estates were managed by an agent, or agents, and the actual business dealings between lord and tenant were few. Even resident landlords were to a great extent cut off from those who held under them.⁹²

The landlords have been almost universally blamed for the continuance of evil conditions in Ireland; but one reason for their inertia must have been the practical

⁹⁰P.P, Census of Ireland, General Reports, Abstract of the population of Ireland, according to the late census: 1813; 1821(36), H.C, pp.1-2; P.P, Census of Ireland, Abstracts of the census of Ireland. Taken in the years 1841 and 1851, H.C, 1851(673)[1400],pp.3-4; D.G. Boyce, *Nineteenth-Century Ireland, the search for stability*, Dublin 1990, p.6; Paul F. State, Op.Cit., p.183; Karl S. Bottigheimer, Op.Cit., p.177; Lawrence J. McCaffrey, *Textures of Irish America*, pp.10-11; Richard B. Finnegan, Op.Cit.,p.16; Andy Bielenberg, Op.Cit., p.p. 55,146; William Forber Adams, Op.Cit., p.p.4,8; Jay P. Dolan, Op.Cit.,p.36; S. H. Cousens, "Regional death rates in Ireland during the great famine, from 1846 to 1851", *Population Studies*, Vol.14, No.1 (July, 1960), p.55; Roger Daniels, *Coming to America: a history of immigration and ethnicity in American life*, New York 1990, p.133; P. J. Drudy, Op.Cit., p.16; Lawrence J. McCaffrey, *The Irish Diaspora in America*, p.54; Kerry A. Graves, Op.Cit., p.28.

⁹¹Arnold Schrier, Op.Cit., p.11; D.G. Boyce, Op.Cit., p. 6.

⁹²Timothy J. Paulson, Op.Cit., p.28; Thomas N. Brown, Op.Cit., pp. 412-413; William Forber Adams Op.Cit., p.p. 8, 24; Arnold Schrier, Op.Cit., p.11.

impossibility of getting a true view of the conditions on the land. The reports of agents were strongly colored by their own interests, and direct complaints from the farmers were so interlarded by servile expressions of loyalty and gratitude, especially during the years immediately after 1815, that the landlord might well have doubted the seriousness of the difficulties to which his attention was called, or the existence of any strong temper among his tenants to take strong action to bring about changes. On the other hand, over half of the landlords held their estates in entail and were no more than tenants for life. They could not sell without the consent of a mature eldest son, and in most cases could not raise money on the land for purposes of improvement, nor guarantee to a tenant the fruits of his improvements. The holdings themselves were often badly divided and in many cases subject to long-term agreements which could not be changed. The change in the whole agricultural situation brought about by the fall in the price of grain after 1815 caused these long leases and other restrictions to bear heavily on landlord as well as farmer. It is not surprising therefore that when opportunity presented itself at the expiration of a lease, the proprietor usually took advantage of it to consolidate his holdings and evict non-paying tenants. This was made comparatively easy by reason of the fact that rents were normally in arrears at least six months and in many places for two years, thus, most Irish landowners were resident and both they and their tenants disliked 'absentee landlords' who failed in their duties towards country and tenants.⁹³

Under the landlords, leaseholders, and middlemen came the tenants who were the most numerous class of all and formed the broad base of the pyramid. Although some landlords and leaseholders did their own farming, it was largely on the crops raised on tenant farms that the people of Ireland lived. Irish peasants would work the land in return for a small wage and also rent small plots of land—maybe a half-acre or acre—for their own use, in the process giving most of their wages back to the landowners. On this land, tenant farmers grew what they needed to feed themselves and their families, however those few tenant farmers who could afford to rent relatively large plots of perhaps a few acres would in turn rent smaller plots to poorer farmers. Under this system, some farmers barely grew enough on these tiny parcels of land to feed their families.⁹⁴

There were three classes of tenants: The annual tenants class, this was the typical "small farmer" class that settled mainly on lands valued at less than fifteen pounds per year, which comprised more than 50 percent of the total acreage under

⁹³William Forber Adams, Op.Cit., pp.9-10; Pre-Famine Ireland: Social Structure: <http://www.deskeen.com/4PrBiography.htm>. 27/02/ 2010, 08: 40 am.

⁹⁴Arnold Schrier, Op.Cit., p.11; Robert Whyte, *The ocean plague, or, A voyage to Quebec in an Irish emigrant vessel: embracing a quarantine at Grosse Isle in 184: with notes illustrative of the ship-pestilence of that fatal year*, Boston 1848, p.10; Karen Price Hossell, Op.Cit., pp.12-13.

cultivation. Next came the cottiers class who lived in poor cottages usually located on somebody else's land. They had cabin and very small land of their own (or no land). And generally rented a patch of conacre (that is, the land is let annually on an eleven-month tenure to the highest bidder) to grow a crop of potatoes or to pasture their flocks. Most cottiers had no leases and only rarely handled cash, instead, their employers deducted their wages. Cottier's lives teetered on the brink of destitution because their holdings were very small. It is notable, from 1815 to 1845, the cottier relied almost wholly upon his potato patch for survival, and his holding was rarely used for any other purpose than the planting of potatoes for himself, his family and his pig.⁹⁵

The agricultural laborers were at the very bottom of the pyramid, as they had no land at all but often they also rented a patch of conacre of potato ground perhaps in return for so many days labour or a share of the crop. Landless laborers and tiny smallholders constituted the poorest of poor, where, they lived in dire poverty and they made up about more than one-half of the rural population. These laborers, many of them single men leased only an acre or so of land and lived in shacks, under bridges, or simply slept in ditches. Some men did not lease any land and instead travelled throughout the countryside finding what work they could, and they were often paid with a meal or two a day and they slept in barns or out in the open.⁹⁶

Although cottiers did not own the land they lived on, their sons could inherit the right to lease that land. But just as was true of land owned by Catholics, the leased land had to be divided equally among a cottier's sons. Very quickly the land available for an individual family could not produce adequate quantity of food to feed a family, so gradually people were forced to leave their land just to survive. For those cottiers who managed to remain on the land, there were few choices of what crop to grow. Farmers had tried planting several kinds of crops on their rented parcels over the years, but the one that grew best in Ireland's rocky soil and damp climate was the

⁹⁵For more details about cottier see: ARPLC, Poor inquiry, Reports on the state of the poor and on the charitable institutions in some of the principal towns; with supplement containing answers to queries, Part I, H.C, 1836[35][36][37][38][39][40][41][42], Appendix(D.), pp.646-654 and part II, Appendix (C.), p.553; Arnold Schrier, Op.Cit., p.p.11-12; William Forber Adams, Op.Cit., pp.16-19; Paul F. State, Op.Cit., p.p.168-169; John O'Beirne Ranelagh, Op.Cit., p.100; Karen Price Hossell,Op.Cit., pp.13-14; Kerry A. Graves, Op.Cit., p.26.Pre-Famine Ireland: Social Structure: <http://www.deskeen.com/4PrBiography.htm>. 27/02/2010, 08:40am.

⁹⁶For more details about the agricultural laborers see: ARPLC, Poor inquiry, Reports on the state of the poor and on the charitable institutions in some of the principal towns; with supplement containing answers to queries, Part I, H.C, 1836[35][36][37][38][39][40][41][42],p.p578-579,664-677; Arnold Schrier,Op.Cit., p.12; Paul F. State, Op.Cit., p. 169; Karen Price Hossell, Op.Cit., p.13; K.P The Rt. Hon. Lord Dufferin, *Irish Emigration and The Tenure of Land in Ireland*, London 1867, p.37; Lawrence J. McCaffrey, *Textures of Irish America*,p.10; Kerry A. Graves, Op.Cit., p.26; Pre-Famine Ireland: Social Structure: <http://www.deskeen.com/4PrBiography.htm>. 27/02/ 2010, 08: 40am.

potato, as potatoes were filling and nutritious, and millions of Irish depended on them for survival. So, it can be noted that in the cottier's household, meat was more of a flavoring than an ingredient, the 900,000 or more families of cottiers ate potatoes almost exclusively, and 3 million people depended on potatoes after they added a few other items, such as fish, to their diets, but most Irish farmers ate about six to nine pounds of potatoes per person each day.⁹⁷

The land that the Irish spent most of their time farming, though, belonged to the English landlords, who looked to that land as a source of income. Some potatoes were grown on that land, but much of it was used to grow grain and raise livestock, and most of these crops were sold and exported to England. Gradually, landlords began to search for ways to increase the acreage available for these moneymaking crops, like by removing tenants, cereal crops and livestock could be raised on the vacated land.⁹⁸

It is notable, cottage tenures were only let from year to year and tenants had no legal claim to retain their holdings for more than the twelvemonth even if they paid the rent, also the continuous competition for land pushed the rent to its highest, and kept even the best of the laborers on the verge of ruin.⁹⁹ Report of commissioners for Poor inquiry stated that, in some cases, landlords located their cottiers on the verge of bogs at high rents, and that when these lands have been reclaimed, by the exertions of the tenants, the latter have been moved further into the unreclaimed moor, still at a high rent, and that thus the landlord has reaped all the benefits of the poor man's industry. On the other hand, they stated that a considerable portion of the land occupied by small holders is tilled by the spade; where it is not, the cottier generally pays for the ploughing by giving his labour in exchange. On the other hand they confirmed that, there was no objection, on the part of landlord, to the accumulation of arrears of rent by their tenants, as thereby they insure their labour at a low rate.¹⁰⁰

It seems clear that neither hope for the future nor memories of the past encouraged the cottier to improve his lot, even if he was able through good fortune to save a little, there were almost insuperable obstacles to his rising into the farmer class.

⁹⁷ARPLC, Poor inquiry, Reports on the state of the poor and on the charitable institutions in some of the principal towns; with supplement containing answers to queries, Part I, H.C, 1836[35][36][37][38][39][40][41][42],pp.646-654; Karen Price Hossell, Op.Cit.,pp. 13-15; Kerry A. Graves, Op.Cit., p.27.

⁹⁸Karen Price Hossell, Op.Cit., p.15;William Forber Adams,Op.Cit.,p.p.6,10,39; Andy Bielenberg, Op.Cit., p.58; Timothy J. Paulson, Op. Cit., p.28; Kerry A. Graves, Op.Cit., pp.28-29.

⁹⁹ William Forber Adams, Op.Cit., p.19.

¹⁰⁰Appendix to first Report of commissioners for inquiring in to the condition of the poorer classes in Ireland, Cottages and Cabins, ARPLC, Poor inquiry, Reports on the state of the poor and on the charitable institutions in some of the principal towns; with supplement containing answers to queries, Part I, Appendix (E.), H.C, 1836 [35][36][37][38][39][40][41][42], pp.1119.

The continuous increase of rents, which accompanied a steadily and rapidly growing population, in most cases wiped out the savings of a year in the following years. Moreover, Laborers and small farmers could not get money from the banks and were forced when they needed it to borrow from local usurers at rates up to 100 percent per year. All the conditions conspired to defeat industry and thrift, and to reduce the level of cotter subsistence to the barest minimum of food, shelter and clothing. Accordingly, peasant's cottage had no windows, and in many cases without a chimney, its ventilation was always bad, and not improved by the fact that the whole family, including the pig, generally slept in its one room. Dirt, cold and bad air made the cabin a breeding ground for disease, and facilitated the spread of epidemics, which from 1817 on played an important part in encouraging emigration. In 1841, 40 percent of these cottages were made up of one room, with nearly another 40 percent having two to four rooms. The average size of an Irish cottage was only 250 square feet.¹⁰¹

It can say that for the greater portion of the half-century the lot of all three tenant classes was one of misery and insecurity. The chief cause of this condition was found in the nature of the Irish land system, a dreary mosaic of rack rents (that is, exorbitantly high rents in relation to farm income), insecurity of tenure, and a frustrating law regarding improvements. Secure in the conviction that the demand and competition for land would never abate, landlords or their middlemen often charged high rents for the meager patches tilled by the small farmers. The farmers, aware that if they could not meet the payments their landless neighbors would be ready and eager to step in and try, toiled on in desperation. There was no way to resist the extortionate demands of the landlords.¹⁰²

Moreover, the law discouraged farmers from attempting any improvements on the land, since legally all such improvements belonged to the landlords, not the farmers, so that when improved farms were sold the landlords were the ones who realized the profits from the enhanced value of the land, not the original improvers. On the other hand, if a farmer made an improvement, the landlord often took this as a sign of increasing wealth and so they raise the rent. The landlords themselves spent nothing on buildings or repairs since they recognized no obligations to their tenants. It was this last fact, it has been pointed out, that made the rents demanded really higher than the actual money amounts, worst of all, the tenants had no security of tenure and

¹⁰¹Further details are given in: Appendix to first Report of commissioners for inquiring into the condition of the poorer classes in Ireland, Cottages and Cabins, ARPLC, Poor inquiry, Reports on the state of the poor and on the charitable institutions in some of the principal towns; with supplement containing answers to queries, Part I, Appendix (E.), H.C., 1836[35][36][37][38][39][40] [41][42], pp.1118-1136; William Forber Adams, Op.Cit., pp.20-22; Karen Price Hossell, Op.Cit., p.13; Miller, Kerby A. and Miller, Patricia Mulholland, *Journey of Hope*, San Francisco 2001, p.3; Kerry A. Graves, Op.Cit., pp.26-27.

¹⁰²Arnold Schrier, Op.Cit., p.12 .

landlords had the right to evict on six months notice. With rents so high, large numbers of tenants often fell far behind in their payments and struggled for years under the shadow of debt and the threat of eviction. Such then was the land system which prevailed among the vast body of Irish peasantry. Thus for the greater part of the century, the old land system remained in force, a system, it has been said, by which “rack rents reduced . . . [the peasants] to the margin of subsistence; the law in regard to improvements deprived them of hope; and insecurity of their tenure kept them in a state of terror”.¹⁰³

The 1841 census divided the 8,175,124 people of Ireland into four categories according to their relative wealth: property owners and farmers of more than fifty acres; artisans and farmers with between five and fifty acres; labourers and smallholders with up to five acres, and the numerically insignificant fourth category, 'means unspecified'. And the 1841 census revealed also that 45 percent of all the farms in Ireland were less than 5 acres, in Connacht, the figure rose to 64 percent. Existence on the smaller holdings was made possible only by the planting of the potato which formed the main crop and practically the sole article of diet among the poorer peasantry. Moreover, the census showed that about 70% of the rural population was either landless or dependent on inadequate holdings of less than five acres. In the wealthier, less densely populated eastern counties this percentage of countrymen with tiny land holdings was much lower, while in a poor and crowded western county like Mayo, it was nearly 85%. Also the census of 1841 showed that 66% of the people employed primarily in agriculture, twenty-four percent in other activities, of which trade (largely concerned with farm products) accounted for the greatest number. In 1815 there were fewer manufactures, and most of those engaged in spinning and weaving were farmers as well. At least seven-eighths of the inhabitants lived in the country itself, while a few lived in villages on the big estates, after the English style, but the great bulk in cabins or houses on their own holdings.¹⁰⁴

The condition of the labouring classes in Ireland had not improved up to the famine, is shown by the Report of the Land Occupation Commissioners in 1845. They say—: “In adverting to the condition of the different classes of occupiers in Ireland, we perceive with deep regret the state of the cotters and labourers in most parts of the country from want of certain employment, It would be impossible to describe adequately the privations which they and their families almost habitually and patiently endure. It will be seen in the evidence that in many districts their only food is the potato, their only beverage water; that their cabins are seldom a protection against the

¹⁰³Quoted in: *Ibid*, pp.12-13. See: William Forber Adams, *Op.Cit.*, p.36-37 .

¹⁰⁴John O'Beirne Ranelagh, *Op.Cit.*, p.110; Paul F. State, *Op.Cit.*, p.169; S. H. Cousens, *Op.Cit.*, p.55; William Forber Adams, *Op.Cit.*, p.6; Karl S. Bottigheimer, *Op.Cit.*, p.177.

weather; that a bed or a blanket is a rare luxury; and that nearly in all. Their pig and their manure heap constitute their only property.”¹⁰⁵

From what has been stated it will be manifest that from 1815 to 1845 there was no fundamental change in agriculture character, or in the social organization of the rural population. By 1846, three-quarters of Irish farms were 20 acres or smaller, and half of these were less than 10 acres. The ranks of the poor swelled, and as rents rose and incomes declined, it became harder for most Irish to get ahead or even keep up. The less land that peasant farmers had, the less they could grow and sell.¹⁰⁶ Therefore we can conclude that the want of capital, and the petty size of the holdings, are the main curses of Irish farming, and next to these, the pride of the gentry and tenantry; for those who ought to be farmers are squires, and those who ought to be labourers are farmers.¹⁰⁷ Moreover, Ireland were possessed of abundant minerals such as coal and iron, and of adequate investment capital, industrialization would have provided an outlet for the overburdened peasantry. However, the lack of such resources coupled with Ireland's subordinate status in the United Kingdom worked to the detriment of any industrial development.¹⁰⁸

1.2.2 Industry

Industry in Ireland was much less successful than its agriculture. As we pointed out earlier, the Napoleonic Wars 1793-1815 meant that England was heavily dependent on Ireland to supply foodstuffs and Irish farmers and their labourers were doing well. So, at the beginning of of the 19th century, the long period of economic expansion came to its end, after Irish economy conditions changed markedly for the worse in response to a depression that set in when the stimulus provided by wartime demand subsided following the end of the Napoleonic wars in 1815. The industry could not bear the growing surplus of rural workers because it was also affected by the depression, this led to Ireland to face an unemployment problem on a great scale after that year.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁵ Quoted in: K.P The Rt. Hon. Dufferin, Op.Cit., pp.37-38.

¹⁰⁶ William Forber Adams, Op.Cit., p.6; Timothy J. Paulson, Op.Cit., p. 28; Kerry A. Graves, Op.Cit., p.26.

¹⁰⁷ ARPLC, Poor inquiry, Reports on the state of the poor and on the charitable institutions in some of the principal towns, Part I, 1836, p.88.

¹⁰⁸ Arnold Schrier, Op.Cit., p.13; Thomas N. Brown, Op.Cit., p.413.

¹⁰⁹ John O'Beirne Ranelagh, Op.Cit., p.100; Paul F. State, Op.Cit., pp.182-183; R. F. Foster, Op.Cit., p.184; Karl S. Bottigheimer, Op.Cit., p.61; Lawrence J. McCaffrey, *Textures of Irish America*, p.12; T.W Moody and F.X. Martin, Op.Cit., p.220 Denny Hatch, Op.Cit., p.8; PRONI: 19th Century Emigration to the North Americas, The Irish poor law:

The beginnings of the Industrial Revolution, which offered new employment to English and Scottish agricultural laborers, exerted little influence on Ireland in 1815. The industrial revolution was making a slow and hesitant entry into the island, as Ireland was badly placed to take advantage of the new movement, and due to the fact that it possessed no good coal of its own, and except in the farther parts of the island, where, transportations were poor, disturbances frequent, and lack of water power. Coal had to be imported from Wales and southern Scotland, and its transportation costs were high, so this naturally proved a severe obstacle in competing with English manufacturing towns. Moreover, most of the iron used in Ireland by the end of the eighteenth century was imported from Sweden and England, so, the lack of iron, as indeed of practically all metals, was a further obstacle to the growth of any machine industry, and the cost of importing machinery and its parts from Great Britain in many cases proved the deciding factor in suppressing the attempts to foster industry in Ireland. Cheap labor usually seeks the raw materials, and is not in itself a sufficient cause for the development of manufactures.¹¹⁰

It can be noted that by 1800 the Irish economy revolved largely around export of raw materials and highly specialized industrial goods to the British market. That is, Union between England and Ireland had resulted in Ireland's economy being absorbed by England. Although free trade now existed between the two countries, England generally used Ireland as a dumping ground for its surplus goods. The fact that the British exported very cheap goods to the Irish market made the situation worse. Thus, the union with England made Ireland more dependent on England and further impoverished the country.¹¹¹ As one historians states: "Ireland was a British colony, dominated for England's political and economic advantage."¹¹² So, it is even conceivable that some of the gains attained by English workers were at the expense of the Irish; or that, at least in some periods; increasing prosperity in Britain was accompanied by declining living standards in Ireland.¹¹³

It seems clear that Ireland's industrial development during the period between the Union and the great Famine depended more than British industry on processing raw materials produced by the agricultural sector, and with much lower labour costs than the rest of the United Kingdom, Ireland could provide raw materials derived

http://www.proni.gov.uk/index/exhibitions_talks_and_events/19th_century_emigration_to_the_north_america_online/helping_hands/the_irish_poor_law.htm. 01/05/2011, 09.10 am.

¹¹⁰William Forber Adams Op.Cit., p.p.17, 48; P.R, Union with Ireland, Evidence taken before the Committee of the Irish House of Commons on the subject of the legislative union, 1833[517], p.p.11-12,15; Andy Bielenberg, Op.Cit., p.p. 113,176.

¹¹¹Paul F. State, Op.Cit., p.183; Denny Hatch, Op.Cit., p.8; Roger Daniels, Op.Cit., p.133; Kerry A. Graves, Op.Cit., p.25; Irish Potato famine, Before the Famine:
<http://www.historyplace.com/worldhistory/famine/before.htm>.15/04/2011, 08:32pm.

¹¹²Quoted in: Robert Moore, "Race Relations in the Six Counties: Colonialism, Industrialism, and Stratification in Ireland," in Norman Yetman and C. Hoy Steele, *Majority and Minority*, Boston 1975, p. 126.

¹¹³Joel Mokyr and Cormac O. Grada, Op.Cit., p.210 .

from agriculture at lower costs to its industrial sector.¹¹⁴ So, although there was evident prosperity for some sectors of the Irish economy, but industries were based on agriculture and well adapted for exporting to Britain, like linen and brewing that continued prosperous, while other industries were exposed to competition from British factories such as cotton and wool, as well as the silk weaving industry and tobacco industry.¹¹⁵ Therefore we may conclude that the lack of mineral resources in Ireland (notably coal) was a part of the explanation for the significantly lower level of Industrial development in Ireland as compared with Great Britain, where mineral resources played a significant role in shaping the character of the industrial sector.¹¹⁶

Advantages as to raw material existed only in the linen industry, so, the linen industry relatively more successful in Ireland than in the rest of Europe because of the practical extinction of the woollen trade and the adaptability, capability of the soil for the growing of flax, favourable climatic conditions and the abundance of labour. Based on that, it can say that from the eighteenth century, the linen industry took centred stage as Ireland's premier industry and primary industrial export,¹¹⁷ and in 1815, linen was the most important Irish industry, which was largely concentrated in Ulster. There was some weaving, in southern counties, but a survey made in 1816 showed that in almost every case this was on the decline. The only important southern linen district, the South Cork sailcloth and canvas area, was ruined by the cessation of wartime demand in 1815, though like other southern linen manufactures, it struggled along for some time with the aid of premiums from the Irish Linen Board and export bounties from Parliament. The most important linen area of Ireland included all of Ulster and parts of the counties of Louth, Sligo, and Mayo. In the late of 1820s the Irish linen industry had achieved a dominant position in the British market, through essentially, expanding demand within Great Britain and Ireland, which provided the core source of expansion for the Irish linen industry between the beginning of the eighteenth century and the mid-1820s, while trans-Atlantic demand from the Americas and the West Indies provided an additional source of trade. However, the existence of linen industry does not change the fact that Irish industrial interests were

¹¹⁴Andy Bielenberg, p.176; P.R, Union with Ireland, Evidence taken before the Committee of the Irish House of Commons on the subject of the legislative union, 1833 [517], p.p. 11-12, 15.

¹¹⁵See: R. F. Foster, *Op.Cit.*, p.192; Karl S. Bottigheimer, *Op.Cit.*,p.p.161-162, 211; John O'Beirne Ranelagh, *Op.Cit.*, p.100; Marjorie R. Fallows, *Irish Americans Identity and Assimilation*, Englewood Cliffs1979, p.15; Seamas MacManus, *The Story of the Irish Race*, New York 1974, pp. 490-491; Andy Bielenberg, *Op.Cit.*, p.p.77-81, 89, 98-100; William Forber Adams *Op.Cit.*, pp.54-56.

¹¹⁶Andy Bielenberg, *Op.Cit.*, p. 176; P.R, Union with Ireland, Evidence taken before the Committee of the Irish House of Commons on the subject of the legislative union, 1833[517], p.p. 11-12,15.

¹¹⁷PR, Union with Ireland, Evidence taken before the Committee of the Irish House of Commons on the subject of the legislative union, 1833[517], p.11; William Forber Adams, *Op.Cit.*, pp.48-49; Andy Bielenberg, *Op.Cit.*, p.177.

subordinated to those of Britain. Instead, it has been argued that the privileged position of Irish linen within the British market and its colonies was an important feature of the development of the industry in the eighteenth century, while it was one of the few Irish industries which benefited from free trade in the nineteenth century.¹¹⁸

The most promising of the factory industries was the cotton manufacture of the Belfast area, as the increasing use of cotton during the wars and the improvements in machinery had already created a prosperous new industry by 1815. The factories in Belfast were, a material source of comfort and employment to the poor; they caused a decisive improvement in the condition of the labourers and mechanic. It is true that cotton was the main cause for the rise of Belfast during this period from an insignificant country town to an important centre. Cotton trade was on the whole improving, and even during times of temporary slackness the workers were saved from absolute distress by their ability to return to the linen trade. The cotton workers were the best paid and least distressed of the poor of Ireland. Weavers could make from nine to twenty-one shillings a week, and the spinners, who were usually young girls, earned from five to sixteen shillings. However, though the employment is to be considerable, there are still many unemployed, and even that relatively prosperous group could find higher wages and better perspectives in America. With the exception of the area surrounding the city of Belfast, weavers and spinners often did not manage to pay their rents throughout the rest of Ireland. By the 1820s the woollen and cotton industries were collapsing, and only linen survived. This collapse coincided with a general recession following the end of the Napoleonic Wars. In 1816 and 1826 some landlords succeeded in passing laws which made evictions easier, and as a result of this, thousands of tenants were evicted.¹¹⁹

As early as 1824, under the pressure of English manufacturers, Parliament withdrew the 10 percent protective tariff on manufactured goods imported into Ireland, a tariff that had been in effect at the time of the union with Britain. So, local Irish industries were deprived of any tariff protection and ultimately destroyed,¹²⁰ where, British economic considerations took precedence. Without the protection provided by tariffs, Irish industries were open to competition from cheap British imports, which after the improved transportation network, could easily be shipped across the entire island to the detriment of native production, so, the Irish

¹¹⁸Further details are giving in: ARPLC, Poor inquiry, Reports on the state of the poor and on the charitable institutions in some of the principal towns, Part I, 1836, Appendix(C.), pp.47-48; William Forber Adams Op.Cit., p.50; C. Gill, *The Rise of the Irish Linen Industry*, Oxford 1925, p.277; Andy Bielenberg, Op.Cit., p.p.11-23,179.

¹¹⁹ARPLC, Poor inquiry, Reports on the state of the poor and on the charitable institutions in some of the principal towns, Part I, 1836, p.p. 3, 7-8, 65; William Forber Adams, Op.Cit., pp.58-59; Andy Bielenberg, Op.Cit., p.p. 24, 33, 177; Denny Hatch, Op.Cit., p.8; John O'Beirne Ranelagh, Op.Cit., p.100.

¹²⁰Arnold Schrier, Op.Cit., p. 13.

manufacturers were not able to compete with the more advanced industries of England. Irish Industrial decline and stagnation in southern Ireland led to a call for protective tariffs, as only in eastern Ulster did industries prosper. The markedly different regional conditions contributed, on the one hand, to firm support of the union with Britain among upper-and middle-class Protestants in Ulster, and to calls by Catholics in southern Ireland for aggressive political activity to redress grievances, on the other. This is southern Ireland, was dependent on agriculture, had no outlet for the surplus of workers that were the result of a rapid population growth.¹²¹ By 1825 Irish manufacturing and domestic industry, outside of the Ulster area, were dead or dying, and Irish agriculture was at the mercy of a ruthless English market. Whether it was grain or beef, the small Irish farmer and his laborer, the cottier, could only supply them by subsisting themselves almost exclusively on a diet of potatoes, and the land itself was exploited as a source of rent for absentee landlords and taxes for the Crown. So, the 1820s was a decade of severe commercial and agricultural contraction, with dire consequences on the lives of millions of cottiers and small farmers.¹²²

It is worthy to mention that the old manual industries of the country survived under protection until 1830, and the census of 1831 showed that one-fourth of the people were still engaged, if only a part of the time, in manufacture.¹²³ So, in several respects, the late 1820s marks a definitive watershed in the industry's history in Ireland and thereafter the advent of wet spinning marked the beginning of a new phase of development, in which machinery was substituted for large numbers domestic producers. This process of transition marked one of the great structural shifts in the Irish economy which contributed to widespread emigration from the traditional linen manufacturing districts between the 1830s and the 1850s. Within Irish economic and social history, these fundamental changes in the mode of industrial production have been over shadowed to a large extent by the Great Famine. However, 'de- proto-industrialisation' also contributed significantly to reducing employment opportunities and household incomes in the Irish countryside, inducing widespread emigration from traditional centres of linen spinning between the 1830s and the 1850s.¹²⁴ In this context, a hand-loom linen-weaver, Edward Donnegan, confirmed that Emigration to England has been going on since 1810, where, many of families in that time, had gone from Cork to the manufacturing districts in England.

¹²¹Paul F. State, *Op.Cit.*, p.183; T.W Moody and F.X. Martin, *Op.Cit.*, p.p.205, 220; Roger Daniels, *Op.Cit.*, p.133; Richard B. Finnegan, *Op.Cit.*, p.16.

¹²²Thomas N. Brown, *Op.Cit.*, pp.411-412; Norman Yetman and C. Hoy Steele, *Op.Cit.*, p.126; John O'Beirne Ranelagh, *Op.Cit.*, p.100.

¹²³William Forber Adams *Op.Cit.*, p.49.

¹²⁴ARPLC, *Poor inquiry, Reports on the state of the poor and on the charitable institutions in some of the principal towns, Part I, 1836, Appendix (C.)*, pp.48-49; Andy Bielenberg, *Op.Cit.*, pp.18-19; P.R, *Union with Ireland, Evidence taken before the Committee of the Irish House of Commons on the subject of the legislative union, 1833 [517]*, pp.11-14.

He also pointed that “The hand-loom weavers attribute the decay of this trade to the importation of cloth from England, the non-residence of the gentry, and almost the whole produce of the country, excepting potatoes, being carried away, instead of being consumed in the country.” And he added “The Irish must emigrate, or starve... The weavers gone to Manchester continue to work by hand-loom; but they get their children into the factories, and are thereby able to live.”¹²⁵

In the spinning sector also, vast numbers of female hand spinners were displaced by the falling cost of machine-spun yarn. The central position of the household as the main unit of production in spinning and weaving was undermined, where, hand spinning was experiencing reversals by the mid-1830s, which continued between 1841 and 1851 when female textile spinners (who had been predominantly employed in flax spinning by hand) fell dramatically from over 515,000 to less than 112,000.¹²⁶

The displaced artisan and the displaced farmer could not find in Ireland the new employment in factory, warehouse, and rough construction which absorbed their prototypes in Great Britain; and their emigration to Great Britain or America was in many ways merely an extension of the nineteenth century drift to the cities taking place across international boundaries. Artisans had in some respects even more incentive to leave Ireland than the agricultural classes, as even when times were bad and work failed, the farmer or cotter perhaps had his own product and a roof over his head, but the artisan had nothing on which to fall back. Hence, as the factory displaced the domestic worker, and as new inventions in turn displaced many of the factory hands, another stream of emigrants increased the groups already going to America. The number increased and decreased, that is the pressure of distress was less steady among the manufacturing classes, but it did not cease.¹²⁷

The census of 1831 showed that nine-tenths of the people of Ireland were primarily engaged in agriculture and trade or manufacture. Among the remaining tenth two groups, domestic servants and fishermen, played role in the increasing of emigration. Domestic servants constituted a large and important body, unlike the farm servants, they lived in the houses of the gentry or substantial farmers, and worked entirely for money wages. Recruited from the families of laborers or smaller farmers, they were, as far as mode of living was concerned, distinctly better off than the classes from which they came, but the lack of opportunity for advancement spread

¹²⁵Quoted in: ARPLC, Poor inquiry, Reports on the state of the poor and on the charitable institutions in some of the principal towns, Part I, 1836, p.30.

¹²⁶Andy Bielenberg, Op.Cit., p.20,27.

¹²⁷ARPLC, Poor inquiry, Reports on the state of the poor and on the charitable institutions in some of the principal towns, Part I, 1836, pp.48-49; William Forber Adams Op.Cit., pp.49-50; Andy Bielenberg, Op.Cit., p.p.18-19,179.

discontent among the more ambitious, and a considerable number were to be found amongst the emigrants.

Fishermen were of two distinct classes: the local or coast fishermen and the deep-sea fishermen. The actual condition of the fishermen on the coast appears to be miserable; and yet their general habits, character and qualifications, are highly deserving of liberal encouragement. At Ardglass in County Down, and off the banks of Wicklow, there were larger fisheries where the fishermen, unlike most of those in the west, had sailing vessels and large nets, and competed fairly successfully with the English and Scottish. Their occupation was altogether seasonal, usually covering the months from August to November, and during the rest of the year some few found employment as sailors, but the majority lived in small cottages and gardens, and raised their own food. Despite the numbers of fish found off the north coast of Ireland there were no large fishing companies in that part of the country. The only group which played an important role in the development of emigration was the deep-sea fishing fleet which centred at Waterford. Fishing also helped emigration to some extent by encouraging Irish shipbuilding, and in the early nineteenth century it enabled Waterford to advance with Belfast, where commercial enterprise was laying the foundations of one of the two great industries of the Ulster city, but for a long time after 1815 the total output from Ireland was very small. However, it can say that the establishment of successful Fisheries in consequence has materially augmented the national wealth, and opened sources of the most valuable industry.¹²⁸

With a few exceptions such as Belfast and Lisburn, towns failed to grow, performing primarily administrative and commercial functions. The expansion of working-class communities in this period, notably in Belfast, but also in other Irish cities, towns and industrial villages, was perhaps the most significant social impact of industrial development.¹²⁹ The cotton trade flourished in Belfast from 1803 to 1825, and during that time it was a great source of prosperity. But after 1825 it has been in a depressed state, so about the year 1826 there was great distress amongst the cotton weavers, arising from want of employment, that public subscriptions to a large amount were collected for their support. From 50 to 100 of them were sent out by this means to British America.¹³⁰

¹²⁸P.P, RSC, Second Report from the Select Committee on the state of Disease, and Condition of the labouring poor, in Ireland, H.C, 1829[347], pp.6-7; William Forber Adams Op.Cit pp.59-60; Andy Bielenberg, Op.Cit., pp.128-130,177.

¹²⁹Joel Mokyr and Cormac O. Grada , Op.Cit.,p.210; Andy Bielenberg, Op.Cit., p.175.

¹³⁰ARPLC, Poor inquiry, Reports on the state of the poor and on the charitable institutions in some of the principal towns, Part I, 1836, pp.6-8.

A survey of the commercial and urban situation reflects the decline which is apparent in agriculture and to a less extent in manufacturing. Counties Dublin and Cork experienced more marked development than elsewhere in the south, where, as a city and mercantile center, Dublin, the second largest city in the United Kingdom, with a population of over 175,000, was prominent. Its imports and exports, though less in proportion to its size than those of British mercantile cities, were still over five times greater than those of any other Irish city. It was, however, declining in wealth, many thousands of its poor could find little or no employment, and even in 1815 the slums of Dublin were notorious for their poverty and disease. The loss of commercial importance brought hardship to the mercantile and gave to the emigration from Dublin a more character than that from any other port.¹³¹

Cork, the second city in Ireland, with nearly a hundred thousand inhabitants, specialized in the provision trade, particularly with the West Indies, and had a further importance as a provisioning base for the British navy. Moreover, the tanning of hides and skins appears to be the only manufacture of importance in Cork, and this is carried on principally for export. The success of this branch of trade mainly rests on the cheapness of labour, as compared to England. In concluding, we may briefly recapitulate those points which appear to be of chief importance. The city of Cork, from its excellent harbour and position, remained in a prosperous state; and, although the wages of the labouring classes have been greatly lowered since the war, yet the fall in the price of provisions has been still greater, and the houses and clothing of those classes have in the same period been improving. However, its commercial importance in 1815 was only slightly greater than that of Belfast, a much smaller town, and it had desperately poor districts which—as already noted above—fell into worse situation with the decline in weaving.¹³²

The only other city of any size was Limerick, the port for an exceptionally rich agricultural area, where the population of Limerick, according to the census of 1831, was 67,575 souls. In this amount there has not been any considerable increase since that year, and the sources of occupation in this city are few and precarious. Waterford and Galway, towns of about twenty-five thousand, both had a considerable provision and grain trade in addition to fishing interests. In this context, the report of commissioners of poor inquiry stated that Waterford has natural advantages (which at a comparatively short period from the present time had rendered this the third city in Ireland). Of the numerous small ports of Ireland, Drogheda, Londonderry and Newry had an importance rather out of proportion to their size, arising from their connection

¹³¹See: William Forber Adams, *Op.Cit.*, pp.60-61; S. O'Maitiu, *Dublin's Suburban Towns 1834-1930*, Dublin 2003, pp.19- 46.

¹³²For more details see: ARPLC, *Poor inquiry, Reports on the state of the poor and on the charitable institutions in some of the principal towns, Part I, 1836*, p.p.29,46; William Forber Adams *Op.Cit.*, p.61.

with the linen trade. Londonderry is a seaport, containing, with its suburbs, a population of 19,620 inhabitants according to the population returns of 1831. It was formerly an extensive market for linen, but after this trade has declined, the city has become a great and increasing port for the export of grain, and various provisions. This city is also remarkable as a port, from which a great proportion of the emigration from the north takes place. While Newry and Drogheda exported grain as well. It is significant of the purely trading character of Irish cities that all the larger ones were seaports. The only inland town of more than fifteen thousand inhabitants was Kilkenny, which, like all inland settlements, derived its importance from the agricultural districts surrounding.¹³³ Towns and cities alike were increasing in population though probably at a somewhat slower rate than rural areas; but outside the factory districts of Ulster, population had no relation to employment or wealth.

In 1815, towns and cities were wholly poor and mean, unlighted, unswept, unpaved—without public water supply, sanitation, or efficient police. The exceptions were the larger cities where parliament had stepped in to create boards appointed by itself or elected by the taxpayers, to take charge of these functions. In general, governmental duties were in the hands of municipal corporations instituted by the Stuarts, which had become in most cases mere echoes of the wishes of a patron. No more damning indictment of corruption and inefficiency can be found than the report of the parliamentary commissioners who investigated these corporations in 1833. Their monopoly of government which prevented any progressive municipal activity, their control of justice in the interests of a privileged group, their appropriation of what had been public property to the advantage of their members, their complete failure to keep peace, and above all the chafing restrictions and heavy tolls with which they hampered trade and aroused the antipathy of the peasantry, played havoc with the prosperity of town and country alike. By 1815 the power of the corporations was already waning, and the next twenty years witnessed an increasing struggle against their privileges, conducted in the towns by the peasants with violence and coercion, and in the cities by chambers of commerce through legal proceeding.¹³⁴

The introduction of railroads brought no major economic advancement, on the contrary, by the 1840s, Irish manufacturing activity had been decreased—the woollen industry that once employed thousands was ruined. The few major industries which survived is linen production, brewing and distilling, and shipbuilding—did so only because firms consolidated and mechanized, and because many were concentrated in and near port cities, which provided easy access to external markets. Urban businesses

¹³³Further details are giving in: ARPLC, Poor inquiry, Reports on the state of the poor and on the charitable institutions in some of the principal towns, Part I, 1836, p.p.63,88-89 and Appendix (C.), p.102; William Forber Adams Op.Cit., pp.61-62.

¹³⁴ William Forber Adams Op.Cit., pp.62-63.

drew labor away from rural areas, reducing employment in the agricultural sector that had constituted Ireland's chief economic activity since long time and which, in 1840, still employed over two-thirds of Irish people.¹³⁵

By 1840 most Irish rural laborers were still cotters their numbers still grew due to natural increase, employment by landlords to reclaim mountain and bog terrain, and the economic value of such workers in areas where dairying and textile weaving predominated. However, rising land values during the early decades of the 19th century convinced many landlords that granting valuable land to secure workers no longer efficient. Falling price forced farmers to increase commercial production at the expense of cotter's small plots, to reduce labor costs through mechanization, and to reemphasize cattle grazing, which required less labor than field tillage, or to practice more efficient grain production, they began to clear off the peasantry and consolidate holdings. Moreover, Parliament in 1829 abolished the 40 shilling freehold franchise, thus eliminating another incentive to maintaining cottier arrangements. Many were forced out and, together with evicted smallholders, they formed a group of landless, independent laborers who survived solely on the wages they earned when they could find work, which, because of the decline of rural industry, was sparse. Working discontinuously, they could be found travelling from harvest to harvest, squatting on wastelands or beside roads on the edges of estates, some migration to Britain in search of jobs.¹³⁶

From what is mentioned earlier we may conclude that the impact of the British industrial revolution on Ireland was a mixed story. On one hand it brought many benefits to the more successful industries which utilised British technologies, capital, markets and trade networks, and it brought Irish consumers high-quality industrial products at reasonable prices. On the other hand it resulted in the decline of a number of Irish industries, which were unable to cope with British competition, contributing ultimately to emigration and regional economic decline in parts of the south. As in the rest of Europe in 19th century, Irish industrial development was geographically highly concentrated, and as a consequence of the intense concentration of industrial activity in east Ulster the population of Belfast rose dramatically. During the Union, greater industrial development in the six counties of Ulster, which later became Northern Ireland, created a more mixed economy than in the rest of Ireland, with more employment opportunities there for both men and women.¹³⁷ Thus, we can

¹³⁵ Paul F. State, *Op.Cit.*, p.183.

¹³⁶ *Ibid*, p. 184; Thomas N. Brown, *Op.Cit.*, p.414; Kerry A. Graves, *Op.Cit.*, pp.26-27.

For more details about Irish immigration to Great Britain see: ARPLC, *Poor inquiry, Report on the city of Dublin, and supplement containing answers to queries, with addenda to appendix (A.), and communications, H.C, 1836*[35][36] [37][38][39][40][41][42], Part II, Appendix (G.), p.p.2833-2837, 2885-2889.

¹³⁷ Andy Bielenberg, *Op.Cit.*, p.175.

say that Ireland remained predominantly agricultural and, with the exception of Ulster, even became less industrialised during the twenty year period which preceded the Famine. Several factors have contributed to this phenomenon: the absence of energy sources, a backward rural economy and a lack of capital accumulation (it is possible that Ireland's reputation dissuaded potential investors, partially caused by and also resulting in the emigration of many of the young, the strong and the enterprising).¹³⁸

This then was the economic background against which Irish emigration in this period (1800-1850) must be viewed, in addition to other economic conditions represented by the frequent famines in Ireland, which will be examined in more detail later.

1.3 Changing Social Conditions:

1.3.1 The Irish society

After the union, the people of Ireland faced many of fundamental social changes. A person's position in the Irish society was determined partly by his family origins and titles, partly by the amount of land he owned and partly by his income. Generally, noblemen had the most land and consequently the largest incomes, but many poor families were deeply in debt. And at the other end of the scale the holding of a lease of a small piece of land established the tenant as a 'farmer' and so higher in the social rank than the landless labourer.

There were two main points of division on the social ranking, the first one was between those who were counted as 'gentlemen' and those who were not (The aristocracy, for these purposes, was represented gentlemen with a patent of nobility), and the other was between those who had a holding or tenancy of land and those who had not. The gentlemen in Ireland were often referred to as 'landlords', and the some used the term landowner or proprietor.¹³⁹ All the land was owned by an upper class, and almost all of it was leased or rented to the lower classes of farmers and cotters, very little being kept in demesne. The typical landlord was an owner of large estates—a gentleman, ill-educated, but generally honorable and respected. Thus, Ireland was the preserve of landed aristocrats.¹⁴⁰

A considerable number of the landlords were absentees who owned large estates in Great Britain and rarely if ever visited their Irish holdings, while another

¹³⁸Denny Hatch, *Op.Cit.*, p.8; Thomas N. Brown, *Op.Cit.*, pp.411-412.

¹³⁹Pre-Famine Ireland: Social Structure: <http://www.deskeenan.com/4PrBiography.htm>. 27/02/2010, 08: 40am.

¹⁴⁰ William Forber Adams, *Op.Cit.*, p.6.

and equally important class, among whom were the great families of Lansdowne and Devonshire, hold estates in both countries and visited their Irish lands for perhaps three months in the year. The absentee landlord was blamed for much of that worst thing in Irish conditions, including some things for which he was not responsible. The mismanagement of estates was generally laid at his door, though the weight of testimony suggests that the character of the agent was more important than the residence of the owner, and residents and non-residents alike were too often exacting and arbitrary.¹⁴¹

The Irish gentleman earned a considerable part of his income from the land, but he was not wholly dependent upon it, nor were his interests wholly confined to it. Politics engaged his attention almost equally with his duties as a proprietor, and in many cases he was a shareholder in the British government. Most of the Irish peers had been deprived by the Act of Union of any hereditary seat in parliament, but all the principal families had some weight in the choice of the representative Irish peers, and exercised paramount influence in elections to the House of Commons, so interest in elections was a vital financial concern. A family which was losing money on lands held by poor tenants could often, through the votes of those same tenants, exert such influence as to recompense them for losses on their estates. The greater landlords were the only group who has the political influence at Westminster, all the gentry of Ireland shared in very extensive political power at home, one might say, that they almost were the political power. The Lord Lieutenant and his court in Dublin represented the wishes of the British cabinet, but for the carrying out of their schemes as well as the information upon which their plans were based, they were almost entirely dependent upon the Irish gentry. The whole enforcement of law was under their control.¹⁴²

With power vested in the English-dominated Protestant ruling class, and with the Irish Catholic nobility and middle classes fleeing to less austere conditions abroad, only the impoverished Catholic farmers remained of the native population in much of Ireland. In Ulster to the north, the Presbyterians originally were brought from Scotland as part of the "plantation" effort had developed their own separate middle-class subculture, having little to do either with the Catholic natives or the Anglican English. It is notable, social stratification was augmented by religious cleavages: upper-class Anglicans, middle-class Presbyterians and lower-class Catholics. Only after the vote was finally restored to the Catholic in 1793, and later mobilized behind Catholic emancipation candidates in the general election of 1826, did the two Protestant groups form an uneasy coalition in response to the fear of Catholic power. In the main, however, it was the religious component that had become paramount in

¹⁴¹ Ibid, pp.6-7.

¹⁴² Further details are given in: Ibid, pp.12-14.

the distribution of wealth, prestige and power, so by any reckoning, the Catholic peasant farmers were relegated to a position of caste-like serfdom at the bottom.¹⁴³

From what has been stated it will be manifest that Irish society was largely a rural, but not a peasant society, a hierarchical aristocratic society with various grades from noblemen to landless cotters.¹⁴⁴ In the first half of the 19th century, Protestant tenant farmers, laborers and craftsmen could be found, but Protestantism was usually equated with middle-and upper-class status. Moreover, in Ulster and the larger cities, they completely dominated the social scene, and most positions in law, finance, trade, and industry were held by Protestants. In southern rural areas, Protestants were usually privileged head tenants, and they together with the landlords, maintained the local administrative machine in ruling over the Catholic majority as magistrates, bailiffs, sheriffs, estate agents, jurors at the local courts and Anglican ministers. Except in northeastern counties, Catholics formed the majority everywhere, accounting for some 80 percent of Ireland's total population of about 6,428,000 in 1834. They were rural residents everywhere, and only a small number were "strong farmers," namely, those who held more than 30 acres, and "middling farmers," those who held more than 10 acres but less than 30 acres. The former enjoyed the security of long leases that often ran for more than 20 years; the latter did not, frequently holding their lands on a year-to-year basis.¹⁴⁵ As we mentioned earlier, during the Napoleonic Wars, they began to grow wheat to meet demand for flour, changing from dairy farming in the process, and thus giving more employment and prosperity to poorer sections of the agricultural community. But the majority of farms were less than five acres, and this condition had spread to the whole of Ireland by 1841. The proportion of small holdings was highest in the non-grazing provinces of Ulster and Connaught, where farmers in these districts usually planted grain as well as potatoes.¹⁴⁶ On the other hand, the growth of population in Ireland during the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries led to hunger and poverty, owing to families having limited lands, together with little industrial development in the country.¹⁴⁷ For the majority of growing Irish population, agriculture remained the only means of subsistence. There were some partial potato crop failures in 1822, 1831, 1835-1837, 1839 and 1842. Yet with very few exceptions, it was only the labouring population

¹⁴³ Marjorie R. Fallows, *Op.Cit.*, p.15.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p.15; Pre-Famine Ireland: Social Structure: <http://www.deskeenan.com/4PrBiography.htm>. 27/02/2010, 08 : 40 am.

¹⁴⁵ Paul F. State, *Op. Cit.*, p.168; R. F. Foster *Op.Cit.*, p.185; John O'Beirne Ranelagh, *Op.Cit.*, p.100.

¹⁴⁶ John O'Beirne Ranelagh, *Op.Cit.*, p.100 ; Denny Hatch, *Op.Cit.*, p.8; Jay P. Dolan, *Op.Cit.*, pp.35-36; William Forber Adams, *Op.Cit.*, p.39; Andy Bielenberg, *Op.Cit.*, p.58; Timothy J. Paulson, *Op.Cit.*, p.28.

¹⁴⁷ P.P, *Census of Ireland, General Reports, Abstract of the population of Ireland, according to the late census: 1813; 1821 (36), H.C, pp.1-2; P.P, Census of Ireland, Abstracts of the census of Ireland. Taken in the years 1841 and 1851, H.C, 1851[673][1400], pp.3-4; Paul Bracey, Op.Cit., p. 28; Mr. Éamon Ó Cuív, Op.Cit.,p.3.*

which was subjected to the consequences which these failures had. In fact, during the same period, some people of the middle and upper classes even improved their standard of living and increased their quality of life, but for a large proportion of Irish people the standard of living was so low that they were almost entirely subsisting on potatoes.¹⁴⁸

Traditionally, the nuclear family was the normal domestic unit in the Irish countryside, a family worked on a patch of land, which used to be owned by a landlord. So, Irish society was everywhere based on strong family and local community ties, reflecting a societal characteristic dating back to before the English conquest to Ireland.¹⁴⁹ On the other hand, in Ireland it was traditional to divide land among all the children, for example, a large farm, which once would have supported a family of six, would have been sub-divided into six small farms, each of which was expected to support a family. So, despite landlords' opposition, middling and small farmers commonly subdivided holding to provide land for their sons when they married. Eventually many peasant families had to live off an acre of land, and thus, tendency toward early marriage appeared as land became more easily accessible to the children of farmers and cotters.¹⁵⁰ In general, it can be said that the premature marriages were the rule amongst the labouring class, and not exception, so most women were married, so most women were married before they were twenty, men a year or two later. The priests were said to have encouraged it as a deterrent to immorality, and because they depended for their living on marriage, baptisma and other fees; but the best testimony is that poverty and ignorance were the real causes behind the early marriage.¹⁵¹ After 1815, with the population growth, the social and economic changes and the scarcity of land, the father of a family could no longer give a patch of land to each of his sons upon his marriage as Irish peasants used to this custom was called partible inheritance. The children were then becoming land-less labourers or were forced to leave the country. It was part of their mentality that the family farm had to be preserved which is why it created a powerful pressure to emigrate, where, many young Irish left the country so that the land would not have to be divided. But this was not true for most western farmers who still practised partible inheritance long after the custom had been abandoned in eastern Ireland, perhaps this

¹⁴⁸Denny Hatch, Op.Cit., p.8; Robert Kee, *Ireland: A History*, London 1980, p. 81.

¹⁴⁹Ronald Takaki, *A Different Mirror: A History of Multicultural America*, New York 1993, p. 142; Paul F. State, Op. Cit., p. 169.

¹⁵⁰Paul Bracey, Op.Cit., p.28; Thomas N. Brown, Op.Cit., p.413; Paul F. State, Op.Cit., p.169; P. J. Blessing, "Irish Emigration to the United States 1800-1920: an Overview", in: P.J. Drudy, Op.Cit., p.16; William Forber Adams Op.Cit., p. 4; PRONI, 19th Century Emigration to the North Americas: The homeland: http://www.proni.gov.uk/index/exhibitions_talks_and_events/19th_century_emigration_to_the_north_american_online/the-homeland.htm. 01/05/2011, 09:10am.

¹⁵¹ARPLC, Poor inquiry, Reports on the state of the poor and on the charitable institutions in some of the principal towns, Part I, 1836, p.576; William Forber Adams Op.Cit., p.32.

was because farms already had a very poor level of productivity so it did not matter very much if the land was divided. Indeed the counties along the Atlantic Coast had the poorest quality soils of the island.¹⁵²

The same factors that are poverty and ignorance explain the unusual extent of mendicancy and petty pilfering. Destitute men who could not cope often turned to alcohol, whereas their families turned to begging for food to survive. Professional beggars were a distinct class, wandering from place to place, and every spring and summer cotters' wives and children, and in bad years the cotters themselves, took to the roads to beg enough potatoes to keep them until the new crop was ready. This casual mendicancy was a recognized part of Irish life. Another type of roving has some bearing on the growth of emigration. Since the eighteenth century some of the cotters had been in the habit of going to England for the harvest. At times whole families left their land, but the women and children were usually left at home to look after the potatoes, while the men went in search of employment across the Irish Channel. This seasonal migration was one of the factors to weaken the connection between the peasant and his land, and therefore an important reason in promoting emigration. Up to 1815 when facilities for crossing the Irish Sea were undeveloped and transportation was by means of small vessels, whose sailings might be delayed a week or more by adverse winds, and whose fares were a serious obstacle, the movement of emigration was not very important. The rush of Irish labor to England, which began in the twenties, was a result of the development of steam transportation between England and Ireland.¹⁵³ With the improving communication and increasing power of central government, the whole country felt the impact of police and administrators. Peasants were asked to pay taxes and rents in cash. There were different ways for Irish peasants to earn this money: they could sell crops or farm animals, work on the building of railroads or roadways, work as seasonal migrants, sell illicit poteen or 'poitin'. In fact these changes made Irish people feel more and more oppressed by landlords and authorities whilst, thanks to increasingly modernised means of communication, they could get to the different ports of departures more easily so making it more easy for them to emigrate.¹⁵⁴

¹⁵²Denny Hatch, *Op. Cit.*, p.9.

¹⁵³Appendix to first Report of commissioners for inquiring into the condition of the poorer classes in Ireland, Expenditure, ARPLC, Poor inquiry, Reports on the state of the poor and on the charitable institutions in some of the principal towns, Part I, 1836, Appendix (D.), pp.670-677; Appendix to Report on the state of the Irish poor in Great Britain, Passage of the Irish between Dublin and Liverpool.—Vagrancy, ARPLC, Poor inquiry, Reports on the state of the poor and on the charitable institutions in some of the principal towns, Part I, 1836, Appendix (G.), pp.2885-2886; William Forber Adams *Op.Cit.*, pp.32-34; Kerry A. Graves, *Op.Cit.*, pp.27-28.

¹⁵⁴Denny Hatch, *Op. Cit.*, p.9.

1.3.2 Sectarian rioting and Violence

During the first 50 years of the 19th century Catholic and Protestants in Ireland gathered along distinctly separate sectarian lines, and it was throughout the nineteenth century Protestants in Ireland had allied with the English government against the Catholic Irish, therefore any potential possibility to establish a united Irish country had disappeared when most of the Irish people who are Catholics stood one side, and those of the North West provinces who are Protestants stood on the other side. The British had attempted to form a dominant Anglo-Irish Protestant ruling class in Ireland, which was in fact much harsher than English domination from abroad, but the Irish refused to accept the legitimacy of this domination. By the mid 19th century, Protestants nearly unanimously in support of union with Britain and against Catholic efforts either to weaken Protestant-based rule or to break the link with London altogether. Growing Catholic assertiveness disabused former patriots and united Irishmen of their tolerant attitudes and drove all Protestants, always acutely aware of their minority status in the country, to depend on British authority for security of their lives and property.¹⁵⁵

After the Act of Union, the institutional embodiment of loyalty to Great Britain could be found in the Orange Order, a fraternal society uniting upper-and lower-class Protestants on a sectarian alliance that espoused fierce defense of the union as a guarantee of Protestant prerogative. It based mainly in Northern Ireland and Scotland, though it has lodges throughout the Commonwealth and United States. The institution was founded in 1795 in Ireland, and its name is a tribute to Dutch-born Protestant William of Orange, who defeated the army of Catholic James II at the Battle of the Boyne (1690).¹⁵⁶ A parliamentary report into the activities of the Orange Order in 1835 found that the Order existed at all levels of society, however the report was generally critical of the activities of the Orange Order, and especially as the routes chosen for the annual 12 July parades ran through Catholic areas, thereby increasing the likelihood of sectarian fighting. Significantly, the Orange Order, which organised protests against Catholic Emancipation, increased in size and many of its new recruits were Presbyterians. It attracted support from Protestant ministers, gentry and members of the Irish constabulary and yeomanry.¹⁵⁷ The yeomanry almost wholly

¹⁵⁵Paul F. State, *Op. Cit.*, p.166; Marjorie R. Fallows, *Op. Cit.*, p. 16; Angela Mickley, *Op.Cit.*, p.7.

¹⁵⁶Further details are giving in: Paul F. State, *Op. Cit.*, p.166; Angela Mickley, *Op.Cit.*, p.7; Johnathan Tonge, *Northern Ireland*, Harlow [u.a.] Longman 2006, p.p.24,171-173; Patrick Mitchel, *Evangelicalism and national identity in Ulster 1921–1998*, Oxford 2003, pp.134-136; The Orange Order: <http://www.evangelicaltruth.com/orange.html>. 10/ 01/ 2011, 02: 45pm; Orange Order: <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/430926/Orange-Order>. 10/ 01/ 2011, 02: 55 pm.

¹⁵⁷Daniel O'Connell and Catholic Emancipation, Catholic Emancipation: <http://www.irishhistorylinks.net/History Links/Catholic Emancipation.html>. 11 /01/ 2010, 08:20am.

Protestant and nearly exclusively Orange, was involved in open sectarian atrocities. The militia was in many places largely Catholic and sectarian clashes between them and the yeomanry were recorded. It can say that from the 1820s sectarian rioting in Northern Ireland became increasingly commonplace, in addition to raged agrarian strife throughout Ireland.¹⁵⁸

Thus, Irish society retained the violent character of long-standing notoriety. Fighting in both rural and urban locales was endemic, despite efforts to prevent it. The proverbial Irish love of fighting found frequent opportunities for expression, notably at fairs, which were the great gathering places for clan or faction. Sometimes the ostensible cause was religious difference, sometimes a family or tribal quarrel, sometimes the local pride of Kerry-men or Limerick-men, but these were merely the excuses to satisfy an innate love of fighting. Moreover, violence against women was only too frequent in the backward parts of the community. Quarrels in many cases terminated fatally with the blow of a spade or any handy weapon, but more serious affrays with muskets and swords usually arose out of the work of secret societies in agitating over religious, and especially over agrarian, disputes. Some brawling resulted from individual quarrels, often fueled by whiskey, but much was collective and well-organized. Fights between great groups of men would break out, held, frequently by prearranged agreement, at fairs, markets, athletic contests, or religious festivals,¹⁵⁹ so, it can say that Organized and unorganized disorders had a most disastrous effect upon the prosperity of Ireland. It poisoned the relationship between landlord and peasant, and still more between both these classes and the greater farmer, to whose ranks belonged the loathed middlemen, who took large leases and sublet them at extravagant rents.¹⁶⁰

However, authorities concentrated their attention more directly on the host of secret societies that grew up in rural Ireland in the first half of the 19th century. Often the successor to groups such as the White-boys of the late 18th century, associations of farmers and laborers bound together by secret, sworn oaths abounded. And indeed these societies grew up increasingly in the towns, mostly militantly Catholic in membership, made the situation worse, although they were not overtly sectarian. Because of famine, evictions, and unemployment many joined to this societies and

In 1796 a yeomanry force, cavalry and infantry, officered by local gentlemen was raised for preserving order. The cavalry force was disbanded in 1814 and the infantry gradually lapsed and ceased to exist in 1834. The Yeomanry was employed in the rebellion of 1798 and earned an unenviable reputation for harshness and cruelty. Cumber Yeomanry Cavalry, 1797:

<http://www.from-ireland.net/county/article/Cumber-Yeomanry-Cavalry,1797/derry>. 11/09/ 2011, 11: 35 am.

¹⁵⁸ James Lydon, *Op.Cit.*, p.281 John O'Beirne Ranelagh, *Op.Cit.*, p.98; William Forber Adams *Op.Cit.* .p.129

¹⁵⁹ Paul F. State, *Op.Cit.*, p.169; Lydon , *Op.Cit.*, p.281; Angela Mickley, *Op.Cit.*, p.8; William Forber Adams, *Op.Cit.*, pp.22-23.

¹⁶⁰ See: William Forber Adams *Op.Cit.*, pp.23-24.

they carried out violence by it against high rents, evictions, wages, tithes and taxes, so, open battles with police became common. The major reason behind the problem of disorder was the system of tithes and the methods of enforcement and collection.¹⁶¹

This was the state of agricultural society in comparatively peaceful periods. At intervals throughout most of Ireland, and almost continuously from 1815 to 1823 in the counties of Limerick, Tipperary and Clare, there was a state of approaching civil war. Thus, it seems clear that insurrection was not merely the action of a few unfortunate individuals, other than it was an organized concerted movement in opposition to high rents, to tithes, and especially to evictions, on the part of the whole agricultural population. It was impossible to do much against the landlord directly, as the estates of the gentry were large and usually well protected. Furthermore, it is doubtful whether in a country with the aristocratic tradition of Ireland, the great mass of peasantry could have been brought to any direct attack upon their lords. Some few attempts on gentlemen's houses did take place, but they were exceptional, and their object was frequently to obtain arms, and not to do any direct harm either to the person or the property of the landlord.¹⁶²

Probably the mob never examined beyond the immediate cause of its anger, and struck blindly, not at the proprietor who was responsible, but at the agent who carried out an eviction or levied distress, or at the tenant who replaced an evicted family, choosing rather to attack the farmer against whom their grievances were more direct. Yet the leaders in such organizations as the White-boys and the Rockites were themselves substantial farmers. These men doubtless hoped to secure protection for themselves by joining to the strongest organized power in the community, but their declared objects, the enforced non-payment of rents and tithes, show that they hoped for a general agrarian reform.¹⁶³

The most widespread secret society in Ireland at this time, that of the Ribbonmen, a Roman Catholic group, was strictly religious, with no agrarian purposes, but it was undoubtedly used at times for agrarian ends. The gentry often chose to consider the outrages as evidence of religious warfare, and attempted to disguise as protection of the church their efforts to save their incomes. Even in defending tithes, they were protecting themselves, and one of the worst features of the

¹⁶¹John O'Beirne Ranelagh, *Op.Cit.*, p.100; Paul F. State, *Op.Cit.*, pp.169-170; James Lydon, *Op.Cit.*, p.p. 281, 293; R . F. Foster, *Op.Cit.*, pp.193-94; Lawrence J. McCaffrey, *Textures of Irish America*, p.12; Angela Mickley, *Op.Cit.*, p.8; William Forber Adams *Op.Cit.*, p.27; Daniel O'Connell and Catholic Emancipation, Catholic Emancipation:http://www.irishhistorylinks.net/History_Links/Catholic_Emanicipation.html. 11 /01 / 2010, 08:20am; Pre-Famine Ireland, Social Structure: <http://www.deskeenan.com/4PrBiography.htm>. 27/ 02 /2010, 08:40 am.

¹⁶² See: William Forber Adams *Op.Cit.*, p.25-27.

¹⁶³ *Ibid*, pp. 27-28.

tithes was that it varied in character from parish to parish, and the injustice was clear to everyone. Tithes did not become a major issue until 1831, but they shared in the popular hatred, and were usually coupled with rents in any statement of grievances or of causes of emigration, in general, religious differences had nothing to do with agrarian crime. There were those who chose to fight, and those who preferred to emigrate. During periods of suppression, however, many who had chosen to fight also found it wiser to emigrate, and after pacification, those had a choice of sailing to America or awaiting annihilation at home, but more hardy spirits emigrated to escape prosecution. On the contrary to popular belief, Ulster was not exempted from this sort of agrarian unrest. Though suffering less from organized disturbances than the extreme southwest, the northern counties were as hard hit as most of Leinster, and very much worse than Connaught. Even the County Down, which had long been famous for its industry and comparative prosperity, was the scene of many agricultural attacks during the years followed 1815.¹⁶⁴

From what has been stated it will be manifest that beneath the political and religious turmoil in Ireland raged a far more desperate agrarian strife, which opened the way for a transoceanic migration such as neither Ireland nor any other European people had ever known before. The four years ending in 1823 constitute one of the blackest periods in the social history of Ireland, as agrarian outrage, which had become somewhat less frequent after the famine conditions of 1817-18, reappeared with increased bitterness late in 1820. The chief center of trouble was the grazing area of Galway and Roscommon, and at the same time, southwest Munster, always a hotbed of trouble, was achieving something like united rebellion against tithes and rents.¹⁶⁵

The reign of anarchy was brought to an abrupt halt by famine in 1821, which will be explained later. Moreover, in 1823 the revival of agrarian agitation, which accompanied improved conditions, lacked much of its former violence. The most direct reason for the change was the new direction given by O'Connell to the activities of the secret societies. All of them were in the name of religion, and it was by uniting them through the priests that he created the tremendous force of the reorganized Catholic Association, whose real effectiveness commenced in 1823— as we pointed out previously. Henceforth the members of the societies directed their main efforts towards the Catholic Emancipation. It is clear, however, that from 1823 to 1829 disturbances took on a more religious and less economic character, therefore Munster, where a considerable proportion of the landlords were Catholic, suffered less, while

¹⁶⁴ Ibid, pp. 29-31; Emily Lawless, *Op.Cit.*, pp.385-386; "Belfast News Letter", August 12, 1817; "Belfast News Letter", February 11, 1820.

¹⁶⁵ William Adams, *Op.Cit.*, p.129; Kerry A. Graves, *Op.Cit.*, p.28; "Belfast News Letter", February 11, 1820.

the border counties of Ulster became the scene of frequent and serious riots.¹⁶⁶ Thus, when the Catholic Relief Act was passed in 1829, it was against this background of violence and depression that the duke of Wellington became convinced that submission to O'Connell's demands was the only alternative to civil war.¹⁶⁷

However Ireland in the early 1830s was a land of violent crime and disorder, as violence, murder, injury and destruction of property were common. Crime was widespread, law and order in disarray in many places, and by the early 1840s assassins were targeting landlords in certain locations, also an added sectarian motive accompanied turmoil in Ulster. Intensely anti-Protestant Ribbonmen battled Orangemen in frequent skirmishes at fairs and markets, and their chilling vow “to wade knee-deep in Orange blood” sent a ripple of fear through Protestants everywhere. That vow indicated how much Protestant-Catholic relations had deteriorated since the nonsectarian sentiments that had found so much favor among some, though never all, in Ireland in the late 18th century. It was not foreordained that the division between Protestants and Catholics in political power, social status and economic wealth put in place after 1691 would lead inexorably to bitter antagonism between the two. That mutual hostility became so ingrained is a testament to enduring cultural pride among the native Irish and to changing economic conditions consequent to commercialization, which forced Catholics and Protestants of the same socioeconomic class to compete for land and employment and compelled increasing numbers of poor Catholic to submit to an increasingly exploitative conditions in landlord-tenant relations,¹⁶⁸ and also led to ejected tenants, where, the extensive clearances of the inhabitants from the estates of landed proprietors in Ireland frequently occur, and are now going on, by means of evictions carried into effect under the laws of ejectment. And whereas numbers of individuals and families are frequently turned adrift without the means of obtaining either food or shelter, and from these causes crimes are multiplied.¹⁶⁹

¹⁶⁶ William Adams, Op.Cit., pp.129-131; Karl S. Bottigheimer, Op.Cit., p.173; Lawrence J. McCaffrey, *The Irish Question*, pp.24-25; James Lydon, Op.Cit., p.285; Ireland & O'Connell, p.33; John O'Beirne Ranelagh, Op.Cit., p.98.

¹⁶⁷ John O'Beirne Ranelagh, Op.Cit., p.100; W. J. Fitzpatrick, *Correspondence of Daniel O'Connell: The Liberator*, Vol. 1, p.p172, 180; Lawrence J. McCaffrey, *The Irish Question*, pp. 26 -28; Karl S. Bottigheimer, Op.Cit., p.174 ; Paul F. State, Op.Cit., p.p. 177,179; James Lydon, Op.Cit., p. 288; Lawrence J. McCaffrey, *The Irish Diaspora in America*, pp. 39-40; Denny Hatch, Op.Cit., p.8; R. F. Foster, Op.Cit., p.187; T. A. Jackson, Op.Cit., p.215.

¹⁶⁸ James Lydon, Op.Cit., p.p.281,293; Paul F. State, Op.Cit., p.170; R. F. Foster, Op.Cit., p.p.193-194; Daniel O'Connell and Catholic Emancipation, Catholic Emancipation:

http://www.irishhistorylinks.net/History_Links/Catholic_Emanicipation.html. 11/01/2010, 08:20 am.

¹⁶⁹ P.R, A bill for the protection and relief of ejected tenants in Ireland, H.C, 1846[237], p.1.

1.3.3 Education

With regard to Education in Ireland, religion elaborated efforts to create a uniform educational system that first were made during this period. Education was practically unknown among the cotters. The schools subsidized by the Kildare Street Society of Dublin served only a small part of Ireland, and were under suspicion as agencies for proselytizing to the Protestant church.¹⁷⁰ That is, during the early 19th century Protestant evangelicalism led to sustained attempt to convert the poor of Ireland to Protestant, and Bible societies supplied the missionaries with the literature they needed to carry out their work. Not only Bibles, but religious tracts of all kinds were supplied in astonishing numbers.¹⁷¹ Since these schools were considered by the majority of Catholics as proselytising agents, it is not surprising that their combined efforts catered for only a fraction of the children of school-going age.¹⁷²

By the 1820s less than half million Catholic children were being educated in hedge schools. First emerging in the 17th century and they became widespread in the 18th in willful defiance of legislation that denied Catholics access to education. Held in secret, sometimes literally in hedge bottoms, when enforcement of the laws lessened, schools were held in cottages and barns. Although textbooks were usually scarce, the classics well as Irish history and literature were taught, and English replaced Irish as the language of instruction as the schools became less secretive. Roman Catholic hedge schools, taught by the priests, had a spasmodic existence throughout a large part of the country. These schools were no longer illegal and frequently had school rooms, but they were more remarkable for the extraordinary character of their texts than for the quality of the teachers.¹⁷³

Education also played an important role in the decision of many Irish to emigrate, where, in 1821, out of 1,700,000 persons between the ages of six and fifteen, there were only 394,000 school children in all Ireland in private schools and they were mostly taught in English. Illiteracy was widespread, and in the wilder portions of the country almost universal. The writing system of Irish had almost died out, though in Connaught, Longford and the mountainous parts of Ulster and Munster Irish was the common language, and English spoken only by the gentry. Even after the beginnings of national education in 1831 almost half the Ulster Protestants could not write their own names.¹⁷⁴

¹⁷⁰ Paul F. State, *Op.Cit.*, p.167; William Forber Adams *Op.Cit.*, p. 22 .

¹⁷¹ James Lydon, *Op.Cit.*, pp. 281-282; Paul F. State, *Op.Cit.*, p.167.

¹⁷² Gearoid O Tuathaigh, *Ireland before the Famine 1798-1848*, Dublin 2007, p. 88.

¹⁷³ *Ibid.*, p.88; Paul F. State, *Op.Cit.*, pp.167-168; William Forber Adams *Op.Cit.*, p. 22 .

¹⁷⁴ William Forber Adams *Op.Cit.*, p. 22; Denny Hatch, *Op.Cit.*, p. 9.

A nationwide system of primary schools was set up in 1831, funded by the central government, with salaried teaching staff appointed and supported by local boards of governors. So, the proportion of peasants who were literate in English became greatly expanded after 1831, thanks to those schools financed by government which provided regular instruction in English. The National Board of Education spent a great deal of money in Ireland, every year just before the Famine they were spending £100,000 on education, this explains that education was placed as a priority. So on the eve of the great Famine, new peasants' knowledge of the world increased well beyond the confines of the Irish Gaelic Culture. Thus, the efforts to convert the Catholic of Ireland to Protestant failed utterly, which only served to solidify Protestant prejudices. A French traveller and social theorist as Alexis de Tocqueville visited Ireland in 1835¹⁷⁵ and said: "All the rich Protestants whom I saw in Dublin speak of the Catholic with an extraordinary hatred and scorn. They say, are savages, incapable of recognizing a kindness, and fanatics led into all sorts of disorder by their priests."¹⁷⁶

At the secondary level the story is a brief one; true, the long-established endowed foundations were gradually subjected to more rigorous inspection by a professional inspectorate, but apart from this, the government was content to leave secondary education to the efforts made by voluntary societies. In the first quarter of the nineteenth century diocesan colleges were opened at Wexford (St. Peter's), Waterford (St. John's) and Tuam (St. Jarlath's), and the network was gradually extended. Moreover, at the beginning of this century, university education in Ireland was confined to Trinity College, Dublin.¹⁷⁷

Despite the policies of some British politicians demonstrated a concern to alleviate religious tensions in Ireland, such as Robert Peel who introduced the measures to appease Catholic opinion, but in the same time, he was particularly anxious to get middle- and upper-class Catholics to support the Union, especially after his conflict with O'Connell when he banned a repeal meeting in Clontarf in 1843 as has previously been explained. So, in 1845 Peel proposed the establishment of the Queen's colleges; three colleges were to be established at Belfast, Cork and Galway; all appointments were to lie with the Crown and the colleges were to be strictly non-denominational. But even educational reform, which the London government had tried to establish on a purely non-sectarian basis, had been compromised so that in effect it was organized on sectarian lines. This was to suit the established church as

¹⁷⁵ Denny Hatch, *Op.Cit.*, p.9; Gearoid O Tuathaigh, *Op.Cit.*, p. 90; Paul F. State, *Op. Cit.*, pp.167-168; James Lydon, *Op.Cit.*, p.p. 290, 299; Karl S. Bottigheimer, *Op. Cit.*, p.176; John O'Beirne Ranelagh, *Op.Cit.*, p. 99.

¹⁷⁶ Quoted in: Paul F. State, *Op.Cit.*, p. 167.

¹⁷⁷ Gearoid O Tuathaigh, *Op.Cit.*, pp. 94 -95.

well as Catholic and Presbyterian interests. O'Connell seemed well on the way to achieve his known aim of restoring Ireland to the Irish, which in reality meant to the Catholics, after he and Archbishop MacHale of Tuam saw these actions as a way of increasing the state's control over Catholics.¹⁷⁸

1.3.4 The Poor Law of 1838

From what has been stated it will be manifest that, the greatest social problem of pre-famine Ireland — the problem of poverty. Descriptions of hordes of Irish poor swarming around coaches are standard in the travel-books of most foreign visitors from the end of the eighteenth century; more systematically quantified evidence was at hand in a succession of official enquiries throughout the opening decades of the nineteenth. The Report of 1836, estimated that the number of labourers who were unemployed and in distress during thirty weeks of year was not less than 585,000, whose dependants would number at least 1,800,000, making in the whole 2,385,000. The question was, what, if anything, ought the State do about this? The sick and the lunatic poor benefited from improvements in the provision of infirmaries, asylums, dispensaries and fever hospitals in the decades before the famine, and the problem of the able-bodied poor was more difficult.¹⁷⁹

It is impossible to comprehend the complexity of the problem without briefly mentioning the assumptions about the economy and society which supported the debate on Irish poverty among the governing classes. The most widely accepted analysis, though there were important exceptions, proposed that the twin roots of the problem lay in excess of population and scarcity of capital. Population pressure, at once a cause and an effect of excessive subdivision, was an impediment to improved agricultural cultivation. As we mentioned earlier, the population was rising rapidly, along with exports, without increases in productivity resulting from more efficient agriculture and manufacture these parallel tendencies had to lead eventually to a lower standard of living for the mass of the population, and to the extreme poverty.¹⁸⁰ Thus,

¹⁷⁸ Daniel O'Connell and Catholic Emancipation, Catholic Emancipation: http://www.irishhistorylinks.net/History_Links/Catholic_Emanicipation.html. 11/01/2010,08:20am; Gearoid O Tuathaigh, Op.Cit., p. 95; James Lydon, Op.Cit., p.p. 294,299.

¹⁷⁹RRC, Third report of the commissioners for inquiring into the condition of the poorer classes in Ireland, H.C, 1836 [43], p.p. 4-9, 25; Gearoid O Tuathaigh, Op.Cit., p.96.

For more details about the actual condition of poorer classes in Ireland see: ARPLC, Poor inquiry, Report on the city of Dublin, and supplement containing answers to queries, with addenda to appendix (A.), and communications, H.C, 1836 [35][36][37][38][39][40][41][42], Part II, Appendix(A.) and (C.).

¹⁸⁰Gearoid O Tuathaigh, Op.Cit., p.96; Karl S. Bottigheimer, Op.Cit., p.162; Richard B. Finnegan, Op.Cit., p.16; T.W Moody and F. X. Martin, Op.Cit., p.204; Lawrence J. McCaffrey, *The Irish Diaspora in America*, p.54.

the massive increase of Ireland's population intensified the depth of poverty in Ireland. By the 1820s over two million people could be described as living below the poverty line, making Ireland one of the poorest countries in Europe. Contemporary travellers never failed to notice the poverty of Ireland's people. As stated in the description one English observer reported what he found near the town of Midleton in county Cork,¹⁸¹ and also the French sociologist, Gustave de Beaumont, who visited Ireland in 1835 wrote: "I have seen the Indian in his forests, and the Negro in his chains, and thought, as I contemplated their pitiable condition, that I saw the very extreme of human wretchedness; but I did not then know the condition of unfortunate Ireland...In all countries, more or less, paupers may be discovered; but an entire nation of paupers is what was never seen until it was shown in Ireland." He confirmed that "misery, naked and famishing, everywhere, and at every hour of the day."¹⁸² Moreover, the commissioners of British 'Poor Enquiry' survey conducted in 1835 revealed that 75 percent of Irish laborers were without any regular work and that begging was very common, and private charity was the only source to which the poor can look for assistance. They concluded that at least one-third of the people were paupers,¹⁸³ so, they added: "with these facts before us, we cannot hesitate to state, that we consider remedial measures requisite to ameliorate the condition of the Irish Poor."¹⁸⁴

British tax laws provided even more incentive for landlords to force their tenants off the land. Landlords were taxed not only on the value of their Irish estates but also on the number of people who lived on the estate and leased land worth less than four pounds. Because so many cotters leased parcels that were certainly worth less than four pounds, landlords saw evicting tenants as a simple way of both increasing income and reducing expenses. But on the other hand, the transition of the Irish land economy from uneconomic subsistence holdings to a consolidated capitalist-farming system would bring with it many problems, as many thousands of dispossessed cotters would be thrown on to the already overstocked labour market. Many suggestions were made about the best way of dealing with [these casualties of displacement]. State-aided emigration schemes, massive public works projects, land reclamation; all found advocates among the ranks of the political economists. There

¹⁸¹ See: Jay P. Dolan, Op.Cit., p. 36.

¹⁸² Quoted in: Irish Potato famine: <http://www.historyplace.com/worldhistory/famine/before.htm>. 15 /04 /2011, 08: 32 pm; Ronald Takaki, Op.Cit., p.142.

¹⁸³ RRC, Third report of the commissioners for inquiring into the condition of the poorer classes in Ireland, H.C,1836 [43], p. 4; RRC, First report from His Majesty's commissioners for inquiring into the condition of the poorer classes in Ireland, H.C,1835[369], p. 338; ARPLC, Poor inquiry, Reports on the state of the poor and on the charitable institutions in some of the principal towns, Part I, 1836, p.9; Lawrence J. McCaffrey, *Textures of Irish America*, p. 11; Irish Potato famine: <http://www.historyplace.com/worldhistory/famine/before.htm>. 15/04 /2011, 08:32 pm.

¹⁸⁴ Quoted in: RRC, Third report of the commissioners for inquiring into the condition of the poorer classes in Ireland, H.C, 1836 [43], p.4.

was also an influential body of opinion which held that the problem of Irish poverty called out for the enactment of a Poor Law for Ireland, because the number of families made homeless by evictions multiplied.¹⁸⁵

The Poor Law was an attempt to come to terms with some of the problems arising out of widespread poverty in Ireland in the early 19th century by providing institutional relief for the destitute. The Irish Poor Law Act of 1838, heavily influenced by an English Act of 1834, but Ireland, unlike England, had never at any stage had a Poor Law; one consequence of this was that any discussion of the pros and cons of such a provision for Ireland was conducted with the English law as the reference model.¹⁸⁶ The advocates of an Irish Poor Law argued on the assumption that the poor had a moral claim on the support of society as a whole. They themselves produced a variety of 'solutions'; there was general agreement, however, on the desirability of a Poor Law. A system of outdoor relief (by giving wages for work done) would enable the labourers to reach at least subsistence level; this, it was hoped, would break the spiral of despair and achieves prospects of improvement in Ireland. But those who opposed the introduction of a Poor Law into Ireland, including O'Connell, argued that it would further demoralise the poor and rupture old ties of charity. Moreover, it was held that a Poor Law would merely aggravate further the problem of Irish poverty by placing an impossible burden on the rates, thereby devouring the rental of the country. The Irish land economy stood in need of a transfusion of capital, a Poor Law seemed more like a deadly haemorrhage. It was expected that this view would have many supporters among Irish landlords.¹⁸⁷ No doubt part of the British concern for the Irish poor derived from humanitarian motives, but economic self-interest also loomed large. There was an increasing alarm at all levels of British society at the ever increasing flood of Irish paupers who crowded into the ghettos of the new industrial towns, as some warned, "There the Irishman abides in his squalor and unreason, in his falsity and drunken violence, as the readymade nucleus of degradation and disorder."¹⁸⁸ O'Connell, after several uncomfortable bouts of indecision, eventually swallowed his basic convictions and supported the Bill; his followers were divided on the matter. The Churches were unhappy at the institutionalised form of the proposed poor relief (the

¹⁸⁵Karen Price Hossell, *Op.Cit.*, p.15; Gearoid O Tuathaigh, *Op .Cit.*, p.97.

For more details about a series of provisions for the improvement of Ireland and the relief of the poor therein, including the means of emigration see: RRC, Third report of the commissioners for inquiring into the condition of the poorer classes in Ireland, H.C, 1836 [43], pp.17-34.

¹⁸⁶NAI, Guide to the records of the Poor Law:

<http://www.nationalarchives.ie/research/research-guides-and-articles/guide-to-the-records-of-the-poor-law/>. 31/07/2011, 03:10 pm; Gearoid O Tuathaigh, *Op.Cit.*, pp.97- 98.

¹⁸⁷For more details see: Gearoid O Tuathaigh, *Op.Cit.*, pp.97- 98; ARPLC, Poor inquiry, Reports on the state of the poor and on the charitable institutions in some of the principal towns, Part I, 1836, p.46.

¹⁸⁸Quoted in: Gearoid O Tuathaigh, *Op.Cit.*, pp.99-100.

workhouses), but neither they nor any other of the scheme's critics exerted themselves sufficiently to prevent its adoption.¹⁸⁹

Accordingly, the Irish Poor Law, enacted by the British government in 1837, and in 1838, Poor Law was conferred on Ireland. A Central Board was established in Dublin to administer the system (subject to the control of the English Board of Poor Law Commissioners); the country was divided into 130 separate administrative areas, called unions, since they united several church parishes together. Each union had its own workhouse and a local Board of Guardians elected by taxpaying landowners and farmers. These Boards were charged with establishing the workhouse, administering it, and raising the tax (half from the owners and half from the occupiers of land) to meet the costs. The commissioners were empowered to employ a number of assistant commissioners to help in setting up the system. Unlike the English experience, there was little initial opposition in Ireland to the construction of the workhouses. The Irish operation also gave the Central Board greater control than in England.¹⁹⁰ In this context, the commissioners stated in their report: "We cannot recommend the present workhouse system of England as at all suited to Ireland."¹⁹¹ Thus, the Poor Law, established workhouses where, in return for a place to sleep and food to eat, people did various jobs. Men were assigned chores that included breaking rocks or crushing animal bones to make fertilizer, and women often spent their days knitting.¹⁹² On the other hand, there were cases called for the application of other remedies, including the immigration,¹⁹³ which will be seen in the following chapter.

It is notable that absence of violent resistance for the workhouses should not imply popular acceptance it; on the contrary, the evidence suggests that they were

¹⁸⁹ Ibid, p.100.

¹⁹⁰ P.R, Return of workhouses contracted for in Ireland, H.C, 1841 Session 1(352),pp.1-4; Gearoid O Tuathaigh, Op. Cit., pp. 100-101; RRC, Third report of the commissioners for inquiring into the condition of the poorer classes in Ireland, H.C,1836[43], pp.25-26; Frank Neal, *Sectarian Violence: The Liverpool Experience, 1819-1914, an Aspect of Anglo-Irish History*, Manchester 1988, p.80; Karen Price Hossell, Op. Cit., p.15; Denny Hatch, Op.Cit., pp.8-9; PRONI, 19th Century Emigration to the North Americas, The Irish poor law:

http://www.proni.gov.uk/index/exhibitions_talks_and_events/19th_century_emigration_to_the_north_americaonline/helping_hands/the_irish_poor_law.htm. 01/05/ 2011, 09:10 am; The Establishment of the Poor Law System:http://www.askaboutireland.ie/reading-room/history-heritage/poor-law-union/poor-law-unions-andtheir/the_establishment_of_the_poor_law. 09/05/ 2011, 10:00 am; NAI, Guide to the records of the Poor Law: <http://www.nationalarchives.ie/research/research-guides-and-articles/guide-to-the-records-of-the-poor-law/>. 31/07/2011, 03:10 pm; Irish Potato famine: <http://www.historyplace.com/worldhistory/famine/before.htm>. 15/04/2011, 08: 32 pm.

¹⁹¹ Quoted in: RRC, Third report of the commissioners for inquiring into the condition of the poorer classes in Ireland, H.C, 1836 [43], p.5. Further details are giving in: Ibid, pp.4-6.

¹⁹² Karen Price Hossell, Op.Cit., p.15.

¹⁹³ Quoted in: RRC, Third report of the commissioners for inquiring into the condition of the poorer classes in Ireland, H.C, 1836 [43], p.p.5, 8-9.

viewed by the mass of the people as more detestable than the jail. The 130 pre-famine workhouses throughout Ireland could hold a total of about 100,000 persons. Everyone knew that entering a workhouse meant the complete loss of dignity and freedom, so, poor people avoided them. On the other hand before the Famine, the workhouses in Ireland generally remained three-quarters empty despite the fact there were an estimated 2.4 million Irish living in a state of poverty.¹⁹⁴ The cotters and landless workers totalled three quarters of Ireland's rural population by 1840. The very poorest population, these undernourished masses fell victim in disproportionate numbers to disease, most notably to epidemics of typhus and cholera. They eked out a miserable existence, giving the country the stereotypical image that travellers took away with them.¹⁹⁵ The 1841 census reveals that 100 Union poor houses were then under construction. However, during this year there were thirty-seven workhouses in operation and during that year over 30,000 people sought relief within their doors. When Ireland suffered from a terrible famine from 1845 to 1851, during the famine years those workhouses will become so overcrowded, as we will see that later. So, by 1846 all 130 unions were operating and on the closing day of that year there were 94,437 people lodged in the workhouses. By this time, however, the entire system was in the grip of a larger crisis. The administrators of the Irish Poor Law had made it clear that the system was designed to meet the normal demands of Irish poverty, but was not equipped to deal with any major catastrophe. Yet, within a very few years of the scheme's inception just such a catastrophe struck rural Ireland.¹⁹⁶

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¹⁹⁴ARPLC, Poor inquiry, Reports on the state of the poor and on the charitable institutions in some of the principal towns, Part I, 1836, p. 46; Gearoid O Tuathaigh, Op.Cit., p. 101; Irish Potato famine: <http://www.historyplace.com/worldhistory/famine/before.htm>. 15/04/ 2011, 08:32 pm.

¹⁹⁵Paul F. State, Op.Cit., p.184; R. F. Foster , Op.Cit., pp.201-202.

See: William Forber Adams Op.Cit., pp.20-21.

¹⁹⁶ H. Burke, *The People and the Poor Law in Nineteenth Century Ireland*, Lattlehampton 1987, p.126; Andy Bielenberg, Op.Cit., p.158; Gearoid O Tuathaigh, Op.Cit., p.101; Kem Knapp Sawyer, Op.Cit., p.16; Frank Neal, Op.Cit., p.80; PRONI, 19th Century Emigration to the North Americas, The Irish poor law: http://www.proni.gov.uk/index/exhibitions_talks_and_events/19th_century_emigration_to_the_north_american_online/helping_hands/the_irish_poor_law.htm. 01/05/ 2011, 09:10 am.

estimated 2.4 million Irish living in a state of poverty.¹⁹⁷ The cottiers and landless workers totaled three quarters of Ireland's rural population by 1840. The very poorest population, these undernourished masses fell victim in disproportionate numbers to disease, most notably to epidemics of typhus and cholera. They eked out a miserable existence, giving the country the stereotypical image that travelers took away with them.¹⁹⁸ The 1841 census reveals that 100 Union poor houses were then under construction.¹⁹⁹ However, during this year there were thirty-seven workhouses in operation and during that year over 30,000 people sought relief within their doors. When Ireland suffered from a terrible famine from 1845 to 1851, during the famine years those workhouses will become so overcrowded, as we will see that later. So, by 1846 all 130 unions were operating and on the closing day of that year there were 94,437 people lodged in the workhouses. By this time, however, the entire system was in the grip of a larger crisis. The administrators of the Irish Poor Law had made it clear that the system was designed to meet the normal demands of Irish poverty, but was not equipped to deal with any major catastrophe. Yet, within a very few years of the scheme's inception just such a catastrophe struck rural Ireland.²⁰⁰

¹⁹⁷ ARPLC, Poor inquiry, Reports on the state of the poor and on the charitable institutions in some of the principal towns; with supplement containing answers to queries, Part I, H.C., 1836[35][36][37][38][39][40][41][42], Part I, 1836, p. 46; Gearoid O Tuathaigh, Op.Cit., p. 101;
<http://www.historyplace.com/worldhistory/famine/before.htm>. 15/04/ 2011, 08:32 pm.

¹⁹⁸ Paul F. State, Op.Cit., p.184; R. F. Foster, Op. Cit., pp.201-202. See: William Forber Adams Op.Cit., pp. 20-21.

¹⁹⁹ Helen Burke, *The People and the Poor Law in Nineteenth Century Ireland*, Lattlehampton, 1987, p.126; Andy Bielenberg, Op.Cit., p158.

²⁰⁰ Gearoid O Tuathaigh, Op .Cit., p.101; Kem Knapp Sawyer, Op.Cit.,p.16; PRONI :
http://www.proni.gov.uk/index/exhibitions_talks_and_events/19th_century_emigration_to_the_north_americaonline/helping_hands/the_irish_poor_law.htm. 01/05/ 2011, 09:10 am.

CHAPTER TWO

**Irish immigration to
the United States
before the Great
Famine**

Chapter 2

Irish immigration to the United States before the Great Famine

2.1 Early Irish immigration to the United States

2.1.1 First Influx of Irish Immigrants to the United States of America and Reasons behind the immigration

Irish immigrants were among those who first ventured to North America, known as the New World, in the early 1600s. Most who came over during these early years were middle-class Protestants living in the north of Ireland looking for a new life, and many of them Presbyterians from Ulster. They continued to arrive up until the American Revolution in 1776. The Catholics constituted a smaller part of early emigration to America.¹

Political oppression and poverty drove many Irish to seek their fortunes in the new land in Britain's American colonies. But it was not until 1690, when England took control of Ireland completely after the Battle of the Boyne, that the Irish left their homeland in large numbers. The occupation government has followed a plan of organized genocide and extermination of Irish nation. As a result of this policy thousands of Irish were killed, and then special courts were set up as a tool to continue the work of annihilation and genocide, which led many Irish to leave their country and to search for asylum in Europe and North America, especially after the British government implemented many new laws in Ireland, among them the penal

¹ Kerry A. Graves, Op.Cit., p.13; Timothy J. Paulson, Op.Cit., p.18; Kerby A. Miller, Arnold Schrier, Bruce D. Boling, David N. Doyle, Op.Cit., p.p. 3, 24; Lawrence J. McCaffrey, *The Irish Diaspora in America*, pp.59-60; Kerby A. Miller and Patricia Mulholland Miller, Op.Cit.,p.5.

laws in 1695, as we pointed out earlier. Emigration set in, but, in spite of the multitude that left, famine laid hold of many of those who remained.²

In the 1600s British migrations to Ireland had rivaled in size those to the New World, where, Ulster received in this period by far the largest migration of the Britons in Irish history. Although they were mainly Presbyterians who had been encouraged by the British government to come from Scotland as part of the Ulster "plantation". But Ulster was partially disgorged to North America in the 18th and Ireland itself became a source of emigrants to there, where, Irish immigrants found their way to the American colonies in greater numbers. Thus it seems clear that the first wave of immigrants from Ireland was Presbyterian, often called Scotch-Irish, and was later followed by Catholic emigrants.³

As powerful as religious oppression was in persuading thousands of people to leave Ireland, the main reason for emigration still remained economic. The first sizable exodus began in 1718 and ended in 1729, the chief reason being crop failure. This occurred in 1717 through 1719; the harvest failed again in 1726-28. Moreover, the famine was especially acute in 1740-1741, when as many as 480,000 people died. Among the Irish this period is still remembered as the Year of the Slaughter, a time when one of every five Irish died, a ratio that was much higher than in the Great Famine of the 1840s.⁴ Adding to the misery of hunger, rents were rising as crops were failing. In the early years of the century people could lease land at bargain prices, but over time land became more scarce and thus more valuable. Also as leases began to expire, Anglican landowners, many of whom were absentee landlords who seldom visited Ireland, raised the rents on their land. Rents were rising as crops were failing. One Irishman, wrote to his sister in New Jersey, complained about the hard times: "This have been a very hard years amongst the poor people, for Corn failed very much and now wheat is at twenty shillings and other Corn proportional lands is got to an Extreme Rate here so that any person who rents land [at these high rates] will likely be ruined financially." As their standard of living declined, many Irish considered emigration to

² Further details are giving in: Emily Lawless, Op.Cit., pp.299-310; Karen Price Hossell, Op.Cit., p.11; Kerry A. Graves, Op.Cit., pp.24-25; Timothy J. Paulson, Op.Cit, p.2; Sir Henry Parnell, Op.Cit., pp.15-20; Richard B. Finnegan, Op.Cit., pp.11-12; T.W Moody and F.X. Martin, Op.Cit., p.205; Irish Potato famine: <http://www.historyplace.com/worldhistory/famine/before.htm>. 15 /04 / 2011, 08:32 pm.

³ Karl S. Bottigheimer, Op.Cit., pp.246-247; Marjorie R. Fallows, Op.Cit., p.20; Kem Knapp Sawyer, Op.Cit., pp.4-5; William D. Griffin, Op.Cit., p.6; Kerby A. Miller, Arnold Schrier, Bruce D. Boling, David N. Doyle, Op.Cit., p.6; Timothy J. Paulson, Op.Cit., p.23; Jay P. Dolan, Op.Cit., p.8; Albert Cook Myers, Op.Cit.,p.35; Amy Hackney Blackwell and Ryan Hackney, *The Immigrant Experience in the United States*: <http://www.netplaces.com/irish-history/the-immigrant-experience/the-immigrant-experience-in-the-united-states.htm>. 05/ 03 /2013, 02: 20 pm.

⁴ Jay P. Dolan, Op.Cit., p. 6.

America, where, as one put it, “There are no rents, no tithes, and no lack of affordable land.”⁵

The decline of the linen industry was another major catalyst for emigration. The manufacturing of linen had replaced farming as the mainstay of the economy. So complete was this that linen made up one half of all the exports from Ireland to England by 1720. Entire families grew the flax, spun the yarn and bleached the cloth. They rented the land they lived on, doing just enough farming to sustain themselves while concentrating on the production of linen. As the English demand for linen lessened and competition from European manufacturers increased, trade weakened. In 1729 a slump in the linen trade along with a poor harvest sparked a rush to America. This Irish rush continued throughout the following years. In the 1770s the linen industry collapsed, sparking a major exodus. In the years 1771-72, the number of emigrants to America from Ireland alone amounts to 17,350. Almost all of them emigrated at their own charge; a great majority of them were persons employed in the linen manufacture, or farmers possessed of some property which they converted into money and carried with them. In August, 1773, there arrived at Philadelphia 3,500 emigrants from Ireland.⁶ Thus, squeezed by high rents and a meager income, many Irish chose to immigrate to what one Irishman described as “a land of peace and plenty . . . the garden spot of the world: a happy asylum for the banished children of oppression.”⁷ It seems that the British did not limit their restrictions to Catholics alone. In the north, the Presbyterian Ulster Scots were burdened with heavy import taxes on cloth shipped to English markets. During the 1700s, many waves of these Scotch-Irish immigrated to colonies in New England, Virginia, the Carolinas, and farther south in search of economic freedom. These families were relatively wealthy and could afford to bring their entire households and weaving businesses to establish a new life in a new land.

It is notable that the failed harvests and economic depression were not new to Ireland. Such misfortunes plagued Ulster in the seventeenth century, but they did not result in a massive exodus. Migration took place in the early eighteenth century, however, because by this time Ireland and America were closely linked. Though an ocean apart, America was well-known to Ulster's Irish. The major link was through a lively transatlantic trade between Ulster and the American colonies. The trading of flaxseed from America for linen from Ulster had transformed the river town of Derry into a major center of trade. Another connection between the two colonies was the work of Presbyterian missionaries who traveled back and forth across the Atlantic. By

⁵ Quoted in: *Ibid*, pp.6-7; Kerby A. Miller, Arnold Schrier, Bruce D. Boling, David N. Doyle, *Op.Cit.*, p.6.

⁶ Jay P. Dolan, *Op.Cit.*, p.7; Philip H. Bagenal, *Op.Cit.*,p.6; William D. Griffin, *Op.Cit.*, p. 8.

⁷ Quoted in: Jay P. Dolan, *Op.Cit.*, p.7; Kerby A. Miller, Arnold Schrier, Bruce D. Boling, David N. Doyle, *Op.Cit.*, p. 420.

establishing religious ties between Ulster and America, they promoted the idea of emigration from a "Land of tyranny "to" a land of Liberty" where people could worship freely.⁸

Another reason for the attraction of the American colonies was that the colonies promoted emigration, for example, South Carolina and Georgia offered "cheap land, free tools and seed" to entice Irish Protestants to settle in their colony. Moreover, shipping agents also promoted travel to America by advertising it as the "garden spot of the world." Letters back home to Ulster singing the praises of America, where there were "no Tithes nor Tithe mongers," were especially instrumental in influencing people's decisions to abandon Ulster. A government official noted that in their letters the emigrants often described America as "a good poor man's country where there are no oppressions of any kind whatsoever."⁹ Thus after the American Revolution, small farmers, artisans, businessmen, and professionals from Northern Ireland continued to settle in America, they found could no longer bear the burden of taxes, high rents, low prices, religious constraints and the fluctuations of the linen trade, and on the other hand, the historical temptations of North America: cheap land, religious freedom and prospect of economic opportunity.¹⁰

As we pointed out, the Irish Presbyterians, not the Irish Catholics, comprised the bulk of the Irish exodus to the American colonies in the 18th century. Coming from the northern and eastern counties of Ulster (Antrim, Derry, and Down), most of them, as many as 80 percent, paid their own way to America during the first wave of emigration in the 1720s. They traveled as families, raising money for passage by selling the unexpired leases that they held on their land. After 1741, as famine and a failing economy plagued the countryside, most emigrants traveled as indentured servants offering their services to a master who would pay the cost of their passage to the New World. For these immigrants, the only choice was to become an indentured servant. This meant they were bound by contract to serve their colonial masters for four years for their passage to the New World. Some agreed to work as indentured servants without pay up to five or seven years in return for free passage to America.¹¹ Most of

⁸ Kerry A. Graves, Op.Cit., p. 25; Jay P. Dolan, Op.Cit., pp.7-8.

⁹ Quoted in: Jay P. Dolan, Op.Cit., p. 8; Kerby A. Miller, *Emigrants and Exiles: Ireland and the Irish Exodus to North America*, New York 1985, p.154.

¹⁰ Kerry A. Graves, Op.Cit., p.p.14-15,25; Karl S. Bottigheimer, Op.Cit., pp. 246-247; Marjorie R. Fallows, Op.Cit., p.20; William D. Griffin, Op.Cit., p. 6; Kerby A. Miller, Arnold Schrier, Bruce D. Boling, David N. Doyle, Op.Cit., pp.6-7; Timothy J. Paulson, Op.Cit., p.18. Further details are giving in John Francis Maguire M. P., *The Irish in America*, New York 1880, p.1-8.

¹¹ Jay P. Dolan, Op.Cit., pp.17-18; Kem Knapp Sawyer, Op.Cit.,p.5; Timothy J. Paulson, Op.Cit., p20; Karen Price Hossell, Op.Cit., p.11; Lawrence J. McCaffrey, *Textures of Irish America*, p.11; Kerry A. Graves, Op.Cit., p.13; Irish Potato famine:<http://www.historyplace.com/worldhistory/famine/before.htm>. 15 / 04/2011, 08:32pm.

these servants were single men or women who worked on farms; some had skills needed in an urban economy. So common was this practice among the Irish that nine out of ten indentured servants in Pennsylvania in the 1740s were Irish. Generally the captain of the ship signed up the men and women who wanted to sell their labor for the cost of travel to America. If he worked with an agent of an American master who needed such laborers, he would deliver the workers to the master at the dock in America. If he acted on his own, upon his arrival in the colonies he would auction off the servants. The commerce of indentured servants was a big business that responded to the labor shortage in the colonies. The entire process was formalized in written contracts, signed by the servant and the indentured, usually the ship captain, and witnessed by two people. By signing the contract the servant and the master pledged themselves to honor the terms of the contract. For the master this meant providing clothes, food, and lodging, while the servant promised to serve his or her master for the agreed-upon term. It was a form of contract labor in which the American purchaser owned the servant's labor.¹²

American and Canadian ships had stopped in Irish ports after delivering flax seed and lumber cargoes to the British Isles to pick up immigrants as ballast. An average ten-guinea transatlantic fare guaranteed that most of the Irish entering America were people of at least moderate means. The majority were artisans or tenant farmers, many of the latter doubling as hand-loom weavers. They came to the New World to find opportunities in a land further removed from the oppression of British mercantilism. And since most of them were nonconformists, rather than members of the Church of Ireland, they also fled Ireland to protest religious discrimination that relegated them to second-class citizenship within the Protestant social order.¹³ Moreover, many adventurous, unemployed young Irishmen sought their fortunes in America and boarded ships heading for Boston, New York and Philadelphia. Whatever the reasons, thousands of Ulster protestants and Presbyterians crossed the Atlantic in the middle decades of the eighteenth century and established themselves along the Appalachian frontier, especially in Pennsylvania, Virginia, and North Carolina.¹⁴

Many early Irish immigrants were too poor or unskilled to take advantage of the offer of free land at that time, as we pointed out, some came as indentured servants. This matter was confirmed by letter, written in 1789 by Phineas Bond, the British consul in Philadelphia, to Lord Carmarthen, British secretary for foreign affairs, describes the arrival of some of Ireland's earliest immigrants. But not all Irish immigrants to Britain's American colonies were poor. However, what the average

¹²Jay P. Dolan, *Op.Cit.*, p.18; Philip H. Bagenal, *Op.Cit.*, p.8. See: Kerby A. Miller, Arnold Schrier, Bruce D. Boling, David N. Doyle, *Op.Cit.*, p.254.

¹³Lawrence J. McCaffrey, *The Irish Diaspora in America*, p.59.

¹⁴Karl S. Bottigheimer, *Op.Cit.*, p. 247; Irish Potato famine:

<http://www.historyplace.com/worldhistory/famine/before.htm>. 15/04/ 2011, 08: 32 pm.

Irish immigrant brought to America was not money or material goods but simply the will to succeed in a new land.¹⁵

Although Irish emigration in the 18th was heavily Presbyterian, there was some Irish Catholic migration to North America. Any Irish Catholic person, who wanted to own land, or even just enjoy a comfortable life, had to think about living somewhere else, so some began thinking of the American colonies. However, the Irish Catholics migration to North America was numerically insignificant prior to 1815.¹⁶ In North America, Irish settlers could be found in every mainland colony, particularly Virginia and Maryland, where tracts of land named 'New Ireland' and 'New Munster' were set aside for Irish settlers and their servants. But as a slave-based economy took hold in the West Indies, these colonies provided fewer opportunities for Irish workers with the result that during the 1700s most Irish Catholic emigrants went to the North American colonies. They comprised about one fourth to one fifth of the Irish migration prior to the American Revolution. Many came as indentured servants from Ulster as well as from the south of Ireland, where large numbers of Catholics lived. Mired in a life of poverty in Ireland because of rent gouging, victims of poor harvests as well as famine, thousands of Irish Catholics abandoned the land of their birth. Like their Presbyterian countrymen, they dreamed of a better life across the sea.¹⁷ Nonetheless, despite harsh Penal Laws and severe economic distress, relatively few Catholics chose to emigrate:

1. The historian Kerby Miller attributes this anomaly to their Gaelic tradition. As he put it, "Throughout this period the great majority of Catholics were Irish-speakers, largely insulated from the impulse to emigrate by the provincialism of Gaelic culture; by its secular, religious, and linguistic biases against individual initiative and innovation; and by literary modes which stigmatized emigration as *deorai* or involuntary exile." This tradition of viewing emigration as exile, widely diffused in popular culture, scarcely predisposed Irish-speakers to regard emigration with favor, especially if they enjoyed at least a subsistence living in traditional communities which remained intensely legalistic and family oriented.

2. In addition, the Catholic Irish traditionally tended to be more oriented to Catholic Europe than to Protestant America. Irish merchants were scattered across Europe, and thousands of Irish served in the armies of Catholic countries on the Continent.

¹⁵ Timothy J. Paulson, *Op.Cit.*, pp.19-20; Kem Knapp Sawyer, *Op.Cit.*, p.p. 5,9.

For more details about this letter see: Kem Knapp Sawyer, *Op.Cit.*, p. 9.

¹⁶ Jay P. Dolan, *Op.Cit.*,p.8; Karl S. Bottigheimer, *Op.Cit.*, p.247; Kem Knapp Sawyer, *Op.Cit.*, pp.4-5; Kerby A. Miller, Arnold Schrier and others, *Op.Cit.*, p. 4.

¹⁷ Jay P. Dolan, *Op.Cit.*, pp.8-9; Philip H. Bagenal, *Op.Cit.*, pp. 3-6.

3. A final reason why so relatively few Catholics emigrated was the unwillingness of most North American colonies to welcome Catholics. Being Irish was bad enough. Being Catholic only intensified the discrimination since English Protestants had no love at all for Catholic papists. In Puritan New England an Irish Catholic was so rare. In South Carolina the legislature passed laws banning the immigration of people “commonly called native Irish, or persons of scandalous character or Roman Catholics.”¹⁸ To prevent the immigration of Irish servants, Maryland, Pennsylvania, and Georgia passed laws that levied a tax on such servants. In Maryland, where the bulk of the Catholic Irish settled, penal legislation aimed at Catholics endured for much of the eighteenth century. Despite all discriminating legislations and the harsh life which, those Irish faced it who ventured to Maryland as indentured servants, the Irish kept coming. However, a few Irish Catholics achieved remarkable success. Even though Catholics made up less than 10 percent of Maryland's population, a considerable number of them belonged to the large landowning gentry. In fact, of the twenty wealthiest families in Maryland, ten were Catholic. At least three of these were Irish. The rest were of English heritage.¹⁹

At the end of the eighteenth century, it can be noted that even though Maryland had its share of Ulster Presbyterians, especially in the western part of the colony, Irish Catholics still comprised a significant number of the 1790 population. But they did not show up as members of the Catholic Church. Kerby Miller concluded that those “Catholics who did leave Ireland during the colonial period seem to have been rootless, restless men . . . They emigrated, settled and often disappeared as solitary individuals. Since the great majority were single males, marriage usually entailed absorption into colonial Protestant family and networks.”²⁰ So, for many reasons the vast majority of Irish Catholics in Maryland as well as elsewhere either remained unchurched or joined Protestant denominations.²¹ In her recent study of Irish Catholic immigration between 1660 and 1775, Audrey Lockhart points out that many Catholics came as indentured servants to the southern colonies or as transported criminals who migrated from their original destination in the West Indies. After releasing from their various forms of bondage, both groups tended to mingle and intermarry with Protestant Irish in those areas, like the South, where the Catholic Church was weak. Thus, because they started at the lowest social levels, and because

¹⁸ Quoted in: Kerby A. Miller *Op.Cit.*, pp.142-143; Jay P. Dolan, *Op.Cit.*, p. 9.

¹⁹ See: Jay P. Dolan, *Op.Cit.*, pp. 9-10.

²⁰ Quoted in: Kerby A. Miller, *Op.Cit.*, p.147; Jay P. Dolan, *Op.Cit.*, p.17.

²¹ In Maryland Irish Catholics would have to adopt the more discreet English attitude in a setting where they were members of a minority religion. In addition, a distinctive ethnic Irish community did not exist in rural Maryland. The gentry landowning class of English descent, not the struggling Irish farmer or poor laborer, defined the Catholic community along the Chesapeake. Even more significant, Catholics in Ireland at this time were strongly attracted to folk religious practices. Finally, the number of priests in Maryland was never large enough to enable them to minister to all the Irish. Jay P. Dolan, *Op.Cit.*, p. 17.

they often ceased to be Catholic, they were slow in establishing distinctly Catholic Irish social institutions, and in achieving the upward mobility of the more numerous Ulster Protestant immigrant group.²² Therefore we may conclude that the first wave of Irish Emigrants to make a lasting mark in American locations were Protestant. Some would deny that they were "Irish", and it is by the term "Scots-Irish" that they have generally been known in the United States.²³

Ulster nonconformists brought power to their new country along with economic and intellectual skills and a commitment to democratic principles that speeded the maturation of America.²⁴ James Leyburn, whose social analysis of frontier society has focused on the contribution of these early Irish toward the emergence of a new social order, has made it a point to warn, nevertheless, that: "it would be a serious distortion of history to claim that the exodus from Ulster was a crusading search for freedom. On the contrary, all of the evidence shows that the people hoped to find social institutions in America very much like the ones they were leaving. These they did find, in the settled areas around their ports of debarkation. When they took farms in the wilderness they set to work forthwith to establish familiar institutions."²⁵ The Irish did not conceive of a society unstructured by social class distinctions, but because of the improvisations required under frontier conditions they found themselves shifting the emphasis from distinctions based on ascription to those based on achievement.²⁶

During the American War of Independence, Irish immigrants supported this cause wholeheartedly and fought in the Revolutionary War because of their history with Britain. The War of Independence commenced with the battle of Lexington, near Boston, on the 19th of April, 1775, and ended with the treaty of peace in February, 1783. Through these eight eventful years, we find a very large proportion of Celtic names on the military, naval and civil lists of each of the thirteen United Colonies. They are especially prominent in Pennsylvania, where we find five Irish colonels at the head of as many regiments, principally made up of soldiers of the same nationality. This was the celebrated Pennsylvania line, so well-known in Revolutionary history. We also find them in large numbers in the Maryland line, and among the volunteers generally. John Barry, who is called the father of the American navy, and a large number of the other naval officers of that period, were Irish by birth or immediate descent. In fact, as many as one third of the Continental

²² Marjorie R. Fallows, *Op.Cit.*, pp. 19-20.

²³ Karl S. Bottigheimer, *Op.Cit.*, p. 246; Kerby A. Miller, Arnold Schrier, Bruce D. Boling, David N. Doyle, *Op.Cit.*, p.p. 8, 24 .

²⁴ Lawrence J. McCaffrey, *The Irish Diaspora in America*, pp.59-60.

²⁵ Quoted in: James G. Leyburn, *The Scotch-Irish: A social history*, Chapel Hill 1962, p.258; Marjorie R. Fallows, *Op.Cit.*, p. 20.

²⁶ Marjorie R. Fallows, *Op.Cit.*, pp.20-21.

Army was Irish. A main reason for this was their resentment against the British government and the elitist Anglican Church, which had discriminated against them in Ulster. It can say that some Irish joined the revolutionary army either to loyalist cause or the patriot cause, but large numbers of them joined to this army because of the opportunities their service offered, such as possible land grants and termination of their bondage as indentured servants. Moreover, the grand charter of American liberty—the Declaration of Independence—was signed on the 4th of July, 1776, by fifty-six delegates, representing the thirteen original States; of this number, nine were of the Irish race. They filled many civil positions of great trust and responsibility in those early days of the American Republic. This is not mentioned in any spirit of boastfulness, but merely to show that there was a respectable number of the race in America before the Revolution.²⁷

It seems that the early Irish immigrants made their mark in politics in America. For example George Clinton won election as the first governor of New York in 1777 and served for six successive terms. In 1784 he appointed the lawyer James Duane, the son of an Irish-born merchant, as the mayor of New York. William Mooney was the founder of the Tammany Society in 1787, a social organization named after a Delaware Indian chief, and its first grand sachem. In the nineteenth century it would become a powerful political organization. The New York Irish also had their fraternal organizations that never failed to celebrate St. Patrick's Day.²⁸

Before the year 1820, no official statistics of immigration into the United States were kept. There are no certain means, therefore, by which we may come to anything like an exact calculation of the numbers arriving before that time. But there are means in abundance by which to judge the special locations of the different nationalities before the Revolution and since. Thus we find that, while Maryland and Pennsylvania were the principal receptacles of Irish immigration before the year 1800, great numbers also found their way into New Hampshire, Virginia (especially into the valley of the Shenandoah), and into North and South Carolina. Thus, the Hon. Edward Young, Chief of the Bureau of Statistics in Washington, in his very able Report on the Statistics of Immigration, published in connection with the census report of 1870, says: “The population of the Colonies at the beginning of the Revolutionary War has generally been estimated at three millions ; and it is probable that as many as one-third of these were born on the other side of the Atlantic, while the parents of a large

²⁷ The Rev. Stephen Byrne, O.S.D., *Irish immigration to the United States: What it has been, and what it is*, New York 1873, p., pp.15-16; Jay P. Dolan, Op.Cit.,p.22; Timothy J. Paulson, Op.Cit., pp.23-25; John Francis Maguire, Op.Cit.,p. 358; William D. Griffin, Op.Cit., p. 10; Irish immigration to America: http://www.answers.com/topic/irish-american#17th_to_mid_19th_century. 16/04/ 2012, 03:05 pm. Further details are giving in: Philip H. Bagenal, Op.Cit., pp. 12–23.

²⁸Jay P. Dolan, Op.Cit., p. 28. For more details about celebrations of St. Patrick's Day see: Mike Cronin and Daryl Adair, Op.Cit., p.7-17; Tom Inglis, *Global Ireland same Difference*, New York 2008, pp.94-97.

proportion of the remainder were among the early immigrants.”²⁹ What proportion of these were Irish we may judge from the fact that, in the year 1729, of the total number of immigrant passengers (6,500) arriving at the port of Philadelphia alone, 5,600 were Irish.

Immigration was in a great degree suspended during the War of Independence; but at its close, the influx of foreign-born people set in with increased velocity. Mr. Young, in the absence of exact figures, estimated the number coming during the period beginning with 1790 and ending with 1820, at 225,000. A very large majority of these were Irish, as is acknowledged by all. They were driven away principally by the unsuccessful rising of 1798, and many other causes. Hence it is that we find them largely represented on land and sea in the war with Great Britain which began in June, 1812, and ended with the battle of New Orleans in February, 1815.³⁰

It seems clear that included among the 1790 emigrants was a sizable number of political radicals who were forced into exile because of their outspoken opposition to England's rule over Ireland—chief among them the United Irish exiles. In this context, the historian David Wilson stated that there were, in effect, two main phases of radical Irish immigration, the first occurred between 1795 and early 1798, in response to the repression of the emerging revolutionary movement in Ireland; it included some who saw America as a temporary base in their continuing struggle for Irish independence, and others who regarded the United States as their new home. The second phase began after the failure of the rebellion in 1798, when the boats were packed with political refugees, and continued right up to 1805 and 1806. Thus, the failure of major rebellion in Ireland against British rule caused a wave of immigration to the United States.³¹

Thus we may conclude that the Irish Americans played an important role in building the new United States of America. The Irish immigrants who came from the northern part of Ireland had been generally better off than the Irish Catholics who came from the south, most of whom were indentured servants. These more prosperous immigrants were able to start farms. Irish blacksmiths, carpenters, and other merchants also established successful businesses upon their arrival in America. These immigrants continued to settle in many areas of the new United States.³² Eventually the Ulster Irish could be found throughout the Appalachian region that stretched from Pennsylvania to Georgia and west to Kentucky and Tennessee. They comprised as much as 50 percent of the white population by 1790, planting in this area a distinctive Irish culture. Irish settlements were not limited to the rural frontier, Irish also settled in the

²⁹Quoted in: The Rev. Stephen Byrne, *Op.Cit.*, pp.15-16.

³⁰ *Ibid*, pp.16-17.

³¹Quoted in: David A. Wilson, *United Irishmen, United States*, New York 1998, p. 8; Jay P. Dolan, *Op.Cit.*, p.31; William D. Griffin, *Op.Cit.*, p.12.

³²Timothy J. Paulson, *Op.Cit.*, pp.25-26.

cities of colonial America, most notably Philadelphia and New York. These cities were home to a growing number of Irish merchants, lawyers, and professionals as well as a middle class of artisans and shopkeepers. Members of the merchant class played a leading role in founding several organizations in the 18th century that served the major ethnic groups in Philadelphia (German, English, Welsh, Scots, and Irish), especially in the case of the Irish, such as the Irish Club, the Society of the Friendly Sons of St. Patrick founded in Philadelphia in 1770, the Hibernia Fire Company, and the Hibernian Society for the Relief of the Emigrants, whose purpose was to protect and assist the immigrants who were coming to Philadelphia in large numbers during 1790s.³³

It can say that by the early 1800s, and under the Union between Ireland and Britain, the situation had changed dramatically, as increasingly disastrous conditions in southern and western Ireland brought growing numbers of Catholic Irish who struggled to cope with their marginal status in a social order which the earlier Irish had helped to create.³⁴ The eminent historian David Fitzpatrick said: "Ireland under the Union was a land which most people wanted to leave."³⁵ Thus, the Irish took their place among the foremost in the battle of life and struggled for wealth and distinction in the United States. The simplest solution for those established Protestant Irish who sought to save themselves from identification with the more stigmatized new wave of immigrants was to "pass" into a more acceptable identity. The term Scotch-Irish was a social invention serving the purpose of setting social distance between themselves and the new wave of Catholic Irish, for whether they were originally of Scotch ancestry or not they were now identified as proper Protestant Americans.³⁶

2.2 Factors affecting Irish immigration to the United States 1800-1820

2.2.1 Pre-Famine Immigration 1821 and the Irish Emigration Trade

Mass emigration to the New World could not have occurred if emigrants had not been granted more freedom to move. The removal of restrictions was at least as

³³See: Jay P. Dolan, *Op.Cit.*, pp.25-27; Philip H. Bagenal, *Op.Cit.*, p.p. 8,14-16; William D. Griffin, *Op.Cit.*, p.11.

³⁴Marjorie R. Fallows, *Op.Cit.*, p.22 .

³⁵Quoted in: PRONI, David Fitzpatrick, *Irish Emigration 1801–1921*:<http://eh.net/eshsi/publications/intro1.html>. 30/02 /2011, 09: 35 am.

³⁶Marjorie R. Fallows, *Op.Cit.*, p.22; Karl S. Bottigheimer, *Op.Cit.*, p. 246; Kerby A. Miller, Arnold Schrier, Bruce D. Boling, David N. Doyle, *Op.Cit.*, p.p. 8, 24.

important as the spread of knowledge about America. In the 1780s, as before the American Revolution, most European immigrants were probably indentured servants or redemptioners. The servant trade had ceased during the war but the Revolution had but little or no consequence on the 'institution of indentured servitude.' In the 1780s Pennsylvania and New-York passed laws in order to encourage the growth of the servant trade. In fact, convict transportation was the only branch of the trade which was put to an end by the action of Congress "In 1788, after receiving reports that convicts were being secretly transported from the West Indies, the Continental Congress urged remedial action upon the states, at least five of which responded by banning the importation of convicted malefactors."³⁷

The British statute of 1788 was the first blow to the decline of the servant trade. Indeed this statute extended to Ireland the long-standing ban on the emigration of skilled artisans. The latter formed the most wanted group in the 'American labour market' so their proportion on immigrant vessels from Ireland immediately reduced greatly. The second blow was the passing of the British Passenger Act of 1803 which drastically reduced the numbers of immigrants that ships could carry. With less servants on board ships captains were making lower profit or no profit at all. It was not worth making the effort of recruiting a cargo of servants any longer since there usually were enough 'fare-paying passengers' to fill the reduced number of berths. Finally, after an epidemic on an overcrowded ship from Holland in 1818, the Congress, recognising the need for regulation, adopted the Passenger Act in March 1819. This Act marked the end of the importation of indentured labour. In fact, many individual artisans found various ruses to evade the law of 1788 and leave for America. Some of them went in response to American inducements.³⁸

However, it can be said that the Irish movement to the United States during the early nineteenth century initiated the most important era of migration to America, but, before a mass movement could occur, emigrants needed a greater ability to move. Therefore a 'transportation revolution' was necessary to provide emigrants with regular, reliable and cheap ocean transportation. There were a series of events that greatly affected Irish emigration to the New World, especially, after England was involved in a European war against Revolutionary France and Napoleon (1793-1815). The impulse toward emigration—already present amongst farmers, weavers, servants and city workers generally—which had been temporarily checked by the difficulties of transportation during the Napoleonic Wars and almost completely stopped by the American War with Britain in 1812-1814. Once peace was restored in February, 1815, the Irish resumed their emigration to the United States, and the immigration reasserted itself and inaugurated an important chapter in Irish and

³⁷ Quoted in: Denny Hatch, *Op.Cit.*, p.19.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, pp.19-20.

American history, where, after that year the pace of Irish immigration to America rapidly increased. So, 1815 was a turning point since after that year a kind of revolution was brought about.³⁹

As we pointed out earlier during the Napoleonic wars, agricultural prices on the rise as the demand for food increased. Those potential emigrants who were forced to remain in Ireland during the Wars, not only created a notional population increase greater than it would otherwise have been, further adding to an already rapidly increasing population. Ireland's population was dramatically increasing as the mortality rate declined; contributing to this exceptional growth was an improved diet and a high fertility rate in an agrarian population marrying at a young age. The immediate consequences of this population increase and the lack of emigration were alleviated to some extent by the fact that Ireland was a major supplier of grain for the English troops. The wheat fields had to be ploughed, sown and harvested by manual labour, thus absorbing much of the labour supply, on a seasonal basis at least, for the duration of the war. When the war ended in 1815, however, a fall in demand for wheat led to an agricultural depression promoting a switch to cattle production by the land owners. Moreover, the use of machinery in manufactories and in the operations of agriculture lessened the demand for hands. This resulted in a rapid reduction in employment for labourers and a consequent large increase in emigration from the country.⁴⁰ Thus, in detailed account of Irish agricultural life – mentioned earlier – the existence of a score of causes for emigration is only too apparent. But throughout that period there was an underlying cause which both in Ireland and in England yearly drove thousands of the rural population to America. The Napoleonic Wars and the high prices which accompanied them made the small, unscientific farm profitable for the last time. Another important factor which facilitated the huge rise in Irish emigration when the war with France ended was that at about the same time the colonial trade in slaves was abolished by England. As a result most of the ships involved in the slave trade were tied up in Liverpool while their owners desperately searched for alternative sources and centers of trade with new regions. Many of those who remained in these new locations did however maintain contact with their families

³⁹Roger Daniels, *Op.Cit.*, p. 127; Denny Hatch, *Op.Cit.*, p.20; Éamon Ó Cuív, *Op.Cit.*, p. 4; William Forber Adams *Op.Cit.*, pp.66-67,70; Kerby A. Miller, Arnold Schrier, Bruce D. Boling, David N. Doyle, *Op.Cit.*, p.4; Jay P. Dolan, *Op.Cit.*, p.35; Lawrence J. McCaffrey, *The Irish Diaspora in America*, p.60; Malcolm Campbell, *Ireland's New Worlds: Immigrants, Politics, and Society in the United States and Australia, 1815–1922*, New York 2008, pp.4-6; Philip H. Bagenal, *Op.Cit.*, pp.24-25; Canada: Canadian immigration in Québec City during the years of the Grosse Ile quarantine station (Colonial emigration 1832-1860): <http://www.pc.gc.ca/eng/lhn-nhs/qc/grosseile/docs/plan1/sec3/page2ai.aspx>. 22/ 06/ 2012, 11:50 pm.

⁴⁰ Jay P. Dolan, *Op.Cit.*, p.35; Andy Bielenberg, *Op.Cit.*, p.p 55,146; John O'Beirne Ranelagh, *Op. Cit.*, pp. 99-100; *Immigrants to Canada, Emigration Handbook of 1820, "The Emigrant's Guide to the British Settlements in Upper Canada, and the United States of America"*, London: 1820 : <http://jubilation.uwaterloo.ca/~marj/genealogy/papers/handbook1820.html>. 22/08/2012, 07:00am.

in Ireland. And thus, links were formed between small areas in Ireland and specific locations in the new world.⁴¹

From what has been stated we can conclude that the combination of factors began the great nineteenth century Irish exodus to the New World, especially, after 1815. Briefly these were an expanding population and economic recession in Ireland, and a Change in the Irish agriculture from tillage to grazing, resulting in consolidation of estates and evictions of small tenant farmers. These factors combined with the English need to develop new frontiers for trade together with an ample supply of shipping, capable of moving both the goods and the emigrants to the desired destinations. So, the five years that followed, years of wretched harvests and a depressed market, were a nightmare to all classes. When they had passed, the poor farmer fought a slow but losing battle against better methods, larger capital, and in time against fresh soils mid superior climate. That battle never ceased in Ireland from 1815 to 1845.⁴²

The economic background in Ireland in the first half of the nineteenth century must be viewed to determine the causes of Irish immigration to the united states, where, as we pointed out earlier, beneath the political and religious turmoil in Ireland raged a far more desperate agrarian strife, which opened the way for a trans-oceanic migration such as neither Ireland nor any other European people had ever known before. For over a century this economic pressure has continued, and millions, yielding to some or all of the conditions—pointed out earlier—or to attractions from across the Atlantic, have detached themselves and gone to America. There were periods of greater or less distress, but there was never a year in which the Irish farmer had not sufficient economic motive for leaving his own country and taking his chance in a new land. The overwhelming influence of economic causes promoting emigration throws all other influences into the background, but religious and political factors cannot be ignored. Religious friction was always present in Ireland in some degree, and it cannot be said that it was a determining factor in immigration, even during the early period of immigration when most of the emigrants were Protestants.⁴³

⁴¹William Forber Adams, *Op.Cit.*, p.47; Andy Bielenberg, *Op.Cit.*, p.58; Timothy J. Paulson, *Op. Cit.*, p.28; Canada: Canadian immigration in Québec City during the years of the Grosse Île quarantine station (Colonial emigration 1832-1860):

<http://www.pc.gc.ca/eng/lhn-nhs/qc/grosseile/docs/plan1/sec3/page2ai.aspx>. 22/06/ 2012, 11: 50 pm.

⁴² William Forber Adams, *Op.Cit.*, p.47; Canada: Canadian immigration in Québec City during the years of the Grosse Île quarantine station (Colonial emigration 1832-1860):

<http://www.pc.gc.ca/eng/lhn-nhs/qc/grosseile/docs/plan1/sec3/page2ai.aspx>. 22 /06 / 2012 , 11: 50 pm.

⁴³William Forber Adams, *Op.Cit.*, p.p.63-64,129; Arnold Schrier, *Op.Cit.*, p.14; Jay P. Dolan, *Op.Cit.*,p.35; Roger Daniels, *Op.Cit.*, p.127.

Politics, like religion, played its part in promoting emigration rather by increasing disturbances than by any direct influence. The one political topic on which Irishmen of all classes and parties were agreed was taxation. They complained then as they have ever since that Ireland's share of the imperial burden was too great, and that taxes were ruining the country. Taxpayers all over the United Kingdom suffered in common. The growing manufactures of Great Britain enabled the British to pay their share, though at a terrible cost in poverty and physical deterioration, while in Ireland no such expansion of industry occurred to offset the drain of war taxes. In truth, the difficulty was not so much heavy taxation, which was inevitable under these circumstances, but a general economic decline which made any extra burden seem excessive. This fact was not at the time apparent, and taxes ranked as a psychological cause of emigration second only to rents and tithes.⁴⁴ Moreover, other emigrants feared the violence of secret terrorist societies like the Ribbonmen or wanted to avoid the increasing agitation for Catholic Emancipation and for the abolition of tithes to the established Protestant church. So, for many Irish, migration seemed like the only solution for their problems.⁴⁵

Thus we note that while the economic background was doubtless the most important element, it was not the only one in the pattern of predisposing conditions of emigration. The dynamics of rural Irish family life was also a contributory factor. Each farm was worked as a unit by a family of husband, wife, and children, and the farm was the support of all. The land was transferred and divided up within the family among the sons with each succeeding generation. As a result the family farm diminished in size over time and was no longer able to support an entire family. To preserve the family farm, a system of land transfer developed whereby control of the property passed to a single inheritor, generally 'the eldest son. So, as the children reached adulthood there was the growing realization that only one of them, usually the eldest son, would inherit the farm. For the younger sons and daughters, therefore, the inheriting of the farm by their eldest brother meant only one thing: they "must travel". The eldest son then married, reared a large family of his own and the cycle was again repeated. Some described this system as one "whose very nature predisposed it to disperse population" and since there was little or no industry to keep these younger sons and daughters in the country, emigration became a "logical corollary" of this dispersal.⁴⁶

Before 1826 landlords as a class had little direct effect upon emigration, though their opinions were not without weight. They determined to some extent the

⁴⁴ William Forber Adams, *Op.Cit.*, pp.65-66.

⁴⁵ Lawrence J. McCaffrey, *The Irish Diaspora in America*, p. 60; Éamon Ó Cuív, *Op.Cit.*, p.4.

⁴⁶ Arnold Schrier, *Op.Cit.*, pp.14-15; Jay P. Dolan, *Op.Cit.*, p.35,79; Lawrence J. McCaffrey, *The Irish Diaspora in America*, p. 61; T.W Moody and F. X. Martin, *Op.Cit.*, p.226; L. Paul-Dubois, *Contemporary Ireland*, Dublin 1908, p. 359.

government policy, and at home they could encourage or discourage the emigrating spirit among their superabundant tenantry. There came a time when many of them were glad to pay the passage to America for dispossessed tenants who had otherwise not sufficient means of emigrating. But in 1815 the war was still uppermost in their minds. Tenants, however poor and miserable, were a source of strength to the country, and to encourage emigration was treason as described by some British newspapers such the London Times in 1815 spoke of the encouragement of Irish emigration as “.... a plot of a most treasonable kind,” while newspaper "the Sun" expressed this vivid opinion in the same time: “The minds of the ignorant are acted on by every means which treachery and falsehood can invent; the disaffected part of the Press is zealously at work; every disloyal engine is employed which can delude the mistaken population of the Sister Island Into a persuasion, that an earthly Paradise exists on the other side of the Atlantic.”⁴⁷ Irishmen did not often go as far as this, but several of the Irish papers quoted these extracts with approval, and except in parts of Ulster, where emigration was an old and accepted habit, the landlord who looked on it favorably was a marked exception.⁴⁸

The first issues of the Irish newspapers in 1815 brought news of the signing of peace between England and the United States, and on 5th of January the Dublin Evening Post in an editorial on the probable effects of emigration, pointed the likelihood of an extensive emigration of farmers to the United States. Three months later the final news of ratification by the American government reached Ireland. This was a signal for the appearance in the Belfast and Londonderry papers of advertisements for passengers to America. However, no heavy exodus to the United States was possible at the beginning of 1815. The American flaxseed ships, which had formerly carried the bulk of the emigrant trade, were late in reaching Ireland, thus missing the usual emigrant season; and the demand for tonnage for freight purposes was so great that it was difficult to obtain ships to carry passengers in numbers. Cargo vessels sometimes took a few, but interest was concentrated in loading goods as promptly as possible.⁴⁹ Thus, the Napoleonic and Anglo-American wars, respectively, disrupted the emigrant trade, as did the U.S embargo Acts of 1807-1810 and British Laws, such as the 1803 Passenger Act, that were designed to curtail departures, especially by skilled workmen. Consequently, in 1800-1814 emigrants from Ulster probably averaged only a few thousand per year, as compared with the 20,000 who crossed the ocean in 1815-1816, as the wars ended.⁵⁰

⁴⁷Quoted in: William Forber Adams, *Op.Cit.*, p.15; “Dublin Evening Post”, January 9, 1815.

⁴⁸ See: William Forber Adams, *Op.Cit.*, p.16.

⁴⁹ *Ibid*, pp.70-71.

⁵⁰ Kerby A. Miller, Arnold Schrier and others, *Op.Cit.*, p.45.

The transatlantic commerce was greatly expanding, and the best example was probably the development of the North America timber trade. After the end of the Napoleonic wars: “the price of timber had soared five-fold the forests of Canada had more than enough wood to satisfy the demand in Europe, and it was cheaper to buy it there and ship it home.” Then, Canada and the Maritime Provinces became the main source of British timber. Hence, it can be noted that the true emigrant trade was established in the years 1816 to 1818. During 1816 and 1817, from six to nine thousand Irishmen sailed for America in each year, and in 1818 the number was more than doubled. From the beginning the trade was closely linked with the ordinary commercial intercourse between America and the United Kingdom, though commencing in 1816, ships were chartered especially to convey emigrants. This was true even of vessels sailing to New York, to which there was a considerable exportation of Irish goods. But it was the shipping requirements of the American exporters, which more than anything else except the passenger acts, determined the course of the emigrant trade. Merchants who intended to bring a cargo of Canadian timber or of American states, ashes, and flaxseed into Irish ports found it profitable to send the vessel back with a freight of emigrants. These cargoes need not be for Ireland, since approximately half the ships in the emigrant trade belonged to the coast towns of western England, Wales, and Scotland. On the western voyage their ballast or cargo of coal or salt was loaded in England or Wales, and the ships stopped in Irish ports only long enough to embark passengers. In 1820 there were already more than a thousand vessels annually employed in carrying North American timber and more than two thousand ships in 1840. During the voyage from America to Europe the timber, cotton and tobacco vessels were usually fully laden. But on their westward voyage back to America their cargo was largely unoccupied since they were carrying European manufactures instead of bulky raw material. It was more profitable if they could find cargo for the westward crossings and merchants and ship-owners came to look at emigrants (instead of slaves) to provide the answer. In a very short time the emigrant trade became a very organised and lucrative branch of transatlantic commerce, it rapidly became more profitable than carrying Canadian timber on the eastward crossing, that is probably why between 1846 and 1851 more than 5000 ships sailed across the Atlantic with Irish emigrants.⁵¹

The control of the Irish emigrant trade was almost wholly under the control of Irish merchants, who found that in addition to linens, salt, provisions, glass, etc., they could make room for a considerable body of emigrant and so increase the profits

⁵¹See: Denny Hatch, *Op.Cit.*, p.20; P.R, ESI, An account of the total number of ships, British and foreign, which have cleared out, from the several ports of Ireland, for the British dominions, and for the United States in North America, for the Cape of Good Hope, and for New South Wales; their tonnage, and the number of passengers; for the last ten years, in each year respectively, and for each separately; distinguishing convicts from passengers, H.C, 1821 (310), pp.2-3; William Forber Adams, *Op.Cit.*, p.71-73.

of their voyage. Not until 1817 there are evidences of the existence of emigrant offices, subsidiary as a rule to some commercial house, which made a specialty of selling passages and did not engage in general business. Ship captains shared regularly in the profits of the passenger trade. They sometimes took cargoes and passengers as a private venture, but as a rule they worked in conjunction with a mercantile firm. The emigrant offices, whatever their character, depended on advertising to secure passengers. In the north this was customarily carried on through the newspapers, where practically all ships from Londonderry, Belfast, and Newry advertised from a month to three months before sailing. This was certainly true in Dublin, where the *Dublin Evening Post*, although a popular paper favourable to emigration, carried advertisements for less than half of the ships which sailed. *Sounders News Letter*, a somewhat aristocratic newspaper, advertised Ramsay's *Waterford Chronicle*, only a small number of the emigrant vessels from that port, and the *Limerick general Advertiser* almost none. This is in part a reflection of the slight extent of emigration from the south, but it also implies the existence of some other means of publicity. The publication of handbills for all sorts of purposes was common in Ireland, and it is probable that these were used for advertising emigrant ships.⁵²

There were newspaper advertisements for ships from all the major ports, and for Belfast and Londonderry for at least four-fifths of those that actually sailed. The *Belfast News Letter* and *Londonderry Journal* not only contain preliminary advertisements for ships expected to sail, but also carry final notices and warnings to passengers telling them when they must be on board, in a form which implies that this was the only official communication between the shipping agent and his passengers. These shipping notices supply an interesting and varied picture of the emigrant trade of the time, and their steady increase is a good sign of its growing importance. Another methods of advertising were rise and spread of rural emigration agencies, subordinate to the central agencies at the ports. The advertisements furnish a key to the things which the emigrant thought important in the matter of transportation. At first it had been sufficient to give the name of the ship and its master, the tonnage, destination, and probable date of sailing. Later, a standard type of advertisement appeared during normal seasons as appeared in advertisement for the ship *Hippocampi* for Philadelphia.⁵³

The advantages of the United States were many and well known. Insofar as the emigration came from old districts where it had been long established—and the greater part did originate in such districts—there was a natural tendency to follow relatives and friends. Furthermore, to the emigrant seeking work, an old and established society was preferred to a pioneer and on the whole poor community. The

⁵² William Forber Adams, *Op.Cit.*, pp.76-77.

⁵³ See: *Ibid*, pp.77-79; “*Belfast News Letter*”, June 11, 1816.

arrival at times of fifteen hundred emigrant in a one day in a town of fifteen thousand, the population of Quebec at this time, could only create a surplus of labor, of which the inhabitants would try to rid themselves as quickly as possible. The immigrants of 1816-1822 all went on to Upper Canada which its capacity to absorb laborers was still limited to a few thousand a year, whereas in the United States, on other hand, except for a short period of commercial distress in 1816, the laborer had no difficulty in getting to job in the ports, and if he was willing to go inland he could be almost sure of securing permanent employment. The older communities also offered opportunities for a large number of specialized trades, particularly for artisans and manufacturing hands.⁵⁴ Moreover, American and Canadian governments subsidised land grants and farms, offered free or reduced cost passages, and published guides and information leaflets on the advantages of emigration there.⁵⁵ It was the pioneer farmer whom Canada really wanted, and for him the advertisements were written, setting forth the advantages of free grants of land and governmental aid. In contrast with the difficult conditions in Ireland to obtain any grant of land, the terms of the American government grants were easy and the long periods allowed for payment, with the advantage of settling on the edge of already established communities, seemed the United States far more attractive. The mere fact that thousands every year were moving to the American west was an irresistible magnet for people as gregarious as the Irish. Doubtless the custom of going to the United State, together with unfamiliarity with Canada, would, in the beginning, have taken most of the emigrants to the American west in contrast to the Canadian, but this preference continued after Canada was well and favorably known.⁵⁶

The Irish conception of American conditions, which largely determined the direction of emigration, was on the whole accurate. Amongst the abuses of the emigrant trade, misrepresentations regarding America the historian Adams have been frequently cited. They appear often enough in shipping advertisements, but it is unlikely that they could have had any serious effect upon the bulk of the emigrants. Many of the Irish newspapers made a feature of American news, and there is ample evidence of close and constant communication across the Atlantic. Throughout 1816 the Dublin newspapers carried on a violent controversy regarding emigration and the

⁵⁴ William Forber Adams, *Op.Cit.*, pp.98-99.

⁵⁵ PRONI: 19th Century Emigration to the North Americas, Passenger Acts:
[http:// www.proni.gov. uk/index/exhibitions_talks_and_events /19th century emigration to the north america online /helping_hands/the_irish_poor_law.htm](http://www.proni.gov.uk/index/exhibitions_talks_and_events/19th_century_emigration_to_the_north_america_online/helping_hands/the_irish_poor_law.htm). 01/05/ 2011, 09.10 am.

⁵⁶William Forber Adams, *Op.Cit.*, pp. 99-100; *Immigrants to Canada, Emigration Handbook of 1820, The Emigrant's Guide to the British Settlements in Upper Canada, and the United States of America:*
<http://jubilation.uwaterloo.ca/~marj/genealogy/papers/handbook1820.html>. 22/08/2012,07:00am.

advantage of the United States; while all over the country papers included advertisements of government offers of land and aid to settlers in Canada.⁵⁷

The newspapers in the important emigration ports published a number of letters from settlers describing conditions, wages, cost of living, and other facts of interest. Some papers, such as the *Dublin Evening Post*, made a point of publishing these facts at the beginning of each emigrant season. The published letters were only a few of the many hundreds that came back from America advising or warning friends of the conditions to be met with. Insofar as the state of America affected the Irish emigration these letters were the greatest single agency. With them must be classed prepaid passages. Successful emigrants were not satisfied to send good advice. They made every effort to bring over families and friends, who in turn brought others, and so kept up a continuous and expanding stream. Sometimes the money for passage was sent back, but as safe and easy means of transferring money did not then exist, and Irish exchange was at times almost unobtainable. It was far simpler to pay the passage to the master or his agent in the American port, and warn the friend or family when to be on the lookout for the ship.⁵⁸

Never in any sense a panic exodus, it reacted immediately to American conditions; hence the almost complete falling off of passengers to the United States, to which, because of the restrictions of the passenger acts, only the wealthier emigrants could afford to go. There can be no doubt of the superior quality of the emigrants of this period. The fares which we have quoted were in themselves sufficient to prevent the poorest from going. Rates of passage fluctuated enormously, and for that reason fares were seldom mentioned in advertisements. When they do appear it is obviously because they are considered low and meant to give additional attractiveness to the vessel. Many advertisements were directed, in particular, to the farmers and sometimes mechanics, but not to the lower classes. As some newspapers indicated, farmers amongst whom should be included the small farmer-weavers of the north—city shopkeepers and artisans were the first to seek in America the opportunities which they could not find at home. Over half the letters from America which appeared in the Irish papers came from men who had been engaged in some trade in Ireland.⁵⁹

It is significant that the greatest emigrant counties in Ireland were those largely inhabited by the small independent weavers. Neither of the preceding classes played any large part in the pioneer emigration which became important in 1817, and it is from amongst the true farming population. Continuous agricultural depression

⁵⁷William Forber Adams, *Op.Cit.*, pp.100-101; “*Dublin Evening Post*”, September 17, 1818.

⁵⁸See: The letter of an emigrant glass-blower to his wife in Dublin: William Forber Adams, *Op.Cit.*, p.101; “*Dublin Evening Post*”, July 25, 1816.

⁵⁹See: William Forber Adams, *Op.Cit.*, pp.103-105; “*Dublin Evening Post*”, April 13, 1818.

was a sufficient motive, and the wealthier farmers went in greater or less numbers in all years. The movement became more prominent and visible in 1817. In that year, the richest western lands of the United States became available. This undoubtedly drew some settlers, but conditions in Ireland were quite sufficient to account for the increase. The harvest of 1816 was below average; that of 1817 was ruinous, the export of wheat and barley being lower than at any other time since the beginning of the century. Hard times had brought on an increase of agrarian unrest, and disturbances were more frequent in 1817 and 1818 than in the two years preceding or following, in addition to spread of the disease in Ireland represented by the Contagious Fever.⁶⁰

The manner of emigration sheds some light on the character of those who were leaving the country. Unlike migrations from other European countries, Irish emigrants were not inclined to travel as a family, and that a much larger proportion, therefore, are between the ages of fifteen and forty—that is, are capable of supporting themselves. The Irish preferred to emigrate in families when they could. Some sources states that in the twenty-five years before the Great Famine only about half of the Irish emigrants landing at Boston and New York traveled in family groups, while mostly young single folks, those under thirty-five, left Ireland; they were the redundant population in a rural economy for whom there was no future in Ireland. Statistics of the passengers from Belfast, for three years, indicate that from one-half to two-thirds went in families, while a list of prospective emigrants from the counties of Wexford and Carlow shows a still higher ratio.⁶¹ Nine-tenths of these latter emigrants were farmers, the remainder were mechanics. It is the artisans who seem pretty regularly to have gone individually or in parts of families. A Dublin shipper, John Astle, testified: “The general custom is that when a family is about to emigrate, two or three of the youngest and strongest go on first, and then, when they obtain a footing, they send for the rest of the family.” This procedure might apply to any type of emigrant, but the Dublin merchants were most familiar with the city artisan class. There is further testimony of the same character from the *Dublin Evening Post*: “There are many tradesmen go out, and leave their families; but it is only until they can earn in another land the means of transporting them.”⁶² It seems that the health and economic circumstances often made it impractical, if not impossible, for families to emigrate together as shown by letter, dated January 25, 1818, is written by John Doyle, an Irish

⁶⁰ARPLC: Reports on the state of the poor, and on the charitable institutions in some of the principal towns, Part I, 1836, p. 26; William Forber Adams, *Op.Cit.*, pp.107-108.

For more details about the conditions in Ireland during this period see: P.P, RSC, First Report from the Select Committee on the state of Disease, and Condition of the labouring poor, in Ireland, H.C.1819[314], pp.60-82.

⁶¹William Forber Adams, *Op.Cit.*, pp.108-109; Jay P. Dolan, *Op.Cit.*, p.37; “Limerick General Advertiser”, May 18, 1819.

⁶²Quoted in: William Forber Adams, *Op.Cit.*, p.109; “*Dublin Evening Post*”, July 20, 1816.

immigrant in New York City, to his wife in Ireland.⁶³ The passenger lists of half a dozen ships from Dublin, Cork, and Sligo show less than one-fourth of the passengers to be related to one another. Furthermore, they also show that not one passenger in five was a woman—a marked contrast to the later Irish emigration in which women were as numerous as men. As most of the women who went were members of families, we may assume that the extensive emigration of Irish servant girls had not yet begun. This may be only another way of saying that emigration of the poor was not important.⁶⁴

The real beginnings of poor emigration must be dated from 1818, the year which brought to a close the better class movement. There was a real fever for emigration. Possibly it drew much of its strength from another and more dangerous fever which had spread over Ireland in 1817. The defective potato crop of the preceding autumn produced a situation approaching famine throughout, practically, the whole island, and as always happened in Ireland the weakened resistance of the people brought on the disease through a violent outbreak of the typhus or the epidemical fever, especially, in the provinces of Conaught and Munster in particular counties Galway and Clare. The epidemic was severe and fatal and it pressed most generally on the poor or lower classes. Thousands of poor had wished to leave Ireland before, tens of thousands then sought an escape. They were in a state of despondency for want of food and employment.⁶⁵

At the beginning it was assumed that the emigration would be primarily Protestant. The Dublin Evening Post said: “One of the peculiarities which distinguish the character of the native Irish, is a vehement and, in many instances, an absurd attachment to the soil on which they were born.....This applies more particularly to the Catholics, for the principal emigrants Ireland are the Presbyterians of the North.” A year later the same journal pointed out that no Roman Catholic priests had emigrated. One might be mistaken in assuming that all Ulster emigrants were Dissenters but undoubtedly a large proportion of them were. There can also be no doubt that a very considerable number of Protestants were going from the south. Talbot stated that all his emigrants were Protestants; and the list of 5,502 prospective emigrants from Wexford and Carlow shows 4,027 Protestants and 1,475 Catholics. One cannot

⁶³ For more details about this letter see: Kem Knapp Sawyer, *Op.Cit.*, p.13; William D. Griffin, *The Book of Irish Americans*, New York 1990, pp. 119-120.

⁶⁴ William Forber Adams, *Op.Cit.*, p.109.

⁶⁵ *Ibid*, p.111; Immigrants to Canada, Emigration Handbook of 1820, “The Emigrant's Guide to the British Settlements in Upper Canada, and the United States of America”:

<http://jubilation.uwaterloo.ca/~marj/genealogy/papers/handbook1820.html>. 22/08/ 2012, 07:00am.

For more details about the situation of the poor in Ireland in 1818 see: P.R: R.S.C, First Report from the Select Committee on the state of Disease, and Condition of the labouring poor, in Ireland, H.C, 1819 (314), pp.41-52.

place much reliance upon the evidence of the petitions (for aid to emigrate), however, since many petitioners should have thought their chances would be better if they claimed to be Protestants. Perhaps the best evidence on the situation in the south is supplied by a letter from Charles Rolleston, a landlord of Kings and Tipperary counties to Bathurst, May 8, 1819: "My anxiety for the welfare of this part of the Empire urges me to force myself upon your notice, and particularly from the view I have of the very general emigration of the Protestants from this country, which I as well as many of the most considerable part of the gentry of this country look on with the greatest regret.....and some of the party who are ready to go are Roman Catholics and are intent on passing as Protestants, this to my own knowledge."⁶⁶ All what can be said definitely on the southern emigration is that much of the better class was Protestant, while practically the whole of the poor emigration must have been Catholic, because the whole of the poorest class was Catholic. However, one can say that the periodic famines and lower ship fares converted, clearly, Irish immigration from a Protestant to a Catholic movement.⁶⁷

Geographical distribution was more important than religious affiliation in determining the direction of emigration. Catholics tended to go where other Catholics had gone before, and laborers to follow laborers; but far more influential than either were the geographical ties which sent the inhabitants of an Irish village to a single community in America, even over many generations. Though the bulk of the emigration was from Ulster, the south was most affected by these new settlements; for the main currents of northern emigration were already set. The most important evidence of the sources of emigration is furnished by the ports of embarkation, which were from Londonderry, Belfast and Newry. Taking together these three ports, the majority of whose passengers came from Ulster, and adding those who went from there by way of Dublin and Sligo. Thus it may say that Ulster was supplying two-thirds of the emigrants at this time.⁶⁸

The rise of the emigration very poor in 1818 and 1819, almost all of it came from the south of Ireland. Evidently there was a demand for passage provided it was not too expensive. The number of petitions for aid to emigrate from Munster, a quarter of the total from Ireland and only slightly less than the number from Ulster, bears out this conclusion. The movement was not confined to Munster. In the same period other thousands from Connaught and Ulster were starting Irish quarters in

⁶⁶Quoted in: William Forber Adams, *Op.Cit.*, pp.116-117; "Dublin Evening Post", March 2, 1815 and June 22, 1816.

⁶⁷ William Forber Adams, *Op.Cit.*, p.117; Lawrence J. McCaffrey, *The Irish Diaspora in America*, p. 60.

⁶⁸ Estimating the Dublin emigration at about twenty-five per cent of the total Irish, or about ten thousand for the period, we may assign to these districts of Leinster some six or seven thousand emigrants. There remains for Munster and Connaught only a small fraction of the total migration.

For more details see: William Forber Adams, *Op.Cit.*, pp.118-121.

British cities from Glasgow to London. The exodus from Ulster to Great Britain did not equal the emigration to America, but in Munster and Connaught it made up almost the whole of the migration from those provinces. During these years, however, conditions of British labor were too unfavorable to attract any Irishman who could possibly hope to reach America, and only the poorest settled across the Irish Channel.⁶⁹

The possession of property and the fear of losing it may well have provided a greater incentive to emigration than desire to retrieve a status already lost. In any case it provided the means. A second feature was the presence of settlers of other than Irish origin—Scots in Ulster, English and Welsh in Dublin and southern Leinster. Possibly there was more initiative to emigration in these than in the native Irish districts; possibly also the transplanted settlers were less attached to their homes, although most of their ancestors had been there for a hundred and fifty years or more. The common use of the English language was apparently the most decisive factor. The importance of language was clearly shown by the mountain regions of Cavan, Tyrone, Deny and Antrim. These districts, whose inhabitants were cut off by the barrier of language from those around them, stood out like little islands in the sea of Ulster emigration. To those who spoke only Irish, America might well have seemed, as the anti-emigrant pamphleteers described it, "a vast snowy desert".⁷⁰

The real importance of the emigration of this period could scarcely have been foreseen at the time. The desire to emigrate increased faster than the means, and created in many districts discontented groups who looked to America for the ultimate solution of their difficulties. Meanwhile, the creation of recognized emigrant routes, some of them from ports which had hitherto had no connection with the trade, provided the means for a steadier and more continuous outflow. These routes determined the currents and to some extent the destinations of the emigrants. Increased business developed a class of brokers who made a specialty of passenger traffic, and kept the advantages and possibilities of emigration constantly before the people. Their competition helped to break down the barrier of expense, and their activities, together with those of the Irish in America, were the leading factors in keeping the movement alive until the second and greater rush of the late twenties, to which this period was only a prelude.⁷¹

⁶⁹P.R, ESI, An account of the total number of ships, British and foreign, which have cleared out, from the several ports of Ireland, for the British dominions, and for the United States in North America, for the Cape of Good Hope, and for New South Wales; their tonnage, and the number of passengers; for the last ten years, in each year respectively, and for each separately; distinguishing convicts from passengers, H.C, 1821 (310), pp.2-3; William Forber Adams, Op.Cit., pp.123-124.

⁷⁰ Quoted in: William Forber Adams, Op.Cit., pp.124-125.

⁷¹ Ibid, pp.126-127.

2.2.2 The Passenger Acts 1803-1823

In the period we are describing, even including 1817, outbreaks of contagious disease on emigrant ships were rare, and deaths on board infrequent considering the poverty of the voyagers and the numbers of small children, for whom the trip was always most difficult. Probably two-thirds of the deaths were those of children. So, the chief importance of bad conditions was in their effect upon the trade, or the general influx of emigration, and it is safe to say that at this time they had none. Many slow voyages and wrecks in 1815, due to exceptionally unfavorable weather, did not in the least deter the emigrants of 1816; while unhealthy conditions and reports of abuses in the next two years were entirely unavailing to check the emigration of 1818. The abuses which most seriously affected the emigrants took place before the ship sailed, especially, by the agents and captains. The most obvious of falsification was the tonnage of the vessel, which largely determined the speed and comfort of the voyage. The emigrants had been defrauded by unscrupulous agents with respect to provisions, where, in some instances appeals were made to public charity to enable emigrants to renew their supplies.⁷²

The chief safeguards of the emigrant were the passenger acts, the first of which was passed in 1803, as a result of exceptionally hard times and extensive emigration in the preceding two years. The enforcement of the Act of 1803, the principal law governing ocean transportation until its repeal in 1823, was in the hands of the customs officials. As originally passed, it required a resident magistrate to supervise with the collector of customs the passenger list of an outgoing vessel. But this provision was found burdensome, and repealed by a special amending Act in 1818. Masters and owners of vessels were required to give bond not to exceed the legal number of passengers, to carry out the other terms of the acts, and to keep and report at the end of the voyage a full log showing that the provisions had been complied with. The efforts of government were largely concerned with keeping number within the law.⁷³

The most frequent violations of this provision are said to have been amongst small vessels sailing illegally from obscure bays or harbors where no Customs official would be present, but a check of arrivals from Ireland in Canada and the United States shows that the proportion of ships coming from such minor harbors was insignificant. The law could be evaded by collusion between shipper, master, and collector. Revenue cruisers, whose main duty was the prevention of smuggling into Ireland, and between Ireland and Great Britain, served as a final government check upon emigrant vessels. Only example of the seizure of an emigrant ship during this period was that of

⁷² See: *Ibid*, pp.80-83.

⁷³ *Ibid*, pp. 83-84.

the Hippocampi—the previously mentioned. It had sailed from Belfast with twenty-five more passengers than its tonnage permitted, and was forced to return to port and disembark some of them, and a fine was laid upon the master and owner. The total penalty was not severe, and other vessels may have chosen to take the risk. The absence of seizures might indicate either that the revenue cruisers were not attempting to enforce the law or that the trade was on the whole legal. Londonderry, Belfast, and Dublin sent at least thirty vessels with passengers to New York in 1815, and to judge from occasional references in the newspapers, number of others must have gone from Newry. In this context the historian Adams said: “We have no means of knowing how many emigrants were carried in these ships, but if they were in the same proportion in succeeding years there were probably between one and two thousand.”⁷⁴

The influence of the passenger acts is illustrated by the singular popularity of the Newfoundland route in 1815. Ships could go to Newfoundland without restriction, and passages were therefore cheap. Over thirty-six hundred persons, almost all of them from Ireland and very poor, are said to have gone there in 1815. The majority seem to have sailed from Waterford, but some ships were advertised from Belfast, and possibly from other ports as well. Many of these people undoubtedly went on to the United States or to Canada in the same year; others remained through the winter, causing more acute distress than had ever before been known in St. Johns. During 1816 small parties of the emigrants went to Quebec, while even greater numbers returned to Waterford. It may have been the reports of hardship, which were known in Waterford early in 1816, or it may have been a new Passenger Act in that year regulating the Newfoundland and Labrador trades, but whatever the cause, emigration to Newfoundland practically ceased in 1816 and never revived as an important part of the Irish movement to America.⁷⁵

The emigration of 1816 indicates clearly the course which would have been pursued had the passenger acts remained unaltered. The year opened with the Act of 1803 in full force, but a series of diplomatic exchanges between the American government and the British government resulted early in the emigrant season in an order giving American as well as British vessels permission to carry one passenger for every two tons. Parliament soon altered the arrangement, but for over two months, at the height of the season, restriction was at a minimum and conditions for carrying passengers to the United States and British North America were identical. It speaks conclusively for the preferences of the Irish that the exodus in this year was almost wholly to the United States. Canada, on the other hand, got almost no Irish. Less than two hundred were noted in the arrivals at Quebec. Occasional attempts were made in advertisements to spread information about Canada, and to emphasize the advantages

⁷⁴ Quoted in: *Ibid*, pp.84-86.

⁷⁵ *Ibid*, pp.86-87.

of free grants of land and government aid. Similar attempts, often untruthful as regards the assistance provided by government, were made to popularize the Maritime Provinces, but the shipping thither was even less than that to Quebec, and emigration negligible.⁷⁶

It was the passenger acts of July 1, 1816, and March 17, 1817, which changed the course of Irish emigration, and gave to it the character which it retained until 1827. The first act, which limited all vessels to the United States to one passenger for five tons, had immediate effects. Vessels about to leave Ireland found themselves required return some of the passages already paid, and very naturally raised the fare on those which remained. So great was the demand, however, that even as late as September 1816, ships were able to get a full quota of passenger under the new restrictions. The act of March 17, 1817 which superseded all earlier legislation for ships Canada, Nova Scotia, and New Brunswick, permitted vessels to carry one adult, or three children under fourteen years of age, for every one and a half tons unladen. The usual minimum provision requirement for twelve weeks was included, but so worded that the master need not give out provisions if the passengers had already supplied their own, and the presence of a surgeon was no longer obligatory. The means of enforcement were practically unchanged, but as an additional check, collectors, after mustering the passengers, were required to give a certified list to the master to be inspected by an official in the colonies before any passengers were allowed to land.⁷⁷

In 1819 the British government passed the first act of parliament to regulate passenger traffic. It set out the minimum provisions to be provided by the shipping company to each passenger and the amount of space, ventilation and sanitary arrangements required for each legal adult (two children under fourteen equalled one statutory adult). Although this law did not go far enough to ensure passenger safety, it was a step in the right direction and constantly improved upon and updated over the years.⁷⁸

⁷⁶ Ibid, pp.87-88.

⁷⁷ Ibid, pp.88-89; Philip H. Bagenal, Op.Cit., p.26.

⁷⁸ PRONI: 19th Century Emigration to the North Americas, Passenger Acts:

http://www.proni.gov.uk/index/exhibitions_talks_and_events/19th_century_emigration_to_the_north_america_online/helping_hands/passenger_acts.htm, 01/05/ 2011, 09:10 am.

2.2.3 Reasons behind change the course of passage to the United States

Canada and New Brunswick rapidly absorbed the bulk of the emigrant traffic and became the adopted routes to New York and Philadelphia in the United States as well as to the west. Most the change came immediately. Where, the trade declined between Ireland and the United States. The reverse side of the picture is the appearance of an important trade to Canada and the Maritime Provinces from all the emigrant ports. Although continuance of regular trade from Londonderry, Belfast and Dublin to New York and Philadelphia in 1816, but their principal trade was with Quebec. Many factors, undoubtedly, contributed to this change in the course of trade. The flow of emigrants in 1816 had produced a surplus of labor in the American ports and led to hard times, reports of which were not slow in reaching Ireland. James Buchanan, the British Consul at New York, took advantage of the situation to urge all settlers to go to Canada, and succeeded in securing from the British government authority to spend up to ten dollars per head in forwarding distressed emigrants to Upper Canada. Under this authority he sent over 3500 people, mostly from Ireland to the Peterborough district. He did not wait until the distressed came to him for aid, but sent his agents aboard incoming vessels offering free transportation to all who would accept. The government at home made the most of these facts and increased at the time its offers of assistance to emigrants to British America. This was the work of the Colonial Office; but independently and perhaps unintentionally parliament aided the change in another way.⁷⁹

It seems obvious from the course of trade that a change in conditions of transportation, rather than any disinclination of passengers to go to the United States, was creating a new direction of emigrant traffic. The capacity of the provinces in Canada to absorb settlers was very limited in 1817, and probably only those Irish stayed who had not the means to go on to New England, which was already turning from agriculture and commerce to manufacture and needed cheap labor. Obviously Quebec could only be used as an entrance to the western country, including upper New York. Quebec ships dropped their references to government land grants, or subordinated them to a recital of the advantages of Quebec as a gateway to the West; and it is safe to say that the majority of the emigrants went there in the hope of going on the United States.⁸⁰

⁷⁹William Forber Adams, *Op.Cit.*, pp.89-90; "Dublin Evening Post", October 16, 1817.

⁸⁰William Forber Adams, *Op.Cit.*, pp.92-.93; "Dublin Evening Post", March 25, 1819; *Immigration to Canada, Emigration Information of the Nineteenth Century: Dublin to Quebec on the Mary and Bell, 1817:* <http://jubilation.uwaterloo.ca/~marj/genealogy/voyages/dublin1817.html>. 02/10/ 2012, 04: 00 pm.

The decisive factor in the new course of emigration was cheapness. Fares always varied a great deal according to the time of year and the demand for passages. In 1816 we find a minimum passage rate of £6 from Belfast to Quebec, a fare of £7 from the same port to Baltimore, while another ship earlier in the year (a superior ship) charged seven guineas to St. Andrews. In 1817, the standard rate from Ireland to the United State was ten guineas. This fare was quoted from Belfast to New York in June. On the same day a ship from Londonderry to St. Andrews offered to take passengers for five guineas. As the Canada ships also took three children for one full fare, the advantages for poor families are obvious.⁸¹

Inducements to wealthier emigrants had begun to appear in the schemes of land speculators, and the first British American land scheme to be advertised in Ireland was promoted by the owners of one half of Prince Edward Island in 1817, with William Marquis, the Dublin ship agent, as their representative. It does not seem to have attracted much attention, but three years later James Forrest of York in Upper Canada managed a successful venture in selling land to emigrants. He came to Belfast, chartered a ship there, and then went to the rounds of the leading market towns of Armagh, Monaghan and Tyrone, engaging passengers, who were also to be purchasers of his land. A similar trade in New Brunswick lands was carried on by A. Campbell at Londonderry. The most ambitious scheme of this period was that of N. Ward of Marietta, Ohio, who travelled all over Ireland selling his land, and engaging passages through various regular agents. Ward shipped his clients to Baltimore, offered them transportation facilities from there to Wheeling, West Virginia, and free passage down the Ohio to Marietta, but he refused to negotiate with any purchaser with less than £25 capital.⁸²

The year 1817 was one of transition. The full effect the factors which were bringing about the transference of the major part of the emigrant traffic to Canadian ports was not apparent until 1818. There was no actual drop in the number of passengers to the United States. Pressure throughout the year was so heavy that most ships were able to take full quotas for any port, but the enormous increase in the total emigration, which probably reached twenty thousand in 1818, was largely absorbed by the Canadian ships. It is unusual to see the price passages falling during a rush year, but the numbers of ships available brought them to a new low level. While direct

⁸¹William Forber Adams, *Op.Cit.*, pp.93-94. See: PRONI, 19th Century Emigration to the North Americas, The cost of passage, “transcript of Letter from John McBride, Quebec, to His Family in Banbridge, Co. Down, June 1819”, Ref: T2123/31/1: http://www.proni.gov.uk/index/exhibitions_talks_and_events/19th_century_emigration_to_the_north_america_online/helping_hands/the_cost_of_passage.htm. 01/05/ 2011, 10:00 am.

⁸²William Forber Adams, *Op.Cit.*, pp.147-148; “Belfast Newt Letter”, April 14, 1820; “Londonderry Journal”, March 7, 1820; “Belfast News Letter”, January 7, 1823.

fares to the United States remained at ten guineas, indirect passage by way of New Brunswick, which became at that time regularly quoted, could be had for £5. The regular rate to St. John, and also to Quebec, was three and a half guineas.⁸³

The tide of emigration in this time was at its flood. Quebec on the north drew something over five thousand emigrants, of whom probably eighty percent came from Belfast and Dublin. The Nova Scotian ports to the east received only a few. The New Brunswick ports were much better situated for emigrant traffic, and St. John took the greatest share, a share which must have approached that of Quebec. Ships came from all the Irish ports, but especially from Londonderry, from which there were nineteen vessels in this one year, the largest number between any Irish port and any port in North America. In 1818 Philadelphia became almost as important as New York, and Baltimore was not far behind Philadelphia. Between them the three ports—Charleston, New Orleans and Boston—received most of the newcomers.⁸⁴

It can say that changes on the other side of the Atlantic had contributed to this popularity to Canadian ports, and were to some extent affecting the course of the movement. Both Quebec and St. John had emigrant societies by 1820, designed in part to aid the new arrival, but primarily to protect the colony from disease and a pauper population. The rise of a poor class trade in 1818-19 caused problems in all the ports, particularly those of British North America, which were far too small to handle such an influx.⁸⁵ In 1819 the Quebec Society embodied in its annual report some paragraphs of warning and advice to emigrants, which were widely copied in Ireland. Instead of discouraging prospective settlers, as was doubtless intended, it proved an encouragement, for agents used the existence of the societies as inducement to the poor to go to those ports.⁸⁶

Meanwhile, timber merchants were also taking a hand in the promotion of emigration. At their offices in Quebec and St. John passages were paid for friends in Ireland, and the practice became almost as common there as in the United States. They were particularly active between 1820 and 1822, when threats of a change in the duties on timber, and even of a possible abolition of the preference given to Canada in 1809, greatly increased shipments, and the tonnage available for emigrant traffic was

⁸³William Forber Adams, *Op.Cit.*, pp. 93-94.

For more details about the names of the vessels, the date and ports of sailing, and the passengers numbers see: *Immigration to Canada, Emigration Information of the Nineteenth Century: Ship Arrivals in Quebec 1818*: <http://jubilation.uwaterloo.ca/~marj/genealogy/ships/ships1818.html>. 01/10/2012, 02:00am.

⁸⁴See: William Forber Adams, *Op.Cit.*, pp.95-97; "Belfast News Letter", April 24, 1818.

⁸⁵William Forber Adams, *Op.Cit.*, p.146; "Belfast News Letter", January 14, 1820.

⁸⁶William Forber Adams, *Op.Cit.*, p.146; PRONI: "transcript of Letter from John McBride, Quebec, to His Family in Banbridge, Co. Down, June 1819":

http://www.proni.gov.uk/index/exhibitions_talks_and_events/19th_century_emigration_to_the_north_america_online/helping_hands/the_cost_of_passage.htm. 01/05/ 2011, 10:00 am. See: *Immigration to Canada, Emigration Information of the Nineteenth Century: Ships to Quebec 1820*: <http://jubilation.uwaterloo.ca/~marj/genealogy/ships/ships1820.html>. 1/10/2012, 02:10am

far beyond the demand. This may have been partly responsible for the very cheap fares then prevailing. At the same time, the rapid fall in timber freights was an added inducement to make some profit on the westbound voyage. This exceptional activity was ended by the new duties of 1822, which proved to be harmless to the Canadian trade. The timber vessels continued to carry the great bulk of the emigrants, and their importance to the emigration trade was used as an argument for the maintenance of preferential treatment. Canadian merchants, thanks in part to the development of canals and roads at this time, were able to offer employment to the poor emigrating in their vessels, and offers were even made to forward passengers to Pittsburg, Illinois, etc., for the majority of the emigrants were still going to the United States. However, the poorer emigrants were transferring from the New Brunswick to the Newfoundland and Quebec routes, those of a better class were discovering the advantages of Liverpool in England as a port of departure.⁸⁷

2.3 Famine of 1821-1822 and its impact on Irish immigration to the United State of America

The potato crop in Ireland in 1821 had been short, and by the following March peasant supplies in the West were exhausted. The situation differed from that of 1818 in that it was local, only Munster, Connaught, and the county of Donegal being affected; but in this case the failure was far more complete and the consequent famine more disastrous, accompanied by heavy rains. Government and charitable aid were set in motion in May 1821, and hundreds of thousands of pounds spent on food and employment for the poor. It could not prevent a considerably death roll, but probably did much to minimize the after effects. The famine itself ended with a fair crop in July and August, but as usual the accompanying fever continued, though with less virulence than between 1818 and 1822, and physically, the peasants were well on the road to normal by the spring of 1823.⁸⁸

All classes were hard hit by the famine and continued unrest in Ireland during this period for Catholic Emancipation—which we explained it in the preceding chapter. The farmer did not starve for want of potatoes, but his misfortunes were heavy. The failure in May of 1821 led to the collapse most of the banking establishments in Ireland, trade came to a standstill, factories were closed, and the farmers, who had a superabundance of grain, found it useless to carry their produce to market. Unfortunately for them England was also well supplied during these years, and grain prices fell steadily through 1822. Moreover, in this year, the northern part of County Cork was on the verge of an agrarian revolt. The secret Whiteboy society was

⁸⁷William Adams, *Op.Cit.*, pp.149-153.

⁸⁸ARPLC, *Poor inquiry, Reports on the state of the poor and on the charitable institutions in some of the principal towns, Part I, 1836, p.p.26,1111*; William Adams, *Op.Cit.*, pp.130; Robert Whyte, *Op.Cit.*, p.10.

revived and began to terrorize landowners, magistrates and tithe collectors. This outbreak of violence had several causes. The post-Napoleonic-war depression and several years of a poor potato crop had resulted in much poverty and evictions of tenant farmers. The "last straw" was the introduction of the Composition Act, 1823 which required the payment of tithes in cash rather than in kind. The tithes were a form of tax which supported the Church of Ireland (Anglican) clergy and were collected from everyone including poor, mostly Catholic, tenant farmers. Many rents were still at war levels, and landlords found it impossible to collect them. Under such conditions the outlook in 1823 seemed dismal indeed.⁸⁹ Thus, with the coming of strong distress in Ireland in 1822, a revival emigration to of America appeared likely and for two years Irish arrivals at Quebec exceeded eight thousands a year. It is notable, however that the augmentation came from Ulster and Munster, whereas Dublin, the source of the greatest artisan emigration experienced a falling off. Belfast gained less than Newry and Derry, whose trade to St. John was also enlarged. Trade to the United States showed only a small increase. From all indication—offers of employment for emigrants, greater abuses by agents, cheap fares—this was a movement of the poor.⁹⁰

The British government thought that sending surplus evicted farmers and other people in poor circumstances to the colonies might ease the situation and prevent an all-out rebellion. So, the government decided to give poor people from north Cork free land grants in Upper Canada (now Ontario) to encourage them to leave Ireland and lead a settled and peaceful farm life in the Canadian backwoods. This emigration scheme had the added benefit of filling up the "empty" land in the colony of Upper Canada. Settlers from Britain and Ireland were especially welcomed to boost the population and form the backbone of a loyal militia which could defend the land against the Americans in case they should invade Canada again. The British government asked officials in Upper Canada to send someone to Ireland to conduct an experiment in moving poor people to Upper Canada. The person sent out was named Peter Robinson, an ex-soldier from the War of 1812, an M.P. and brother of the Attorney General of Upper Canada. (He also happened to be in England at the time.) He was directed to superintend an experimental emigration of two shiploads of poor farmers from north Cork to be settled in the Bathurst District of Upper Canada. Peter Robinson's report includes a description of his discussions with the local magistrates and clergy, how the settlers were selected, their voyage and building of new homes. The ships lists of the "Stakesby" and "Hebe" name all the emigrants and their former residence in Ireland. After the successful 1823 experiment, Robinson was sent back

⁸⁹See: William Forber Adams Op.Cit., pp.131-132; "Belfast News Letter", October 15, 1822; Roberta M. O'Brien, "Emigration from Cork Ireland to Upper Canada, 1823: The First Peter Robinson Settlers": <http://webhome.idirect.com/~obrien/cork1823.html>. 20/10/2012, 12:35 am.

⁹⁰ William Forber Adams Op.Cit., p.143.

to Cork in 1825 to bring back a much larger group to the Newcastle district (around present day Peterborough). These two groups of emigrants from the north Cork area are now referred to as the Peter Robinson settlers. The city of Peterborough was named after Peter Robinson and the 1825 settlers.⁹¹ Moreover the British government published several guides for the Emigrant such as the Emigrant's Directory and Guide to obtain Lands, and effect a Settlement in the Canadas. But not all guides reliable.⁹² However, the Quebec emigrant returns, which show a greater influx from Cork and from Minister generally in 1822 than in either 1823 or 1825; and famine, not government assistance, was the motivating force. Furthermore, the district of north Cork from which these emigrants were drawn, did not, as did some neighboring districts, become a center of extensive emigration until the great famine stimulated the exodus from all Ireland. The assisted Irish, even with government aid, did not prosper like the independent settlers, but they fared better than their poorer countrymen who followed later, and they became a useful section of the community.⁹³

2.3.1 The Passenger Act 1823

The British passenger act of 1823 repealed all preceding passenger acts and nominally equalized conditions of passage to British America and to the United States. Vessels on transatlantic voyages were limited to one passenger to five tons, but Customs licences might be issued enabling them to carry one passenger to every two tons unladen. Such licences were apparently habitually issued to Quebec; for statistics of ship arrivals in 1824 show that the numbers of arrivals on the various ships were not fewer than in previous years, and far in excess of the ordinary provisions of the law. The act permitted the granting of similar licences to British or American vessels for the United states, and no doubt they were issued in many cases; but the terms of the United States passenger act would have prevented shippers from taking full advantage of the concession, and the apparent equalization of conditions of passage to

⁹¹Roberta M. O'Brien, "Emigration from Cork Ireland to Upper Canada, 1823: The First Peter Robinson Settlers": <http://webhome.idirect.com/~obrienr/cork1823.html>. 20/10/2012, 12:35 am.

For more details about Peter Robinson's report see: Peter Robinson's Report on 1823 Emigration to the Bathurst District of Upper Canada: <http://webhome.idirect.com/~obrienr/probin.html>. 20/10/2012, 12:45am.

Also for more details about List of emigrant settlers from the South of Ireland embarked on board of the Stakesby and Hebe transport for passage to Quebec see: The Stakesby, August 7, 1823:

<http://webhome.idirect.com/~obrienr/stakesby.html>. 20/10/2012, 12:50 am; The Hebe, August 7, 1823: <http://webhome.idirect.com/~obrienr/hebe.html>. 20/10/2012, 12: 55 am.

⁹²PRONI, 19th Century Emigration to the North Americas, The cost of passage, "Transcript of an advertisement for the Emigrant's Directory and Guide", Reference: T2123/31/1:

http://www.proni.gov.uk/index/exhibitions_talks_and_events/19th_century_emigration_to_the_north_america_online/helping_hands/the_cost_of_passage.htm. 01/05/2011, 10:00 am.

⁹³William Forber Adams Op.Cit., p.147. See: Peter Robinson Settlers from Cork to Canada 1823 & 1825: <http://www.theshipslist.com/ships/passengerlists/brunswick1825.shtm>. 20/10/2012, 02: 00am.

Canada and the United States was deceptive.⁹⁴ As the tonnage requirements of licensed ships under the new Act were the same as those already existed in British America, and licensed ships to the United States were less strictly limited than before. This obviously would not explain the changes in the amount of emigration; but the act was more severe in other respects, notably in requiring a space of fifteen square feet per person, and the presence of a surgeon on all vessels carrying more than fifty people. The last requirement was particularly awkward; there were not enough doctors in all Ireland meet such requirement, and in 1825 vessels from Belfast were advertising frantically for surgeons. The effect of the act was to increase the cost of passage to a point beyond the reach of the poor. Fares from Londonderry and Dublin to St. John and Quebec had been as low as £2, but after 1823 the cheapest rate quoted British America was £3.10. Thus, the numbers from Munster, always the source of a very poor type, declined markedly. Of those who went, the great group were said to be mechanics, cotters being unable to afford the expense. In the north, shipping advertisements ceased to offer employment to emigrants to America, and land became the main motive.⁹⁵

The return of comparative peace aided in, and was aided by, general economic revival. The next two years after 1823, brought excellent crops of grain, for which the prosperous British manufactures provided a constantly rising market. The advance was greatest in oats, and Ulster farmers benefited particularly. Farming prosperity gave good employment to other classes as well, and by the end of 1825 the outlook for Ireland was better than at any time since the peace. On the other hand, a new act passed in 1825, to go into effect in the following year, replaced the law of 1823, though its terms were in general the same. A special clause permitted the commissioners of the treasury to exempt from its regulations ships from Ireland to British America. It seems that in practice such exemptions were only granted in respect of the requirements for carrying provisions, which had already been allowed under the previous act.⁹⁶ So, in the Newcastle district, in Western Canada, settled by pauper emigrants from Ireland between the years 1825 and 1828, where, by information gathered from two reports of a Select Committee of the House of Commons on Emigration, dated on the 26th May 1826, and 29th June 1827, that 2,024 Irish pauper emigrants embarked from Cork in the year 1825, for Upper Canada, under the superintendence of Mr. Peter Robinson ; that of this number 621 men, 512 women, and 745 children were located on the Newcastle district, and that

⁹⁴William Forber Adams, *Op.Cit.*, pp. 143-144.

⁹⁵*Ibid*, p.144; "Londonderry Journal", April 11, 1820.

⁹⁶See: William Forber Adams, *Op.Cit.*, p.p.133-134, 145; Porter, *Progress of the notion*, II, p.84; *Immigration to Canada, Emigration Information of the Nineteenth Century: Emigration Handbook of 1820, "The Emigrant's Guide to the British Settlements in Upper Canada, and the United States of America"*: <http://jubilation.uwaterloo.ca/~marj/genealogy/papers/handbook1820.html>. 22/08/2012, 07:00am.

the total expense of the conveyance of these emigrants from Ireland to Canada, and of their settlement at Newcastle, including their sustenance up to the period that they enabled to provide for themselves, was £43,145, no portion of which appears to have been repaid by the settlers.⁹⁷

With the British financial crisis of 1826, the wave of prosperity in Ireland came to an end. Capital, so abundant before, was withdrawn from all but the most certain investments. Thus, 1826 was the beginning of a period of depression for craftsmen of all sorts. The distress of 1826, which was general throughout the United Kingdom, enabled the advocates of emigration as a means of relief to bring their ideas to the attention of the country for the first time. Moreover, the appointment of two parliamentary committees on emigration indicated a change in the attitude of the upper classes. Landlords appearing before the Emigration Committee, expressed their willingness to support any scheme of emigration for their tenants, and offered to contribute as much as twenty pounds for a family of four; while others, without waiting for parliamentary action, were sending, yearly, out small groups, and in this way at least retained some influence on emigration.⁹⁸ It seems the check ceased to operate in 1826, when over thirteen thousand emigrants sailed for British America, and five thousand for the United States. In this exodus even the poor participated to some extent, financed possibly by contributions from America which were by then extensive. However, at the end of 1826, emigration to America was much more popular, especially in Munster, than it had seven years earlier, but it was not yet possible on an extensive scale.⁹⁹

It is difficult to determine to what extent the increase of politico-religious, excitement affected emigration. Few Irishmen were against political conflict, and the political activity up to 1829, as well as the delusive hopes of improvement from the reform may have operated as a slight check. The Catholic clergy have been said to have discouraged the movement, their enemies claiming that they did not want to lose the various fees which were their only income, their friends that they were trying to protect their followers from the drift towards Protestantism, which was then believed to be the fate of most settlers in the United States. The general character of the priests

⁹⁷COPY of a Despatch from Earl Grey to Governor-general the Right Honourable the Earl of Elgin, Return of the assessed value of the townships in Western Canada settled by pauper between 1825 and 1828, and their present condition; also, particulars of the formation of "the Canada Emigration Association," established at Toronto in 1840, H.C, 1847-48 [368], p.12.

⁹⁸William Forber Adams, *Op.Cit.*, pp.135-139; ARPLC, *Poor inquiry, Reports on the state of the poor, and on the charitable institutions in some of the principal towns, Part I, 1836*, p.42; "Belfast News Letter", June 6, 1826.

⁹⁹William Forber Adams *Op.Cit.*, p.145.

See: PR: ESI, Return of the number of persons who have emigrated from Great Britain and Ireland to the British colonies and America, from the years 1825 to 1832; of the number of families who have emigrated, and, of the number of unmarried females, not forming part of the above, who have emigrated to new South Wales and Van Diemen's Land, H.C, 1833(696), pp.2-4.

seems to belie this first argument, but there may have been some truth in the second.¹⁰⁰

Emigration is primarily an economic matter, and other factors were more important than priestly influence in keeping down the Catholic exodus. Throughout these years, as in the preceding period, over half the emigrant sailed from Ulster ports in the north, where the mechanization of the linen industry resulted in a large number of unemployed workers. A sizable number of emigrants also came from Leinster, the southeast of Ireland, where a similar technological change led to an increase in rural poverty as machine production in factories and mills displaced domestic spinning and weaving of linen. And according to the testimony of A. C. Buchanan,¹⁰¹ who knew that trade well, the northern Catholics were too poor to go. In the west, landlords while denying that poverty was the cause, testified that the Catholics were still too much attached to the soil to emigrate. The exceptions to this were in parts of Munster which had suffered most severely during the famine and from them even the poorest were eager to escape. The only notice of a large Catholic emigration comes from Dublin, where John Astle, a considerable shipowner stated that three- fourths of his emigrants were from Irish Catholic church.¹⁰²

2.4 The Irish Emigration from Liverpool

In the 1820s and 1830s many Irish immigrated to English cities as London, Liverpool, or Manchester. Other prospective emigres answered American advertisements that appeared in Dublin and Belfast for jobs building canals to connect the Atlantic seaboard with the Great Lakes region. Weavers, spinners, and other craftsmen were being forced out of work because of technological advancements in England. As England became more industrialized, Ireland's manufactured products could not compete with the mass-produced goods on the English market. Many of these Irish craftsmen, having some financial resources, bought passage to the United States for their families to pursue their trades abroad. Irish emigration through port of Liverpool to the United States of America and to the British settlements commenced, where, the first leg of the emigrant's journey was from a port in Ireland to Liverpool in England. Most of the shipping lanes in the Irish Sea led to Liverpool, the seaport that had become the main center of the Atlantic passenger trade. The journey took less

¹⁰⁰William Forber Adams, *Op.Cit.*, p.139.

¹⁰¹In 1828, A. C. Buchanan was appointed by Britain as Upper Canada's first Chief Agent for Emigration. Buchanan himself advised the British authorities to appoint Canadians only as emigration agents, not as immigration officers, to ensure that the administration of immigration to the colony from the mother country was "free from local prejudice".

¹⁰² William Forber Adams, *Op.Cit.*, pp.140-141; Jay P. Dolan, *Op.Cit.*, p.37.

than a day, but the ships had no amenities, and most often they carried cattle, pigs, sheep, and horses along with the emigrants, who stayed on the top deck for the relatively brief journey.¹⁰³

Once they arrived in Liverpool, they had to wait for a ship bound for North America, which could mean days of waiting in run-down flop-houses. They purchased their own tickets or had them prepaid by relatives or friends in North America, and when the time came, they boarded a ship destined for Canada or the United States. A sizable number of Irish, as many as 60 percent of all Irish emigrants chose to sail to Canada, due to the cheaper fares, and from there they would then travel south to the United States; some settled permanently in Canada. New York was the harbour of choice for those who sailed for the United States, since by this time New York was supplanting Philadelphia as the Irish capital of the United States.¹⁰⁴

In consequence of the numerous impositions to which emigrants embarking at the port of Liverpool were subjected, the agent of the "Passengers' Office," was appointed by the American Chamber of Commerce in the spring of 1823 to procuring passages, and in making the needful arrangements for emigrants proceeding from Liverpool to the United States and British America. Many vessels sailed from this port for Quebec, &c. during the spring and summer of every year, and when there was very little freight in proportion to the number of vessels, they might be chartered, to take passengers from a port in Ireland to Quebec, on very moderate terms, generally about 21s. per register ton.¹⁰⁵ Sailing from Liverpool to North America took about five to six weeks. The sailing ships that carried the emigrants were built to carry timber or grain, not human cargo. Having delivered their cargo to Liverpool, they returned to North America with emigrants filling their empty holds. Accommodations were primitive, with poor ventilation amid crowded conditions where four people slept in a space of six feet by six feet, in an area between the decks that was only five to six feet in height. Such an overcrowded environment enabled contagious diseases to spread easily. For a rural people who had most likely never been on a ship before,

¹⁰³Kerry A. Graves, *Op.Cit.*, p.28; Expost of Frauds committed on Emigration Liverpool, 17th January, 1834, ARPLC, Poor inquiry, Reports on the state of the poor, and on the charitable institutions in some of the principal towns, Parts I, 1836, Appendix (G.), p. 2910; Jay P. Dolan, *Op.Cit.*, pp. 37-38.

¹⁰⁴Jay P. Dolan, *Op.Cit.*, pp. 37-38.

¹⁰⁵Immigration to Canada, Emigration Information of the Nineteenth Century: "Immigration Papers of 1825-26: extracted from the British Parliamentary Papers, 1826 (404) IV.1 "Select Committee on Emigration from United Kingdom Report, Minutes of Evidence, Appendix, Index", "Letter from Agent of the Passengers Office at Liverpool, on the Charge of conveying Emigrants from that Town to America": <http://jubilation.uwaterloo.ca/~marj/genealogy/reports/report1825.html>. 01/10/2012, 01:15 am. See: Estimate of the Expenses of a Vessel to be chartered at Liverpool, to carry Passengers from a Port in Ireland to Quebec. *Ibid.*

the long voyage across the Atlantic, where heavy storms were common, was frightening.¹⁰⁶

Although many of migrants chose to travel to Canada because it was a less expensive route to the America, but some of them advised their friends and relatives not to come this way, and in this context, the immigrant John McBride said in a letter to his family in Ireland in 1819 that “I would not allow anyone who can afford to go direct to the United States to come this way, on account of so many being taken in these ships.”¹⁰⁷ An alternative was to travel to Liverpool which cost a few shillings at most, and then try to raise the passage money to America. The fare from Liverpool to New York averaged between two and three pounds, but many of those who chose this route never left England. The development of steam communication made the port of Liverpool almost as convenient for passengers as direct sailing, and as the practice increased it gradually deprived the Irish ports of much of their freight trade to the United States, and enhanced Liverpool's advantage of frequent and regular sailings.¹⁰⁸

Free transportation to the English port gave the emigrants the full benefit of fares which ran from £4.10 to £7, and seem to have been on an average lower than those from Ireland. The change involved landing New York, to which the westbound Liverpool traffic was largely confined, but this was not obstacle. After completion of the Erie Canal in 1825 settlers found it a convenient port for the west, and not unsuitable for those parts of the Atlantic seaboard to which the Irish were accustomed to go. So, the completion of the Canal established a transportation link between New York and the sprawling interior of the Midwest. From 1823 on it received more than half the total American immigration; and in self-protection the New York legislators passed a series of ordinances, the final effect of which was to require a payment of \$3.00 per head for each immigrant. This tax drove a few of the Irish poor to Philadelphia, but the majority of those for New York were landed at Amboy, and the acts did little good. The only other United States port of great interest to the Irish was Baltimore, which after 1823 absorbed an increasing share of the direct emigration from Belfast.¹⁰⁹

The growth of the Liverpool trade owed something to the reduced importance of the regular Irish merchants in the emigration traffic. They naturally sent emigration from their own wharves, and whenever possible in their own ships; but the shipbroker, or passenger agent, who chartered the middle section of a timber vessel

¹⁰⁶Jay P. Dolan, *Op.Cit.*, p. 38.

¹⁰⁷Quoted in: PRONI: “Transcript of Letter from John McBride, Quebec, to His Family in Banbridge, Co. Down June 1819”:http://www.proni.gov.uk/index/exhibitions_talks_and_events/19th_century_emigration_to_the_north_america_online/helping_hands/the_cost_of_passage.htm. 01/05/ 2011, 10:00 am.

¹⁰⁸*Ibid* ; William Forber Adams, *Op.Cit.*, pp.153-154.

¹⁰⁹ William Forber Adams, *Op.Cit.*, pp.153-154; Jay P. Dolan, *Op.Cit.*, p. 39.

for passengers, and sold passages in advance without reference to particular vessels, had no incentive for favoring one route rather than another. The same men, who chartered a Liverpool ship to take on a load of emigrants in an Irish port, also sent other emigrants to Liverpool to take passage there. The advertisements show that by the middle twenties by far the greater part of the trade from Ulster and Dublin had fallen into their hands, the regular merchants taking only a small number in their vessels.¹¹⁰

The continuous years of low class traffic, 1819-1823, had given undue advantage to the less scrupulous agents, and merchants found it difficult to compete. In Ulster, the organization of emigration had then reached a stage where the would-be emigrant needed only the money to pay his passage; everything else was done for him. The brokers had sub-agents whose business was to visit the main towns on market days during the spring, thus reducing to a minimum the inconvenience of securing passage. The movement from the south was not yet sufficient to make profitable such a development, and control of emigration there remained in the hands of merchants. The growth of the New York-Liverpool trade gave to American shipowners, who controlled most of it, some revenge for the loss of the passenger traffic in 1817. Their agents began to supplant the Irish charterers, and while British shipping from Ireland to America remained stable at about 3000 tons a year, American tonnage rose from 9500 to 18,000. It receded thereafter, but Americans never lost control of the direct route to their country.¹¹¹

The dismal years before 1823, and to an even greater extent perhaps the two year, of hopeful improvement which intensified the subsequent failure, had done a great deal to foster the emigrating tendency. Long before the government check was removed, the social check in Ireland had largely disappeared and the influence of the upper classes was wholly favorable. There remained only the inherent attachment to the native soil—an attachment in many cases intensified by ignorance—which formed the principal obstacle to the extension of emigration. It had been broken down to some extent in Munster and Leinster, and was almost non-existent in Ulster, but in Connaught it was still a formidable barrier. The events of the next ten years were to undermine this influence and introduce Irish emigration on a grand scale.¹¹²

¹¹⁰ William Forber Adams, *Op.Cit.*, pp.154-156.

¹¹¹ *Ibid*, p.156.

¹¹² *Ibid*, pp.156-157.

2.5 Reasons behind Rise of large scale Irish emigration 1827-1836

The Irish migration to the United States continued on a fairly consistent basis throughout the nineteenth century. Although it began hesitantly in the 1820s but grew with the passing of each decade. In 1827, the movement of Irish to America for the first time since 1818 reached, officially, at least twenty thousand. But William Adams pointed out that there is strong reason to believe that the returns were especially defective in that year, and the actual figure may have been thirty thousand or over. The emigration of the next ten years was peculiarly subject to fluctuations, but its proportions were now so great that nothing short of absolute economic disaster in America could bring it below 30,000.¹¹³

This opinion seems true because some historians stated that the need for organizations that catered for, represented and gave a voice to the wider Irish community in America, was heightened from 1827. Prior to that date the British had restricted the number of Irish who were allowed to emigrate to a new life in America. We mentioned earlier the very general desire for emigration amongst the poorer classes in Ulster and large districts of Munster and Leinster, but large scale emigration was impossible without an extension of facilities bringing passage within the reach of thousands who had been in this time unable to go, so a change in the passenger acts was primarily responsible. The British government repealed the British Passenger Act in 1827, which had greatly inflated the cost of fares, and in that year, over 20,000 Irish took advantage of the cheaper rates, so, the number of Irish arrivals to America grew rapidly and by 1835 over 30,000 Irish emigrants were landing in New York annually. Thus from 1830 onwards the Irish emigrant becomes a recognized and important factor in American economic and social history.¹¹⁴

Conditions proved so bad, however, that a new British act was passed in 23 May, 1828 applicable only to vessels sailing to British America. Thus, the conveyance of passengers from the United Kingdom to the British possessions in North America is regulated by an Act of Parliament (9 Geo. 4, c. 21), of which the following are the principal provisions: Ships are not allowed to carry passengers to these colonies unless they be of the height of five feet and a half between decks, and they must not carry more than three passengers for every four tons of the registered

¹¹³Roger Daniels, *Op.Cit.*, p.127; William Forber Adams, *Op.Cit.*, pp.159-160; The Rev. Stephen Byrne, *Op.Cit.*, pp. 17-18; Mike Cronin and Daryl Adair, *Op.Cit.*, p.13.

¹¹⁴Mike Cronin and Daryl Adair, *Op.Cit.*, p.13; William Forber Adams, *Op.Cit.*, p.160; Edwin G. Burrows and Mike Wallace, *Gotham: A History of New York City to 1898*, New York 1999, p.543; "Belfast News Letter", April 27, 1827; PRONI: 19th Century Emigration to the North Americas, Helping hands: http://www.proni.gov.uk/index/exhibitions_talks_and_events/19th_century_emigration_to_the_north_america_online/helping_hands.htm. 01/05/2011, 09:20am.

burthen ; there must be on board, at least 50 gallons of pure water, and 50 pounds of bread, biscuit, oatmeal, or bread stuff, for each passenger. When the ship carries the full number of passengers allowed by law, no part of the cargo, and no stores or provisions, may be carried between decks; but if there be less than the complete number of passengers, goods may be stowed between decks in a proportion not exceeding three cubical feet for each passenger wanting of the highest number. Masters of vessels who land passengers, unless with their own consent, at a place different from that originally agreed upon, are subject to a penalty of (£ 20) recoverable by summary process before two justices of the peace in any of the North American colonies. It was far from restoring the stricter regulations of the early twenties, for it revived only the old space requirement of five and a half feet between decks, and permitted the carrying of three passengers to every four tons registered instead of the one passenger to every two tons previously enforced. It eliminated also the detailed specifications regarding provisions. This act, which remained in force through the summer of 1835, was in general well enforced in Ireland, except as to provisions, and though it apparently proved less effective at Liverpool where the great quantity of shipping made control difficult. Besides the sea voyage from England, persons proceeding to Canada should be provided with the means of paying for the journey, which they may have to make after their arrival at Quebec. The cost of this journey must, of course, depend upon the situation of the place where the individual may find employment, or where he may have previously formed a wish to settle. Thus, new, less stringent regulations were introduced in 1828 and between that date and 1837 almost 400,000 Irish immigrated to North America.¹¹⁵

Relaxed regulations were immediately reflected in cheaper fares. When the minimum rate from the north of Ireland to the United States remained at £5, and that from Liverpool at £4, fares to Canada dropped to £2 or at most £3. The act of 1828 apparently made no difference, for the same rates are quoted in 1830. It can say that, the repeal of the Passenger Act early in 1827 brought to a close period of restricted emigration, and opened the way to a full operation of forces which had been greatly strengthened during these years. At the beginning of the twenties Munster was in no sense an important center of emigration, but by 1827 many, if not most, of its poor and middling inhabitants were ready and cage to seek their fortunes abroad.¹¹⁶ Thus,

¹¹⁵Appendix to report from the Commissioners for Emigration, addressed to Viscount Goderich, dated 15 March 1832, in: GRC, Copies of any reports from the Commissioners for Emigration to the Secretary of State for the Colonial Department, since the last session of Parliament, H.C, 1831-32(724), p.10; William Forber Adams, Op.Cit., pp.160-161; PRONI: 19th Century Emigration to the North Americas, The cost of passage:http://www.proni.gov.uk/index/exhibitions_talks_and_events/19th_century_emigration_to_the_north_america_online/helping_hands/the_cost_of_passage.htm. 01/05/ 2011, 10:00 am. Further details are giving in: Immigration to Canada, Emigration Information of the Nineteenth Century: Passenger Act of 1828: <http://jubilation.uwaterloo.ca/~marj/genealogy/papers/passengeract.html>. 01/10/2012, 02:15am.

¹¹⁶ William Forber Adams, Op.Cit., p.p. 156,161.

after 1830, the composition and size of the Irish immigrant group altered radically. The combined impact of population increase and recurring crop failures in the 1830s swelled the estimated numbers arriving in American ports to over 200,000 for the single decade of the 1830s.¹¹⁷

By 1831 the standard fare from Ireland to Canada (depending on season, route taken, and shipping line) had fallen from an average of between four and ten pounds sterling to just one pound ten shillings. It is possible that in March and April, passages may be obtained from Dublin for 35s, or even 30s; but the prices always grow higher as the season advances.¹¹⁸ And due to the great demand for transportation to North America many of the regulations of the Passengers Acts were ignored by Masters as there was money to be made. The conditions in steerage on board one of the ships destined for there, was described by Mr. Stephen E. De Vere who reported what he experienced to the Chairman of the Colonial Land and Emigration Commission: “Hundreds of poor people, men, women and children of all ages, huddled together without light, without air, wallowing in filth and breathing a fetid atmosphere, sick in body, dispirited in heart, the fever patients lying between the sound...”¹¹⁹ So, although the Canadian route was relatively inexpensive, it was considered very hazardous, and the death rate could be extremely high, whether from shipwreck or ship's fever, moreover, the hardships resulting from a detention the vessel at Grosse Isle—the quarantine station—for weeks. Nevertheless, as we pointed out, many who would have preferred to go to America chose this route because it was all they could afford and they later travelled overland to the United States.¹²⁰

The passenger act was not altogether responsible for this continued downward trend, as is shown by the extraordinary drop in fares to the United States which began about 1831, when Liverpool agents offered to take passengers from Newry to

¹¹⁷ Marjorie R. Fallows, *Op.Cit.*, p.22; Kerry A. Graves, *Op.Cit.*, p.28.

¹¹⁸ Report of the Commissioners for Emigration, addressed to Viscount Goderich, dated 15 March 1832, in: GRC, Copies of any reports from the Commissioners for Emigration to the Secretary of State for the Colonial Department, since the last session of Parliament, H.C, 1831-32(724), p.7; ARPLC, Reports on the state of the poor, and on the charitable institutions in some of the principal towns, Part I, 1836, p.20; PRONI: 19th Century Emigration to the North Americas, The cost of passage: http://www.proni.gov.uk/index/exhibitions_talks_and_events/19th_century_emigration_to_the_north_america_online/helping_hands/the_cost_of_passage.htm. 01/05/ 2011, 10:00 am.

¹¹⁹ Quoted in: Immigrants to Canada, Emigration Information of the Nineteenth Century: 1828 Voyage: <http://jubilation.uwaterloo.ca/~marj/genealogy/voyages/eye1820s.html>. 03/09/2012, 11.00am.
See also: Immigration to Canada: 1831 Stay at Grosse Isle for the Mary: <http://jubilation.uwaterloo.ca/~marj/genealogy/voyages/mary1831.html>. 03/09/2012, 09:00am.

¹²⁰ PRONI: “ Transcript of Letter from John McBride, Quebec, to his family in Banbridge, Co. Down, June 1819”: http://www.proni.gov.uk/index/exhibitions_talks_and_events/19th_century_emigration_to_the_north_america_online/helping_hands/the_cost_of_passage.htm. 01/05/ 2011, 10:00 am; Immigration to Canada: 1831 Stay at Grosse Isle for the Mary: <http://jubilation.uwaterloo.ca/~marj/genealogy/voyages/mary1831.html>. 03/09/2012, 09:00am.

Liverpool and thence to New York for £3, children half fare. Three years later the fare from Liverpool to the United States ports was from 50% to 60% and passengers were advised to bargain for reductions. Several factors doubtless contributed to this fall, like bad times in England had caused a surplus of shipping and a decline in the timber rates from British America between 1830 and 1833. At this same time, international trade between England and the United States was increasing, which made numerous ships available for passage. A typical ship captain brought a ship laden with goods from Canada or the United States to England, but often could not find enough cargo to fill his hold for the return trip across the Atlantic. Transporting passengers in the below-deck steerage area filled this need. The competition for passengers among ships brought ticket prices down during the 1830s and 1840s, which made the decision to immigrate more feasible for many poverty-stricken Irish. On the other hand, trade to the United States was to some extent picking up, especially after tariff reductions of 1833, and the settlement in 1830 of the long dispute over West Indian trade. Thus the great majority of emigrants did not travel by ordinary cargo vessels, and the main cause of the reduction in fares lay the increase of the number of passengers. Emigrant ships during these years could usually count on a full passenger list, and were thus able to operate on a smaller margin profit for each individual. During the season of 1832 every one of the twenty-two vessels which left Belfast for Quebec carried its full legal complement of passengers, and the same condition doubtless prevailed at other ports.¹²¹ From accounts transmitted by the different agents employed in facilitating the conveyance and location of emigrants in 1832, the outlay for the emigration this year exceeded considerably the sum allowed for that purpose. Most of the emigrants of that year passed into the United States, while in the British American timber trade vessels, there was a tonnage barely sufficient to carry the large emigration of 1831 and 1832. Other merchant ships, unlike timber ships, were not easily convertible for emigration purposes, and it is quite possible that in these years the available tonnage set a definite limit to the amount of emigration.¹²²

While cheaper fares made possible the first great emigration of the Irish poor, we must turn to the state of Irish agriculture for its direct cause. There was the effect of steam transportation between Ireland and Great Britain on the course of emigration, but its most significant effect lay in a change in the character of Irish rural economy. Steamers were first used for freight in 1824, and by 1830 twelve companies operating forty-two vessels were carrying animals from Irish ports to Liverpool or Bristol. In the same year the inauguration of steam service on the Shannon, which was connected by canal with Dublin, opened up the western grazing country to easy communication with the

¹²¹William Adams, *Op.Cit.*, pp.161-163; Kerry A. Graves, *Op.Cit.*, p.38; "Belfast News Letter", December 28, 1832, which gives the number of passengers by each vessel, and its tonnage.

¹²²P.R., Correspondence respecting emigration, and disposal of Crown lands, H.C, 1834 (616), p.24; William Adams, *Op.Cit.*, p.163.

English market. The assimilation of the trade between England and Ireland to the coasting trade, accomplished in 1826, reduced many charges on shipping and helped the steamers in drawing together the two countries.¹²³ The Irish grazier in this time became able to sell in a free market, and grazing profits, aided by higher prices for butter, increased enormously. The result was a widespread movement for the consolidation of farms, and increased severity in dealing with under-tenants. Moreover, the Whiteboys and the famine of 1822 had shown southern landlords and farmers the dangers of an abundant population, and the enhanced value of grazing land now gave them an additional reason for clearing their estates. To quote one of many similar opinions expressed by landlords “We now discover that dairy cows are more profit able than cottager tenants.”¹²⁴

Ejectment for nonpayment of rent as a means of attempting to enforce payment was a recognized proceeding in northeastern Ulster, though not elsewhere. The politico-religious quarrels connected with Catholic Emancipation furnished another motive, and the disfranchisement in 1829 of 200,000 forty shilling freeholders was a signal for further activity on the part of landlords, who wished to create £10 freeholds- then the lowest voting class. Agitation for the passage of an Irish Poor Law, which would have made the gentry largely responsible for the cottiers within their district, though not effective until 1838, was preceded by frantic efforts on the part of landlords to remove the pauper population from their lands. These movements for ejectment were greatly facilitated by the act of 1826, which required the landlord's agreement to all subleases. The act was considerably modified in 1832, but it proved very effective during its work. The necessity of emigration as an accompaniment to eviction was clearly recognized. The Emigration Committee of 1826 said of the Subletting Act: “All the advantages that may be derived from this Act will be diminished, if not rendered nugatory, unless a well-organized system of emigration should be established concurrently with the measure itself.”¹²⁵ A year later the act was declared unenforceable in Cork unless accompanied by emigration. The Poor Inquiry Commission of 1833-1836, which secured information from every parish in Ireland as to the extent of emigration, how it was aided, and where it went, and on the prevalence of the practice of consolidating farms, and of evictions, supplies positive evidence of the comparatively slight connection between the two.¹²⁶

¹²³Steamers were first used for freight in 1824, and by 1830 twelve companies operating forty-two vessels were carrying animals from Irish ports to Liverpool or Bristol. In the same year the inauguration of steam service on the Shannon, which was connected by canal with Dublin, opened up the western grazing country to easy communication with the English market. See: William Adams, *Op.Cit.*, pp.163-164.

¹²⁴ Quoted in: *Ibid*, p.164.

¹²⁵ Quoted in: *Ibid*, p.165.

¹²⁶ *Ibid*, pp.165-166.

The emigration of the evicted raises an interesting question—that of the means which enabled them to go during this period, noting that there could be no doubt of their desire. In all the evidence before the Poor Commissioners but two instances occur in which ejected tenants preferred other aid than assistance in emigration, while hundreds expressed a wish to go to America. But there is also much proof to the effect that the evicted were too poor to raise even the small capital necessary for passage at that time. The answer is to be found first in the help of friends, a help so generally extended to Irish emigrants. Some emigrants were assisted to emigrate by the Poor Law Commissioners, others were assisted by Parish funds while still others were assisted by compensation from their landlords for crops in the ground or for buildings. Furthermore, there was considerable direct aid from landlords, consisting usually of passage money, sometimes supplemented by a small capital for use upon arrival in America. In 1826 landlords had expressed their willingness to cooperate in a general scheme, but had given little actual assistance. In 1833 forty-seven parishes reported direct landlord assistance in emigration, and twenty-three others aid by public subscription, presumably from the gentry. These seventy parishes were widely scattered throughout Ireland.¹²⁷

Indirectly, evictions were added to the causes of emigration by spreading unemployment from districts already over-populated to others where the pressure had there been less severe. Generally, agricultural wages remained the same, ranging from five pence to ten pennies a day for steady labor, or eight pennies to a shilling for casual work; but a decrease in the number of working days may well have made the early thirties especially miserable for the cottier and lowest class of farmer, who was dependent on wages. The distress was perhaps no greater than in 1818 or 1822, but coming after a very general spread of the emigrating spirit, and at a time when fares were only about half as high as in the earlier periods, it became a far more strong cause of emigration than before.¹²⁸

Social disturbances, punctuating the continuous pressure of the economic distress, played an important role at this period as in other periods. The religious friction which preceded Catholic Emancipation reached unusual intensity in 1827, and party lines were determined almost wholly by creed. Religion, however, was not the

¹²⁷Ibid, pp. 166-167.

For more details about general comments and information about assistance which was given to some of the passengers on vessel. If the Master of the vessel is known, his name will also be given. See: Immigrants to Canada: "Extracted from the Immigration Reports of 1835, 1837 and 1838": Vessels Arriving at Quebec 1835: <http://jubilation.uwaterloo.ca/~marj/genealogy/ships/ships1835.html>. 10/10/2012, 02: 20 am; Vessels Arriving at Quebec 1837: <http://jubilation.uwaterloo.ca/~marj/genealogy/ships/ships1837.html>. 10/10/2012, 02 : 30 am; Vessels Arriving at Quebec 1838: <http://jubilation.uwaterloo.ca/~marj/genealogy/ships/ships1838.html>. 10/10/2012, 02:35am.

¹²⁸ See: William Forber Adams, *Op.Cit.*, pp.167-168.

primary cause of the so called tithe war after 1830. Tithes were, as has been pointed out, essentially an economic grievance, accidentally allied with the religious question, and were exploited by politicians, as Lecky said, "Later agrarian crime had an organization and a purpose which made it peculiarly easy to give it a political hue."¹²⁹ So, tithe agitation now became openly part of a general campaign against agrarian burdens. The agrarian insurrections, though no more violent than those of the preceding decade, produced a far greater hysteria. It is not surprising in such troubled times to find Protestant asserting that insurrection was the primary cause of emigration; but such statements will not stand investigation. Cornwall Lewis, before writing his book on Local disturbances in Ireland, obtained full reports from the northwestern area where emigration was heaviest. They ascribed it, firstly, to the desire for more land for large families, and second to a wish to escape grand jury cess and tithes. Lewis's conclusion is: "The motive to emigrate with the Protestants is self interest, and a desire to better their condition, and not religious persecution." This is not really inconsistent with the report of the Londonderry Journal, which surveyed emigration in 1832:

"Most of those who have sailed from this port this season are, as usual, small farmers who have been in decent circumstances and of the protestant persuasion. Rackrents under Landlords who, could we believe them, are overflowing with zeal for Protestant Interests, combined with tithes, are doubtless the chief cause of the melancholy determination which those persons have adopted; but we can well suppose that there are not a few of them who are anxious to find a refuge in the forests of the new world from the feuds and bickerings which prevail to such a deplorable extent in their own country."¹³⁰ Agrarian troubles were worst, however, in the southwest, and it is there that one can find them most often cited as the cause of Protestant emigration.

From what has been stated it will be manifest that the combination of social and economic evils, with special causes in certain years, produced a total emigration from Ireland in the thirties of about 650,000, of whom roughly two-thirds went to America, and one-third to Great Britain. On the other hand it is clear from the character of immigration into Great Britain, as well as from Irish reports, that the best classes Irish were turning to America. Even among the weavers, all who could went to America. Those who moved to Great Britain were either Just able to pay the passage across the Irish sea or were sent by public subscription. This movement, therefore, can scarcely decreased emigration to America, and may ultimately added to it. Many remained in Lancashire or Scotland only long enough to accumulate the necessary

¹²⁹ Quoted in: *Ibid*, pp.172-173.

¹³⁰ Quoted in: *Ibid*, pp.173-175; "Londonderry Journal", April 17, 1832.

funds for the transatlantic voyage. Conditions in America were far more attractive than in Great Britain.¹³¹

We pointed out previously, that the proportion between the emigration to the United States and to the British North American provinces was very different, where, in Comparison of emigration between the both of them by examining the Return of Emigration, it is impossible not to be struck with the difference in the progress of emigration. Up to 1835 the emigration to British North America generally exceeded that to the United States; so that between 1816 and 1834, of 669,725 persons who emigrated to the American continent, 402,301 went to British North America, and only 267,424 to the United States. Since 1835 the preponderance has been continually the other way, where, between 1835 and 1847 the emigration to the United States exceeded every year that to British North America,—but the disproportion was not very great, never, except in 1838 and 1839, amounting to 2 to 1; but in the four years between 1848 and the close of 1851 the disproportion has been excessive, the emigration direct to the United States having been no less than 898,118—that to British North America no more than 147,998, or less than one sixth. Thus, of 3,053,294 persons who have emigrated in the 21 years between 1835 and 1855, 2,323,312 have gone to the United States, and only 729,982 to British North America.¹³² It is notable, that the emigration to the British Colonies has, in fact, been for many years almost stationary. Thus, excluding the exceptional year 1847, the annual emigration to those colonies between 1840 and the close of 1854 was on an average 36,101 persons; while the average of the nine years between 1830 and 1839, also excluding the exceptional year 1838, was 35,132.¹³³

The increase of emigration to the United States as compared with that to British America was the necessary consequence of the facilities for employment offered by the two countries respectively. The restricted population, and capital of the British Colonies could absorb but a small number of immigrants annually, and consequently as the emigration increased the additional emigrants were compelled to resort to the more extensive labour market of the United States.¹³⁴ Thus, the chief incentives for immigration to America, to the bulk of the emigrants of this period, were good wages and steady employment. Cheap land ceased to be an inducement and almost disappeared from the shipping advertisements, but the great land boom of 1829-1837, by drawing off the discontented poor from the Atlantic coast, left a

¹³¹ William Forber Adams, *Op.Cit.*, p.p. 175,177.

¹³² GRC, Twelfth general report of the Colonial Land and Emigration Commissioners, 1852, H.C, 1852[1499], p.8; GRC, Sixteenth general report of the Emigration Commissioners, H.C, 1856[2089], p.8.

¹³³ 1847 the year of the Irish famine, when the emigration to British North America amounted to 109,680.
1838 the year of the Canadian rebellion, when the emigration to British North America fell off to 4,577.

GRC, Sixteenth general report of the Emigration Commissioners, H.C, 1856[2089], p.9.

¹³⁴ *Ibid*, p.9.

vacancy to be filled by the emigrants. Most of them were unskilled laborers. Moreover, during these years when all the states had run wild in canal building, and construction begun on three great railways, and when road building was continuing apace, offered golden opportunities. The success of those who emigrate may be inferred from the high rate of wages they receive: the wages of the labourer are much higher in proportion than those of the mechanic. Mechanics' wages are not much higher than in Ireland, while laborers' wages were said to be four times as high as in Ireland, and there were many work opportunities. On a farm in the neighbourhood of New York they earn from 10 to 13 dollars a month, including board and lodging; on the canals and railroads from 10 to 15 dollars a-month. Artisans found fewer opportunities, but the current wages of \$4.50 a week for handloom weavers, and of \$6 to \$9 for cotton spinners and other craftsmen represented wealth to them. Manufacturing distress in 1829 caused some hardships, but two years later the conditions had improved sufficiently to create glowing comment in the Irish newspapers. American attractions were kept constantly before the public by means of newspaper articles, as well as by information in the shipping advertisements, especially of ships for Baltimore, the key point for the three biggest construction works in the United States—the Pennsylvania Canal system, with 5,000 jobs in 1828, the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal, with 1,800 jobs, and the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad. In this context, the accounts received both from British America and from the United States have been favourable. Mr. Peter G. Bell and Mr. George Ash, gentlemen who charter emigrant vessels to America, state there is full employment in the United States, and they always succeed except from their own misconduct or from sickness.¹³⁵

There were the incorrect representations which have been sometimes made to settlers as to the nature of the assistance which they may expect from Government. These representations have been put forth by agents who, having engaged portions of vessels upon speculation, have afterwards endeavoured to collect their complement of passengers by deluding uninformed persons either with expectations of gratuitous grants of land, or with the hope of a supply of tools, or even of being maintained for a limited period at the public expense. The report of the Commissioners for Emigration in March 1832 pointed out that the efforts of Government may be advantageously applied; and by which useful assistance may be afforded to those who emigrate. Emigrants may be benefited by the collection and gratuitous communication to them of statements showing the demand for labour in different districts; by advice and information to be given them through the Government agents who have been appointed for this purpose at the principal colonial ports, and by contributions from public funds to the hospitals and emigrant societies which exist in the principal

¹³⁵ARPLC, Reports on the state of the poor, and on the charitable institutions in some of the principal towns, Part I, 1836, p.20; William Forber Adams, *Op.Cit.*, pp. 177-178; "Belfast Newt Letter", July 17, 1827.

colonial towns. The British Government has decided no longer to permit the disposal of land in these colonies except by sale. In this context, the Commissioners for Emigration said: "As far as we can judge experience has shown that the most prudent course for working people in these countries is, to commence by earning their livelihood in the occupation to which they have been accustomed at home, and afterwards to acquire land, should that be their object, by purchasing it out of their savings from the high wages paid in these colonies. This course, which is rendered easy in Canada."¹³⁶

The colonies in North America to which emigrants can with advantage proceed, are Lower Canada, Upper Canada, and New Brunswick. From the reports received from the other British colonies in North America, namely, Prince Edward's Island, Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, and Cape Breton, it appears that they do not contain the means either of affording employment at wages to a considerable number of emigrants, or of settling them upon land. Thus, British America was still too sparsely settled to take care of any large number of emigrants, and employment depended primarily upon governmental activities. In New Brunswick, Irishmen worked on the new roads, along which many of them settled. In lower Canada, the long standing dispute between the Governor and Assembly over the control of the treasury blocked any heavy appropriations for public works, but the executive contrived to use a portion of the emigrants for road building into the eastern townships, where some Irish settled. Upper Canada only was in a position to employ large numbers, and the Rideau and Welland canals absorbed the majority of the emigrant laborers until 1831, when most of the work was completed.¹³⁷

The report of the Commissioners for Emigration in 1832 confirmed that the greater part of the emigrants in 1831 found the means of settling themselves without experiencing inconvenience from the want of the former facilities for the acquisition of land.¹³⁸ So, as to the probable extent of emigration to those provinces this year has been more than verified, and so great was the desire among the agricultural and labouring classes in every part of the United Kingdom to emigrate during the summer.

¹³⁶Quoted in: Report of the Commissioners for Emigration, addressed to Viscount Goderich, dated 15 March 1832, in: GRC, Copies of any reports from the Commissioners for Emigration to the Secretary of State for the Colonial Department, since the last session of Parliament, H.C, 1831-32(724), p.3.

¹³⁷Appendix to report from the Commissioners for Emigration, addressed to Viscount Goderich, dated 15 March 1832, in: GRC, Copies of any reports from the Commissioners for Emigration to the Secretary of State for the Colonial Department, since the last session of Parliament, H.C, 1831-32(724), p.p.9,11-12;William Forber Adams, Op. Cit., pp. 178-179; Immigrants to Canada, Emigration Information of the Nineteenth Century: 1832 Emigrants Handbook For Arrivals at Quebec: <http://jubilation.uwaterloo.ca/~marj/genealogy/papers/emigrants1832.html>. 28/09/2012,04:55pm.

¹³⁸Report of the Commissioners for Emigration, addressed to Viscount Goderich, dated 15 March 1832, in: GRC, Copies of any reports from the Commissioners for Emigration to the Secretary of State for the Colonial Department, since the last session of Parliament, H.C, 1831-32(724), p.7.

In this context, report of Buchanan, emigration agent at Quebec stated that “emigration from all parts of the United Kingdom rapidly increases, and vast numbers come from counties that hitherto were not in the habit of sending any. In every portion of Ireland the small farmers and labouring peasantry are also becoming more sensible of the advantages to be gained by transferring their industry to these fine provinces.”¹³⁹ Very many respectable and wealthy farmers came out this year from almost every portion, of Ireland, but more particularly from the counties' of Armagh, Fermanagh, Cavan, Leitrim, Mayo, Sligo, Tyrone, Dublin, Limerick and Wexford. A number of poor tenants, principally from estates near Castlecomer, came out; they embarked at New Ross and Waterford, and were in general poor and' apparently ill-provided. From the counties of Mayo and Roscommon many poor tenants also came. Some of these emigrants pleaded great distress on arrival. For many of them they got employment in the country; but so soon as the Quebec Emigrant Charitable Society began its operations on a more extended scale, several of these emigrants, as well as many others, returned to the city, and loitered many weeks importuning the dispensers of that charity; who—as Buchanan pointed out—in too many instances were deceived by their tales of distress.¹⁴⁰

It is notable, Canadian attractions were kept before the public by means of government reports published in the newspapers, especially after the appointment of Buchanan in 1828, as emigration agent at Quebec, and to some extent by shipping advertisements; but for every notice of British America in the Irish press, there were at least three of the United States.¹⁴¹ Moreover, private letters continued to be of immense importance as sources of information to the people willing to emigrate. By the death of Thomas Addis Emmet in 1827, the Irish lost their most respected informant on American conditions, but the loss was more than offset by the increase in the amount of correspondence, which then reached all parts of Ireland. Allowing for inevitable fluctuations and exceptions, the tone of the letters remained remarkably cheerful. Most of the emigrants did well, and many saved money. As for boarding, wrote one, “I need not insert, for every day here is as Christmas day at home.”¹⁴² Many of the Scot-Irish and some others thought of America as their country even

¹³⁹ Quoted in: Extracts from Report of the Resident Agent for Emigrants to Viscount Aylmer, dated Quebec, 12 December 1831, in: GRC, Copies of any reports from the Commissioners for Emigration to the Secretary of State for the Colonial Department, since the last session of Parliament, H.C, 1831-32(724), p.20.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid, p. 20.

¹⁴¹ Appendix to report from the Commissioners for Emigration, addressed to Viscount Goderich, dated 15 March 1832, in: GRC, Copies of any reports from the Commissioners for Emigration to the Secretary of State for the Colonial Department, since the last session of Parliament, H.C, 1831-32(724), p.9; William Forber Adams, *Op.Cit.*, pp.178-179; P.R, Papers relating to emigration to the British provinces in North America 1835(87). In continuation of papers 1833 and 1834), p.20.

¹⁴² Quoted in: William Forber Adams, *Op.Cit.*, p. 180 .

before they emigrated. There were, of course thorns among the roses as pointed out by some immigrants' letters.¹⁴³

The importance of American remittances as a factor in this emigration was very considerable, where a large portion of the passages of the emigrants are paid for by their friends in America. Two of the leading shipping agents at Belfast reported in 1834 that a third of their passages to the United States were paid in America. In this context, Mr. Ash stated, that a great many of the immigrants passages are paid by their friends who have previously gone out in very poor circumstances. The passages of persons going to British America are also frequently paid there, but not to such an extent as those going to the United States. This tends to show the prosperity of the emigrants in the countries to which they have gone; and there is another great proof of the same in the amount sent to this country by emigrants independently of the money paid for the passages of their friends. Mr. Bell has received remittances to the amount of several thousand pounds from persons in America in favour of their friends at home. Other agents also were said to have received considerable sums, including over £500 from Baltimore in a single year,¹⁴⁴ and Londonderry agents reported that British American emigrants, though less successful than those to the United States paid half the passages and provided many of the sea stores for their friends in 1834. The largest amounts were naturally sent to Liverpool, where Fitzhugh and Grimshaw, the foremost agents in the emigrant trade, received sums from America for passages ranging from over \$12,000 in 1830 to over \$19,000 in 1833, seven-eighths of which were for Irish emigrants, and in addition £2500 a year in cash in amounts from £1 to £10. Those receipts, if applied wholly to emigration, would have defrayed the expenses of about one-sixth of the Irish sailing from Liverpool. The obvious importance of such remittances is further confirmed by reports from the parishes, and by shipping accounts. In many villages of Ulster many of the poor were only able to emigrate by the aid of friends in America, and others were encouraged by this tangible evidence of the success of their former neighbors.¹⁴⁵

At Londonderry, where the practice was oldest and most deeply rooted, ships were chartered for the only purpose of taking out those whose passages had been prepaid, and tickets for the ships of George Buchanan and Co. were sold in Quebec, Montreal, New York, Philadelphia, and Louisville. This system was largely confined to the districts of extensive emigration. It is worth mentioning here that the remittances were not always a sign of emigrant prosperity, however, and a good deal of the money sent over was from employers desiring cheap labor, so when they in want

¹⁴³ Ibid, p. 180 .

¹⁴⁴ARPLC, Reports on the state of the poor, and on the charitable institutions in some of the principal towns, Part I, 1836, p.20; William Forber Adams, Op.Cit., pp.180-181.

¹⁴⁵William Forber Adams, Op.Cit., pp.181-182.

of workmen, offer to defray the expenses of their workmen's friends. Other employers expected the emigrant; to pay his own passage, but allowed him to give security for future payment and procured him a job on landing—the industrial equivalent of the indenture system, so that this circumstance is not to be taken as evidence of the emigrants being in all cases able to save money to that extent, but it is certainly evidence to the fullest extent of the demand for labour that exists in that country. The practice seems to have begun in 1827, when Keenan and Cassidy of Pittsburgh took a shipload of laborers for that district and repeated the enterprise the following year. One of the largest importers of labor was W. and T. Adair of Baltimore, who sent several shiploads in 1827 and following years from Belfast and Londonderry. Some of these may have been for the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal Co., which imported one shipload of laborers from Liverpool in 1829, and sent for more when many of the first lot deserted.¹⁴⁶

While American aids and inducements to emigration were increasing steadily throughout the period; the movement itself was subject to distinct fluctuations. These resulted very largely from the necessity on the part of poor emigrants of finding employment as soon as they landed. An unusually heavy season meant hard times for late comers, and bad accounts sent home to Ireland. Such a season was 1827, and in the following year emigration dropped to 17,000. This setback was only temporary, and the next four years showed a continuous increase, far surpassing all previous records, as famine and cholera were the mainsprings. The introduction of inferior qualities of potatoes, together with a succession of wet seasons, and the appearance of a definite blight, had rendered the staple food of the peasantry utterly unreliable, and in thirteen of the seventeen years after 1828 there were partial failures of the potato crop. In some years, including 1830 and 1831, the failure was so bad as to cause famine, which was particularly severe in Connaught.¹⁴⁷

In the autumn 1830, rain and wind spoiled not only potatoes but also hay and oats throughout the northwestern counties, and by February 1831 there was a general demand for relief, although prices were not so high as in 1830. The suffering extended to a class somewhat superior to the poorest, and better capable of emigrating, and the appearance of relief ships bearing corn from the United States added to the amount of shipping available for passage. The influx of 1831 was absorbed with some difficulty in America, and many discouraging reports were sent back to Ireland. At the instigation of the British Government the British American ports levied a tax, similar to the one in New York, upon all emigrants for the support of hospitals. Though this

¹⁴⁶Ibid, pp.182-183; ARPLC, Reports on the state of the poor, and on the charitable institutions in some of the principal towns, Part I, 1836, p.79; "Londonderry Journal", January 29, 1833; "Belfast News Letter", June 1828, October 5, 1830.

¹⁴⁷William Forber Adams, Op.Cit., p.183.

was known in Ireland before season opened, it proved no deterrent to emigration, for cholera had broken out in the island. It came over Ireland (1831-1832) as a terrible and incomprehensible curse.¹⁴⁸ The suddenness of attack and the horrible aspect of the victims spread complete terror throughout the country and all who could have fled before its ravages. To prevent the worst horrors at sea, the government required emigrant ships to carry surgeons, but the measure had no effect in checking the influx of emigration, and could not prevent some dreadful voyages. The cholera was worst amongst the poorest classes, and provided a more powerful stimulus to emigration than any which had hitherto touched them. So, there were ships from Ireland carried more passengers than allowed to Quebec.¹⁴⁹

The disease passed from Ireland almost as rapidly as it had come and had practically disappeared by the end of 1832, but the emigrants carried it, as they had carried preceding epidemics, to America and Canada. It seems this clear from letter from the Surgeon W. W. Thompson to the Board of Health in June 1832: “With deepest feelings of regret I have the painful duty to perform of transmitting you one of the most melancholy and distressing accounts of cholera, which occurred on board the British barque “Brutus”, bound for Quebec, from Liverpool, with three hundred and thirty passengers.... It is impossible to describe the scene of misery of the third, fourth, and fifth, people dying in every direction.”¹⁵⁰ Thus, in June, 1832, the cholera broke out in Quebec and swept away one-tenth of the population. The consequences must have been dreadful; for the affrighted inhabitants of the country could not be prevailed upon to afford the strange emigrant any accommodation; consequently, many who were previously disposed to stop in this province, hurried off to Montreal, and from there to Upper Canada. Thus, the majority of the Irish emigrants this year proceeded to Upper Canada, and many fell victims to the cholera. So, the colonial

¹⁴⁸ Ibid, p.184; PRONI: 19th Century Emigration to the North Americas, Hospitals: http://www.proni.gov.uk/index/exhibitions_talks_and_events/19th_century_emigration_to_the_north_america_online/the_promised_land/hospitals.htm. 01/05/2011, 10: 30 am; “Londonderry Journal”, April 24 and May 15, 1832.

See: ARPLC, Poor inquiry, Reports on the state of the poor, and on the charitable institutions in some of the principal towns, Part I, 1836, p.26.

¹⁴⁹William Forber Adams, Op.Cit., p.185; P R, Copies or extracts of the correspondence between the Secretary of State for the Colonial Department and the governors or lieutenant – governors of the British colonies in North America and Australia, H.C, 1833,(141),pp.13-14; PRONI: 19th Century Emigration to the North Americas, Hospitals:

http://www.proni.gov.uk/index/exhibitions_talks_and_events/19th_century_emigration_to_the_north_america_online/the_promised_land/hospitals.htm. 01/05/2011, 10: 30 am; “Belfast News Letter”, April 17, 1832.

See: Immigrants to Canada, Ship Arrivals in Quebec 1831:

<http://jubilation.uwaterloo.ca/~marj/genealogy/ships/ships1831.html>. 22/09/2012, 02:30am.

¹⁵⁰Quoted in: LancsGen-L Archives, Barb Ontario Canada, The Liverpool Mercury and Lancashire General Advertiser, Friday June 15, 1832 / Ship Brutus –Awful Mortality, Part 4:

<http://archiver.rootsweb.ancestry.com/th/read/LANCSGEN/2012-04/1335061249>. 29/10/2013,02:00am; Jon Malings, June 15, From the Surgeon, “Letter to the President of the Board of Health, Liverpool”:
<http://www.deddington.org.uk/history/emigrationandtransportation2/emigration/emigrationfromdeddington/june15fromthesurgeon>. 29/10/2013, 02:30am.

authorities established a full-fledged quarantine station at Grosse Ile (a small island thirty miles downstream from Quebec City and in the middle of the Saint Lawrence River), to monitor public health of immigrants at the St. Lawrence gateway to Canada. The disease reached to the northern ports of the United States at almost the same time, finding its way south in the autumn and winter, and working its greatest havoc there. The effect upon the emigrants of that year was disastrous, as no one employ them, and many refused even to take their money for fear of contagion, and the accounts sent home cut in half the number of emigrants in the following year. That cholera was the only cause of this falling off is shown by the emigration from Londonderry. The Londonderry ships had had clean bills of health in the previous season, and the numbers sailing from the northern port showed no decrease.¹⁵¹

Moreover, cholera strengthened the feeling that Ireland was a doomed country; and the movement of the poor, once started, could not be stopped. In 1834, when accounts from America were good, ships numerous and cholera had reappeared in the northwest of Ireland, it reached about fifty thousand emigrants, but once more the influx year was unfortunate. The Quebec Assembly, still at war with the governor, refused to make appropriations for quarantine, and there was a fresh outbreak of cholera at Quebec. Storms also took a heavy toll of ships, and over five hundred Irish emigrants were lost at sea. These factors, together with an improvement in the linen trade, and an increase in the cost of passage, combined to reduce the emigration of 1835 to 25,000 emigrants.¹⁵²

The parish returns disclose the evidence of wealthy emigrants from parts of Ireland except Leinster, where the better class farmers were apparently finding sufficient opportunities at home. Despite some evidence to the contrary from agents at the Irish ports, numbers of the well-to-do went to Quebec, and were said to have formed an important contribution to the population of Canada between 1832 and 1837. The advertised temptations were as before cheapness and easiness of transportation to the United States. The shipping agents in Ireland said that all their passengers intended to go to the United States, and almost all succeeded, as direct fares to the United States became cheaper, but in 1835 the numbers had fallen again to three thousand a year. Meanwhile conditions at Quebec were also undergoing a change, fewer advertisements then stressed opportunities of reaching the United States, emphasizing instead wages and employment in Canada.¹⁵³ Many advertisements offered the names of ships heading to Quebec and advantages voyage

¹⁵¹P.R, Copies or extracts of the correspondence between the Secretary of State for the Colonial Department and the governors or lieutenant – governors of the British colonies in North America and Australia, H.C, 1833(141), p.p. 6-7,13-16; P.R, Correspondence respecting emigration, and disposal of Crown lands, H.C, 1834(616), p.24; William Forber Adams, Op.Cit., pp.185-186; PRONI: 19th Century Emigration to the North Americas, Hospitals:

http://www.proni.gov.uk/index/exhibitions_talks_and_events/19th_century_emigratin_to_the_north_america_online/the_promised_land/hospitals.htm. 01/05/2011, 10: 30 am; National Historic Sites of Canada, Quarantine and public health, The great epidemics: <http://www.pc.gc.ca/eng/lhn-nhs/qc/grosseile/docs/plan1/sec3/page2ai.aspx>. 22/06/ 2012, 11: 40 pm. See Appendix to Mr. Buchanan's reports.

¹⁵²William Forber Adams, Op.Cit., pp.186-187.

¹⁵³Ibid, pp. 195-198; "Belfast News Letter", June 22, 1830; "Londonderry Journal", June 18, 1833.

on board. An advertisements (dated March 1835), for the William Ewing, offered passage to Quebec from Derry and pointed to “quick passages, and a very comfortable vessel in every respect, and opportunity offer for the accommodation of Passengers. An abundant supply of Fuel and water will be put on board for the voyage.”¹⁵⁴ However, the labourers arriving in Upper Canada, who have been forwarded thither as paupers by the charitable institutions, cannot as readily obtain employment as those who have been able to make their own way. An idea certainly prevails, that those who have accepted the relief in question are themselves deficient in industry and energy.¹⁵⁵

At the beginning of this period two main areas—Ulster, and the more populous parts of Munster—had supplied most of the emigration, though there were not wanting strong expressions of desire in other regions. Altogether Ulster accounted for forty-six per cent of Irish emigration in three years, maintaining its numbers more steadily than the other provinces, which were more responsive to American conditions or extraordinary causes at home. The fertile and populous areas of Munster and northern Leinster supplied most of the remaining emigrants, giving to Munster twenty-seven per cent and to Leinster sixteen per cent of the total. The reports in the Poor Inquiry show quite clearly the existence of well defined emigration districts in the south as well as in Ulster and there are few evidences of heavy emigration from isolated parishes. At first Protestants outnumbered Catholics, but by the 1830s the migration of Catholics surpassed that of Protestants, and as a result, about one half of all the emigrants in this period were Catholic. This was a significant shift from the colonial period, when Protestants far outnumbered Catholics. The Poor Inquiry report sheds little light on the religious affiliation of the emigrants. The opinion of Henry Inglis after his tour of Ireland in 1834 was that most the emigrants were Roman Catholics. The geographic distribution would seem to bear this out, although there were still a number of Protestants among the southern emigrants. One return of passengers from Limerick gives 145 Protestants to 573 Catholics, or about a fifth of the total.¹⁵⁶ Since the great majority of the emigrants were by all accounts from the lowest classes, it is unlikely that the proportion of Protestants from the south would be much higher than this. However, the Catholic share in the emigration from Ulster was also in increase, and they were supposed to have formed about one-quarter of the numbers sailing from Belfast, and a third of those from Newry.¹⁵⁷ The detailed reports of the Ordnance Survey make possible a reliable analysis in Londonderry, where two thousand emigrants from thirty-one parishes, in 1834 and 1835, six-tenths were

¹⁵⁴Quoted in: PRONI: 19th Century Emigration to the North Americas, Advertisements: http://www.proni.gov.uk/index/exhibitions_talks_and_events/online_exhibitions1/19th_century_emigrationtothe_north_americas2/at_the_port1/advertisements-3.htm. 01/05/2011, 08:00am.

¹⁵⁵ P R, Papers relating to emigration to the British provinces in North America, H.C, 1835(87). (In continuation of papers 1833 and 1834), p.6.

¹⁵⁶ See: William Forber Adams, Op.Cit., pp.187-190; Jay P. Dolan, Op.Cit.,p.37; James Patrick Byrne, Philip Coleman, Jason Francis King (ed), *Ireland and the Americas: Culture, Politics, and History: a Multidisciplinary Encyclopedia*, Vol.2, 2008, pp.29-30; “Londonderry Journal”, April 17, 1832.

¹⁵⁷ William Forber Adams, Op.Cit., p.190; “Belfast News Letter”, April 22, 1831; “Belfast News Letter”, May 25, 1827.

Presbyterian, three-tenths Catholic, and one-tenth members of the Established Church. AS the Catholic population of the parishes was almost equal to the Presbyterian, the proportion of emigrants among the Catholics was little more than half that amongst the Presbyterians, the exact ratios being as follows:

Presbyterians	1.68
Catholic	0.89
Established Church	0.82

The ratio of Catholics among the total emigration in this period has been estimated as high as eighty-two percent, but William Adams says: “all my information goes to prove that this figure is excessive, and that fifty to sixty per cent is nearer the truth.”¹⁵⁸

Geographic and religious distribution take on greater Significance when accompanied by an analysis of the economic status of the emigrants. We already mentioned many signs of increased poverty such as the emphasis of advertisements on opportunities of employment rather than land, the reappearance of various delusive attractions for the ignorant and unwary, very cheap fares, etc. The newspaper accounts corroborate this impression, as the Londonderry Journal said in 1834, “Most of the emigrants were persons in very mean circumstances”¹⁵⁹, and the persons going to the United States are farmers and labourers, and a few mechanics. The farmers are estimated to amount to one-third of the emigrants.¹⁶⁰ The general mass of the emigrants was divided by Buchanan into three groups: first, the small farmer, the second artisans of different grades, and servants, and thirdly, actually labouring paupers. Buchanan thought this last class the largest, but parish returns, which give the occupations of 36,000 emigrants show proportions of one-half small farmers, three-eighths laborers and servants, and one-eighth artisans.¹⁶¹ In general those of the labouring class that go are persons who have been hired as farmers' servants by the half-year, from May to November, and from November to May, as is customary in this country. The very general emigration that takes place among this class goes a great way to show that the remaining class is prevented by want of funds from emigrating. The amount of capital which each of the farmers going to the United States is supposed to have taken with him varies from £50 to £500. The amount of capital taken by persons going to British America is very trifling; and indeed it very often happens that this class of emigrants seldom have more than what lays in a scanty store of provisions after paying their passage. Neither the labourers nor the

¹⁵⁸ Quoted in: William Forber Adams, *Op.Cit.*, p.191.

¹⁵⁹ Quoted in: *Ibid*, pp.191-192; “Londonderry Journal”, June 17, 1834.

¹⁶⁰ ARPLC, *Poor inquiry, Reports on the state of the poor, and on the charitable institutions in some of the principal towns, Part I, 1836*, p.19.

¹⁶¹ See: William Forber Adams, *Op.Cit.*, pp.192-193.

mechanics take any capital with the exception of a sovereign, or two or three dollars, but they seldom go with less. From some cities they were only able to emigrate to England, but from Belfast in bad times they swelled the numbers going to America, being aided by emigrant associations, the larger part of whose funds were raised by charity.¹⁶²

The majority of the emigrants in this time consist of families, and in addition to this there are a great number of single persons who go out independently; these generally are farm servants whose wages have been paid by the half year, and who are thus enabled to amass sufficient money to take them out.¹⁶³ In spite of their poverty, the laborers were less willing than the small farmers to divide the family for purpose of emigration. The majority of the new settlers in preceding years had gone individually or as parts of families. The parish reports for this period show 11,134 emigrant in families to 8,939 individuals. The preponderance of laborers in the emigration from Connaught and in the trade to British America, made emigrants in families decidedly more numerous than from the other provinces, or to the United States, where they were only a small majority.¹⁶⁴

Emigration by families also involved an increase in the number of women, fewer of whom came then independently. Before 1827 they had formed about thirty per cent of the Irish going to the United States, but during this period they averaged about thirty-five per cent, rising as high as forty-eight per cent in 1835. A higher proportion went to Canada, and they were never less than two-fifths of the total Irish emigration during these years. In America this change produced a serious social problem; for instead of immigration without home ties, easily transferable from place to place, and assimilable through marriage with the native population, solid groups of Irish of the lowest class were thrown as cohesive masses into the melting pot. In the ship *Canada*, for Quebec, which sailed April the 19th, 1834, there were 102 males, 71 females, and 61 children under 14, making a total of 234 passengers; of whom there were only 19 above 30 years of age.¹⁶⁵

Meanwhile, the emigration of small farmers went on as before, the young, healthy and unmarried going first and sending for the rest of the family the following season. This was usual among the poorer sort, but it included some of greater affluence and better standards. Letters of emigrants show many of them to have been

¹⁶²ARPLC, Poor inquiry, Reports on the state of the poor, and on the charitable institutions in some of the principal towns, Part I, 1836, p.p.19-20,79; William Forber Adams, Op.Cit., p.194; "Belfast News Letter", May 22, 26, 29, 1829.

¹⁶³ARPLC, Poor inquiry, Reports on the state of the poor, and on the charitable institutions in some of the principal towns, Part I, 1836, p.19.

¹⁶⁴William Forber Adams, Op.Cit., p.194.

¹⁶⁵ARPLC, Poor inquiry, Reports on the state of the poor, and on the charitable institutions in some of the principal towns, Part I, 1836, pp.19-20; William Forber Adams, Op.Cit., pp.194-195.

accustomed to a diet that included more than the potatoes, buttermilk and herrings supposed to be typical of this class. According to the Ordnance Survey which confirmed that they generally go in families and take more or less capital (the price of their farm) with them. Similar notices of emigrants provided with capital from the sale off their farms come from all parts of Ulster, and from Leitrim, Mayo, Roscommon, Carlow, Kings and Meath, and from 1830 on there was a considerable emigration of richer farmers. Some from Derry to the United States took £500 or more, and the capital of whole groups from that port may have averaged £50 for each person.¹⁶⁶

Thus, the emigration to the United States continued to grow, especially after the system of remittances and prepaid passages became general; so that during the last seven years (1849-1856) the emigration to the United States was more than five and a half times as large as that to British America. It may to some be matter of surprise, looking to the extraordinary progress made of late years by Canada, and especially by the western districts of it, that the number of emigrants to that part of the British possessions has not increased in a corresponding proportion. But such an increase, which we can hardly doubt has taken place, would first show itself by a diminution of the emigration across the Canadian frontier into the United States, and by the establishment of a counter current from the United States into Canada, rather than by an immediate increase in the arrivals by sea. The shortest route to Canada, west of Lake Ontario, is through the State of New York; and although the unrivalled water communication of the St. Lawrence makes the route by that river in practice the cheapest and most desirable for emigrants, it will probably be some years before its advantages are fully known and sufficiently appreciated to give a new direction to the emigration.¹⁶⁷

It can say that, there was very little desire on the part of Irish emigrants to settle in British North America; with an almost frantic longing they wished to go to the United States, especially, after the bad times of 1831, where, the emigrants in Canada advised their friends to go, if possible, to New York. Later parish reports from various parts of Ulster and from the Queens County exhibit a preference on the part of emigrants for the United States, Canada being chosen only by those who could not afford to reach America in any other way. These reports shed no light upon the ultimate destination of the emigrants, the majority giving simply "America," and others referring to the country to which the emigrants sailed. United States returns and Buchanan's reports, even if they were accurate, would not be conclusive as to final residence, since no check was kept upon emigrants after the year of their arrival.¹⁶⁸

¹⁶⁶ARPLC, Poor inquiry, Reports on the state of the poor, and on the charitable institutions in some of the principal towns, Part I, 1836, p.p19-20,79; William Forber Adams, Op.Cit., pp.195-196.

¹⁶⁷GRC, Sixteenth general report of the Emigration Commissioners, H.C, 1856[2089], p.9.

¹⁶⁸William Forber Adams, Op.Cit., pp.198-199; Cecil Woodham-Smith, *The Great Hunger: Ireland: 1845-1849*, London 1962, p. 209.

So, were said: “it would be extremely difficult, if not impossible, to ascertain the number of emigrants who actually settle in the Canada; of those who arrive at Quebec many pass into the United States, some of whom return from thence, and establish themselves in Canada, others return from Canada to the United Kingdom, and some of those who emigrate to the United States from the United Kingdom, come and settle in Canada.”¹⁶⁹ The most Important evidence as to the settlement of the Irish is to be found in the census of Upper Canada taken in 1842, and that of Lower Canada in 1844, when the Irish-born numbered 122,000. In the eleven years preceding 1842, 253,000 Irish immigrants had entered Canada. Assuming that the great majority of those arriving before 1830 did not remain in Canada, there should still have been enough to balance the deaths during the eleven years, and therefore we may assume that less than half the later immigrants stayed in the provinces. As there is no evidence that the proportion remaining changed after 1835, it should be correct also for the period 1830-35.¹⁷⁰

However, many factors, other than land, prevented the great majority of the well to-do from coming to Canada; for the old superiority of travel to the United States, attributed to the stricter provisions of the American passenger acts, became more marked with the increase of numbers to Canada, and the attendant overcrowding of vessels and unhealthy conditions. This, and the fact that almost all the farmers had friends in the United States, were given as reasons for growing preference of emigrants from Londonderry for the latter country. This reason would have had less weight in other parts of Ireland, but the first was equally influential everywhere, and some settlers influx from the United States into Upper Canada by way of New York. Six thousand were said to have followed this route in 1833 when cholera caused even laborers to warn their friends against the Quebec route.¹⁷¹ In this context, the chief agent for emigrants said in his report in 1835: “although the emigration by way of New York is so considerable, no pecuniary assistance whatever is afforded from any known fund, and those emigrants being generally better provided as to means, private assistance is seldom found necessary.”¹⁷² Moreover, he confirmed that the emigrants, who have arrived this season by way of New York, have exceeded in amount those of last year. This has no doubt been occasioned by the representation of persons in Upper Canada, writing home to their friends and complaining of the obstructions, privations and expenses to which they imagined they were subjected at Grosse Isle. The shipwrecks, too, which have happened every year on approaching the St. Lawrence, may have impressed them

¹⁶⁹Extract of a Despatch from Lord Aylmer to Lord Goderich dated Quebec, 12 May 1831, in: GRC, Copies of any reports from the Commissioners for Emigration to the Secretary of State for the Colonial Department, since the last session of Parliament, H.C, 1831-32(724), p.16.

¹⁷⁰William Forber Adams, *Op.Cit.*, p.199.

¹⁷¹*Ibid*, p.200; ARPLC, Poor inquiry, Reports on the state of the poor, and on the charitable institutions in some of the principal towns, Part I, 1836, p.79; P.R, Copies or extracts of the correspondence between the Secretary of State for the Colonial Department and the governors or lieutenant – governors of the British colonies in North America and Australia, H.C, 1833(141),p.7.

¹⁷²Quoted in: P.R, Papers relating to emigration to the British provinces in North America, H.C, 1835(87). (In continuation of papers 1833 and 1834), p. 6.

with exaggerated ideas of danger by this route. Thus the wrecks of 1834 had a similar effect to cholera, but way of New York never became an important alternative because of expense. Occasional ship advertisements did indeed attempt to prove that it was cheaper, but government reports belied this, and the numbers coming in by way of New York never came near to compensating for those who from Canada to the United States.¹⁷³

Of the emigration, however, which arrives at New York, few British subjects now settle in the Western States. The instructions to persons arriving by this route, which the chief agent for emigrants have caused to be printed, and which have been largely circulated by the aid of the British Consul at New York, have been productive of benefit in directing the progress of emigrants to Upper Canada by way of Oswego. At the end of the chief agent's report for emigrants, he expressed his regret to notice the increasing number of shipwrecks to emigrant vessels, particularly during the past season, which led to very serious loss of lives, where, he pointed out that "the number of vessels lost last season were 17, and the loss of lives to amount to 731."¹⁷⁴

We may conclude from reports of Poor inquiry in 1836 that:

1. The persons going to the United States during this period are superior in point of respectability and capital to those emigrating to British America. This may be in some degree caused by a difference in the price of the passage. Anyone having capital would necessarily prefer the States.
2. The agricultural class, which are the most respectable, are also more inclined to go to the States, as their friends have been emigrating thither for the last twenty years, while the class that emigrate to British America consist principally of labourers as well as several farmers emigrate particularly to Quebec; they are inferior in point of capital and respectability to those going to the United States.
3. The price of passage to the United States is from £4.10s to £5 for young or old; whereas to British America it is only from £1.10s to £2 for an adult, and for a child one-third that sum. This is caused by the different regulations as to the number of passengers in proportion to the tonnage, in the United States and in British America.
4. The evidence of the future success of the emigrants, although necessarily general in its nature, goes far to prove the prosperity of the emigrants in the countries to which they have gone. By all the accounts from emigrants, one of them stated: "he scarcely knows an instance of any one returning except from ill health, and that very seldom, and vast number of persons, are prevented emigrating from want of means."¹⁷⁵ As well

¹⁷³ Ibid, p.6; William Forber Adams, Op.Cit., pp.200-201.

¹⁷⁴Quoted in: P.R, Papers relating to emigration to the British provinces in North America, H.C, 1835(87).(In continuation of papers 1833 and 1834), pp. 6-7.

¹⁷⁵ARPLC, Poor inquiry, Reports on the state of the poor, and on the charitable institutions in some of the principal towns, Part I, 1836, p.p. 19, 79.

as one of the commissioners pointed out: “ It almost, invariably happens that those who go to America induce others to follow them; if one or two go from a neighborhood, it generally happens that many others follow their example. I know no instance of persons coming back disappointed either from America or England. I have known many cases of the son going to America, and remaining several months, and sending money to pay the passages of all or some portion of the family.”¹⁷⁶

Religion, apparently, exerted no influence on the choice of an immediate destination. Of the emigrants from Londonderry county in 1834 and 1835, both Presbyterians and Catholics sent a small majority to Canada, and only among adherents of the Church of Ireland was there a decided preference — seventy-two per cent going to Canada. Religion did, however, help to determine the residence of those who remained in the provinces. The 44,000 Irish-born in Lower Canada in 1844 were almost all Roman Catholics, and were largely concentrated in the cities of Quebec and Montreal, with a few along the upper St. Lawrence and New York border, while of the 78,000 in Upper Canada, probably three-fifths of them were Protestants. Though the Catholics in the United States were antagonized by a series of attacks upon their church between 1831 and 1834 as we will see later. The bad feeling had no effect upon the coming of the emigrants, and in many of the attacks, the Irish were not directly concerned. In later years there would be an outstanding leaders from the Protestant Irish community who would attempt to guide and help the later arrivals from the Catholic southern and western counties, but there would be others whose anxiety to proclaim themselves as proper Protestant Americans would contribute to violent clashes when the two groups met. It was not a foregone conclusion, by any means, that the presence of earlier Irish immigrants would markedly ease the way for the later arrivals, for they represented different social and religious backgrounds. To become Scotch-Irish was to define this difference.¹⁷⁷

The main effect of these antipathies upon the tide of emigration was negligible. Such changes as took place arose from alterations in the normal course of trade. The sudden increases in the number of emigrants had been very largely taken care of by expansion of the trade to British America, and especially to Quebec, in vessels chartered for the purpose. After 1833, when emigration on the or scale became more regular, the proportion going from Irish ports to the United States increased rapidly, and by 1835 had reached nearly one-half the total. This does not indicate the full extent of the gain, however, since it represents primarily the growth of the trade

¹⁷⁶ Quoted in: *Ibid*, p.62.

¹⁷⁷ William Forber Adams, *Op.Cit.*, p.201; Marjorie R. Fallows, *Op.Cit.*, p.22.

direct from Ireland to the lesser emigrant ports, such as Philadelphia and Baltimore. The greatest change was the rapid expansion of the Liverpool-New York traffic.¹⁷⁸

Advertisements of Liverpool ships appeared regularly in the Irish newspapers; and in the strenuous competition which developed in Belfast in 1827, and in Londonderry in 1832, the Liverpool ships had the best of it. Instead of adding a small group to the emigration from Irish ports as it had done in 1825 and 1826, Liverpool secured fifty per cent of the trade in 1827, seventy-five per cent in 1830, and over eighty per cent after 1834. Belfast agents attributed their loss to the decline of cargo trade, evidenced by the importation of flaxseed, cotton, and other American products by way of Liverpool, however other Irish ports suffered even more severely. Afterwards, when trade became more settled, Liverpool cargo advantage was more pronounced; but as emigrant ships had usually been chartered from Liverpool, often with English cargoes, it seems probable that the activities agents were a more decisive factor in stimulating passenger traffic from the Mersey port. The rapid growth of the Liverpool trade brought about a considerable increase of illegal and crooked dealing, which was particularly bad during these years. In one respect however, the emigrants were better off than their predecessors.¹⁷⁹

2.5.1 The Emergence of the Passenger Broker and Frauds committed on Emigration

For the most part the emigrants came to Liverpool without having made previous arrangements for their passage, and without knowing what vessels, or if any were, or the berths here, bound to the ports at which they wished to land; entire strangers to the town, they were dependent for information on the people in whose dwellings they took up their abode for the time, and by whom they were introduced to masters of vessels, who soon adopted the plan of rewarding the lodging-house keepers for such introduction by a commission on the passage money. This practice prevailed so early as the year 1817, about which time some parties, finding the influx of emigrants tolerably regular, undertook to supply vessels with a certain number on commission, and finally chartered the whole, or part of the between-decks, to carry emigrant passengers, taking upon themselves the risk of procuring the full number, and seeking their remuneration out of the excess of passage-money received over the

¹⁷⁸ William Forber Adams, *Op.Cit.*, p. 203.

¹⁷⁹ *Ibid*, pp. 204-205 .

amount agreed to be paid to the owners of the ship for the use of the between-decks.¹⁸⁰

In this growing transatlantic business the passenger broker appeared to serve as intermediary between ship-owners and emigrants. Rapidly a vast network of agencies came into being to tap the emigrant stream at its various sources. He acted through agents in provincial towns of England and Ireland. In fact the broker was a speculator who did not own ships, he sold space in the ships and received a commission from the shipping company for each berth sold. So, the broker got a steady income from the packet ships.¹⁸¹ It was very big business: on average he took 12.5% of the sum paid for passages, but he did not only work with the commission system. Sometimes he chartered whole ships which did not belong to any packet company and which did not sail at regular times, and most of the time these were inferior ships. He did not receive any commission but bought the whole space in the ship and then tried to pack in that space as many people as the law allowed it or really as many passengers as he could, so, in fact, the big money was made out of charter ships. In Liverpool, agents' offices were concentrated in a few areas, mainly in Goree Piazza and Waterloo. One of the major firms of brokers was W & J. T. Tapscott which was run by the American William and James Tapscott. William worked from Liverpool and his brother James from New York. In 1851, William employed between twelve to twenty agents in Liverpool, Dublin and other towns.¹⁸²

The class of people into whose hands these poor people fell was chiefly of the lowest description, and having no reputation to sustain, and caring for little beyond making money out of their engagements, the merchants seldom interfered, the bargains being made between the master and the passenger, brokers, or agents connected with emigration ; and, arising out of the circumstances which led the passenger-brokers into this business, was the supplying provisions, bedding, and various articles necessary for the voyage to the passengers. These were either supplied by provision dealers on the amount of purchases, or, in some cases the passenger-brokers established provision stores themselves, and supplied these articles for their own profit. A profit was also obtained on the purchase of dollars, from the bullion brokers, which emigrants were, on this account, persuaded to take in exchange for

¹⁸⁰Expost of Frauds committed on Emigration Liverpool, 17th January, 1834, ARPLC, Poor inquiry, Reports on the state of the poor, and on the charitable institutions in some of the principal towns, Part I, 1836, Appendix (G.), p.2910.

¹⁸¹Packet ships were big vessels with three masts, the largest sailing ships of their day. The first of the Atlantic packet lines was the Black Ball Line, later called the Old Line. It started in 1818, sailing from New York to Liverpool (which had become the biggest port of the British Empire) with passengers, fine freight and mail. By 1849 there were several lines sailing from Liverpool. Denny Hatch, *Op.Cit.*, pp.21-22.

¹⁸²*Ibid*, 22.

British moneys.¹⁸³ Although there were many emigrants there was great competition between brokers. They often advertised, on the walls and in newspapers, both packet and charter ships as if they owned them but also as larger and much better than they were. On average, American ships, usually being the largest ones, were about 1,000 tons. However, by 1851 in Liverpool newspapers most of the ships advertised were said to be more than 1,200 tons register. Advertisements were misleading and were meant to be.¹⁸⁴

The Act of Parliament then in force was to a great extent inoperative, the officers of the Customs, to whom the execution of it was delegated, being generally otherwise employed on what they conceived matters of more importance to the revenue, so that the fittings of the ships, the provisions the water casks, &c. &c, underwent a very cursory examination, if any and led to the frequent and serious inconvenience of emigrants in vessels bound to the United States of America. The American law prevents more passengers being taken into the United States by vessels than two souls for every live tons of the vessel's register burthens, but left the spare to be occupied by the passengers, even when the full number was taken on board, undefined. The evils arising out of this state of things were soon developed:

1. The detention of the emigrants at their own cost, and at, considerable expense, in a strange place.
2. The insufficiency of the vessels employed in carrying emigrants, many inferior and second class vessels being chartered for that express purpose, while the ignorance of the emigrants prevented thorn from ascertaining or attempting to ascertain the charterers of them.
3. The want of sufficient space, there being no efficient regulating control.
4. The engaging a greater number than the vessel could legally carry; in consequence of which many were frequently turned on shore by the master, on examination, after the vessel had left the dock, thus the poor creatures were left without any redress, as it often happened that the broker who engaged with them to find a passage would, after this, neither returns them their passage money, nor find them with a passage by another vessel.¹⁸⁵

¹⁸³Appendix to Report of commissioners for inquiring in to the condition of the poorer classes in Great Britain, Expost of Frauds committed on Emigration Liverpool, ARPLC, Poor inquiry, Reports on the state of the poor and on the charitable institutions in some of the principal towns, Part I, 1836, Appendix (G.), p. 2911; William Forber Adams, Op.Cit., p. 235.

¹⁸⁴Denny Hatch, Op.Cit., p. 22.

¹⁸⁵Further details are giving in: Appendix to Report of commissioners for inquiring in to the condition of the poorer classes in Great Britain, Expost of Frauds committed on Emigration Liverpool, ARPLC, Poor inquiry, Reports on the state of the poor and on the charitable institutions in some of the principal towns, Part I, 1836, Appendix (G.), p. 2911.

Thus, most deceptions were with regard to the number of passengers in proportion to tonnage, and the quantity of provisions to be taken by each emigrant. The passenger acts, though they tried to prevent some of the new abuses, were largely ineffective, and many complaints made against the conduct of passenger agents and shipbrokers in the United Kingdom. The principal charge was detention previous to sailing, after public notice has been given of the day; whereby the emigrant is put too much unavoidable expense, and consequent privation, as he is too frequently compelled to expend, before the actual day of sailing, the small stock of money on which alone he depended to convey his family to the place of destination after reaching Quebec.¹⁸⁶ In this context, the report from the Commissioners for Emigration in March 1832 pointed out: “Persons newly arrived should not omit, to consult the Government agent for emigrants, and as much as possible should avoid detention in the ports, where they are exposed to all kinds of impositions and of pretexts for keeping them at taverns till any money they may possess has been expended. For the same purpose of guarding against the frauds practised on new comers, and of preventing an improvident expenditure at the first moment of arrival.”¹⁸⁷ A committee was appointed to inquire into the frauds and impositions practiced upon emigrants in the port of Liverpool, and to report such measures as might be deemed advisable in order to prevent such practices in future. The exertions of the Governments agents in the several places of embarkation may be crowned with complete success, where, they gave the emigrants advice how to proceed, and the best means of finding employment, in addition to, they gave them the landing-money for the purpose of paying their passage to the place of destination. Thus, these exertions rescued the poor emigrant from the cupidity and knavery of the class of people falsely calling themselves passenger agents and shipbrokers.¹⁸⁸

Most of the Government reports stated that, the whole of the frauds committed from time to time on emigrants are chiefly on those from Ireland, who appear, by their gullibility, to be the victims whom these agents most generally succeed in practising their impositions

¹⁸⁶Ibid, p.235; Letter from John Motteux of Beachamwell Hall, Norfolk to A.C. Buchanan dated April 17, 1837, Immigrants to Canada, Immigration Report of 1837, extracted from the British Parliamentary Papers: <http://jubilation.uwaterloo.ca/~marj/genealogy/reports/report1837.html>. 11/ 06/ 2012, 01:45 am; ARPLC, Poor inquiry, Reports on the state of the poor, and on the charitable institutions in some of the principal towns, Part I, 1836, pp. 20-21.

¹⁸⁷Quoted in: Appendix to report of the Commissioners for Emigration, addressed to Viscount Goderich, dated 15 March 1832, GRC, Copies of any reports from the Commissioners for Emigration to the Secretary of State for the Colonial Department, since the last session of Parliament, H.C, 1831-32[724], pp8-9.

¹⁸⁸See: Letter from John Motteux of Beachamwell Hall, Norfolk to A.C. Buchanan dated April 17, 1837, Immigrants to Canada, Immigration Report of 1837, extracted from the British Parliamentary Papers: <http://jubilation.uwaterloo.ca/~marj/genealogy/reports/report1837.html>. 11/06/2012, 01:45 am; Immigrants to Canada, 1834 Emigrants Handbook: Extracts: Extracts from Official Instructions Published by A.C. Buchanan, Esq: <http://jubilation.uwaterloo.ca/~marj/genealogy/papers/emigrants1834.html>. 10/10/ 2012, 01: 05am.

upon; for, out of ten cases of fraud, nine are practiced on emigrants from Ireland.¹⁸⁹ Thus, it seems clear that the various frauds are attempted upon emigrants which can only be effectually defeated by the good sense of the parties against whom they are contrived. Sometimes agents take payment from the emigrant for his passage, and then recommend him to some tavern, where he is detained from day to day, under false pretences for delay, until-before the departure of the ship the whole of his money is extracted from him.¹⁹⁰

2.6 The Irish Emigration 1836-1845

The history of Irish emigration time, from 1835 to the famine forms a continuous story, somewhat, different from that of the hectic years just before, but undergoing no important change in cause or character, despite the three distinct waves in which the emigrants set forth. The first spent itself in two years, in each of which the numbers exceeded forty thousand, and then dropped to eleven thousand in 1838. There followed a steady increase to over 93,000 in 1842 and another drop, this time to 38,000, then there was an unbroken crescendo that reached 77,000 in 1845, only to be lost in the great flood which followed the famine. These fluctuations were very largely the result of American conditions, but the factors which determined the character of the emigration were to be found in Ireland.

The decreasing pressure of population because of immigration, especially during the period 1831-1841, helps to explain a general improvement in the state of Ireland first observed in 1833 in respect to professions and trade, and extending in 1834 to some of the farmers, where, emigration helped to keep the working population on a level with the demand for labour, although in part at a very low rate of wages.¹⁹¹ Two years later O'Connell found the farmers so prosperous, and even the laborers sufficiently removed from want, that he considered it an ideal time for introducing a Poor Law; and despite three successive years of low prices, the country was considered just before the famine to be in a better position than it had been fifteen years earlier. Property had increased in value, and though rents were higher, they were paid. English capital poured into Ireland in 1836 and Irish bank deposits increased by over three millions sterling between 1840 and 1846. The Progress was

¹⁸⁹ Appendix to Report of commissioners for inquiring in to the condition of the poorer classes in Great Britain, Expost of Frauds committed on Emigration Liverpool, ARPLC, Poor inquiry, Reports on the state of the poor and on the charitable institutions in some of the principal towns, Part I, 1836, Appendix (G.), p.2911.

¹⁹⁰ Appendix to report from the Commissioners for Emigration, addressed to Viscount Goderich, dated 15 March 1832, in: GRC, Copies of any reports from the Commissioners for Emigration to the Secretary of State for the Colonial Department, since the last session of Parliament, H.C, 1831-32[724], pp. 9-10.

¹⁹¹ ARPLC, Reports on the state of the poor and on the charitable institutions in some of the principal towns, Part I, 1836, p. 48; William Forber Adams, *Op.Cit.*, p.212.

most noticeable in the cities and towns, where trade was booming, and especially in the north. The first railway in Northern Ireland was completed in 1839, and the same year saw the beginning of valuable harbor improvements in Belfast. The main factor in the development of the northern cities was the growth of the factory linen industry. Wages, except for the finest weavers, were not higher in 1845 than in 1825, but there was more employment, and the trade absorbed without difficulty the workers of the then declining cotton manufacture. Improvements in the linen market also aided the handloom weavers who were enabled to hang on, and less inclined to emigrate. Mechanics shared in the general revival, aided by an accelerated development of steam power for all purposes, especially in the north and west.¹⁹²

It can say that the economic development in Ireland has always been strongly connected with political and social changes. In 1835, Thomas Drummond took office as Chief Secretary in Ireland; his work was undoubtedly facilitated by O'Connell's cooperation with the Melbourne ministry after 1835, and by the consequent cessation of Repeal agitation. Drummond conciliated Roman Catholic Ireland by giving offices to Catholics, consulting them freely, and breaking the power of the protestant ascendancy which had hitherto ruled Dublin Castle. The formation of the Royal Irish Constabulary in 1835 was largely his work, and the force, which was to a considerable extent Catholic, constituted the only popular police that Ireland has ever had, so turbulence and agrarian agitation declined. The settlement of the tithe question in 1838, when all tithes were replaced by a land tax, the burden of which was in part borne by the landlords, added to the comparative tranquillity.¹⁹³

However, improvements were useless in improving status of the laborer. The opinion of a German traveller in 1840 was that "Ireland had in twenty years improved greatly in transportation, the appearance of its towns, agriculture and schools, that crime and religious and party spirit were decreasing, but not poverty."¹⁹⁴ The evidence before the Devon Commission in 1843 presents the same picture.¹⁹⁵ In Dublin, there were handbills placarded on every corner, tree, pump and public place in the city . . . and for 40 or 50 miles in the surrounding country, stating in substance that the people were fools not to leave the country where there was nothing but poverty staring them in the face . . ."¹⁹⁶ In some places the small farmer is included in the general distress, but for the most part he was said to be better off. The lot of the laborers, from amongst whom the bulk of the emigrants after 1835 were drawn, was uniformly wretched, excepting always in those districts where extensive emigration had raised

¹⁹² William Forber Adams, *Op.Cit.*, pp.212-213.

¹⁹³ *Ibid*, pp. 213-214.

¹⁹⁴ Quoted in: *Ibid*,p.214.

¹⁹⁵ *Ibid*, p.214.

¹⁹⁶Quoted in: Jay P. Dolan, *Op. Cit.*, p.36.

wages and curtailed unemployment. In one respect only had their condition improved. The Devon Commission reported that: “Up to this period any improvement that may have taken place is attributable almost entirely to the habits of temperance in which they have so generally persevered, and not, we grieve to say, to any increased demand for their labour.”¹⁹⁷ It is notable, some increase of temperance may have come from the Spirit Licensing Act of 1836, which made drunkenness punishable for the first time by arrest and fine; but its main development began in 1838 with the work of father Matthew, a Franciscan friar, whose great emotional crusade, backed by the church and accompanied by tales of miracles, had within two years captured Ireland. The temperance pledge was taken by Catholics everywhere and in the north by Protestants also. For seven years, until the death of Father Matthew and the miseries of the famine put an end to his crusade, the movement was one of the strongest influences in Irish life. It proved valuable aid to emigration, both in helping the poor to save, and in increasing their success when they reached America. The improved habits of Irish laborers were first noticed in America in 1840, and continued to the famine.¹⁹⁸

The passage of the Irish Poor Law in 1838 proved to be other stimulus to emigration. It placed a burden, averaging ten pence in the pound before the famine on farmers and landlords, who had to pay the poor rate for their lower tenants, and both classes were anxious to shift the responsibility. On the other hand, the commissioners for inquiring pointed out in 1836 that, there were cases called for the application of other remedies, and amongst them of the immigration to a field where the demand for labour is more extensive and certain, so, they recommend that those who desire to emigrate should be furnished with the means of doing so in safety, and with intermediate support when they stand in need of it, at emigration depots. They added: “The feelings of the suffering labourers in Ireland are also decidedly in favour of emigration. They do not desire workhouses, but they do desire a free passage to a colony where they may have the means of living by their industry.” This is strongly shown in the extracts from the Reports of assistant commissioners, who made inquiries into the disposition of the people upon the subject of emigration, and did so publicly in twenty-two counties. Even before the act came into effect the Emigration commissioners reported: “The desire to emigrate is moreover at the present moment stimulated and encouraged by the proprietors, who are apprehensive of the amount of the charge which may be thrown upon them by the Poor Law, which is now coming into operation.”¹⁹⁹

¹⁹⁷Quoted in: William Forber Adams, *Op.Cit.*, p.214.

¹⁹⁸*Ibid*, pp. 214- 215.

¹⁹⁹Quoted in: RRC, Third report of the commissioners for inquiring into the condition of the poorer classes in Ireland, H.C, 1836[43], p.p.5, 8-9; William Forber Adams, *Op.Cit.*, p. 215.

Then, when Poor Law became fully effective in 1840 their anxiety was increased. Amongst the landowners and agents who gave evidence, and who were only a part of the whole land-holding class, fifteen had given direct financial aid to emigrants, and ten others had given money which had been used for emigrating. Some of them helped emigration from a number of parishes and even from more than one county. But as a rule the numbers helped were not great, and the main importance of the practice lay in introducing emigration into districts where it was not generally followed, especially in the region extending from Galway to North Cork. Agents frankly admitted that many of Irish were loath to go, and as the majority were given only their passage, and often arrived in America completely destitute, their experiences may not have encouraged others to follow their example. Almost all the landlord aid was connected with evictions, which became unusual in this time unless accompanied by some offer of compensation. There is evidence that where eviction without compensation did take place emigration frequently followed.²⁰⁰

The unsupported laborers found many reason cause to emigrate in 1839. Their earnings had not increased, and their subsistence grew steadily worse. The "curl" which had begun to affect potatoes in 1831 was still prevalent five years later, but it was a season of exceptionally heavy rainfall in 1839 which destroyed a great part of the crop throughout the west, south, and midlands. There were partial failures again in 1841 and 1842, and in 1844 the first signs of the blight which a year later brought on the great famine. The resistance of the people was weakened and fever increased. Agrarian agitation, often for purpose of compelling employment, reappeared with considerable violence, and it was strengthened by a revival of the campaign for Repeal of the Union, which in 1843 proved a positive check to emigration.²⁰¹ At the same time an improved demand for labor in Great Britain and hopes of railway construction in Ireland served to keep the laborers from going to America. They were not as a rule eager emigrants, but hard times drove them forth to the number of fifty thousand a year and more before the famine. The education was in some degree responsible for the number of emigrants. The majority of the laborers in the thirties knew little or no

For more details about the extracts from the Reports of assistant commissioners see: RRC, Third report of the commissioners for inquiring into the condition of the poorer classes in Ireland, pp.9-17.

²⁰⁰ William Forber Adams, *Op.Cit.*, pp.216- 217; PRONI: 19th Century Emigration to the North Americas, The Irish poor law and Landlords as agents of emigration: http://www.proni.gov.uk/index/exhibitions_talks_and_events/19th_century_emigration_to_the_north_america_online/helping_hands/the_irish_poor_law.htm. 01/05/2011, 09:10am; The Rt. Hon. Lord Dufferin, K.P., *Op.Cit.*, pp.55-57.

For more details about the number of the some cases of ejectment, during 1838-1842 see:

P.R, Return of the number of cases ejectment entered for trial, and of the number actually tried at quarter sessions before the assistant barristers of the several counties in Ireland, during each of the last five years, H,C, 1843[320], p. 2.

²⁰¹William Forber Adams, *Op.Cit.*, pp. 217-218; Marjorie R. Fallows, *Op.Cit.*, pp. 22-23; Lawrence J. McCaffrey, *The Irish Diaspora in America*, p.61; John O'Beirne Ranelagh, *Op.Cit.*, p.111.

English, and were under a serious handicap in America. And in 1841 the majority of the inhabitants of Ireland were still illiterate, but the progress of education was making rapid steps on the number.²⁰²

Thus it can say that immigration fever was spreading throughout the country, so much so that by 1840s, well before the Great Famine, emigration was becoming integral aspect of Irish life, where, during this decade the numbers arriving in American ports rose again sharply to an estimated 800,000 emigrants.²⁰³ Most of those who emigrated during this time, as high as 60 percent, were unskilled laborers, while the others were better-off farmers. The emigration report of 1836 commented upon a considerable increase in the number of unskilled laborers, and latter reports leave no doubt that they were the predominant class after 1840. The Canadian agents complained continually of this, including Buchanan. The emigrants of 1841 were said to be of a better type, though they were only fit to work on roads, and in the two years following, one-third of the emigrants arrived destitute, and many of the Irish were only enabled to pay their passage through the help of friends. The poverty of the emigrants again appears in a statement from Cork that they were composed of the laborers eight pence a day, those who earned six pence being unable to save enough for their passage.²⁰⁴

The artisans, who were almost as poor as the laborers, were also said to be coming to Canada in an increasing numbers in 1836 and to the United States as well before 1840. Thereafter, improved conditions in Great Britain drew the majority of them to England and Scotland, and a report from Upper Canada in 1841 stated that they formed only one per cent of the immigration. A larger proportion probably went to the United States, but their place in the total exodus from Ireland was considerably less than it had been fifteen years ago. Poor though the emigrants might be, the bulk of the testimony before the Devon Commission substantiates the following quotation from Antrim: "In this as in most districts, the industrious and well conducted are almost the only emigrants, while the able bodied idlers and disorderly characters are but rarely known to leave the country."²⁰⁵

The increasing movement of the poor was accompanied by a falling off in the other classes of emigration. Small farmers still set forth from the old districts in Ulster and Cork, and apparently from Tipperary as well, but in many places they were apparently less anxious than before to emigrate. Wealthier farmers went from all parts of Ireland, but were few in number, forming only two per cent of the emigrants to Upper Canada, which took as Large a proportion as any other district. The majority

²⁰²William Forber Adams, *Op.Cit.*, pp. 217- 218.

²⁰³Jay P. Dolan, *Op.Cit.*, p.37; Marjorie R. Fallows, *Op.Cit.*, pp. 22-23; Kerby A. Miller, *Op.Cit.*, p.199.

²⁰⁴ See: William Forber Adams, *Op.Cit.*, pp. 218-220; Jay P. Dolan, *Op. Cit.*, p. 37.

²⁰⁵ Quoted in: William Forber Adams, *Op.Cit.*, p. 220.

of this superior emigration comes from Ulster, and probably indicates a continuation of the old Presbyterian movement. A Londonderry minister confirmed in 1844 that: “Emigration is going on with amazing rapidity, and I may add that the most enterprising, industrious, and virtuous part of the people are quitting the country, and leaving us the dregs.”²⁰⁶

During the last five years emigration from Ulster to a considerable extent has taken place among all classes, but the predominant part taken by Ulster in the total emigration in this time came to an end, and in some parts there was an actual decrease in the number of emigrants. The Ordnance Survey reports from Antrim, which extend from 1836 to 1840, show that in many parishes which had formerly sent hundreds, emigration had almost ceased, and the reasons usually given were better employment at home as well as bad accounts from America. Only in the northwest was the emigrant spirit as strong as ever, though in part of that district, namely Cavan and Monaghan, increasing poverty and the competition for land held the movement in check. Despite very clear evidence from the Devon Report that emigration was only popular in restricted districts of the south, the great gain during these years came from southern Ireland. Cork supplanted Belfast as the leading emigrant port, and Sligo and Limerick greatly increased their quotas. However, the commissioners for inquiring — according to reports of the assistant commissioners—pointed out that in the years 1833 and 1834 the number of those who emigrated from Sligo was very considerable; much more so than in the present year. Of particular significance for the future was the appearance of a little emigration from almost every part of the country.²⁰⁷

The shifting of the balance of emigration to the south meant, of course, a corresponding gain in the Roman Catholic element. Reports from Antrim indicate that Presbyterians were still leaving that part of the country more rapidly than members of any other church. Scattered returns from a district of about 100,000 people show that one per cent of the Presbyterians emigrated, and only half as many Roman Catholics. But in the lands just below the Ulster border they were emigrating in large numbers, and at least one part of America, New England, rarely saw a Protestant Irishman. Contemporary Protestant opinion that the Catholic Church was opposed to this emigration was mistaken. The Rev. Michael Fitzgerald, Archdeacon of Limerick, in his testimony before the Devon Commission echoed the opinion of many other members of the priesthood when he said: “There is one, and in my mind, only one great remedy for agricultural distress in Ireland (postponing the Repeal question for

²⁰⁶ Quoted in: *Ibid*, p. 221.

For more details about the emigration from these counties and others see: Third report of the commissioners for inquiring into the condition of the poorer classes in Ireland, H.C, 1836 [43], pp.9-17.

²⁰⁷ See: Third report of the commissioners for inquiring into the condition of the poorer classes in Ireland, H.C, 1836 [43], pp.10-17; William Forber Adams, *Op.Cit.*, pp. 221-222.

the present), and that is emigration on the largest practicable scale, and on the principle of the emigration to Canada under the sanction of the government in 1822. This is the only effectual remedy in my opinion.”²⁰⁸ In 1843 a Catholic emigration society started to assist the movement to America under the guidance of the priests.²⁰⁹

The increase in the number of migrating women, which had begun in the thirties, continued, where, in Ulster, County Tyrone, the commissioners for inquiring stated that if a free passage to America were offered, Young women would also gladly accept such an offer, and they confirmed that “Since the failure of the spinning business many young women, who had friends in America, went out; many more endeavour to get field labour, but the number of men is so great that the women seldom get any employment.”²¹⁰ And by 1845 the women formed almost one-half of the total both to the United States and British North America. This was in part, as has previously been explained, a result of the laborers' habit of going in families,—families in this time including two-thirds of the emigrants from Antrim and at least as high a proportion elsewhere. The other part of the women's gain was caused by the rising emigration of girls, particularly of servants. They were said in some counties to be more eager to emigrate than the men, and were more certain of obtaining immediate employment in America. They bulked particularly large in the New Brunswick-New England trade, keeping the proportion of women to St. John at over sixty per cent, most of them went on to the United States. In this context an Irish traveller in 1840 said that “he could not have met less than a thousand Irish servant girls in Boston.”²¹¹

Poverty shows, as it did between 1831 and 1835, the sensitiveness of the emigrant to American conditions. During the first two years of this period reports of employment were good, but the panic of 1837 put, practically, an end to every form of public work in the United States, and many in Canada as well. It is true that some work continued on the St. Lawrence improvements, and the few thousand emigrants of 1838 did well; but the news of the Canadian Rebellion was an additional deterrent, and it may have helped to prevent the rapid revival which would otherwise have followed. In this context, Mr. Buchanan in annual report on Emigration to the Canada for the year 1838, said: “I regret to have to report a much larger decrease in the comparative amount of the emigration than has occurred of late years to account for which it is only necessary to refer to the unfavourable condition for the reception of the immigrant in which these provinces were placed in consequence of the rebellious

²⁰⁸ Quoted in: William Forber Adams, *Op.Cit.*, pp. 222-223.

²⁰⁹ *Ibid*, p. 223.

²¹⁰ Third report of the commissioners for inquiring into the condition of the poorer classes in Ireland, H.C, 1836 [43], pp.117.

²¹¹ Quoted in: William Forber Adams, *Op.Cit.*, pp. 223-224.

outbreak of 1837".²¹² The decrease in the number of emigrants from England in 1838 is 4,590; from Scotland, 962; from Ireland, 13,082; and from Lower Ports, 1; Total number, 18,635 souls. Moreover, Buchanan pointed out in his report that the few immigrants who arrived during the last season were generally supplied with ample stores and sufficient pecuniary means. It may be remarked that most of these emigrants came out from home to join friends who have preceded them, and who; having advantageously established themselves in these provinces, had remitted money to Europe to enable their relatives to join them there.²¹³

By 1840, although business in general was still below normal, laborers' wages had picked up, and averaged about seventy-five cents a day at Quebec and a dollar in the United States, which was better than in 1832. Artisans' wages which had been running well over a dollar a day were also affected, and in 1842 had fallen as low as seventy-five cents in Canada, while the cheapness of immigrant labor caused some replacement of New England women by Irishmen in the Lowell mills. This year saw a further stoppage of United States public works, and the laborers, most of whom were Irish, flocked to Canada where they shut out the new emigrants. A traveller observed that the three thousand Irish working on the Welland Canal mobbed anyone of another nationality who dared to apply for employment, and in the United States their frequent riots, which were often unorganized strikes, effectively kept others away. As the contractors preferred men who had been some time in the country, the 90,000 immigrants of 1842 found little encouragement anywhere. Some hundreds were sent back to Ireland from Boston through funds raised by an emigrant Society, but in New York the calls on their resources had been so heavy that the emigrant societies were bankrupt. Even with the reduced numbers of 1844, there was still unemployment, and canal laborers only earned forty cents a day. Government emigration agencies in Canada had to close, having exhausted their funds by August, but by this time the effect of the panic of 1837 had largely worn off, and there was some improvement until the excessive emigration of 1846 again made trouble.²¹⁴

The statistics of emigration show that the Irish reaction to these conditions, though just as pronounced as in the previous period, was slower in taking effect. The principal changes in numbers came as a rule in the second year after the conditions responsible for them. This delay is attributable, partly, to the new type of emigrants,

²¹² Immigrants to Canada, Immigration Report of 1838 from the British Parliamentary Papers 1839, Annual Report on Emigration to the Canada for the year 1838:

<http://jubilation.uwaterloo.ca/~marj/genealogy/reports/report1838.html>

31 /10/2012, 03:00 am; William Forber Adams, Op.Cit., p. 224.

²¹³ Further details are giving in: Immigrants to Canada, Immigration Report of 1838 from the British Parliamentary Papers 1839, Annual Report on Emigration to the Canada for the year 1838:

<http://jubilation.uwaterloo.ca/~marj/genealogy/reports/report1838.html>. 31/10/2012, 03: 00am.

²¹⁴ William Forber Adams, Op.Cit., pp. 224-226.

who, more ignorant than their predecessors, were most of them unable to send back accounts of their experiences; and also in part to the wider distribution of the districts from which the emigrants were drawn, so that news travelled more slowly. Hence in 1844, when American conditions were just changing for the better, we find statements from five districts in Ireland that emigration was being stopped by bad reports, and from three that it was increasing from good reports. Both types of report came from the county Clare from towns not thirty miles apart. The remittances from America might had less effect upon the amount of emigration during these years, although they were still a very important item. They paid for more than half of the ten thousand passages in 1838, and in the following years emigrants going to join friends —most of them presumably on the friends' money—were a majority. The great numbers arriving in 1842 came despite a falling off in the amount of remittances, and it seems probable that during these years the old emigrant classes sent less than formerly. But from 1843 on, the new emigrants were sending back contributions, where, three-fourths of the Quebec arrivals were again their way to friends. There are no figures for the amount of the individual remittances during these years, but those from Canada were as a rule just enough to pay the passages of newcomers, and it was expected that government would then come to their assistance and forward them to their friends.

There was less reason for fluctuation in the emigration the better class. The bad American harvests of 1835 and 1837 were indeed the cause of reports such as that contained in the following letter from an emigrant schoolmaster in Philadelphia to his friends in Londonderry: “The family that has a good comfortable way of living together or near each other at home, that is in Ireland, have more real heartfelt enjoyment in that home than they ever can have by coming to this country unless they can bring with them strength of sinews, much of determination, and plenty of money to bear them inland and establish them on a farm...”²¹⁵ The farmers' reverses were only temporary, and the majority prospered.

It seems clear that the real factors determining the destination of emigrants were the amount of employment, wages, and still more the traditional and sentimental attachment to the united States which drew the great majority in that direction. The emigration commissioners wrote in 1841: “It is their land of promise on leaving Ireland, and nothing but actual experience will convince any of them that they might more advantageously settle elsewhere.”²¹⁶ There was no cause for a change of destination during this period, but there was a gradual shift of route.²¹⁷

²¹⁵ Quoted in: *Ibid*, pp. 226-227.

²¹⁶ Quoted in: *Ibid*, pp. 228-229; Arnold Schrier, *Op.Cit.*, p.17 .

For more details see: ARPLC, Reports on the state of the poor and on the charitable institutions in some of the principal towns, Part I, 1836, p.61.

²¹⁷ William Forber Adams, *Op.Cit.*, p.229.

2.6.1 Reasons the shift of immigration's route to the United States after 1840:

By 1840 about 1 million people of Irish descent lived in the United States. After 1840 the numbers going directly to the United States were always greater than those going to British America, and by 1845 they had become two-thirds of the total. This change was ascribed in part to the equalization of fares to the two countries, which continued thereafter to be approximately the same. The rate from Liverpool without provisions was thirty shillings to Quebec, forty shillings to St. John, and to New York seven dollars, or with food ten dollars. Rates from Irish ports were somewhat higher, but it was said that from Sligo it was cheaper to go to the United States than to Canada, and there was no great saving in the Quebec route from any port of Ireland.²¹⁸

The new passenger acts may have been in some degree responsible for keeping up Canadian fares. The act of 1835 limited the number of passengers to three for every five tons, instead of the three to four tons previously enforced, and required ten square feet of deck per person. It also allowed only one-third of the passengers' food to be taken in potatoes—a more serious restriction for the Irish, and one which was most frequently broken. The act of 1842 increased the allowance of potatoes to one-half the total provisions, but required a form of contract under which these must be furnished by the ship. It also specified a more substantial ship construction, stipulating that lower decks should be laid upon permanent hold beams, and it increased the count for children by making every two between the ages of one and fourteen equal to one adult passenger.²¹⁹ These changes did not add to the cost of passage to Canada, but they may have prevented a decrease, such as had accompanied every preceding augmentation in numbers. Neither did they bring conditions on ships to British America up to the level of those for the United States. The Canadian ships could still carry fifty percent more passengers, and the wealthier emigrants continued to prefer the United States route for this reason. A more powerful influence than the passenger acts was largely responsible for the change of route. Liverpool and New York were fast swallowing up the greater part of the transatlantic traffic, and the passenger trade could not hold out alone from the regular course of shipping. The number of emigrants to the United States is increasing, and that the increase is attributed to the facilities afforded by the Liverpool steamers bringing over passengers from a port in Ireland to Liverpool, to be there embarked for the United States.²²⁰

²¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p.229; Karen Price Hossell, *Op.Cit.*, p.11.

²¹⁹ William Forber Adams, *Op.Cit.*, pp. 229-230; Kerry A. Graves, *Op.Cit.*, pp.44. .

²²⁰ ARPLC, Poor inquiry, Reports on the state of the poor, and on the charitable institutions in some of the principal towns, Part I, 1836, p.19; William Forber Adams, *Op.Cit.*, p. 230; Jay P. Dolan, *Op.Cit.*, p.37.

Liverpool then employed the British ships which had formerly been chartered for emigrants by Irish merchants, and had practically the whole of the American flaxseed and cotton trade. Canadian timber vessels, the last resort of Irish shippers, came in greater numbers to Liverpool than to all Ireland. Regularity of service was Liverpool's greatest advantage, and cheaper fares, made possible by larger numbers, were the second. Regularity was also New York's chief asset, and it gained at the expense of every other American port. After 1842 its advantage was temporarily increased by a slump in the timber.²²¹

It was natural, with the change in direction of trade that fewer of the emigrants to Canada should go on to the United States. The Ordnance Survey returns show that it was still a common practice from the north in 1840, and there were public reports in Canada the next year—denied by some authorities, but substantiated by a statement of the emigration agent at Hamilton, Ontario—that great numbers were pouring into the United States. On the other hand, the agent at Montreal stated that thousands were too poor to pay the river fare above the city, and as the fare was higher in 1842, it must have been an effective obstacle.²²²

As we pointed out earlier, this period witnessed a confirmed increase in the numbers of those coming to Upper Canada from the United States. So, Governor Colborne was annoyed with the administration of the emigrant tax and quarantine system at Quebec in 1835 that he threatened to advise all settlers to come by way of New York, and unofficial letters gave similar counsel. A great increase in emigration by this route was reported in 1836. Emigrant tracts, inspired probably by Canadian merchants, tried to put a stop to the practice, but without much success. A considerable proportion of those who came to Canada were not new emigrants, but ones who had been some time in the United States, while of the remainder, many who preferred the New York route split their families in order to take advantage of the cheap fares for children in the Canadian vessels. Dr. Douglas, the medical officer at Quebec, objected strongly to this custom.²²³ However, the emigrants at New York, and on their route to their destination they will find many plans and schemes offered to their consideration by persons assuming the character of Land and Emigrant Agents, so, to guard Emigrants from falling in errors, many instructions for emigrants arriving at Quebec, and in particular the emigrants arriving at New York and who are desirous of settling in Canada, issued by A.C. Buchanan, to be obtained without fee or

²²¹See: William Forber Adams, *Op.Cit.*, p.p. 230, 232.

²²²*Ibid*, pp. 232-233.

²²³*Ibid*, p.233; Extract of a Despatch from Lord Aylmer to Lord Goderich dated Quebec, 12 May 1831, in: GRC, Copies of any reports from the Commissioners for Emigration to the Secretary of State for the Colonial Department, since the last session of Parliament, H.C, 1831-32[724], p. 16.

reward, with every other assistance and advice that can benefit the Emigrant proceeding to the Canada.²²⁴

The emigration agents said that the influx from the United States in 1841 and 1842 was greater than the opposite movement, and the large numbers coming for public works support these statements. But in most years the balance seems to have lain in the other direction, although the proportion of Canadian immigrants going to the United States was less than ever before. According to one estimate about half the Irish arrivals left British America, but this figure includes the New Brunswick trade. New Brunswick was still the recognized route to New England, and in several years during this period had an Irish immigration exceeding seven thousand persons. The emigrant agent there claimed that only a small majority left the Provinces, but the letters of Sir William Colebrooke, the governor, show plainly that among the Irish only the destitute families remained. New Brunswick was, however, taking a smaller share of the whole than it had before the thirties. Of the much greater numbers arriving in Quebec, probably from a half to two-thirds in this time stayed in Canada.²²⁵

As one might expect, little of the emigration of this period went into the pioneer communities of the west. The Irish Emigrant Society of New York gave the advice which it had given twenty years before: "We would tell all to avoid the Atlantic cities and to distribute themselves throughout the lands. . . . Thousands continually land entirely penniless and are at once in a state of destitution; whereas such person should have at least five pounds on his arrival to enable him to prosecute his journey to the interior."²²⁶ Most of the Irish immigrants did not possess this capital, or were too ignorant to make use of it; and the only intimation of a westward migration comes from Massachusetts, where it was said that disappointed laborers were going through New York to the lands beyond the Ohio. This was not a pioneer emigration, however, but a response to the demand for labor in the western states.²²⁷

In these years, when the development of the Liverpool route was preparing the way for the great emigration after 1845, perfected the technique of defrauding emigrants, which was one of the scandals of the famine emigration. The great

²²⁴See: Appendix to report of the Commissioners for Emigration, addressed to Viscount Goderich, dated 15 March 1832, in: GRC, Copies of any reports from the Commissioners for Emigration to the Secretary of State for the Colonial Department, since the last session of Parliament, H.C, 1831-32[724], pp.8-9; Immigrants to Canada, 1834 Emigrants Handbook: Extracts from Official Instructions Published by A.C. Buchanan, Esq: <http://jubilation.uwaterloo.ca/~marj/genealogy/papers/emigrants1834.html>. 10/10/2012, 01:05am.

²²⁵William Forber Adams, *Op.Cit.*, pp. 233-234.

²²⁶Quoted in: *Ibid*, pp. 234-235.

²²⁷*Ibid*, pp. 235.

ignorance of most of the emigrants and the inability of many to speak English made deception easy. The act of 1835 went beyond earlier regulations in giving the customs officials complete discretion as to whether they should hold a ship for unseaworthiness, and it aimed at one serious abuse in requiring a payment by brokers of a shilling a day to each passenger for every day that the ship was detained beyond the date contracted for sailing, unless the weather made delay unavoidable, as there were instances occurred of vessels having been kept from sailing for weeks. Through a technicality, the act of 1835 was found to be unenforceable against foreign ships, but an amending act in 1838 remedied the defect.²²⁸ But the act of 1842 was the first to make definite requirements as to ship construction, and to forbid the sale of spirits on board except in certain limited quantities. But its main importance lay in protecting the emigrant in his negotiations before sailing. Licences were required from all passenger brokers, to be forfeit on any proof of fraud, and quicker legal remedies were provided for their victims. Supervision of most terms of the act was transferred from the customs to the emigration agents, whose sole duty it was to look after the emigrant. The regulations regarding shipping conditions seem to have been moderately effective, and the Quebec reports showed regular but not numerous convictions for excess passengers, and especially for insufficient provisions. Despite the fact that neither act required the presence of a surgeon, there was a constant decrease in the proportion of deaths on board or in quarantine. The improvements in health probably owed, much more, to Father Matthew than to legislation; for the frightful conditions which prevailed after the famine showed that the acts have been quite insufficient.²²⁹

Unfortunately other forms of malpractice were not preventable by law. The dissemination of false statements about America could scarcely be proven against an agent, since there was only the emigrant's word against his; and Wedderburn, the emigrant officer at St. John complained that: "To add to the emigrants' distress, they have been and are subjected to most gross and reprehensible delusions by the shipping agents throughout Ireland; they not only induce the poor people to believe that they will get lands here for nothing, but that they will also receive provisions for settling on them. The readiness with which the uninstructed receive this flattering, erroneous and cruel encouragement only augments their subsequent disappointments; and the poor particularly so, as they are further assured that there is a government fund provided here

²²⁸ Ibid, p.235; Letter from John Motteux of Beachamwell Hall, Norfolk to A.C. Buchanan dated April 17, 1837, Immigrants to Canada, Immigration Report of 1837, extracted from the British Parliamentary Papers: <http://jubilation.uwaterloo.ca/~marj/genealogy/reports/report1837.html>. 11/ 06/ 2012, 01:45 am; ARPLC, Poor inquiry, Reports on the state of the poor, and on the charitable institutions in some of the principal towns, Part I, 1836, pp.20-21.

²²⁹ William Forber Adams, *Op.Cit.*, pp. 235-236.

to convey them to any part of British North America or elsewhere.”²³⁰ But as we pointed out earlier, no pecuniary aid will be allowed by Government to emigrants to the North American colonies; nor after their arrival will they receive grants of land, or gifts of tools, or a supply of provisions. Hopes of all these things have been sometimes held out to emigrants by speculators in this country, desirous of making a profit by their conveyance to North America, and willing for that purpose to delude them with unfounded expectations, regardless of their subsequent disappointment. But the wish of Government is to furnish those who emigrate with a real knowledge of the circumstances they will find in the countries to which they are going.²³¹

With regard to Quebec, there was nothing of more importance to Emigrants on arrival at there, than correct information on the leading points, connected with their future pursuits. Many have suffered much by a want of caution, and by listening to the opinions of interested designing characters, who frequently offer their advice unsolicited, and who are met generally about wharves and landing places frequented by strangers. To guard Emigrants from falling into such errors, they should immediately on arrival at Quebec, proceed to the Office of the Chief Agent for Emigration to the Canada (A.C. Buchanan), where every information requisite for their future guidance in either getting settlement on lands, or obtaining employment in Upper or Lower Canada, will be obtained gratis. So, there were important instructions issued by Buchanan to the Emigrant arriving in Canada.²³² In this context, the report from the Commissioners for Emigration in March 1832 pointed out: “Although Government will not make any gifts at the public expense to emigrants to North America, agents will be maintained at the principal colonial ports, whose duty it will be, without fee or reward from private individuals, to protect emigrants against imposition upon their first landing, to acquaint them with the demand for labour in different districts, to point out the most advantageous routes, and to furnish them generally with all useful advice..”²³³

²³⁰ Quoted in: *Ibid*, pp. 236-237.

²³¹ Appendix to report from the Commissioners for Emigration, addressed to Viscount Goderich, dated 15 March 1832, GRC, Copies of any reports from the Commissioners for Emigration to the Secretary of State for the Colonial Department, since the last session of Parliament, H.C, 1831-32[724], pp.8.

²³² *Ibid*, p.8; Extract from the Emigration Agent's Return of Arrivals in Quebec, from the 19th to 31st May 1850, in: P.R, Copies or extracts of any despatches relative to emigration to the North American and Australian colonies; in continuation of the papers presented to the House of Commons in July 1849, H.C, 1851[348], p.11; *Immigrants to Canada, 1832 Emigrants Handbook for Arrivals at Quebec*: <http://jubilation.uwaterloo.ca/~marj/genealogy/papers/emigrants1832.html>. 28/09/2012, 04:55pm; *Immigrants to Canada, 1834 Emigrants Handbook*: <http://jubilation.uwaterloo.ca/~marj/genealogy/papers/emigrants1834.html>. 10/10 /2012, 01: 05 am.

²³³ Quoted in: Appendix to report from the Commissioners for Emigration, addressed to Viscount Goderich, dated 15 March 1832, in: GRC, Copies of any reports from the Commissioners for Emigration to the Secretary of State for the Colonial Department, since the last session of Parliament, H.C, 1831-32[724], p.8.

As we previously mentioned, the most serious frauds seem to have arisen from collusion between brokers and boarding-house keepers at Liverpool, whereby emigrants were charged outrageous prices for board and lodging and the handling of luggage, and were frequently sold tickets supposed to be good on American railways, but which subsequently proved to be either worthless or good for about one-third of the amount charged. These practices had begun in earlier years, but were much increased by the expansion of the Liverpool trade, and were duplicated in this time at New York.²³⁴

The typical emigrant up to 1830 and perhaps 1835 was a small farmer, often impoverished and ill versed in his own business, but proud of his independence and determined to improve upon it in the new world. Such men often had to work as unskilled laborers when they arrived in America, but possessing knowledge of English, and aided frequently by the presence of friends in the country, those with energy had little difficulty in rising to better jobs. The new emigrant was a laborer, with no background of self-help beyond the indifferent cultivation of his potato patch, hampered by ignorance of the land and of the language, and by a character in which excess of joy and gloom seemed equally unfortunate to the slower tempered Anglo-Saxon. But he too, unlike many of his successors after the famine, was the most vigorous of his kind, and the road to advancement was open to him.²³⁵

This ends the story of Irish emigration before the great famine, which followed the total destruction of the Irish potato crop in 1845 and 1846. The year 1846 created a new record of 109,000 emigrants. In 1847 the number was doubled, thus inaugurating a decade in which more Irish went to America than had left the island in all its earlier history. The potato blight and the Great Famine that ensued—probably the greatest social calamity of 19th-century Western Europe—changed the country profoundly, both physically and psychically. Thousands perished and millions migrated in one of the most tragic, most memorable population declines and shifts in history. The Great Famine did a great deal to institutionalize emigration as a permanent feature of Irish life. So, the flight after this famine changed the course of Irish development and introduced a new phase American immigration, but the movement itself, though differing in detail from the exodus of the preceding thirty years, is inextricably bound up with the work of the emigrants.²³⁶ Finally we can say

²³⁴ See: William Forber Adams, *Op.Cit.*, p. 237.

²³⁵ *Ibid*, pp. 238-239.

²³⁶ *Ibid*, p.239; Paul F. State, *Op.Cit.*, pp.163-164; Karl S. Bottigheimer, *Op.Cit.*, pp.177-178; James Lydon, *Op.Cit.*, p. 301; Garreth Byrne, *Quaker Non-Violence In Irish History*, pamphlet from the Dawn magazine, *Nonviolence in Irish History* (Nos. 38-39), April 1978, p.11; Lawrence J. McCaffrey, *The Irish Diaspora in America*, p.61; Daniel O'Connell and Catholic Emancipation: http://www.irishhistorylinks.net/History_Links/Catholic_Emanicipation.html. 11/01/2010, 08: 20 am.

that the onset of the Great famine in 1845, not only marked an end to phase of conciliatory policies, but also placed relief measures at the center of Irish policies. And while the “Potato Famine” was a major stimulus for immigration it is often considered just “a last straw” as Irish immigration was well under way prior to the famine and continued long after its effects had subsided due to “religious discrimination, exorbitant rents, industrial decline, evictions, the conflict between landlords and the agrarian terrorist organizations.”

1- Names of Ports from whence Emigrants came during the Year 1838 with comparative Statement of the Numbers arrived at Quebec and Montreal during the seven preceding Years.

Ireland								
Name of Ports	1838	1837	1836	1835	1834	1833	1832	1831
Dublin	135	2,535	2,438	912	5,879	3,571	6,595	7,157
Wexford	-	-	18	6	23	21	157	229
Ross	12	130	208	259	278	325	926	1,159
Waterford	14	859	629	205	1,008	197	877	1,216
Youghal	-	246	249	65	203	53	159	210
Cork	149	2,699	2,588	861	2,261	925	1,987	2,735
Baltimore	-	360	166	99	-	-	184	-
Tralee	17	286	250	42	217	67	133	114
Limerick	96	1,055	906	641	1,097	602	1,689	2,759
Clare	-	-	-	-	-	19	-	-
Galway	4	-	83	-	79	190	425	452
Westport	-	-	-	194	221	-	529	720
Killala	-	223	288	-	-	-	-	514
Sligo	187	1,813	1,687	893	2,114	657	2,961	4,079
Ballyshannon	-	-	122	-	154	71	86	200
Donegall	73	113	66	-	2	-	113	-
Londonderry	204	1,424	1,427	1,041	1,580	1,852	2,582	2,888
Larne	-	-	-	-	-	-	137	-
Belfast	548	1,999	1,209	1,350	3,024	2,637	6,851	7,943
Newry	17	282	144	537	945	725	2,374	1,591
Strangford	-	-	-	-	117	41	349	169

Irish immigration to the United States before the Great Famine

Drogheda	-	-	-	-	-	60	90	-
Kilrush	-	-	-	-	4	-	-	-
Kinsale	-	86	118	3	2	-	-	-
Newport	-	378	-	-	-	-	-	-
	1,456	14,538	12,596	7,108	19,208	12,013	28,204	34,135

2- Comparative Statement of the Number of Emigrants arrived at Quebec since the Year 1829, inclusive.

-----	1829	1830	1831	1832	1833	1834	1835	1836	1837	1838
England and Wales	3,565	6,799	10,343	17,481	5,198	6,799	3,067	12,188	5,580	990
Ireland	9,614	18,300	34,133	28,204	12,013	19,206	7,108	12,590	14,538	1,456
Scotland	2,643	2,450	5,354	5,500	4,196	4,591	2,127	2,224	1,509	547
Hamburgh and Gibraltar	-	-	-	15	-	-	-	-	-	-
Nova Scotia Newfoundand West Indies, &c.	123	451	424	546	345	339	225	235	274	273
Havre de Grace	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	485	-	-
	15,945	28,000	50,254	51,746	21,752	30,935	12,527	27,728	21,901	3,266

Grand Total 264,054

3- Return of the Number of Emigrants arrived at New York from the United Kingdom, for the last Ten Years.

		England	Ireland	Scotland	Total
In the year	1829	8,110	2,443	948	11,501
	1830	16,350	3,499	1,584	21,433
	1831	13,808	6,721	2,078	22,607
	1832	18,947	6,050	3,286	28,283
	1833	-	-	-	16,100
	1834	-	-	-	26,540
	1835	-	-	-	16,749
	1836	-	-	-	59,075
	1837	-	-	-	34,000
	1838	-	-	-	1,359
Total					237,647

Immigrants to Canada, Immigration Report of 1838 from the British Parliamentary Papers 1839, Annual Report on Emigration to the Canada for the year 1838:

<http://jubilation.uwaterloo.ca/~marj/genealogy/reports/report1838.html>. 31/10/2012, 03:00am.

CHAPTER THREE

**The Great Famine
emigration
1845-1850**

Chapter 3

The Great Famine emigration 1845-1850

3.1 The Potato Blight and its Consequences

Potato, in the mid-forties from the 19th century was the sole food of about one-third of the Irish people. It was a crucial component in the diet of a considerably larger number. Not only is the potato almost an ideal food, especially if supplemented by milk, but the produce in potatoes of a given area of ground is much greater than that for any grain crop and an acre of the potatoes could feed a large family. In good years, the crop could not only support a family but also provide food for pigs, chickens, and cattle, as well as providing a means of exchange in a society that as yet had no cash or money economy. Thus, the Irish people had assured themselves of abundant, healthy food by adopting a potato diet. Day after day, three times a day, people ate salted, boiled potatoes, probably washing them down with milk, flavouring them, if they were fortunate, with an onion or a bit of lard, with boiled seaweed or a scrap of salted fish, where, they seldom enjoyed the taste of meat, cheese, eggs, fish or bread.¹

Thus, the survival of a vast impoverished population depended on the recurring fruitfulness of the potato and on that alone. This alarming dependence on the fate of a single crop was fraught with danger; it left a very large number of people in a

¹ARPLC, Poor inquiry, Reports on the state of the poor and on the charitable institutions in some of the principal towns, Part I, 1836, p.p.550-551, 1081-1090, 1109-1117; Central Relief Committee of the Society of Friends, *Transactions of the Central Relief Committee of the Society of Friends during the famine in Ireland in 1846 and 1847*, Dublin 1852, pp.8-9; Gearoid O Tuathaigh, Op. Cit., p.181; Ronald Takaki, Op.Cit., p.144; William Pulteney Alison, *Observations on the famine of 1846-7, in the Highlands of Scotland and in Ireland : as illustrating the connection of the principle of population with the management of the poor*, Edinburgh 1847, pp.17-18; Éamon Ó Cuív, Op.Cit., p.5; K. H. Connell, "The Potato in Ireland", Past and Present, Oxford, No. 23 (Nov., 1962), p.57; Karl S. Bottigheimer, Op.Cit., p.p159-160; Timothy J. Paulson, Op.Cit., p.28; Lawrence J. McCaffrey, *The Irish Diaspora in America*, pp.54.55; T.W Moody and F.X. Martin, Op.Cit., p.219; Marjorie R. Fallows, Op.Cit., p.16; P. Dolan, Op.Cit., pp.68-69; Karen Price Hossell, Op.Cit., pp.14-15.

For more details see: P. M. Austin Bourke, "The Use of the Potato Crop in Pre-Famine Ireland", Journal of the Statistical and Social Inquiry Society of Ireland, Vol. XXI, Part VI, Dublin, 1968, p.83-89.

frighteningly vulnerable position, especially, the potato, is perishable and cannot be held in store to relieve scarcity like grain. So, it keeps so badly that the surplus of one year does nothing directly to make good the deficiency of the next; it is bulky, too, difficult, if communications are poor, to move from areas of abundance to areas of scarcity. In such circumstances, if anything were to happen to the potato harvest, would produce a social and economic crisis for Irish society, this is what happened, where, from 1845 to 1851 Ireland suffered from a terrible famine. The potato crop, on which much of the population depended almost exclusively for nourishment, had failed. The Irish had no other food that could supply their nutritional needs once the potato harvest failed.²

There was a long spell of wet weather in July of 1845, which did no apparent harm to a promising potato crop. Then in August came news of a strange disease attacking the crop in the south of England, it was potato blight. The crop all along the eastern seaboard of the United States and Canada had been ravaged in 1842, but this was its first appearance in Europe, when finally reached Ireland. In September of 1845, the first sign of a potato blight appeared as leaves on potato plants suddenly turned black and curled, then rotted, seemingly the result of a fog that had wafted across the fields of Ireland. The cause was actually an airborne fungus (*phytophthora infestans*) originally transported in the holds of ships traveling from North America to England. Winds from southern England carried the fungus to the countryside around Dublin, where the blight was observed in Waterford and Wexford. So, the south-eastern counties were first affected, and then spread rapidly until about half the country was affected.³

The blight spread throughout the fields as fungal spores settled on the leaves of healthy potato plants, multiplied and were carried in the millions by cool breezes to surrounding plants. Under ideal moist conditions, a single infected potato plant could infect thousands more in just a few days. There had been crop failures in the past due to weather and other diseases, but this strange new failure was unlike anything ever

²ARPLC, Poor inquiry, Reports on the state of the poor and on the charitable institutions in some of the principal towns, Part I, 1836, p.p.1081-1090,1109-1117; K. H. Connell, Op.Cit., p.63; T.W Moody and F.X. Martin, Op.Cit., p.220; Gearoid O Tuathaigh, Op.Cit., p.181; Kem Knapp Sawyer, Op.Cit., p.16; The Central Relief Committee of the Society of Friends, Op.Cit., pp.23-24; P. Dolan,Op.Cit.,p.69; Timothy J. Paulson , Op. Cit., pp.28-29.

³ T.W Moody and F.X. Martin, Op.Cit., p.220; Kerby A. Miller, Op.Cit.,p. 281; Karen Price Hossell, Op.Cit., pp.15-16; Kerry A. Graves, Op.Cit., pp.30-31; Marjorie R. Fallows, Op.Cit., p.17; Jay P. Dolan, Op.Cit., p.67; Lawrence J. McCaffrey, *The Irish Diaspora in America*, p.55; Gearoid O Tuathaigh, Op.Cit., p.181; Karl S. Bottigheimer, Op.Cit., p.178; Emily Lawless, Op.Cit., pp.396; Timothy J. Paulson, Op.Cit., p.29; Irish Potato famine: <http://www.historyplace.com/worldhistory/famine/before.htm>. 15/04/2011, 08.32 pm.

seen. Potatoes dug out of the ground at first looked edible, but shriveled and rotted within days. The blight was completely out of the realm of European agricultural experience in 1845. Potatoes are not produced commercially from seed, but they are rather reproduced vegetatively, as a significant portion of the crop is withheld from final consumption, and potato buds (or "eyes") are replanted for next year's crop. Seed crop capital is an important component of total production in modern conditions, depending on climate, soil quality, and agricultural technology.⁴

The first known newspaper published on 6 September 1845 reports that potato blight had made its way into Ireland. Not all of Ireland was affected that first year but, where the blight did appear, it destroyed everything, and accordingly, the distress, though acute, was not felt throughout the whole country,⁵ so in Ireland itself there was little immediate reaction. This home complacency was in some measure due to confidence about the food situation.⁶ Confidential circular issued by Dublin Castle dated 11 September 1845, solicited reports from county and sub-inspectors of the constabulary on the state of the potato crop in their particular counties. There was as yet no general alarm for the Irish crop.⁷

At first reported in only a few districts, the blight was "played down by the British government", but it gradually spread throughout nearly all of Ireland, destroying the staple food of the peasant and his domestic animals.⁸ By the second week of October, it was clear that the Irish crop was seriously damaged, and some concern began to be expressed about the potato exports.⁹ This seems clear in the newspapers and official reports in Ireland, as an article in the October 18, 1845,

⁴Agricultural Statistics of Ireland, Copy of the report of Dr. Playfair and of Mr. Lindley on the present state of the Irish potato crop, and on the prospect of approaching scarcity. (Dated 15th November 1845), H.C, 1846[28], p.1; Marjorie R. Fallows, *Op.Cit.*, p.17; Lawrence J. McCaffrey, *The Irish Diaspora in America*, p.55; T.W. Moody and F. X. Martin, *Op.Cit.*, p.221; Karen Price Hossell, *Op.Cit.*, p.16; Kerry A. Graves, *Op.Cit.*, p.31; Sherwin Rosen, "Potato Paradoxes", *The Journal of Political Economy*, Vol. 107, No. 6, Part 2: Symposium on the Economic Analysis of Social Behavior in Honor of Gary S. Becker (Dec., 1999), Chicago, pp.S295-S296; Irish Potato famine: <http://www.historyplace.com/worldhistory/famine/before.htm>. 15/04/2011, 08:32pm.

⁵"Waterford Freeman", September 6, 1845; "Dublin Evening Post", September 6, 1845; Gearoid O Tuathaigh, *Op.Cit.*, p.181; PRONI: 19th Century Emigration to the North Americas, The homeland: http://www.proni.gov.uk/index/exhibitions_talks_and_events/19th_century_emigration_to_the_north_america_online/the-homeland.htm. 01/05/2011, 09:10am.

⁶ See: P. M. Austin Bourke, "The extent of the potato crop in Ireland at the time of the famine", *Journal of the Statistical and Social Inquiry Society of Ireland*, vol. XX, Dublin, 1959, pp.1-19; Sherwin Rosen, *Op.Cit.*, p. S306.

⁷ NAI, RLFC2/Z13210, Archive Awareness Month (2003): <http://www.nationalarchives.ie/digital-resources/online-exhibitions/archive-awareness-month-2003-exhibition/>. 25/03/2011, 10:15pm; "Dublin Evening Post", 13 September 1845.

⁸ Marjorie R. Fallows, *Op.Cit.*, p.17.

⁹ P. M. Austin Bourke, *The Use of the Potato Crop in Pre-Famine Ireland*, p. 89.

edition of the Illustrated London News said that the disease was “extending far and wide.”¹⁰ The reports of the Famine Relief Commission collection, confirmed in letter dated 22 October 1845: “The potato crop has been seriously injured in county Wexford to the loss of at least a fourth...the greatest alarm prevails.”¹¹

3.1.1 The Great Hunger

Throughout the summer of 1846, the people of Ireland had high hopes for a good potato harvest. But hopes that the potato blight would not return were cruelly dashed when, there was a second failure, in the autumn of 1846, and this time it was complete.¹² The cool moist summer weather had been ideal for the spread of blight, and diseased potatoes from the previous harvest had also been used as planters and sprouted diseased shoots. At first, the crop appeared healthy, but by harvest time the blight struck ferociously, spreading fifty miles per week across the countryside, destroying nearly every potato in Ireland. Thus, by the autumn of 1846, Ireland was in the grip of famine, after starvation struck by September in the west and southwest where the people had been entirely dependent on the potato, and no one in Ireland was immune to the effects of the famine. In its September 4, 1846, edition, the Cork Examiner proclaimed, “All is alarm and apprehension. The landlord trembles for the consequences; so does the middleman; so does the tenant farmer.”¹³ Any relief plan requiring them to purchase food was bound to fail. In areas, especially rural areas where people actually had a little money, they couldn't find a single loaf of bread or ounce of corn meal for sale. In this context, Father Matthew, a Catholic priest, wrote to Trevelyan in 1846, he described to him state of the Irish people: “In many places the wretched people were seated on the fences of their decaying gardens, wringing their hands and wailing bitterly the destruction that had left them foodless.”¹⁴ Meanwhile, the Irish watched with increasing anger as boatloads of home-grown oats and grain departed on schedule from their shores for shipment to England. Food riots erupted in ports such as Youghal near Cork where peasants tried unsuccessfully to confiscate a boatload of oats. At Dungarvan in County Waterford, British troops were thrown with stones and opened fire on the crowd, killing two peasants and wounding

¹⁰ Quoted in: Karen Price Hossell, Op.Cit., p.16.

¹¹ Quoted in: NAI, RLFC2/Z14172, Documents of the Month, October 2004: <http://www.nationalarchives.ie/digital-resources/documents-of-the-month/2004-2/october-2004/.17/04/2011,> 11: 00 pm.

¹² S. H. Cousens, Op.Cit., p.55; Gearoid O Tuathaigh, Op.Cit., p.181; T.W Moody and F.X. Martin, Op.Cit., p.223; Kerry A. Graves, Op.Cit., p.31; Irish Potato famine: <http://www.historyplace.com/worldhistory/famine/before.htm>. 15/04/2011, 08:32 pm.

¹³ Quoted in: Karen Price Hossell, Op.Cit., p.16; Irish Potato famine: <http://www.historyplace.com/worldhistory/famine/before.htm>. 15/04/2011, 08.32 pm.

¹⁴ Quoted in: Irish Potato famine: <http://www.historyplace.com/worldhistory/famine/before.htm>. 15/04/2011, 08: 32 pm.

several others. British naval escorts were then provided for the riverboats as they passed before the starving eyes of peasants watching on shore.¹⁵

When the winter set in, there was no food left, and panic began to seize the famished people. Hungry mobs roved the country, Local relief committees were once again besieged by mobs of unemployed demanding jobs on public works projects. The Irish Board of Works was once again swamped with work proposals from landlords. The numbers employed leapt from 30,000 in September, to 150,000 in October, to 285,000 in November, and finally reached nearly half a million in December.¹⁶

The Irish in the countryside began to live off wild blackberries, ate nettles, turnips, old cabbage leaves, edible seaweed, shellfish, roots, roadside weeds and even green grass. They sold their livestock and pawned everything they owned including their clothing to pay the rent to avoid certain eviction and then bought what little food they could find with any leftover money. As food prices steadily rose, parents were forced to listen to the endless crying of malnourished children.¹⁷ The full range of famine sufferings was manifested chiefly in those areas where most of the elements of dire poverty were already deeply ingrained. It can say that the effects of the famine were felt most deeply in the west and southwest, where, many people were subsistence farmers, living on tiny plots of land. In Mayo and Clare, two of the poorest counties, they died by the thousands, while in the western part of county Cork, the suffering was just as bad, and in the town of Kenmare in Kerry the local priest wrote, "They were dying by the dozens in the street." A Cork magistrate also has left us account of a visit to the neighbourhood of Skibbereen in west Cork (perhaps the worst afflicted locality in the country) in late December 1846: "entered some of the hovels . . . and the scenes that presented themselves were such as no tongue or pen can convey the slightest idea . . ." ¹⁸ Meanwhile, some landlords saw the

¹⁵ Karen Price Hossell, *Op.Cit.*, pp.16-17; Kerry A. Graves, *Op.Cit.*, pp. 32-33; "Cork Examiner", September 25, 1846; Irish Potato famine: <http://www.historyplace.com/worldhistory/famine/before.htm>. 15/04/2011, 08:32 pm. For more details about food supplies imported into Great Britain from Ireland during this period see: ASI, Returns of the quantity of grain and flour of all sorts imported into Ireland, from 1st January 1839 to 1st January 1849; of grain and flour and other agricultural produce imported from Ireland into Great Britain . . . , H.C,1849[588], p.3.

¹⁶ T.W Moody and F.X. Martin, *Op.Cit.*, p.223 ; Gearoid O Tuathaigh, *Op.Cit.*, p.184; Irish Potato famine: <http://www.historyplace.com/worldhistory/famine/before.htm>. 15/04/2011, 08:32 pm.
For more details about the number of paupers in the several Union Workhouse in each Province in Ireland in October and December, 1846 and the extent of Accommodation in the workhouses see: P.R, Copies or extracts of Correspondence relating to the state of union workhouse in Ireland, H.C, 1847[766][790][863], p.p. 6,130-131.

¹⁷ Karen Price Hossell, *Op.Cit.*, p.17; Kerry A. Graves, *Op.Cit.*, p.33; Irish Potato famine: <http://www.historyplace.com/worldhistory/famine/before.htm>. 15/04/2011, 08.32 pm.

¹⁸ Quoted in: Jay P. Dolan, *Op.Cit.*, p.69; Gearoid O Tuathaigh, *Op.Cit.*, pp.184-185.

famine as an opportunity to finally evict their tenants, who, weak from hunger, were unable to work and pay their rent. Thus, the famine imposed the greatest hardship on the poorest people.¹⁹

3.1.2 Black Forty-Seven

Amid the bleak winter, hundreds of thousands of desperate Irish sought work on public works government relief projects. By late December 1846, 500,000 men, women and children were at work building stone roads. Many of the workers, poorly clothed, malnourished and weakened by fever, fainted or even dropped dead on the spot. The men were unable to earn enough money to adequately feed themselves let alone their families as food prices continued to climb. Corn meal in this time sold for three pennies a pound, three times what it had been a year earlier.²⁰

The situation in Ireland had reached its worst by February 1847, starting with great gales blew and the country was covered in thick snow. Starving people crowded into the towns and flooded to the public works which the government was proposing to close. A fever epidemic in this time spread in Ireland, that what people called 'famine fever' was in fact two separate diseases, typhus and relapsing fever. Nor was this the only scourge, as dysentery was to be expected among people who had been eating raw turnips or seaweed or half-cooked Indian meal, and it too often led to the fatal bacillary dysentery, the 'bloody flux', which now also became epidemic. Scurvy became general among those who were forced to resort to Indian meal, which is lacking in vitamin C. Also 'Famine dropsy', or hunger oedema, to give it its proper name, was widespread. In addition to these diseases, there were many ways in which terrified and undernourished people exposed to the bitter winter and to infection in soup kitchens and workhouses or on public works—which will be explained—could perish.²¹ Thus, the starvation and disease ravaged the land in that fateful year of 1847, which was one of the worst in Irish history, known to this day as Black 47, because of the magnitude of suffering, which led to great immigration from Ireland, was somewhat more than doubled that, of the previous year, and for it is the very year of the 'coffin ships' in which so many Irish people died of typhus, dysentery, or cholera.²²

¹⁹ Karen Price Hossell, *Op.Cit.*, p.18.

²⁰ Irish Potato famine: <http://www.historyplace.com/worldhistory/famine/before.htm>. 15/04/2011, 08:32pm.

²¹T.W Moody and F.X. Martin, *Op.Cit.*, pp.224-225; Gearoid O Tuathaigh, *Op.Cit.*, p.192; Ronald Takaki, *Op. Cit.*, p.144; Irish Potato famine: <http://www.historyplace.com/worldhistory/famine/before.htm>.15/04/2011, 08 : 32pm.

²² Jay P. Dolan, *Op.Cit.*, p.68; Kem Knapp Sawyer, *Op.Cit.*,p.16.Copy of a dispatch from Governor-General the Right Hon. the Earl of Elgin to Earl Grey, in: PR, Papers relative to emigration to the British provinces in North America (In continuation of the papers presented December 1847), H.C,1847-

3.1.3 Relief Measures and its impact on the Irish immigration

Enough has been said to indicate that, given the structure of Irish society and the nature of the Irish economy, a major failure of the potato crop meant, of necessity, a major crisis. Light may be shed on the more controversial question of the effectiveness of the efforts made to meet this crisis. This is a question which has always generated a great deal of heated argument where, the Irish nationalism responded to the disaster with many crucial questions: since Britain was the richest and most powerful nation in the world and since Ireland was part of the United Kingdom, why had the British government permitted the export of Irish meat and grain at a time when the peasant masses were perishing from hunger? Why did the government fail to provide a sufficient food supply for the Irish people? Thus ever since the famine, people have debated the culpability of the British government, with the claim that during the famine more than enough food was produced in Ireland to feed all of its people still haunts the memory of the Irish to this day. Instead of remaining in Ireland, it was exported to Britain.²³ In this context, Thomas Gallagher noted, many other European countries, including France, Belgium, Holland, Germany, and Russia, also suffered a potato blight during the worst of the Irish Potato Famine (1846-1847), but these countries stopped exporting all other foods to make up for the loss and to prevent a “famine” from occurring. Gallagher asserted that the British forced the Irish to continue exporting all their other food products as its citizens starved throughout the country.²⁴ This policy was fatal to the Irish as the potato was vital to their lives and Ireland was, “the one country in Europe where seven out of eight people were almost completely dependent on it.”²⁵ As a result of the forced export of all this food, 1 million people starved to death or died of disease. For this reason people especially, nationalist view, still claim that the British government was guilty of genocide against the Irish people, while there are who see it is not seem to be the case. They confirmed that even without the exportation of agricultural products from Ireland, there still would have been a serious food shortage in the country after the failure of several potato crop. So, government apologists, on the other hand, claim that the famine was a 'natural disaster', could not have been anticipated, and was met by the expenditure of energy and money, where, many English politicians, civil servant,

48[932][964][971][985], p.85; Denny Hatch, Op.Cit., p.44; Kerby A. Miller and Patricia Mulholland Miller.,Op.Cit.,p. 4.

²³Gearoid O Tuathaigh, Op.Cit., p.185; Lawrence J. McCaffrey, *The Irish Diaspora in America*, pp.56-57; P. J. Drudy, Op.Cit., p.73; Kerry A. Graves, Op.Cit., pp.31-33.

²⁴Thomas Gallagher, *Paddy's Lament*, New York 1982, p.88; Noel Ignatiev, “How the Irish Became White,” in Sinon J. Talty, *Into the Melting Pot: The Assimilation of Irish Potato Famine Emigrants in the United States*, Thesis Presented to the Faculty of Humboldt State University in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree Master of Arts, May 2006, p.4.

²⁵Thomas Gallagher, Op.Cit., p.14; Sinon J. Talty, Op.Cit., p.4.
Further details are giving in: Thomas Gallagher, Op.Cit., p.39.

religious group, and ordinary citizens did contribute money. What basis, if any, there may be to either case can only be judged by examining exactly what were the relief efforts made by the government.²⁶

The response of the British government to Ireland's tragedy was less than adequate, in large part due to the English attitude toward the Irish, since most of the English were Protestants and had a dim view of Catholics in general and Irish Catholics in particular. For centuries the English looked upon the Irish as inferior people, and such cultural prejudice was widespread during the 1800s. The Times of London, in early 1847, spoke for many English when it declared that Ireland was a "nation of beggars" whose "leading defects were indolence, improvidence, disorder, and consequent destitution." Many in the political elite believed that the famine was God's work, a providential intervention to force the Irish to become more self-reliant. Charles Edward Trevelyan, the doctrinaire permanent secretary at the British Treasury, bluntly said the famine was "a direct stroke of an all-wise and all-merciful Providence that laid bare the deep and inveterate root of social evil plaguing Ireland... this was God's punishment of the Irish, and in this manner Ireland would be cleansed... only then could it participate fully in the social health and physical prosperity of Great Britain." A firm belief in laissez-faire economics reinforced this attitude, so this meant that the government's intervention in Ireland's economy would be limited. The famine became "a heaven-sent opportunity to stamp out Irish laziness, ingratitude, violence and ignorance, and to remake Ireland in the image of industrious, efficient, orderly England." In historian Peter Gray's words "That more was not done to keep people alive was due to the triumph of ideological obsession over humanitarianism."²⁷

Nonetheless, the extent of the famine was so great that the British government was forced to intervene, but its intervention was completely inadequate. Official English policies treated the famine as Ireland's problem, even though England considered itself and Ireland a single country. The first responses were public works projects that provided employment and wages so that people could buy food. This took place in 1845-46 when Robert Peel was prime minister.²⁸

²⁶See: P. J. Drudy, Op.Cit., p.73; Gearoid O Tuathaigh, Op.Cit., p.185; James S. Donnelly, *The Great Irish Potato Famine*, Sutton 2001, pp.210-215; T .W Moody and F.X. Martin , Op.Cit., p. 226.

²⁷ Quoted in: Jay P. Dolan, Op.Cit., pp.71-72; Karen Price Hossell, Op.Cit., p.20. See: William Pulteney Alison, Op.Cit., p.60.

²⁸ Jay P. Dolan, Op.Cit., p.72; Karen Price Hossell, Op.Cit., p.20.

3.1.4 Famine relief in Peel's government

The partial potato failures were nothing new in Ireland. That is, the previous years of potato failures had accustomed the Irish to periodic famines in which many died.²⁹ On receiving the news of potato failure Charles Edward Trevelyan acted quickly to prepare for public relief employment, and was aware of the urgency of the problems caused by the expected food shortage. The Cabinet in London, far removed from the scene of action, was much less perturbed. Sir Robert Peel, the prime minister, habitually distrusted alarmist reports from the Viceroy in Ireland, and he considered that all reports from the Irish executive needed to be carefully scrutinized because "a haze of exaggeration covered Dublin Castle like a fog."³⁰ However, the government was forced to take prompt action to deal with the partial failure of the crop in 1845-1846. Peel, appointed a scientific commission to investigate the new disease diagnosed its nature incorrectly and suggested the wrong remedies, as it failed to discover that blight is actually a fungus growth and not a disease of the potato itself. But, Peel's relief measures on the other hand were prompt, skilful and on the whole successful.³¹ Meanwhile, the people of Ireland formulated their own unscientific theories on the cause of the blight. Some Catholics viewed the crisis in religious terms as Divine punishment for the "sins of the people" while others saw it as Judgment against abusive landlords and middlemen. In England, religious-minded social reformers viewed the blight as a heaven-sent 'blessing' that would finally provide an opportunity to transform Ireland, ending the cycle of poverty resulting from the people's mistaken dependence on the potato.³²

While the potato crops rotted in the fields, the wheat crops of the 1840s were stronger than they had ever been. But the wheat and other grains Ireland's small farms grew did not belong to the farmers. These crops belonged to landlords who owned the land, they sold the wheat to England for profit, leaving the farmers and their families with only potatoes to eat. During the famine, armed British guards were hired to prevent the grain crops from being stolen by the starving Irish.³³ However, naturally, the first thing that the person in charge should do, for a country facing starvation, was to forbid all export of foodstuffs from Ireland, but Peel decided against prohibition of exports of food from Ireland. Moreover, the Irish crisis of autumn 1845 finally

²⁹ Marjorie R. Fallows, *Op.Cit.*, p.17; Lawrence J. McCaffrey, *The Irish Diaspora in America*, p.55; T.W. Moody and F.X. Martin, *Op. Cit.*, p.p.221-222, 226; Gearoid O Tuathaigh, *Op.Cit.*, p.181.

³⁰ Quoted in: A.R.G. Griffiths, "The Irish Board of Works in the Famine Years", *The Historical Journal*, Vol. 13, No. 4 (Dec., 1970), p. 635.

³¹ T.W. Moody and F.X. Martin, *Op.Cit.*, p.221; Gearoid O Tuathaigh, *Op.Cit.*, pp.185-186; Irish Potato famine: <http://www.historyplace.com/worldhistory/famine/before.htm>. 15/04/2011,08:32 pm.

³² See: Irish Potato famine: <http://www.historyplace.com/worldhistory/famine/before.htm> 15/04/ 2011, 08: 32 pm.

³³ Timothy J. Paulson, *Op.Cit.*, p.30; Lawrence J. McCaffrey, *The Irish Diaspora in America*, pp.54-55.

convinced Peel that the time had come to remove the tariffs imposed on imported grain in the interests of the English farmer. Peel, therefore, took a decision of a great importance to repeal the Corn Laws, as they were called.³⁴ The Protection laws had been enacted in 1815 —as we mentioned previously — to artificially keep up the price of British-grown grain by imposing heavy tariffs on all imported grain. Under the Corn Laws, the large amounts of cheap foreign grain now needed for Ireland would be prohibitively expensive. However, English gentry and politicians reacted with outrage at the mere prospect of losing their long-cherished price protections.³⁵ Agricultural protection had been a burning issue in English politics for years, and had become symbolic of the struggle for power between the landed class and the businessmen. Peel persisted on his attitude, although he knew that to do so was to bring down his government and to tear the Tories apart. The political outrage in Britain surrounding Peel's decision quickly overshadowed any concern for the consequences of the crop failure in Ireland.³⁶

In November 1845 a relief commission was set up to cope with distress of the crop failure in Ireland and the formation of local committees was encouraged charged with the co-ordination of relief measures throughout the country. It was composed of landowners, their agents, magistrates, clergy and notable residents. The local committees were supposed to help organize employment projects and distribute food to the poor while raising money from landowners to cover part of the cost, and British government would then contribute a matching amount.³⁷ In this context, Dr. Playfair and Mr. Lindley visited the district lying between Dublin and Drogheda, on 15 November 1845, and inspected various Potato-fields and stores in the counties of Dublin, Louth, Meath, Westmeath and part of Kildare, they stated: “we can come to no other conclusion than that one-half of the actual Potato crop of Ireland is either destroyed or remains in a state unfit for the food of man.” And they added that of the remaining half thus assumed to be capable of preservation, there can be no doubt that the principal part may be relied upon as food for the ensuing winter. “But, considering the means, or rather the want of means, on the part of the Irish peasant, the wetness of the climate, the disputes between landlord and tenant, and perhaps the despair or other feelings of the poor cultivators.....more of the crop will disappear.”³⁸ Moreover, on 20 January

³⁴ T.W Moody and F.X. Martin, *Op.Cit.*, p.222; Seamas MacManus, *Op.Cit.*, p.602 Gearoid O Tuathaigh, *Op. Cit.*, pp.185-186; Irish Potato famine: <http://www.historyplace.com/worldhistory/famine/before.htm>. 15/04 / 2011, 08:32pm.

³⁵ Irish Potato famine: <http://www.historyplace.com/worldhistory/famine/before.htm>.15/04/2011,08:32pm; Seamas MacManus,*Op.Cit.*,p.602.

³⁶ T.W Moody and F.X. Martin, *Op.Cit.*, p.222; Gearoid O Tuathaigh, *Op.Cit.*, p.186; Irish Potato famine: <http://www.historyplace.com/worldhistory/famine/before.htm>. 15/04/2011,08:32 pm.

³⁷ T.W Moody and F.X. Martin, *Op.Cit.*, p.222; Gearoid O Tuathaigh, *Op.Cit.*, p.186; Irish Potato famine: <http://www.historyplace.com/worldhistory/famine/before.htm>. 15/04/2011, 08:32 pm.

³⁸Quoted in: ASI, Copy of the report of Dr. Playfair and of Mr. Lindley on the present state of the Irish potato

1846 the report of the commissioners of inquiry into matters connected with the failure of the potato crop stated: “of 32 counties in Ireland, not one has escaped failure in the potato crop; of 130 Poor Law Unions, not one is exempt.” And the report pointed out “ a calamity more widely extended, and more serious in its nature, than any that has affected the Irish poor since the year 1817.” It confirmed also on encouragement of the public works saying “in all cases of public distress, it is necessary, where employment in labour is to be given, to those (poor) on a great scale.”³⁹

The relief policy itself had two main goals; the first was the provision of employment, so that labourers might earn the wherewithal for buying food, the second goal of policy was to ensure that local traders would not capitalise on the food shortage by raising prices to an exorbitant level; this, in effect, meant ensuring that a reserve supply of cheap food be made available for use in controlling such profiteering. The shaky Irish relief effort soon came under the control of Charles Trevelyan who Peel appointed him to oversee relief operations in Ireland and would become the single most important British administrator during the Famine years. To provide employment the government resorted, as usual, to schemes of public works, and about 140,000 found employment on relief schemes in the season 1845-46. Peel also acted immediately to counter the more immediate hazards of the potato failure, namely, price inflation on food supplies, and actual starvation. As early as November 1845 Peel had authorized the purchase of £100,000 worth of Indian meal from America, and Trevelyan made no effort to replenish the limited supply.⁴⁰

In 23 January 1846, colonel Jones Chairman of the Board of Public Works in Ireland (1845-1850), stated that having been obliged to visit the operations going forward at the Shannon, he took the opportunity of being in that neighbourhood to inspect personally the district of Kilglass, county Roscommon, and he felt himself bound to report that its condition is extremely bad. He found families using potatoes that were quite unfit for human food; and in some of the pits and fields that he visited, the whole of the potatoes were seriously injured. Moreover, Sir Lucius O'Brien, Lieutenant of the County Clare, stated after examination of the state of his county, that : “he has reason to believe that the disease of the potato, which was for a time arrested, is now in many districts progressing again, probably in consequence of the late mild and springing weather.” He also said that many families have lost the whole of their supply, and whole districts have lost the greater portion of their crop, and he

crop, and on the prospect of approaching scarcity. (Dated 15th November 1845), H.C, 1846[28], p.1.

³⁹Quoted in: ASI, Extract of a report of the commissioners of inquiry into matters connected with the failure of the potato crop, H.C, 1846[33], pp.1-2.

⁴⁰Gearoid O Tuathaigh, Op.Cit.,pp.186-189; T.W Moody and F.X. Martin, Op.Cit.,p.222; Éamon Ó Cuív, Op. Cit.,p.5; Irish Potato famine:<http://www.historyplace.com/worldhistory/famine/before.htm>. 15/04/2011, 08:32 pm.

added “Thinks, that in addition to measures for increasing employment, it would be very desirable that Government should provide stores of provisions in different places. Thinks that a joint fund might possibly be raised, partly by individual and partly by Government contribution, for establishing such stores.”⁴¹After that, the supplies were secretly stored in the country, and between March and June special food depots began operations in Munster, Leinster and Connaught. The government saw the food depots as a last line of defence against starvation, and as a guarantee against excessive price rises by food monopolists. They were not meant to replace or even to compete with existing retail agents.⁴²

However, in remote rural areas, many of the relief committees were taken over by poorly educated farmers. Local landowners, upon seeing who was on the committees, balked at donating any money. There were also many absentee landlords in the remote western areas with little first-hand knowledge of what was occurring on their property, they also failed to donate. So, in the more remote areas of the south and west, the government authorised the establishment of special sub-depots, manned by the police and coastguards, who were permitted to sell meal directly to the people in need. During the summer of 1846 over 100 of these sub-depots came into operation. In all, the government spent some £185,000 on food supplies (chiefly Indian meal) in the 1845-6 season; but about three-quarters of this was recovered in sales.⁴³

It can say that peel's early measures; creating public works, pegging prices, and distributing food—were on more or less effective lines in 1845-1846. But it must be remembered that the potato failure in this season, for all its severity, was only partial, not total; nearly half the country escaped the blight. A total failure was quite a different matter; and when 1846 brought such a failure Lord John Russell was Prime Minister and Peel was the deposed leader of a shattered party, after his resignation announced on June 29, 1846.⁴⁴

⁴¹Quoted in: ASI, Extract of a report of the commissioners of inquiry into matters connected with the failure of the potato crop, H.C, 1846 [33], p.4.

For more details about the Relief Commission see: “Sources in the National Archives for researching the Great Famine: The Relief Commission”, *Journal of the Irish Society for Archives*, Spring 1995, pp.14-15: <http://www.nationalarchives.ie/topics/famine/relief.html>, 20/08/2013, 10:20pm.

⁴² Further details are given in: Gearoid O Tuathaigh, *Op.Cit.*, pp.187-188.

⁴³ Gearoid O Tuathaigh, *Op.Cit.*, p.188.

⁴⁴ R. F. Foster, *Op.Cit.*, p.202; Gearoid O Tuathaigh, *Op.Cit.*, p.188; Karl S. Bottigheimer, *Op.Cit.*, p.178; Jay P. Dolan, *Op.Cit.*, p.p.67,72; William John Fitzpatrick, *Correspondence of Daniel O'Connell*, Vol.2, p.281; Irish Potato famine: <http://www.historyplace.com/worldhistory/famine/before.htm>, 15/04/2011, 08:32 pm.

3.1.5 Famine relief in Whigs government

Peel's departure paved the way for Charles Trevelyan to take full control of Famine policy under the new Liberal government. The Liberals, known as Whigs in those days, were led by Russell, and were big believers in the principle of *laissez-faire*.⁴⁵ The advent of the Whigs to office in the summer of 1846 heralded a major change in government policy towards Irish distress. The change boded ill for Ireland, for the Whigs were much more wedded to current beliefs about the economic system, they were deeply committed to the doctrines of free trade and private enterprise. Russell had little of Peel's independence of judgment, and none of his Irish administrative experience, and most important of all, perhaps, is that the new Chancellor of the Exchequer, Sir Charles Wood, also held similar views to Trevelyan as to the proper role of the State in economic affairs. So, it was decided at once that in the event of a second failure of the potato crop, there would be no government buying: the supply of food was to be left exclusively to private enterprise.⁴⁶

As a devout advocate of *laissez-faire*, Trevelyan claimed that aiding the Irish brought "the risk of paralyzing all private enterprise." Thus he ruled out providing any more government food, despite early reports the potato blight had already been spotted amid the next harvest in the west of Ireland. Trevelyan believed Peel's policy of providing cheap Indian corn meal to the Irish had been a mistake because it undercut market prices and had discouraged private food dealers from importing the needed food. So, when he had firmly taken control, he ordered the closing of the food depots in Ireland that had been selling Peel's Indian corn, and he also rejected another boatload of Indian corn already headed for Ireland. His reasoning, as he explained, was to prevent the Irish from becoming "habitually dependent" on the British government, and his openly stated desire was to make "Irish property support Irish poverty."⁴⁷ In areas that were mostly Catholic, the government did offer aid if the people agreed to give up Catholicism and become Protestants. The British feared that if they sent money to the people of Ireland, it would be used to buy guns and ammunition for revolt. Many well-off British thought it was the Irish people's own fault that they were so dependent on the potato and now were starving. They believed that the Irish were simply too lazy to find better jobs and work hard to provide more for their families, and many British also believed that if they came to the aid of the Irish people, the Irish would never learn to provide for themselves. The truth was that Irish Catholics, who made up the majority of those affected by the famine, were not

⁴⁵ Irish Potato famine: <http://www.historyplace.com/worldhistory/famine/before.htm>. 15/04/2011, 08:32 pm.

⁴⁶ Gearoid O Tuathaigh, *Op.Cit.*, pp.188-189; T. W. Moody and F.X. Martin, *Op.Cit.*, p.222; R. F. Foster, *Op. Cit.*, p.202.

⁴⁷ Quoted in: Irish Potato famine: <http://www.historyplace.com/worldhistory/famine/before.htm>. 15/04/2011, 08: 32 pm .

allowed by law to get better jobs to improve their situation. When in 1846 the British did begin sending food and supplies into Ireland, many knew the assistance was too little, too late,⁴⁸ thus, the prospect of an appalling disaster caused no modification in the government's plans. Relief was to be limited to public works, nor was the government any longer to meet half the cost, which was to be borne entirely by the rates. The idea, of course, was to force the Irish landlords to bear the cost, so the whole burden fell on the Irish board of works.⁴⁹ We can say that there were three distinct phases in the Whig handling of the Irish famine (public works, soup kitchens and workhouse).

Public works:

During the first phase, covering roughly the second half of 1846, the government placed almost total reliance on an extensive public works programme, with but a limited and reluctantly accepted involvement in the supply of food. At first glance certain similarities with Peel's 'relief package' are obvious, but whereas Peel had had to deal with a partial potato failure which struck late in the season, the failure of 1846-7 was total. Moreover, Trevelyan's obsession with economy and efficiency was now dominating implementation of policy. The wasteful expenditure which, it was believed, had occurred during the previous season was not to be repeated. Trevelyan's free market relief plan depended on private merchants supplying food to peasants who were earning wages through public works employment financed mainly by the Irish themselves through local taxes. But the problems with this plan were numerous, as tax revenues were insufficient, wages had been set too low and paydays were irregular and those who did get work could not afford both pay their rent and buy food, and Ireland also lacked adequate transportation for efficient food distribution.⁵⁰

Thus, we may conclude that throughout the entire Famine period, the British government would never provide massive food aid to Ireland under the assumption that English landowners and private businesses would have been unfairly harmed by resulting food price fluctuations. In adhering to *laissez-faire*, the British government also did not interfere with the English-controlled export business in Irish-grown grains. In this context, correspondences between John Russell and the Earl of Bessborough in 1846, pointed out that, adjustments made to the public works

⁴⁸ Timothy J. Paulson, *Op.Cit.*, pp.31-32 .

⁴⁹ T.W Moody and F.X. Martin ,*Op.Cit.*, p.223; Jay P. Dolan, *Op.Cit.*, p.72.

⁵⁰ Gearoid O Tuathaigh, *Op.Cit.*, p.189; Karl S . Bottigheimer, *Op.Cit.*, p.179; Jay P. Dolan, *Op.Cit.*, p.72; Irish Potato famine: <http://www.historyplace.com/worldhistory/famine/before.htm>.15/04/2011,08.32 pm.

legislation inherited from Peel were limited and were intended to eliminate abuse and manipulation by landlords and farmers.⁵¹

However, the top priority in the Whig relief programme of 1846 was the provision of employment, not food. At Trevelyan's suggestion it was decided to place all public works under the control of a completely reorganised Board of Works. The cost of the schemes was to fall on property owners in the distressed districts. But there were long delays; in late autumn before the schemes became operative, and they were heavily criticised from the outset. But the ultimate failure of the public works policy was in a crisis greater than anybody in authority had anticipated the machinery simply could not cope with the great numbers needing relief, since the Board of Works chiefs felt equipped to manage about 100,000 at a maximum. So, the government was decided at the end of 1846 to wind up the relief works and to resort to an emergency scheme of direct outdoor relief,⁵² where, by December 1846, reports of the horrors of mass starvation at Skibbereen and other places demonstrated that traditional forms of relief were failing.⁵³

Soup Kitchens:

Trevelyan's public works relief plan for Ireland had failed. At its peak, in February and March of 1847, some 700,000 Irish toiled about in useless projects while never earning enough money to halt starvation. In Cork harbor, the long-awaited private enterprise shipments of Indian corn and other food supplies had finally begun arriving. Food prices dropped by half and later dropped to a third of what they had been, but the penniless Irish still could not afford to eat. As a result, food accumulated in warehouses within sight of people walking about the streets starving.⁵⁴ In this context a poor village schoolmaster in County Sligo, one of the two thousand tenants on Lord Palmerston's huge estate said in 21 February 1847: "It is true that there is a potato famine in practically every part of the country but there is corn and wheat and meat and dairy products in abundance. For putting his hands on any of this, the tenant is liable to prison, even to execution or to exile..."⁵⁵

⁵¹Earl of Bessborough to Russell, 13 September 1846, Wood to Russell 25 September, Russell Papers, PRO, London 30/22/5C fols 144-8, 326-7; Russell to Earl of Bessborough, 2 October 1846, Bessborough to Russell 4 October, Russell Papers, PRO, London 30 / 22 /5D, fols 38-41,46-47; Irish Potato famine: <http://www.historyplace.com/worldhistory/famine/before.htm>. 15/04/2011,08.32 pm.

⁵²See: Gearoid O Tuathaigh, Op.Cit., pp.190-191; T.W Moody and F.X. Martin, Op.Cit., p.223.

⁵³Labouchere to Russell, 11,16 December 1846, Russell Papers, PRO, London 30/ 22/5F, fols 151-152,195-196; Cathal Poirteir, *The Great Irish Famine*, Dublin 1995, p.96.

⁵⁴Gearoid O Tuathaigh, Op.Cit., p.191; Irish Potato famine: <http://www.historyplace.com/worldhistory/famine/before.htm>.15/04/2011, 08:32 pm.

⁵⁵Quoted in: Kem Knapp Sawyer, Op.Cit., pp.16-17.

For more details about food supplies imported into Ireland during this period see: ASI, Returns of the quantity of grain and flour of all sorts imported into Ireland, from 1st January 1839 to 1st January 1849; of

Between March and June of 1847, the British government gradually shut down all of the public works projects throughout Ireland. The government, under the direction of Prime Minister Russell, had decided on an abrupt change of policy "to keep the people alive", through abandon public works and extend direct relief. The model chosen for the direct relief programme was the soup kitchen. Daily soup demand quickly exceeded the limited supply available, as in Killarney, there was just one soup kitchen for 10,000 persons, so, cheap soup recipes were improvised. By the spring, Government-sponsored soup kitchens were established throughout the countryside. But unrealistic criteria for deciding who was entitled to relief, unenforceable conditions regarding the actual distribution of food, unforgivable delays in making supplies of meal available at the kitchens, all produced a predictable harvest of deception, recrimination, and hardship. Yet for all that the soup kitchens were operating in virtually every poor law union in the country in the summer of 1847, and in August an incredible 3,000,000 people were receiving rations at the soup kitchens daily, the vast majority of them free gratis. To this must be added the numbers receiving relief through the continued charity of individual benefactors and of such societies as the Society of Friends and the British Relief Association. However, the meager rations were not enough to prevent malnutrition, as many adults slowly starved on this diet. Moreover, these assistance programs were expensive and were financed by taxation in England, so the soup kitchens were being shut down according to schedule, since the soup kitchen scheme was never meant to be more than a temporary emergency operation.⁵⁶

Workhouse:

On termination of the soup kitchens the government decided that the best way of dealing with Irish poverty was by improving the existing poor law machinery. Where, the British government conceded that the scale of the 1846-7 crisis demanded humanitarian aid in food, followed by the permanent extension of the poor law to give a right to relief to both the able-bodied and helpless destitute.⁵⁷ So, parliament enacted the Irish Poor Law Extension Act on 8 June 1847, which proposed to dispose neatly of the whole problem by thrusting responsibility on the Irish poor law, thus leaving Ireland to bear the whole cost through the poor rates. The Act provided for the establishment of

grain and flour and other agricultural produce imported from Ireland into Great Britain...,H.C,1849[588], p.2.

⁵⁶Gearoid O Tuathaigh, *Op.Cit.*, pp.191-193; T.W Moody and F.X. Martin, *Op.Cit.*, pp.223-226; Emily Lawless, *Op.Cit.*, p.399; Jay P. Dolan, *Op.Cit.*, p.72; Karen Price Hossell, *Op.Cit.*, p.22; Kerry A. Graves, *Op.Cit.*,p.34; Irish Potato famine: <http://www.historyplace.com/worldhistory/famine/before.htm>.15/04/ 2011, 08:32 pm.

⁵⁷Earl of Bessborough to Russell, 2 1847 January, Russell to Bessborough. 5 January, Russell Papers, PRO, Landon 30/22/6A, fols,19-20,48-49; Cathal Poirteir, *Op.Cit.*, pp.96-97.

more workhouses in Ireland to give the homeless a place to go, but the workhouses were now paid for by a tax paid by landowners. So, the immediate sufferers were to be the Irish landlords, whom the Whigs blamed by and large for the disaster that had taken place. Inevitably, to reduce the burden of tax, the landlords became more determined in their efforts to evict pauper tenants, where, the new poor law also made landlords responsible for the taxes on small holdings on their estates occupied by peasant families and small farmers. To relieve themselves of this tax burden they evicted those tenants and broke up their little farms and villages.⁵⁸ As a Cork merchant commented, this clause in the poor law “almost forced the landlords to get rid of their poorer tenantry; in order that they should not have to pay for these small holdings, they destroyed the cottages in every direction.”⁵⁹

The Act made conditions worse, especially, for the remaining cottiers since it also contained the infamous 'Gregory Clause' which stated that anybody with a holding of quarter acre or more of land was excluded from relief and could not enter a workhouse, and it was required to forfeit their land before seeking relief. As a result, countless farm families with small holdings were forced into a life-and-death decision over whether to stay on their land and possibly starve or to give up their farm, surrender their dignity, and head for the workhouse as destitute paupers. So, with no real choice, many abandoned their homes and went to the workhouse, where at least they knew they would be fed. Not surprisingly, these measures provoked sporadic rural disorder as landlords, large farmers, rent and rate collectors were intimidated, or worse, by a desperate peasantry. Many landlords, desperate for cash income, now wanted to grow wheat or graze cattle and sheep on their estates, but they were prevented from doing so by the scores of tiny potato plots and dilapidated huts belonging to penniless tenants who had not paid rent for months, if not years. To save their estates from ruin, the paupers would simply have to go. The only way to do this was by evicting tenant families who were unable pay rents, and once this took place, landlords cleared their estates by destroying the tenants' homes as well as taking what little land they still possessed. After the land was cleared, the landlord could turn it into a more commercially viable estate with cattle and sheep replacing the evicted

⁵⁸Karen Price Hossell, *Op.Cit.*, pp.20-21; William Pulteney Alison, *Op.Cit.*, pp.64-65; T.W Moody and F.X. Martin, *Op.Cit.*, p.226; Gearoid O Tuathaigh, *Op.Cit.*, pp.192-193; P. Dolan, *Op.Cit.*, p.70; Kem Knapp Sawyer, *Op.Cit.*, pp.18-19; Denny Hatch, *Op.Cit.*, p.43; Robert Whyte, *Op.Cit.*, p.11; Irish Potato famine: <http://www.historyplace.com/worldhistory/famine/before.htm>. 15/04/ 2011, 08: 32 pm.

For more details about the numbers of evicted destitute poor in provinces and counties in Ireland see: P.R, Abstract return of all notices served upon relieving officers of poor law districts in Ireland, by landowners and other, under the act 11 & 12 Vict. c. 47, intituled, "an act for the protection and relief of the destitute poor evicted from their dwellings", H.C, 1849[1089], p.35; P.R, A bill to amend the law in Ireland as to ejectments and distresses, and as to the occupation of Ireland, H.C, 1846[384], p.1; P.R, A bill for the protection and relief of ejected tenants in Ireland, H.C, 1846[237], p.1.

⁵⁹Quoted in: P. Dolan, *Op.Cit.*, p.70. See: Kerry A. Graves, *Op.Cit.*, p.15.

tenants. Many tenants, already starving and destitute, refused to turn over their land, knowing that they would lose their houses as well. They would rather die as paupers at home than as homeless vagabonds in a ditch along the road. However, as winter approached, increasing numbers of evicted Irish families wandered the countryside in tattered rags with nowhere to sleep.⁶⁰

Thus, a primary form of relief from 1847 until the end of the famine was the workhouse, where people worked for food. Derided as "Bastilles of the poor", they housed the able-bodied poor, who worked at such tasks as grinding corn or breaking stones, for eight to ten hours a day. Breaking stones was so hated that some applicants for assistance declared that "they would rather die than break stones."⁶¹ As we pointed out in the preceding chapter, Ireland had as many as 130 workhouses by 1847 that had been built to provide work and food for the poor. In normal times they were often crowded, but when mass starvation gripped the countryside, they were inundated with hundreds of starving men, women, and children seeking relief, while workhouse were already jammed. As a temporary emergency measure, auxiliary workhouses were set up in unused warehouses, empty stores and other old buildings to provide shelter for an additional 150,000 persons, but they had no heat or sanitary facilities, and soon they had no food. Mortality rates in these overcrowded, disease-infested refuges skyrocketed during the famine, where, about 25 percent of those who went to live in one died there from cholera, dysentery, or typhus, as happened in Cork Union, so such relief efforts were no match for the overwhelming poverty and prolonged famine. Both inside and outside the workhouses of western Ireland, people began to starve on a scale approaching the previous ruinous winter. Anger and resentment grew in the countryside over the prospect that it was all going to happen again, and the result was intense hatred for British authority, leading to unrest and anti-landlord violence.⁶²

⁶⁰ Jay P. Dolan, *Op.Cit.*, pp.70-71; S. H. Cousens, *Op.Cit.*, p.56; T.W Moody and F. X. Martin, *Op.Cit.*, p.226; Gearoid O Tuathaigh, *Op.Cit.*, p.193; Karen Price Hossell, *Op.Cit.*, p.p15,21-22; Kerby A. Miller, *Op.Cit.*, p.287; Kerry A. Graves, *Op.Cit.*, p.p.28-29,34-35; Irish Potato famine: <http://www.historyplace.com/worldhistory/famine/before.htm>. 15/04/2011, 08:32 pm.

⁶¹ Quoted in: Jay P. Dolan, *Op.Cit.*, p.72; Kerry A. Graves, *Op.Cit.*, pp.33-34. For more details about amount of Workhouse Accommodation in Ireland, the number of inmates on the January,1847 and the steps which have been taken in pursuance of the powers given by the Irish Poor Relief Acts for providing increased, accommodation for applicants for relief in the several Unions in Ireland, see: P.R, Copies or extracts of Correspondence relating to the state of union workhouse in Ireland, H.C,1847[766][790][863], pp.121-122. And see also: P.R, Return from the several county gaols and from workhouses in Ireland, of the daily diet allowed to an able-bodied man, H.C, 1847-1848[486], pp.1-2.

⁶²See: Jay P. Dolan, *Op.Cit.*, pp.72-73; Karen Price Hossell, *Op.Cit.*, pp.21-22; BL, "The Cork Examiner" Vol. VI No. 862, Ref: 025CKEX18470315; Irish Potato famine: <http://www.historyplace.com/worldhistory/famine/before.htm>. 15/04 / 2011, 08: 32 pm.

When the workhouses became so overcrowded, despite the appallingly high death rate, the only way to deal with the excess was to encourage emigration. But so many clamoured to go – some even entering the workhouse for that sole purpose - that the option of emigration was restricted to those who had been inmates for at least two years. Eventually, it was agreed that 'outdoor relief' should also be granted, which meant that paupers did not necessarily need to go into the workhouse but could nevertheless receive aid - including assistance to emigrate. Powers were granted to the Boards of Guardians enabling them to contribute towards the cost of emigration, including providing outfits and paying the passage of any family that could prove it needed help. In the years after the Famine, government aid to Irish peasants concentrated mainly on the 'Congested Districts'. These were areas of special need, mainly concentrated on the western fringes of Ireland that had high population levels coupled with low employment opportunities. Apart from supplying the 'sinews of emigration', through assisted passages, the British government inadvertently encouraged others to assist aspiring emigrants.⁶³

3.1.6 Famine Relief stemming from the United States

The winter of 1846 -1847 — not a normal winter, but the harshest and longest in living memory. When the real extent of the failure of the potato crop became known, there arose a deep feeling of sympathy, not only in Great Britain, but throughout a great part of the civilized world. The differences of country, race, religion, and language seemed to be forgotten in the desire to relieve suffering humanity. The government relief measures were augmented by voluntary effort, while fund-raising groups were formed in Ireland, Britain, America and elsewhere; these groups provided the resources for feeding many of the worst sufferers, especially in Connacht. Thus, while Britain's aid policy to Irish people during the famine was slow to develop, there were countries, all over the world, that are collecting money and sending it to Ireland to help providing food for the starving. Newspapers in Dublin and Cork published the names of these countries,⁶⁴ as the scale and geographical

For more details about the total amount of poor rates levied in each Union in Ireland at the late of 1846, see: P.R, Copies or extracts of Correspondence relating to the state of union workhouse in Ireland, H.C, 1847 [766][790][863], pp. 130-131.

⁶³William Pulteney Alison, Op.Cit., p.68; Robert Whyte, Op.Cit., pp.11-12; Kerry A. Graves, Op.Cit., p.p.34-35; PRONI: 19th Century Emigratio to the North Americas, The Irish poor law:

http://www.proni.gov.uk/index/exhibitions_talks_and_events/19th_century_emigration_to_the_north_america_online/helping_hands/the_irish_poor_law.htm. 01/05/ 2011, 09:10 am; Robert Whyte, Op.Cit., pp.11-12.

For more details about the number of deaths in the workhouses in Ireland, see: P.R, Copies or extracts of Correspondence relating to the state of union workhouse in Ireland, H.C,1847[766][790][863], pp.128-129.

⁶⁴See: Central Relief Committee of the Society of Friends, Op.Cit.,p.44; Gearoid O Tuathaigh, Op.Cit., pp. 184-185; Kem Knapp Sawyer, Op.Cit.,p.20;T.W Moody and F. X. Martin, Op.Cit., pp. 223-224; Timothy J. Paulson, Op.Cit., p.32; Jay P. Dolan, Op.Cit., p.68; BL, "The Cork Examiner" Vol. VI No. 862, Ref: 025CKEX18470315; BL, "The Cork Examiner" Vol. VI No. 877, Ref: 025CKEX18470419.

scope of contributions provided during the Irish Famine was unprecedented. The first international donation came from Calcutta at the end of 1845, as a result of a fund-raising initiative by members of the British army, many of whom were Irish-born. Concurrently with subscriptions raised in India, thousands of miles away in Boston a fund-raising committee was organized, after news of the potato blight had reached Boston in November 1845. At the instigation of the Boston Repeal Association, a charitable fund was established, making it the first formal fund-raising structure in the United States.⁶⁵

It can say that the United States, the chosen homeland of many thousands of Irish emigrants, outdid all other countries in generosity, where, by the time of the famine, the Irish were the largest immigrant group in America. When news of the potato blight arrived in the United States, Irish-American aid groups in the northeastern states were eager to help. So, the savings sent home by the Irish emigrants in America, to assist other members of their families, or to enable them to emigrate. A city of Philadelphia topped all other United States centers in the magnitude of its donation, together with even non-Irish people in the United States whom also helped.⁶⁶ In this context, the schoolmaster in County Sligo said: “This is indeed the most touching of all the acts of generosity that our condition has inspired among nations...”⁶⁷ The first organizers of the United States aid for Ireland, on a scale, were the Quakers, the Society of Friends, and headed by Jacob Harvey, a prominent citizen of New York, an Irishman and a friend, they became the main channel for the transmission of relief to Ireland.⁶⁸ By November 1846 tragic stories of starvation were appearing in the American press and were being reinforced by private letters sent from friends and family in Ireland. The circular sent by the Society of Friends (Quakers) in Dublin at the end of 1846 was widely publicised and used as a basis for fund-raising activities by non-Quakers throughout North America. The respect for the Quakers and their first-hand accounts from the west of Ireland led to a

⁶⁵ Kem Knapp Sawyer, *Op.Cit.*, p. 26.

⁶⁶ *Ibid*, pp.20-21; Central Relief Committee of the Society of Friends, *Op.Cit.*, pp.45-46; T.W Moody and F.X. Martin, *Op.Cit.*, p.224; Timothy J. Paulson, *Op.Cit.*, p.32; Karen Price Hossell, *Op.Cit.*, pp.22-23; Robert Whyte, *Op.Cit.*, p.11. See: P. R, Return of the freight paid by government on donations of food from America, for the relief of the poor of Ireland and Scotland, 1847-1848[93], H.C, pp.1-3; Central Relief Committee of the Society of Friends, *Distress in Ireland: Extracts from Correspondence Published by the Central Relief Committee of the Society of Friends*, No III, Dublin 1847, pp.3-8.

⁶⁷ Quoted in: Kem Knapp Sawyer, *Op.Cit.*, p.21.

⁶⁸ Central Relief Committee of the Society of Friends, *Transactions of the Central Relief Committee of the Society of Friends during the famine in Ireland in 1846 and 1847*, Appendix V, pp. 216-217; and *Distress in Ireland: Extracts from Correspondence Published by the Central Relief Committee of the Society of Friends*, pp.8-10.

new wave of sympathy.⁶⁹ Thus, Religious Society of Friends took a leading part in help the Irish, and the reports of its agents from all over Ireland did much to inform public opinion in Britain on the nature of the catastrophe. One such report was from William Edward Forster, a member of the Quaker community in England, he was acting on behalf of the recently formed Central Relief Committee of the Society of Friends, with branches in Dublin and London. A first-hand investigation of the overall situation in Ireland was conducted by Forster,⁷⁰ he observed, the children, had become “like skeletons, their features sharpened with hunger and their limbs wasted, so that little was left but bones, their hands and arms, in particular, being much emaciated, and the happy expression of infancy gone from their faces, leaving behind the anxious look of premature old age.”⁷¹

In 1846, the Quakers, held a rally in Washington, on behalf of the starving Irish, and soon people all over America were sending food packages that shippers agreed to send without charge to ports in the eastern United States, so these the packages would then be shipped to Ireland.⁷² In New York, a meeting in Tammany Hall raised 800 dollars and acted as a spur to other organisations to contribute the proceeds of social events. The seriousness of the Irish situation overcame much traditional native hostility to Ireland and to Catholics, which had been evident in 1846 when the president of an Irish Protestant organisation was jeered by his members for having given money to a Catholic fund. Instead, the main division emerged between those who believed that the Famine arose from British mismanagement and those who supported the response of the government. The Tribune newspaper actively sought to encourage the inhabitants of New York to do more for Ireland, optimistically suggesting that “the more unfeeling portion of the aristocracy of Ireland and Britain would feel rebuked and humbled by this exhibition of trans-Atlantic benevolence; they would be impelled to take effectual measures to prevent a recurrence of the occasion for it.”⁷³ This did not prove to be the case, as the Prime Minister, Lord John Russell, personally thanked the inhabitants of the United States for their generosity and allowed the removal of freight charges on charitable goods imported from the United States.⁷⁴

⁶⁹ Knapp Sawyer, Op.Cit., pp.26-27; BL, “The Cork Examiner” Vol. VI No. 877, Ref: 025CKEX18470419; Central Relief Committee of the Society of Friends, *Distress in Ireland*, pp.3-4.

⁷⁰T.W Moody and F.X. Martin, Op.Cit., p.224; Irish Potato famine:

<http://www.historyplace.com/worldhistory/famine/before.htm>. 15/ 04/2011, 08:32pm.

⁷¹Quoted in: Irish Potato famine: <http://www.historyplace.com/worldhistory/famine/before.htm>. 15/04/2011,08:32pm. For more details about William Edward Forster’s Report see: Central Relief Committee of the Society of Friends, *Transactions of the Central Relief Committee of the Society of Friends*, Appendix III, pp. 146-160; Emily Lawless, Op.Cit., pp.397-398.

⁷² Timothy J. Paulson, Op.Cit., p.32.

⁷³ Quoted in: Kem Knapp Sawyer, Op.Cit., p.27.

⁷⁴ Ibid, p. 27. See: P. R, Return of the freight paid by government on donations of food from America , for

It can say that family feeling is stronger in Ireland than anywhere else in Europe, and sending money home was already a characteristic of the Irish emigrant. In this context, Jacob Harvey wrote: "I am proud to say, that the Irish in America have always remitted more money, ten times over, than all the foreigners put together."⁷⁵ He estimated, from inquiries made by him in New York, Baltimore, and Philadelphia that the total amount sent home by Irish emigrants in America during 1847 amounted to a million dollars, or £200,000. They have since been steadily increasing from year to year. The response of the citizens of the United States to the appeal for starving Ireland was 'on a scale unparalleled in history'. A great public meeting was held, in Washington, on February 9, 1847, under chairmanship of the Vice-President of the United States, at which it was recommended that meetings should be held in every, town and village so that a large national contribution might be raised and 'forwarded with all practicable dispatch to the scene of suffering'. Meetings all over the country, from Albany to New Orleans, followed; on several occasions, one of the letters which describing the state of Skibbereen was read, and large sums collected. Mayors and Chief Collectors of Customs at the ports of New York, Boston, Philadelphia and Baltimore, with members of the Senate, volunteered to receive local contributions and forward them to Ireland, placing them 'in such hands for distribution as they, in their discretion may think advisable'. The contributions were entrusted to the Friends, who acted, among other bodies, as agents for money collected for Ireland, and moreover, the Catholic churches in New England and Brooklyn sent contributions of money for Irish relief. Again, as in the previous year, the trade of the United States was benefiting from the food shortages throughout Europe. Their generosity was also helped by the fact that America had enjoyed a bumper food harvest in 1846 and therefore had a considerable agricultural surplus, and every vessel available was engaged, most profitably, in carrying American food to Europe.⁷⁶

It is worthy of mention that a high proportion of contributions was in kind, not in cash, encouraged by an announcement made early in February 1847 that the British Government would pay the freight on all donations of food, and that on United States

the relief of the poor of Ireland and Scotland, H.C, 1847-1848 [93], pp.1-3 ; BL,"The Cork Examiner" Vol. VI No. 877, Ref: 025CKEX18470419.

⁷⁵ Cecil Woodham-Smith, *Op.Cit.*, p.241; "Boston Advertiser", January 11, 1847.

⁷⁶ "Letter from Jacob Harvey to one the Secretaries, New York, March 13, 1847" in: The Central Relief Committee of the Society of Friends, *Transactions of the Central Relief Committee of the Society of Friends*, p.p. 46-51, Appendix V, p.268; Cecil Woodham-Smith, *Op.Cit.*, pp.241-242; Kem Knapp Sawyer, *Op.Cit.*, p.27; BL, "The Cork Examiner" Vol. VI No. 862, Ref: 025CKEX18470315; "New York Sun", February 15, 18, 1847; Boston Advertiser, March 11, 1847. See: Central Relief Committee of the Society of Friends, *Distress in Ireland*, pp.14-23. For more details about the Ports of Shipment, the Ports of Delivery, the Names of the Ships, the individual Committee to whom each Parcel of Food was Consigned and an Account of the Freight on each Parcel. See: P.R, Return of the freight paid by government on donations of food from America, for the relief of the poor of Ireland and Scotland, H.C, 1847-1848 [93], pp.1-3.

roads and canals no tolls on provisions for Ireland would be charged. In many States, South Carolina, for instance, railroads volunteered to carry packages marked 'Ireland' free, while cities and towns in the United States chartered vessels to go to Ireland for contribution of relief. Two U.S. warships, the Jamestown and the Macedonian, were specially commissioned to carry the supplies to Ireland, where, the Congress demonstrated its desire to help Ireland when, responding to a request by the Boston Relief Committee, it gave permission for the sloop of war the Jamestown to be used to transport supplies to Ireland. This was a remarkable gesture in view of the fact that the United States was at war with Mexico, but the relief committees justified the action on the grounds that there was a critical shortage of seaworthy vessels to transport the relief to Ireland. The voyage of the Jamestown caused much excitement and received widespread publicity in Ireland and America. On 17 March 1847, foodstuffs began to be loaded onto the Jamestown, which left Massachusetts on 28 March. The ship was manned by volunteers who slept in hammocks on deck in order to maximise room for supplies.⁷⁷ In response to criticisms that a government warship was being used for such a purpose, the Captain of ship, Robert Bennett Forbes, responded, "It is not an everyday matter to see a nation starving."⁷⁸ The Jamestown took 15 days and 3 hours to arrive in Cork, where it was greeted by the Liverpool philanthropist, William Rathbone, who had agreed to help oversee the impartial distribution of relief. Forbes was anxious that the distribution be carried out speedily, arguing that if the relief could cross the Atlantic in 15 days, it should not take a further 15 to reach the poor.⁷⁹

Thus, the measures have been taken in the United States for the relief of the destitute Irish Poor. The letter from Viscount Palmerston, the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs to Mr. Pakenham, Her Britannic Majesty's Minister at Washington on March 31, 1847, acknowledging the donation in food and money of the Legislature and citizens of the United States of America, for the relief of the famine in Ireland. So, he said also in his letter: "I have to instruct you to take every opportunity of saying how grateful Her Majesty's Government and the British nation at large feel for this kind and honourable manifestation of sympathy by the citizens of the United States for the sufferings of the Irish people."⁸⁰ On July 29, 1847, the Treasurer of the New York Irish

⁷⁷P. R, Return of the freight paid by government on donations of food from America, for the relief of the poor of Ireland and Scotland, H.C,1847-1848[93], p.3; The Central Relief Committee of the Society of Friends, *Transactions of the Central Relief Committee of the Society of Friends*, Appendix V, pp.234-235; BL, "The Cork Examiner" Vol. VI No. 877, Ref: 025CKEX18470419; Kem Knapp Sawyer, Op.Cit., p.27; Cecil Woodham-Smith, Op.Cit., pp.242-244; Timothy J. Paulson, Op.Cit., p.32; "Boston Advertiser", February 25, 1847.

⁷⁸ Quoted in: Kem Knapp Sawyer, Op.Cit., pp. 27-28.

⁷⁹ Ibid, p.28; Timothy J. Paulson, Op.Cit., p.32; Cecil Woodham-Smith, Op.Cit., pp. 243-245. Further details are giving in: BL, "The Cork Examiner" Vol. VI No. 877, Ref: 025CKEX18470419.

⁸⁰Quoted in: P.R, Letter from the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs to Her Majesty's minister at Washington, acknowledging the donation in food and money by the citizens of the United States of America, for the relief of the famine in Ireland, H.C, 1847[852], p.3.

Relief Committee wrote to the Society of Friends in Dublin, “I think there is now an appearance of an end being brought to this glorious demonstration of a nation's sympathy for poor suffering Ireland.”⁸¹ However, the food sent from America was not nearly enough to turn the tide of disaster that was rising in Ireland, and in spite of the help, the misery grew among the Irish. So, by the time the United States sent its two warships filled with food to Ireland, many more ships were sailing in the other direction for immigration.⁸²

3.2 Sailing to America during the great famine

The failure of the potato crop was just the first of many challenges facing the Irish during the Famine era. For the Irish who were fortunate enough to avoid starvation and contagious diseases, the next obstacle was surviving the journey across the Atlantic to reach America. In the end, the Great Hunger left many Irish with only one choice: stay and starve or leave and live. Many decided to leave, and during the famine years, at least 1 million people emigrated from Ireland to the United States. So, the famine emigration, the exodus from Ireland, is historically the most important event of the famine. Few of those immigrants knew what they would do there, but they knew that at least they could find work and food.⁸³ Many would probably have agreed with one American who went to Ireland and upon his return reported to the U.S. Senate what he had seen there: “There is nothing unnatural in the desire of the unfortunate Irish to abandon their cheerless and damp cottages, and to crawl inch by inch, while they have yet a little strength, from the graves which apparently yawn for their bodies.”⁸⁴ Most of those who fled Ireland during the famine were stepping into the unknown, and the majority had never set foot outside their county—some had never even been outside their village, so leaving their homeland was a decision made out of desperation, and making that decision was just the first step in a long process.⁸⁵

Irish were still living in their home country began to receive news from their friends who had immigrated to America. They knew that in America, the Irish could worship as they pleased, also the idea of escape from British rule was also appealing to those looking for reasons to leave, but the chance for better opportunities in America made the prospect of leaving Ireland even more attractive. That is, the

⁸¹ Quoted in: Cecil Woodham-Smith, *Op.Cit.*, p.245.

⁸² Kem Knapp Sawyer, *Op.Cit.*, p.p.23,28; Timothy J. Paulson, *Op.Cit.*, pp.32-33.

⁸³ Simon J. Talty, *Op.Cit.*, p.8; Karen Price Hossell, *Op.Cit.*, p.24; Kerry A. Graves, *Op.Cit.*, p.38.

⁸⁴ Quoted in: Karen Price Hossell, *Op.Cit.*, p.24.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 24-25; Arnold Schrier, *Op.Cit.*, p.3; *American and Irish-American Views of the Famine, Narrating the Famine in Bessy Conway*; or, *The Irish Girl in America*, 1861:

<http://xroads.virginia.edu/~HYPER/SADLIER/Bessy/Bessy1.htm>. 14/08/2013, 09:15 am.

horrible conditions of the famine pushed the immigrants from Ireland, opportunity and a chance at a better life pulled them to the United States.⁸⁶ People everywhere during the famine were seized by a panic to get out of Ireland. Emigration was limited to the spring and summer, so that the effect of the partial failure of the potato crop in 1845 did little to increase the numbers that year. It was a different story in July and August of 1846, when universal failure brought the new spectacle of heavy autumn emigration. The poor cottiers went first, and then in the early weeks of 1847 the small farmers began to forsake the country in droves, as about six thousand emigrants sailed from Liverpool alone in January.⁸⁷

3.2.1 Financing the Journey

3.2.1.1 The Cost of Tickets for North America

In fact, during the Famine period, the cost of steerage passage varied from £2 to £5 according to the port of arrival. The greatest drop came from Irish ports where during the 1820s, with the British Passenger Acts favouring migration to Canada rather than to the United States, passage to Quebec could be obtained for as little as thirty shillings. In Cork in 1846, steerage passages to Canada ranged from 50 to 60 shillings and from 70 shillings to £5 to the United States. After 1847 the rates were standardised to about 65 shillings to Canadian ports and 75 shillings to New York. In Liverpool, the cost of steerage passage to New York fell from £12 in 1816 to just £3,10s. in 1846. Fares varied from day to day, sometimes changing by the hour. The variation in some fares depended on the season, where, it was sometimes more expensive in winter because conditions were more difficult than during the summer. It also depended on the comfort of the ships rather than the accommodations on board. For a Liverpool-New York crossing, berth in steerage varied between £3, 10s and £5. Sometimes one could also get a cabin. They were much more expensive (£12 to £15) mainly because they were few and far between. They were usually only available on packet ships which regularly crossed the Atlantic. These were not the accommodations used by the masses of Famine emigrants. These destitute men and women traveled in steerage, the cargo areas below decks, which were hastily converted for passenger use.

For several reasons it was generally cheaper to sail to Canada than to the United States:

⁸⁶ Timothy J. Paulson, *Op.Cit.*, p.32-33; Kem Knapp Sawyer, *Op.Cit.*, p.23.

⁸⁷ T.W Moody and F.X. Martin, *Op.Cit.*, p.225.

- Canada was a colony of England at the time, and government leaders actually encouraged settlement of this largely uninhabited region, where, they were anxious to populate British North America sometimes subsidised fares as low as £2.
- Most of the larger and better ships were sailing to the United States and most of those sailing to British North America were Canadian timber ships, they were not made for the emigration trade.
- British Passenger Acts were less strict than American ones, especially in the first years of the famine, which will be explained later.⁸⁸

Most of the Irish passengers, however, planned to cross to the United States as soon as possible to reunite with friends and relatives already living there. Migration from Ireland to the United States was not very easy; instead it was a long, expensive and risky journey, one often filled with peril. Once they had decided to leave Ireland, emigrants had to come up with a way to finance their journey, however the sources of funds for the immigrants, were many and varied. In addition to encouragement of the British government to immigration by contributing to its cost, often they had a little money saved for an emergency, some pawned whatever they had—bedding, cooking pots, utensils—and used the money to buy tickets, while others sold all of their clothing, except what they were wearing, or sold their pig or cow, if they still owned one, and some people even begged for money.⁸⁹ During the winter of 1846-47 the chief of the Board of Works in Dublin referred to the "great delusion" about emigration. It was not the poorest who were about to leave, he complained, but "all the small farmers who were hoarding all the money they can procure in order to make a stock for the spring, when they intend to bolt, leaving the landlords in the lurch."⁹⁰

In March 1847, in a frequently cited passage, the Cork Examiner noted that "the emigrants of this year are not like those of former ones; they are now actually running away from fever and disease and hunger, with money scarcely sufficient to pay passage for and find food for the voyage."⁹¹ Nonetheless, though hard data distinguishing between the socioeconomic backgrounds of those who died and those who emigrated, it seems fair to assume that the latter were mostly people of some modest means. Many contemporary accounts refer to small farmers "with interests in their farms" and "small sums of money at their disposal" leaving or planning their

⁸⁸ Denny Hatch, *Op.Cit.*, p.23; Kerry A. Graves, *Op.Cit.*, pp.38-41.

⁸⁹ Karen Price Hossell, *Op.Cit.*, p.25; Marcus Lee Hansen., *The Atlantic Migration 1607-1860: A history of the continuing settlement of the United States*, New York 1961,p. 251.

⁹⁰ Quoted in: Lord Dufferin and G. F. Boyle, *Narrative of a Journey from Oxford to Skibbereen during the Year of the Irish Famine*, Oxford 1847, pp.12-13; William Henry Smith, *A Twelve Month's Residence in Ireland during the Famine and Public Work 1846 and 1847*, London 1848, p.56; Cormac Ó Grada, *Black '47 and Beyond*, New Jersey 1999, p.109.

⁹¹ Quoted in: Cormac O Grada, *Op.Cit.*, p.107.

departure. In west Kerry, for example, farmers swapped their holdings with their more prosperous neighbors for the passage money to America,⁹² and around Skibbereen a good many were giving up their land and preparing for departure; these were the “substantial farmers, who still have a little means left”, and some of them were saving up the proceeds of selling corn and planning “on the first opportunity to escape from the famine-stricken island to the unblighted harvests of America.” From Sligo too in March 1847 there was “much emigration going on and in contemplation.”⁹³ For most of the landless poor, with no savings or liquid assets to fall back on, the cost of a passage across the Atlantic remained too high, the emigrants were therefore more likely to be from artisanal or small-farm than from purely proletarian backgrounds. An engineer on the public works claimed that as a consequence of not getting work on the public works, those with some stock or savings emigrated, so as in the words of Lamie Murray, general manager of the Provincial Bank of Ireland, “the best go, the worst remain.”⁹⁴

In the meantime much has been recently done by individual landlords both in Scotland and Ireland to assist their destitute tenants to emigrate. Emigration which is carried on by private resources is usually resorted to as an escape from, the pressure of poverty, or as a means of relieving a neighbourhood from a superabundant population, and is, therefore, conducted exclusively with a view to the interests of the emigrant himself, or of those at whose expense he leaves the country. In this case the emigrants naturally seek the country which, at the least distance and the smallest expense, offers them an advantageous home, with the prospect of fair employment. These conditions are fulfilled by the American Continent. It is worth mentioning that the average length of passage was from Liverpool to Quebec about 45 days, to New York about 35 days; from London to Quebec about 52 days, to New York about 43 days.⁹⁵

3.2.1.2 Landlord Assistance

The eviction of Irish tenants was one of the causes of migration, especially during the famine many Irish peasants did not have money to pay their rents. So, the vast majority of the tenants have made the decision to risk emigration, and once they sign a paper they will be at the mercy of the landlords and their agents.⁹⁶ As we

⁹² Ibid, p.107; “Illustrated London News”, July 6, 1850; *The Tide of Emigration to The United States and to the British Colonies*: <http://www.cornwall-online.co.uk/history/cmi/emi.htm> 07/09/2011, 02: 00 pm.

⁹³ Quoted in: Lord Dufferin and G. F. Boyle, *Op.Cit.*, pp.12-13; William Henry Smith, *Op.Cit.*, p. 56; Cormac Ó Grada, *Op.Cit.*, pp.107-109.

⁹⁴ Quoted in: Cormac Ó Grada, *Op.Cit.*, p.p. 107,109.

⁹⁵ GRC, Tenth general report of the Colonial Land and Emigration Commissioners, 1850, H.C, 1850[1204], p.5.

⁹⁶ William Forber Adams, *Op.Cit.*, p.9; Paul Bracey, “The great Irish hunger: Famine, eviction and emigration” , Study at Northampton University College, Northamptonshire, 2001, p.28; Kem Knapp Sawyer, *Op.Cit.*, p. 19; Irish Potato famine: <http://www.historyplace.com/worldhistory/famine/before.htm>. 15/04 / 2011,08:32pm.

pointed out earlier, according to the Poor Law of 1838, new taxes were imposed on landlords for poor relief. Landlords' rates were assessed according to the value of their estates and the amount levied depending on the number of paupers resident in a parish. These rates encouraged landlords to reduce their tax bill by reducing the number of poor peasants, where in order to pay lower rates many landlords cleared their estates. Some of them combined eviction with Atlantic fares, it cost a landlord half as much in one year to send his tenants abroad than to keep them at home. Sometimes this could be achieved by 'forgiving' the rent, which would then be used to buy a passage, or by the landlord buying the tenant's home, land and crop at a price that would allow the family to emigrate. That is, some smallholders barred from the public works, deemed emigration a better bargain than running down their assets in seeking to make ends meet at home. So, in many cases landlords encouraged their tenants to leave and did not press for the last years rent or even paid for the voyage. The landlord did this out of self-interest, not charity, because if they did not send the tenants away, they would become an everlasting burden upon the landlords' estate. Some landlords, wanting to clear their estates of the poor to convert the land into more commercially viable areas for cattle and sheep raising, promoted the emigration of their tenants by paying for their journey. Some landlords even organized migration in groups; they organized the journey, chartered a ship and even donated a small amount to the emigrant tenant to start a new life overseas.⁹⁷

Thus, between 1846 and 1855 about 50,000 tenants and labourers were shipped across the Atlantic, that is to say about 10% of people evicted in that period. Among these tenants, most of them only received their fares, some got provisions as well, and very few got some 'landing money'. The bulk of assisted emigration was conducted by ten major landlords who, between them, sent out some 30,000 people.⁹⁸ Most landowners who assisted tenants were large 'improving' proprietors with access to funds outside Ireland. Two of them, Lords Lansdowne and Palmerston were government ministers. All landlords said they were helping voluntary emigrants but most of the time the only choice given was eviction. The majority of landlords only saw assistance as having commercial interest, though a few really seemed to care

⁹⁷Cormac Ó Grada, *Op.Cit.*, p.109; Denny Hatch, *Op.Cit.*, p.24; Marcus Lee Hansen, *Op.Cit.*, p. 251; Jay P. Dolan, *Op.Cit.*, p.77; Kerry A. Graves, *Op.Cit.*, pp.39- 40.

⁹⁸Denny Hatch, *Op.Cit.*, p.24; PRONI: 19th Century Emigration to the North Americas, The Irish poor law: http://www.proni.gov.uk/index/exhibitions_talks_and_events/19th_century_emigration_to_the_north_america_online/helping_hands/the_irish_poor_law.htm.01/05/2011, 09:10am; The Rt. Hon. Lord Dufferin, K.P., *Op. Cit.*, pp.55-57; William Forber Adams, *Op.Cit.*, pp.216- 217; Kerry A. Graves, *Op.Cit.*, p.39. The 'top ten' were: Fitzwilliam (Co. Wicklow), Wandesford (Co. Kilkenny), Lansdowne (Co. Kerry and Queen's), Bath (Co. Monaghan), Palmerston (Co. Sligo) Wyndham (Co. Clare and Limerick), Gore Booth (Co. Sligo), Spaight (Co. Clare and Tipperary), de Vesci (Co. Queen's), Mahon (Co. Roscommon). See: PRONI: 19th Century Emigration to the North Americas, The Irish poor law: http://www.proni.gov.uk/index/exhibitions_talks_and_events/19th_century_emigration_to_the_northamerica_online/helping_hands/the_irish_poor_law.htm. 01/05/2011, 09:10 am.

about their tenants. Landlords like the Fitzwilliams on Wicklow and Colonel Wyndham in Clare involved themselves on a large scale. They purchased land in America and settled Irish tenants on it.⁹⁹

Landlord sponsored emigration—often depicted as the cruel eviction of defenceless peasants – was accepted with gratitude, with the demand for assistance usually outstripping the supply. That said, many such emigrants did arrive in America in a state of dire poverty and need. The Canadian authorities criticized the landlord Gore Booth for 'The shoveling of helpless paupers' off his estates. Lord Palmerston has sent out large numbers of tenants, so many of them came in miserable condition to New Brunswick and Canada, that the authorities there made a great outcry, and his agents were obliged to make explanations and excuses. On the 1st of November, 1847, 422 of his people arrived at St. John, but, the whole in the most abject state of poverty and destitution, with barely sufficient rags to cover their nakedness. This was confirmed by the official report at New Brunswick, that was sent to Lord Palmerston's agents, so, the Canadian authorities also described the assisted emigrants from Lord Palmerston's Sligo estates as especially impoverished and miserable.¹⁰⁰ The landlords have selected the old, the infirm, the children and the destitute for the first shiploads to Canada, but anyone who is still able to work for them, to make the land produce, they are trying to hold back.¹⁰¹ While many pauper families had been told by their landlords that once they arrived in Canada, an agent would meet them and pay out between two and five pounds depending on the size of the family, but no agents were ever found, so promises of money, food and clothing had been utterly false. Landlords knew that once the paupers arrived in Canada there was virtually no way for them to ever return to Ireland and make a claim, thus they had promised them anything just to get them out of the country.¹⁰²

Thus, Landlord assistance was very low since it represented only 4% of overseas emigration. Moreover its importance varied in the different counties. The counties of Clare, Limerick and Sligo were prominent centres of landlord assisted emigration. In these counties there were important proprietors such as the marquis of Lansdowne in Kerry, Francis Spaight in Clare and Tipperary, or Sir Robert Gore Booth in Sligo who spent £15,000 in removing 1340 tenants. On the contrary, even if Sir John Benn-Walsh and Lady Carbery spent considerable sums of money, landlord

⁹⁹ Denny Hatch, *Op.Cit.*, p.24.

¹⁰⁰ See: *Ibid*, pp.43-44; Edward E. Hale, *Letters on Irish Emigration*, Boston, 1852, p.10; PRONI: 19th Century Emigration to the North Americas, The Irish poor law, "transcript of a letter from S. Walcott to Sir R. Gore Booth, 1847":

http://www.proni.gov.uk/index/exhibitions_talks_and_events/19th_century_emigration_to_the_north_americaonline/helping_hands/the_irish_poor_law.htm. 01/05/2011, 09:10 am.

¹⁰¹ Kem Knapp Sawyer, *Op.Cit.*, p.20.

¹⁰² Irish Potato famine: <http://www.historyplace.com/worldhistory/famine/before.htm>. 15/04/2011, 08:32pm.

assistance was very uncommon in County Cork. Francis Spaight, a Limerick merchant and also a British magistrate who had himself transported many of his own tenants in 1847, said: "I found so great an advantage of getting rid of the pauper population upon my own property that I made every possible exertion to remove them; they were a dead weight and prevented any improvement upon the land they occupied."¹⁰³ Almost every landlord agreed with F. Spaight on the fact that reducing the population was the precondition for agricultural improvement. However, most of them looked to the state to help remove the people.

3.2.1.3 Official Attitudes in Britain towards State-Assisted Emigration:

If landlords believed it was the role of the state to sponsor emigration, most ministers thought it was the landlords' responsibility to assist emigration. Nevertheless, plans for state assistance fluctuated. British radicals argued that Ireland was not overpopulated if its population was working. At the same time the British colonies petitioned the government to limit the flood of Irish paupers who were thought to be bringing disease with them. In 1848 Russell, the Prime Minister, had become convinced that a project was necessary and favoured linking emigration aid to employment on a Halifax-Quebec railway. His plan was smothered.¹⁰⁴

There were the number of persons who have emigrated at the expense of the different Poor-Law Union in Ireland in the years 1844-1846.¹⁰⁵ So, state-assisted emigration was made possible thanks to the amendments to the Irish Poor Law in 1847 and 1849. It allowed workhouse guardians to finance the emigration of pauper inmates. Little money was available until 1849 but in the early 1850s some 5,000 Irish were annually sent to North America. So this form of state assistance appeared late and was very limited, even more limited than landlord assistance.¹⁰⁶

It seems attitude of Government clear from a letter written on the 29th January 1847 by Earl Grey and sent to Lord Elgin, contained his explanation of points raised by Government, as justification for not intervening with any assistance. Among those points, he introduced the notion that emigrants conveyed by the Government would become dependant on the British Government whereas under the system of spontaneous emigration, emigrants were well aware that they had to be completely

¹⁰³ Quoted in: Denny Hatch, *Op.Cit.*, p.24.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid*, p.24.

¹⁰⁵ Further details are giving in: P.R, Summary of a return of the number of persons who have emigrated at the expense of the different Poor-Law Union in Ireland, in the years 1844, 1845, and 1846, 1847, H.C, [255], p.1; A.C. Buchanan to Earl of Elgin, 20 December 1848, P.R, Papers Relative to Emigration to the British Provinces in North America 1848, H.C, 1849[1025], p.32.

¹⁰⁶ Denny Hatch, *Op.Cit.*, pp.24-25.

reliant on themselves. Lord Grey estimated that "a charge of two millions or more might be thrown upon the Treasury" and that intrusion could mean that "the system of voluntary emigration, which is now working so satisfactorily, and upon so large a scale, would be entirely deranged", to a point where damage caused would be irreparable. The introduction of free passage could also alter greatly the demographic and social character of emigrants. Those who were less industrious and even infirm would be able to emigrate and could therefore become a burden on the receiving country and require even more Government aid. Lord Grey provided further justification and evidence in support of the Government's decision in his memoirs, published in 1853. He suggested that even if the Government decided to remove the distressed Irish it would not have been possible to do so as there were not enough officers or an organisation in place which could have carried out the type of selection process necessary. Emigration was occurring at a scale which was not conceivable by the Government. His final point was that if the Government had set up a program of organised emigration, the United States would have passed a law to prevent a foreign Government from casting the destitute upon their shores.¹⁰⁷

3.2.1.4 Prepaid Tickets and Remittances

During the Famine more emigrants than ever needed assistance in order to be able to cross the Atlantic. The help from both landlords and the State was very limited. Sometimes American grain ships carried away small groups of people who begged to be rescued from isolated districts. American employers occasionally paid the passages of skilled workers whose services they were anxious to secure. There were also various 'Emigrant Societies' such as The Irish Emigrant Society of New York which appealed to public benevolence for the means to finance their members' departure. The philanthropist Vere Foster took a special interest in the plight of the Irish emigrants. In addition to his guide on emigration, he also helped several Irish reach America by paying their fares. All these forms of assistance only concerned a very small number of emigrants. In fact, the greatest help came from relatives at home and abroad.¹⁰⁸

Therefore, another important source for financing the Irish emigrants was money sent from relatives or friends who were already in the United States, often, this money was meant as a relief in Ireland, but it was spent on a passage. It is difficult to realise to the mind the magnitude of the pecuniary sacrifices made by the Irish in

¹⁰⁷ Further details are given in: GRC, Tenth general report of the Colonial Land and Emigration Commissioners, 1850, H.C, 1850[1204], pp.7-8; Denny Hatch, *Op.Cit.*, pp.25-26.

¹⁰⁸ Denny Hatch, *Op.Cit.*, pp.26-27.

America, either to bring out their relatives to their adopted country, or to relieve the necessities and improve the circumstances of those who could not leave or who desired to remain in the old country. Usually, one of the family members goes first and, after acquiring some money, sends it home to finance the journey of another member of the family; eventually the entire family emigrates—as we mentioned earlier— this was known as chain migration. Such assisted emigration was common among the Irish long before the famine, but it increased substantially as the Great Hunger worsened. The correspondence from the United States carries a great deal of detailed information, and at the same time it is the principal means of supply for the expenses of the voyage. An emigrant who has succeeded there, sends out for his friends, and sends money enough to bring them, or, which amounts to the same thing, he buys there passage tickets which he sends to them. The system of "one-bringing-another" had become firmly rooted and the Irishman who left home often went to join his kith and kin. The development of prepaid tickets made it easier for the Irish migrants to bring relatives over after them, this is called chain migration, and the Irish migrants were the first large group that did this.¹⁰⁹

Since the late 1820s many of those engaged in the emigrant trade had personal or business connections and were able to establish American agencies for the sale of prepaid tickets. For example, James Tapscott was selling such tickets in New York to emigrants who had been in America long enough to have saved some money. The New York Tapscott sent the money to the Liverpool Tapscott who brought the new emigrants over on one of his ships. Harden and Co. also had offices in New York, Boston and Philadelphia. The arrival of tickets and money from America was an additional stimulus to emigration and they facilitated mass departures.¹¹⁰ In 1848, family or friends sent as much as half a million pounds to those who wanted to follow them out of Ireland, and by 1850 the amount of money lent had doubled. It is impossible to tell the amount of such remittances with precision, however, the Last Report of the British Land and Emigration Commissioners, shows, that they had ascertained, that in 1850, as large an amount as £957,008 had been remitted, thus in small sums, a very considerable amount must have escaped their observation.¹¹¹ From 1848 to 1854 about £7.5 million were

¹⁰⁹GRC, Seventeenth general of the Emigration Commissioners, H.C,1857 Session 2 [2249], pp.5-6; GRC, Eighteenth general report of the Emigration Commissioners1858, H.C, 1857-1858 [2395], pp.6-7; GRC, Sixteenth general report of the Emigration Commissioners, H.C, 1856 [2089], pp.7-8; Jay P. Dolan, *Op. Cit.*, p. 77; Marcus Lee Hansen, *Op.Cit.*, p.251; Edward E. Hale, *Op.Cit.*, p.6; Arnold Schrier, *Op.Cit.*, pp.16-17; Roger Daniels, *Op.Cit.*, p.130; John Francis Maguire, *Op.Cit.*, pp.313-317; Kerry A. Graves, *Op.Cit.*, p.39; BL, "The Cork Examiner" Vol. VI No. 870, Ref: 025CKEX18470402; "Cork Examiner", June 22, 1871; "Illustrated London News", July 6, 1850; The Tide of Emigration to The United States and to the British Colonies:<http://www.cornwall-online.co.uk/history/cmi/emi.htm>.07/09/2011,02:00pm.

¹¹⁰Denny Hatch, *Op.Cit.*, pp.27.

¹¹¹GRC, Seventeenth general of the Emigration Commissioners, H.C,1857 Session 2 [2249], pp.5-6; GRC, Eighteenth general report of the Emigration Commissioners1858, H.C,1857-1858 [2395], p.7; GRC, Sixteenth general report of the Emigration Commissioners, H.C, 1856 [2089], p.8; Jay P. Dolan, *Op.Cit.*, p.77;

brought from North America. In the 1820s the Irish in America were already remitting £60,000 annually and between 1850-1855 they remitted an annual average of £1.2 million. These enormous amounts of money sent from America to Ireland largely made to reunite families in the New World shows the strength of relationships amongst Irish families at that time. These remittances financed the great majority of departures, especially in the early 1850s. The annual sum of remittances in the 1840s was enough to pay for the annual emigration and later the sums were twice the amount required. This clearly shows the significance of the process of sending funds back to Ireland which engendered chain migration. On the other hand, the importance of this business to ships owners will be seen readily. Ships of large accommodations for freighting, which carry out bulky raw produce, and bring back the more condensed manufactures of England, have just the room to spare, which is made into accommodations for these passengers. In Mr. Robert B. Minturn's testimony before the "Lords' Committee" June 20, 1848, he says that the amounts paid for the passage of emigrants go very far towards paying the expense of voyages of ships from America to Europe and back.¹¹²

3.2.2 Embarkation

3.2.2.1 Leaving Home

By 1840, just a few years before the Potato Famine struck, more than one million Irish were living abroad. Hundreds of thousands had settled in Great Britain, Europe, and Canada, and hundreds of thousands of Irish were already living in the United States. Nearly every family still in Ireland had family members or friends who had immigrated to another country. Letters from foreign countries not only told of the opportunities awaiting those who left Ireland, but helped many Irish men and women grow accustomed to the idea of living away from their beloved homeland. For the Irish people, who often had very limited education and life experience outside their small towns and villages, these letters provided a broader world view—a view that

Marcus Lee Hansen, *Op.Cit.*, p.251; Edward E. Hale, *Op.Cit.*, pp.6-7; BL, "The Cork Examiner" Vol. VI No. 870, Ref: 025CKEX18470402; "Cork Examiner", June 22, 1871; "Illustrated London News", July 6, 1850; *The Tide of Emigration to The United States and to the British Colonies*: <http://www.cornwall-online.co.uk/history/cmi/emi.htm>. 07/09/2011, 02:00pm.

For more details about Return of Amounts remitted in 1848 by persons in British North America and the United States to their Relations in Great Britain see: Copy of a letter from the Colonial Land and Emigration Commissioners to Herman Merivale, Esq., P.R, Copies or extracts of any despatches relative to emigration to the North American and Australian colonies; in continuation of the papers presented to this House in August 1848 and February 1849, since those moved for on the 15th day of May last. (Part II.—North American colonies), H.C, 1849[593][593-II], pp.358-359.

¹¹²Denny Hatch, *Op.Cit.*, pp.27; Edward E. Hale, *Op.Cit.*, p.7. Further details are giving in: John Francis Maguire, *Op.Cit.*, pp.313-322.

didn't seem too frightening. The notion of packing a few belongings and walking out the door for the last time did not seem quite as frightening when they knew that so many of their neighbors had already done so successfully. They also know there would be familiar faces to meet them on their arrival.¹¹³

However, immigration to America was not a joyful event; it was referred to as the American wake. The night before the emigrants were to leave, their friends and neighbors would gather to celebrate a ritual known as the American wake —what amounted to a funeral wake for those going to America. Such a celebration was appropriate since their departure was like a death, in that many would never see their loved ones again. Those who pursued this path did so only because they knew their future in Ireland would only be more poverty, disease, and English oppression, so America became their dream. Early immigrant letters described it as a land of abundance and urged others to follow them through the "Golden Door." The image of America's riches had been fostered by letters from previous Irish immigrants. When combined with the notion of the United States being the "home of liberty," this provided strong incentive to attempt the Atlantic passage. These letters were read at social events encouraging the young to join them in this wonderful new country. The American wake was an Irish custom associated with the Irish-speaking regions of western Ireland, which was practiced as early as 1830, but perhaps was not widespread at that time, however by the late 19th century, it had become common.¹¹⁴ However, Talty explained that: "After attending an Irish farewell ceremony called an "American wake," many of these evicted Irish desperately sought survival rather than success when embarking for America on a "coffin ship."¹¹⁵ It was a true wake, a native of county Mayo recalled "though not of a dead person, but a living one who next day would be sailing for the promised land." Like the Irish wake of the dead, this ritual was filled with both sadness and gaiety, but sadness was the prevailing emotion, for there was little chance that the emigrant would ever again return home, as one person put it, "It was as if you were going out to be buried." In fact, traditional Irish countrymen "made very little difference between going to America and going to the grave."¹¹⁶

¹¹³ Kerry A. Graves, *Op.Cit.*, pp.36-37.

¹¹⁴ P. Dolan, *Op.Cit.*, p.76; Karen Price Hossell, *Op.Cit.*, p.25; Kerby A. Miller and Patricia Mulholland Miller, *Op.Cit.*, p.2; *Irish Immigrants in America during the 19th Century*: <http://www.kinsella.org/history/histira.htm>. 14/05/2013, 04:35pm.

¹¹⁵ Quoted in: Sinon J. Talty *Op.Cit.*, p.7. Further details are given in: Kirby Miller, *Op.Cit.*, p.298.

¹¹⁶ Quoted in: Kerby A. Miller, *Op.Cit.*, p.558; P. Dolan, *Op.Cit.*, p.76. See: Kerry A. Graves, *Op.Cit.*, p.41; *American and Irish-American Views of the Famine, Narrating the Famine in Bessy Conway; or, The Irish Girl in America, 1861*: <http://xroads.virginia.edu/~HYPER/SADLIER/Bessy/Bessy1.htm>. 14/08/2013, 09:15 am.

During the famine, the Catholics emigrants ought to receive worthily the sacraments of the church before leaving home. All Catholics know that this is a duty incumbent upon them in all undertakings involving danger, and also in entering upon a new condition of life. Thus received most emigrants the priest's blessing. Many cried but they left confidently, believing in the blessing they had received. They departed with various amounts of money, or tickets sometimes. Emigrants, especially in the first years of the Famine, were rushing to the ports. And because of the panic caused by the Famine, traditions such as the 'emigrant wake' were abandoned.¹¹⁷

The emigrants piled their meager belongings into handcarts or stuffed them into bags and headed for a seaport. To reach the port many families walked after they loaded belongings on to the handcart along with the youngest children while the other members of the family walked alongside. The journey was more difficult for the poor living far from a port whereas wealthy emigrants used a cart or travelled by train. To get as far as an Irish port, emigrants had to survive. The poorest had to avoid death from starvation and most emigrants had to avoid death from diseases which were spreading dramatically. Leaving home was demoralising so the obstacle was actually also of a psychological kind.¹¹⁸

Thus, enormous numbers of Irish arrived at the United States during this period, where, an estimated half-million Irish many of them were evicted from their cottages, but the poorest of the poor never made it to North America. They fled Irish estates out of fear of imprisonment then begged all the way to Dublin or other seaports on the East Coast of Ireland. Almost every port in Ireland witnessed the sad departures of the Famine ships. Thousands of Famine emigrants sailed from practically every port, Dublin, Donegal, Sligo, Galway, Limerick, Waterford, Wexford, New Ross, Belfast, Londonderry, Cork, Tralee, Drogheda, Newry, Kilrush, Westport, Youghal, directly to North America. The Ulster ports of Newry, Belfast and Londonderry enjoyed a sizeable share of the trade. Londonderry, the most northerly port in Ireland, had built up a successful trade with the smaller American ports as well as with Canadian ports.¹¹⁹ However, during the famine most emigrants sailed from Dublin or Queenstown, a port south of Cork. The next stop in the journey was Liverpool, the major port of embarkation in the prefamine period and remaining so

¹¹⁷ Rev. Stephen Byrne, Op.Cit., p.28; Denny Hatch, Op.Cit., p.27.

¹¹⁸ Karen Price Hossell, Op.Cit., p.25; Denny Hatch, Op.Cit., p.27; Kerry A. Graves, Op.Cit., p.41

¹¹⁹ Karen Price Hossell, Op.Cit., p.26; T.W. Moody and F.X. Martin, Op.Cit., p.225; Denny Hatch, Op.Cit., p.28; Cecil Woodham-Smith, Op.Cit., p.206; Kerry A. Graves, Op.Cit., p.41; BL, "The Cork Examiner" Vol. VI No. 862, Ref: 025CKEX 18470315; "The Cork Examiner" Vol. VI No. 904, Ref: BL/ 025 CKEX 18470621; Kerby A. Miller and Patricia Mulholland Miller, Op.Cit.,7; Irish Potato famine: <http://www.historyplace.com/worldhistory/famine/before.htm>. 15/04 /2011, 08:32pm.

through the famine, where, the emigrants from this port, as in former years, prove to be nearly altogether Irish.¹²⁰

3.2.2.2 Sailing from Liverpool

Throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Irish emigration to Britain remained steady. Fares for the short passages to Liverpool, Glasgow, and Cardiff were within the means of even the poorest tenant farmers and agricultural laborers. Furthermore, going to Britain involved less of a commitment to permanent exile than did the long, transatlantic voyages to Quebec, Boston, New York, or New Orleans. Many refugees in Britain were comforted by the knowledge that their homeland was just across the Irish Sea, within easy reach, but still, America represented extensive opportunities and a cleaner break with an oppressive past. Thus, before and during the famine, with their money or prepaid tickets in hand, most Irish who wanted to emigrate walked from their homes to the nearest Irish seaports and then crossed the Irish Sea on the decks of crowded cattle boats to Liverpool. In Liverpool, the emigrants were joined by thousands of passengers who could not find a place on a ship bound from Ireland and had crossed the Irish Sea to embark for America. This additional leg in their journey delayed their departure, sometimes for weeks, and added to their cost of travel. The smaller boats crossing between Dublin and Liverpool charged passengers about five shillings for a space on deck. The emigrant was forced to stand and be exposed to the weather, crowded against his fellow passengers throughout the trip.¹²¹

All the ports in the British Isles were thronging with Irish emigrants desperate for a passage, though the passenger trade was in fact concentrated in the biggest British ports, Glasgow, London, and Liverpool. So if thousands of Irish emigrants sailed to North America directly from Irish ports, many more left from British ports and mostly from Liverpool, the main port of departure for Irish emigrants for many reasons, as already mentioned in the preceding chapter.¹²² Therefore, emigrants could reach Liverpool from many different Irish ports whether from smaller ports like the

¹²⁰P.R, Copies or extracts of any despatches relative to emigration to the North American and Australian colonies, in continuation of the papers presented to House of commons in August 1848 and February 1849, H.C,1849[1025], pp.29-30; Jay P. Dolan, Op.Cit., pp.76-77; Karen Price Hossell, Op.Cit., p.26; T.W Moody and F.X. Martin, Op.Cit., p.225; Kerry A. Graves, Op.Cit., p.42.

¹²¹ Lawrence J. McCaffrey, *The Irish Diaspora in America*, p.61; P.R, E.S.I., Return of the number of Irish poor brought over monthly to the ports of Liverpool, Glasgow, Bristol, Swansea, Neath, Cardiff, and Newport, from the coast of Ireland, in each of the last five years 1854, H.C, 1854[300], pp1-5; Kerry A. Graves, Op.Cit., pp.41-42.

¹²²For more details about the reasons that make Liverpool, the main port of departure for Irish migrants see: chapter two, p.35-37.

port of Drogheda or from the main and the largest ports, mostly Cork and Dublin. They provided a greater regularity of channel crossings, where, from Cork it took from twenty-two to thirty-six hours, according to the weather, and usually cost only 10 shillings, while from Dublin passage was much shorter, twelve to fourteen hours. Approximately three-quarters of the emigrants went to Dublin, where they boarded ships and sailed across the Irish Sea to Liverpool, Glasgow, and South Wales, while the remaining one-quarter sailed from the Irish ports of Galway, Limerick, or Cork. Often, family members accompanied emigrants to the docks and watched as they boarded ships and sailed away. Those sailing to Liverpool took whatever transportation across the sea they could find, and many crossed on steamers, but emigrants also sailed away on fishing boats and barges, sometimes sharing space with food and livestock being exported to England. Cork and Limerick, among the Irish ports, and Liverpool are distinguished for the large mortality among their emigrants, but the port of Galway shows the largest percentage of deaths, although, from the limited number of emigrants embarked there.¹²³

The majority of those who fled to Great Britain were the poorest Irish. They could not get enough food to survive in their home region and did not have enough money to go to North America. So they crossed the sea in cattle boats and coal barges. Some re-emigrated to America they had collected enough money, weeks or months after their arrival. Others found work in British factories and construction sites but many died of fever in the slums of Liverpool, Glasgow and also London. They were emigrants of despair, the unskilled, poor and without property who inhabited the slums and scrublands of cities and countryside. They were distinguished from the “emigrants of hope” who could afford the fare to America. In fact, it was quite easy to make the difference between the various categories on their arrival at the Clarence Dock in Liverpool (where they all landed). Emigrants possessed luggage and personal belongings, paupers had almost nothing but the rags on their backs, while businessmen and civil servants were crossing in the few cabins available. On 21 April 1849, Edward Rushton, the stipendiary magistrate in Liverpool, wrote to the Home Secretary and explained the desperate situation resulting from Irish immigration, he stated that between the thirteenth of January and the thirteenth of December 1847, 296,231 persons landed in this port from Ireland; that of this vast number, about 130,000 emigrated to the United States, that some 50,000 of them were on business, and the remainder were paupers. For 1848 the official total of arrivals is not known, however, during 1848 an estimate was made from weekly reports in the *Manchester Guardian*. According to this estimate more than 250,000 Irish landed in Liverpool that year, about

¹²³Denny Hatch, *Op.Cit.*, pp.28-30; Karen Price Hossell, *Op.Cit.*, p.26. For more details see: P.R, Copies or extracts of any despatches relative to emigration to the North American and Australian colonies, in continuation of the papers presented to House of commons in August 1848 and February 1849, H.C, 1849 [1025],p.30.

94,000 of them were paupers. It is easier for the years 1848 to 1853 since there are official police statistics which were given to the 1854 Select Committee on Poor Removal.¹²⁴

The crossing was a traumatic experience for passengers. There was little cabin accommodation, and most ships were carrying animals below deck and they were usually taken better care of. Moreover, few ships had steerage accommodation so most passengers had no shelter. They were then exposed to the weather and often arrived exhausted, scarcely able to walk. Some of them even died on the way. But the fact that they stayed on deck throughout the voyage was not the only reason why they usually arrived in such a poor physical state. Most of the time steamers were overcrowded and there were no provisions and it was too crowded to get a mere drink of warm water anyway. Thus, having escaped the Famine in Ireland, weakened by a difficult crossing to England, another dreadful experience awaited those disoriented Irish arriving in Liverpool in order to get passage to America. Indeed the arrival in Liverpool did not guarantee the next leg of the journey, that is to say certify their ability to get on board a ship for America, The difficulties of the journey began before the emigrant was able to leave Liverpool. Passengers were not allowed to board the ships until the last minute and therefore had to wait for their ships' departure along the docks, thus the emigrant was 'plundered' at every stage and every step from the very moment he landed. Before getting on board emigrants had to deal with ship-brokers, runners, boarding-house keepers who overcharged them, keepers of spirit vaults and provision stores who sold them bad food and drink at high prices.¹²⁵

3.2.2.2.1 Runners

The inquiries which have been instituted both in New York and Canada, disclosed a system of fraud, on the part of the persons called "runners" who infested New York and Liverpool. Because the crossing was so difficult, emigrants were relieved to disembark on the docks of Liverpool, but their joy at leaving the ship was often short-lived; now they had to face even more, peril, usually of the human variety. Those who met the bedraggled emigrants often were looking for easy marks, or

¹²⁴P.R, Return of the number of Irish poor who have received relief out of the poor rates; and of the money value of such relief, H.C,1847- 1848[369], p.1; Copy of, or extracts from, any correspondence addressed to the Secretary of State for the Home Department, relative to the recent immigration of destitute Irish into Liverpool, H.C,1847[193], pp.1-16; Frank Neal, Op.Cit., pp.81-82; Denny Hatch, Op.Cit., pp.30-31;Graham Davis, "Little Irelands" in Roger Swift and Sheridan Gilley,*The Irish in Britain, 1815-1939*, London 1989, pp.105-106; Jay P. Dolan, Op.Cit., pp.76-77; T.W Moody and F.X. Martin, Op.Cit., p.225; Tom Inglis, Op.Cit., p.89; Irish Potato famine:

<http://www.historyplace.com/worldhistory/famine/before.htm>. 15/04/ 2011, 08:32pm.

¹²⁵Further details are giving in: Denny Hatch, Op.Cit., pp.31-32; Kerry A. Graves, Op.Cit., pp.42-43.

people they could swindle, however few emigrants, especially during the first year of the famine emigration, were prepared to deal with the con men who awaited them. Thus, the first group of tricksters that emigrants would encounter were called runners, whom would race to the docks as soon as they spotted a ship arriving from Ireland. Emigrants do not themselves usually make their bargains with the masters or owners of ships, but are brought together and put on board by some "passenger broker" with whom they have contracted, and who furnishes their stores, and as we previously mentioned, instances of fraud and cruelty take place on the part of these men sometimes or by their runners.¹²⁶

It appeared by the evidence given before the Committee of the House of Commons last session, that although the malpractices of the "runners" at Liverpool are notorious and indisputable, they are so powerful, and act so much in concert, that all attempts to control them have hitherto been ineffectual. As passengers left the ship, sometimes struggling to carry their bags, many emigrants gladly handed over their bags, grateful for assistance, but true to their name, some runners took off running, carrying with them everything the emigrants owned. Some runners did not steal bags, instead, they led the emigrants to a boardinghouse that they promised had excellent accommodations at good prices, so these runners would quickly grab the emigrant's bags and walk away from the docks, leaving the emigrant with no choice but to follow. As we pointed out in the preceding chapter, the runners often worked in concert with dishonest boardinghouse keepers and would direct the emigrants through the strange city into a building where rooms were rented, but once the emigrants were settled, the landlord would appear and demand a large amount of money for rent, and the travelers, bewildered, would hand over the money. Most emigrants planned to stay in Liverpool for a few days and had saved up what they thought would be enough money for rent, but some though, were conned into handing over all of their money to the landlord. These unfortunate victims were forced to find low-paying jobs or even beg on the streets to make enough money to buy tickets for the voyage across the Atlantic—about ten dollars at the time. Caught up in the never-ending need to pay an unscrupulous landlord, some even ended up staying in England permanently living in poverty in Liverpool or eventually; migrating to some other English city. Moreover, unprotected young women, after having been thus detained and robbed, are often thrust on the streets, and forced to seek a living by prostitution.¹²⁷

¹²⁶GRC, Twelfth general report of the Colonial Land and Emigration Commissioners, 1852, H.C, 1852 [1499], p.11; Karen Price Hossell, *Op.Cit.*, p.27; Edward E. Hale, *Op.Cit.*, p.8; Denny Hatch, *Op.Cit.*, p.32; Lawrence J. McCaffrey, *Textures of Irish America*, p.13.

¹²⁷ GRC, Twelfth general report of the Colonial Land and Emigration Commissioners, 1852, H.C, 1852[1499], p.11; Karen Price Hossell, *Op.Cit.*, pp.27-28; Edward E. Hale, *Op.Cit.*, p.8; Denny Hatch, *Op.Cit.*, p.32.

The cheap lodging houses were also used by scores of Irish waiting to embark on ships heading for North America. The conditions at the boardinghouses in Liverpool were often squalid at best, and many emigrants were forced to share a small room with as many as twenty other strangers. Some rooms were in basements where almost no light penetrated, and some of them were filled with a foot or two of water all the time. The migrants endured the foul living conditions, looking forward to the day when their ship would finally sail. Many of these emigrants contracted typhus in the rundown, lice-infested lodging houses, then boarded ships, only to spend weeks suffering from burning fever out at sea. However, many ships did not sail as scheduled. Although ticket agents promised that a ship would sail on a certain date, the fact was that many sailed days, even weeks, later than advertised, as ship owners and their agents tried to fill the ship with as many passengers as possible. As emigrants waited out the days in overcrowded boardinghouses, they would be forced to make their meager stores of food last for days longer than anticipated, eating only one small meal a day. Some, unsure of what would be provided aboard ship, had purchased food to take with them on the voyage but had to eat it while they waited. When the desperation and hunger that forced the emigrants to leave Ireland in the first place followed them to Liverpool, some emigrants slipped into depression or other forms of mental illness.¹²⁸

Runners also persuaded the emigrants to change their English sovereigns into dollars at a very low rate, thus giving them a very bad deal. They were in league with provision merchants who allowed them 15% on anything bought by an emigrant they dragged in. They also got a percentage from clothes merchants. Emigrants were sold bad quality products and unnecessary objects. Runners often ran spirit vaults or food shops as well but they also made a lot of money with passenger brokers who were forced to give runners a 7.5% commission for each passenger who came along with them, this percentage is of course recharged on the emigrant; and thus the general expense of passage is increased to the poorest and most destitute class.¹²⁹ Some runners did even more than take emigrants to brokers. They appointed themselves sub-brokers, sold passages for up to £5, bought real tickets to brokers at the usual £3 10s and kept the difference. Ticket brokers engaged in deceptions beyond concealing the fact that ships would often not sail as advertised. The brokers wanted to sell as many tickets as they could because they received a commission on every ticket they sold, so they routinely sold tickets to far more people than the ship could hold. Fortunately, when it came time to board the ship, most captains paid little attention to

¹²⁸ Karen Price Hossell, *Op.Cit.*, p.28; Denny Hatch, *Op.Cit.*, pp.33-34; Lawrence J. McCaffrey, *Textures of Irish America*, p.13; Kerry A. Graves, *Op.Cit.*, pp.42-44; Irish potato famine, before famine: <http://www.historyplace.com/worldhistory/famine/before.htm>. 15/04/2011,08:32pm.

¹²⁹ GRC, Twelfth general report of the Colonial Land and Emigration Commissioners, 1852, H.C, 1852[1499], p.11; Denny Hatch, *Op.Cit.*, p.32.

the number of passengers, so often all of the passengers made the voyage, in spite of the overbooking. Brokers sometimes even sold worthless tickets they printed themselves, keeping the entire fare, and the migrants who presented these tickets at the dock were denied passage and were then stuck in Liverpool, usually penniless. Other than the worthless ticket, they had no receipt or contract from the broker and had no choice but to remain in England while they tried to earn money to buy a legitimate ticket. So, it was in the interest of the emigrants and of the brokers that the system of plunder by runners should be stopped. There were suggestions that runners should be licensed, made to wear badges, and give money guarantees for good conduct. The system was tried but never worked.¹³⁰

3.2.2.2 Boarding the Ship

In an effort to prevent epidemics at sea, those emigrants who had valid tickets were given a cursory medical inspection before they could board the ship. Although emigrants were supposed to undergo a health inspection before being allowed on board a ship, many did not because of the lack of available medical inspectors. The inspections that were carried out were brief, where, the doctors would simply ask the passengers to stick out their tongues, and only the most obviously ill emigrants were prevented from boarding as happened in November 1847 when many of the passengers were already ill with typhus as they boarded the ships, examinations were impossible to do for so many people. But it seems that they usually rejected no one for the trip, even those seemingly on the verge of death.¹³¹ In this context, one passenger, named Robert Whyte, made the voyage in 1847 and wrote in his diary about his experiences, describing the appearance of the immigrants on board the ship this way: “A more motley crowd I never beheld; of all ages, from the infant to the feeble grandsire and withered crone... Many of them appeared to me to be quite unfit to undergo the hardship of a long voyage, but they were inspected and passed by a doctor, although the captain protested against taking some of them. One old man was so infirm that he seemed to me to be in the last stage of consumption.”¹³²

Once the emigrants had managed to get on board the ships, the following stage in the emigration process was the Atlantic crossing. And as we previously

¹³⁰ Denny Hatch, *Op.Cit.*, p.33; Karen Price Hossell, *Op.Cit.*, pp. 28-29.

¹³¹ William Henry Smith, *An Emigrants Narrative or A Voice from the Steerage*, New York 1850, p. 27; Robert Whyte, *The ocean plague, or, A voyage to Quebec in an Irish emigrant vessel: embracing a quarantine at Grosse Isle in 1847: with notes illustrative of the ship-pestilence of that fatal year*, Boston 1848, pp.75-76; Karen Price Hossell, *Op.Cit.*, pp.29-30; Kerry A. Graves, *Op.Cit.*, p.44; Irish potato famine: <http://www.historyplace.com/worldhistory/famine/before.htm>. 15/04/2011, 08:32 pm.

¹³² Quoted in: Robert Whyte, *Op.Cit.*, pp.25; Robert Whyte, *Robert Whyte's 1847 Famine Ship Diary: The Journey of an Irish Coffin Ship*, Cork 1994, p.18; Karen Price Hossell, *Op.Cit.*, p.30.

mentioned, the crossing was not an easy voyage, it was long, taking between one and three months, and the sea was a stranger to most emigrants. Unfortunately, the greatest majority of Irish migrants could only afford steerage passages in between decks. As was previously shown, the cost of a ticket for passage in steerage was low, but the risks were great. Indeed, during all the length of the crossing, Irish emigrants had to endure conditions which did not protect them from horror or death. Sadly, aboard many ships the risks were so great that there were numerous deaths. These ships became known as the infamous 'coffin ships'.¹³³ British ships were not required to carry doctors, and anyone that died during the sea voyage was simply dumped overboard, and as the fever was raging through the whole ship, the deaths increased from one to four a day. Mr. Thompson, the captain, and Mr. Connor, first mate, from the commencement, did all they could to alleviate the sufferings of the sick, where, they had no doctor on board. The captain told Mr. Connor, that half of his sailors were sick with the ship fever, and that more than half of his passengers had died by that disease. The Atlantic crossing was therefore a major if not the greatest obstacle, another difficulty which emigrants had to overcome before reaching North America.¹³⁴

Thus, boarding the ship could also be a dangerous undertaking, as the process was far from orderly and organized; passenger were expected to board as quickly as possible, and panic often ensued when individuals were separated from families or when people became fearful that the ship would fill before they were aboard. The narrow entrance to the gangway would be mobbed, so some passengers would try to scale the sides of the ship as friends or family members already on board reached over the rail to help them. Dr. J. J. Lancaster, one of the medical inspectors at Liverpool, observed, "Sometimes the passengers have to watch their opportunity, and when the ship gets near the entrance to the dock you may see men, women, and children clambering up the sides of the ship." Sometimes the people climbing the sides of the ship fell into the water and drowned. Wealthy philanthropist Vere Foster wrote of the embarkation process, "There is no regularity or decency observed with regard to taking the passengers on board the ship; men and women were pulled in any side or end foremost, like so many bundles."¹³⁵

¹³³ Karen Price Hossell, *Op.Cit.*, pp.31; Robert Whyte, *Op.Cit.*, pp.14-15; Denny Hatch, *Op.Cit.*, p.39; The Rev. Stephen Byrne, *Op.Cit.*, p.20.

¹³⁴See: Irish potato famine: <http://www.historyplace.com/worldhistory/famine/before.htm>, 15/04/2011, 08:32 pm; William Smith, *An Emigrants Narrative or A voice From the Steerage*, pp.12-16; Denny Hatch, *Op.Cit.*, p.39.

¹³⁵Quoted in: Karen Price Hossell, *Op.Cit.*, pp.30-31.

3.2.2.2.3 Conditions on Board

British shipping laws were flexible, letting ships of every shape and size sailed from Liverpool and other ports crammed full of people up to double each ship's capacity. Often the captains of the ships were dishonest or simply inexperienced. The more passengers they could carry the more money the shipping companies would make, the captains therefore had every reason to carry more people than the ships could reasonably hold or feed. Even though they transported thousands of immigrants, many of the ships used during the peak of famine emigration were not actually meant to carry passengers. They were instead designed to bring cargo such as timber, cotton, and tobacco from the United States to England, and then they were quickly fitted to carry immigrants on the return voyage.¹³⁶

And as we previously mentioned, nearly all Irish emigrants traveled in steerage, which was the least expensive accommodation. Steerage passengers were quartered on a deck low in the ship's hull, where there was no light or fresh air. A steerage ticket entitled a passenger to one-quarter of a berth, and berths were usually six feet by six feet, made of wood and lined the sides of the ship like shelves. Thus, below decks, hundreds of men, women and children huddled together in the dark on bare wooden floors with no ventilation, breathing a stench of vomit and the effects of diarrhea amid no sanitary facilities and the passengers being seasick were vomiting in all parts of the vessel.¹³⁷ In 1847 an English philanthropist, Steven de Vere, sailed in steerage to get an idea of what most emigrants had to endure and wrote of his experience: "Hundreds of poor people, men, women, and children, of all ages, from the driveling idiot of ninety to the babe just born, huddled together without light, without air, wallowing in filth and breathing a fetid atmosphere, sick in body, dispirited in heart."¹³⁸ De Vere went on to describe how passengers who became ill were obliged to lie hour after hour on bunks so hard and narrow that they could not turn over to get into different position. These unfortunates had no food unless another passenger brought some to them, thus many sick persons remained in bare wooden bunks lying in their own filth for the entire voyage, too ill to get up. To make matters

¹³⁶Timothy J. Paulson, *Op.Cit.*, p.34; Karen Price Hossell, *Op.Cit.*, p.31; Lawrence J. McCaffrey, *Textures of Irish America*, p.13; Kerry A. Graves, *Op.Cit.*, p.44; Irish potato famine: <http://www.historyplace.com/worldhistory/famine/before.htm>. 15 / 04/ 2011, 08: 32pm.

¹³⁷Karen Price Hossell, *Op.Cit.*, pp.31-32; Denny Hatch, *Op.Cit.*, p.p.39,43; Ronald Takaki, *Op.Cit.*, p.145; William Smith, *An Emigrants Narrative or A voice From the Steerage*, p.7; Kerry A. Graves, *Op.Cit.*, p.p.45,47; Irish potato famine:<http://www.historyplace.com/worldhistory/famine/before.htm>. 15/04/ 2011, 08:32 pm.

¹³⁸Quoted in: Karen Price Hossell, *Op.Cit.*, pp.32-33; Denny Hatch, *Op.Cit.*, p.44; Margaret M. Mulrooney, *Fleeing The Famine : North America and Irish Refugees, 1845-1851*, Westport 2003, p.18.

worse, hygiene on board ship was almost nonexistent. Water was scarce; what fresh water that was available was used for drinking and cooking, not for bathing.¹³⁹

Moreover, seasickness created another hygiene problem, since most passengers had never before been on a ship, they would become seasick almost as soon as the ship sailed. They would become sickest when seas were rough, which was also the time they would be confined below deck, where many passengers would lie in their berth, lean over the edge, and vomit on whatever and whoever was below them.¹⁴⁰ Emigrants not only suffered from discomfort and illness but also from being victimized by some of their fellow passengers. During the 1840s another man, Dr. J. Custis from Dublin, sailed on six emigrant voyages to get an idea of what those aboard had to endure, and then he wrote a series of newspaper articles about his experiences. Custis was particularly bothered by the crimes that took place, writing, "The torments of hell might, in some degree, resemble the sufferings of the emigrants on board...."¹⁴¹ Shipboard crime was not unusual. Because passengers were forced to live close together, quarrels often broke out, and they soon turned to fistfights, and likewise, sexual assaults were not uncommon. Passengers also had to guard their few belongings closely; if they did not, another passenger searching for food or for goods to trade for money once in America would steal whatever they could find.¹⁴²

3.2.2.2.4 Getting Food and Water

During the 1840s British law required that during the trans-Atlantic voyage, each passenger aboard ship receive seven pounds of food a week and six pints of water a day. The water ration was meager enough since it was to be used for drinking, cooking, and washing, but once at sea, the captain and crew often ignored the regulations or followed them arbitrarily. And although United States Passengers' Acts held the ship for providing water and some food for the passengers, these were often present in name only. So, emigrants often began voyages with few provisions, sailed in vessels lacking adequate space, food, or toilet facilities and many died in route. In this context, an English philanthropist, Vere Foster who travelled on an emigrant ship, the *Washington*, during the late 1840s, described the water distribution aboard ship that, in doing so there was no regularity, thus, the lack of good drinking water was another big

¹³⁹William Smith, *An Emigrants Narrative, or A voice From the Steerage*, pp.7-8; Karen Price Hossell, Op.Cit., p.33; Denny Hatch, Op.Cit., p.43; Margaret M. Mulrooney, Op.Cit., p.18; Irish potato famine: <http://www.historyplace.com/worldhistory/famine/before.htm>. 15 /04/2011, 08:32pm.

¹⁴⁰Kerry A. Graves, Op.Cit., p.47; William Smith, *An Emigrants Narrative, or A voice From the Steerage*, pp. 6-7; Karen Price Hossell, Op.Cit., p.33; American and Irish-American Views of the Famine, Narrating the Famine in Bessy Conway; or, *The Irish Girl in America*, 1861: <http://xroads.virginia.edu/~HYPER/SADLIER/Bessy/Bessy1.htm>. 14/08/2013, 09:15 am.

¹⁴¹Quoted in: Karen Price Hossell, Op.Cit., p.33.

¹⁴²I bid, p.33.

problem on vessel. Sometimes the water was stored in leaky old wooden casks, or in casks that previously stored wine, vinegar or chemicals which contaminated the water and caused dysentery. Many ships ran out of water long before reaching North America, making life especially miserable for fevered passengers suffering from burning thirsts. Some unscrupulous captains profited by selling large amounts of alcohol to the passengers, resulting in "totally depraved and corrupted" behavior among them.¹⁴³

With regard to food, most passengers, steerage passengers on both British and American ships were most commonly given oatmeal and biscuits (which were often unfit to be eaten), but shortage of food affected almost everyone. Rations, specified under the Passenger Acts could not keep anyone in good health for the length of the crossing and few emigrants could afford to take their own food, where, it was assumed, would bring along their own food for the journey, but most of the poor Irish either were consumed their provisions or boarded ships with no food, depending entirely on the pound-a-day handout which amounted to starvation rations.¹⁴⁴ However, the food was also not always distributed as specified by law, as sometimes the captain withheld food until the ship actually set sail. Passengers might board the ship on the day, when the voyage was supposed to begin, but the ship might sit at the dock or in the harbor for days while waiting for favorable winds or for a storm to pass. Foster wrote that "the day after passengers boarded, provisions were not served out this day, notwithstanding the engagement contained in our contract tickets, and notwithstanding that all the passengers were now on board, the most of them since yesterday and had no means of communication with the shore. Many of them being very poor, had entirely relied upon the faithful observance of the promise contained in their tickets, the price of which includes payment for the weekly allowance of provisions."¹⁴⁵ On the other hand doctors were not often present on board the ships. Many ships did not carry a surgeon because the law did not make it compulsory. In fact, one can say that when passengers became ill they were in trouble, even when the ship carried a doctor.¹⁴⁶

¹⁴³See: Karen Price Hossell, *Op.Cit.*, p.33-34; Robert Whyte, *Op.Cit.*, p.p.37-39,45; Lawrence J. McCaffrey, *Textures of Irish America*, p.13; William Smith, *An Emigrants Narrative or A voice From the Steerage*, p.p.14,17-18; Denny Hatch, *Op.Cit.*, p.43; Kerry A. Graves, *Op.Cit.*, p.47; Irish potato famine: <http://www.historyplace.com/worldhistory/famine/before.htm>. 15/ 04/2011, 08:32pm.

¹⁴⁴William Smith, *An Emigrants Narrative or A voice From the Steerage*, p.18; Denny Hatch, *Op.Cit.*, p.43; Kerry A. Graves, *Op.Cit.*, pp.47-48 Irish potato famine: <http://www.historyplace.com/worldhistory/famine/before.htm>. 15/04/2011, 08:32 pm.

¹⁴⁵Quoted in: Karen Price Hossell, *Op.Cit.*, p.34. For more details about Getting Food and Water see: Robert Whyte, *Op.Cit.*, pp.37-40; Denny Hatch, *Op.Cit.*, p.43; John Francis Maguire, *Op.Cit.*, pp.182-184.

¹⁴⁶ Denny Hatch, *Op.Cit.*, p.43.

3.2.2.3 Coffin Ships

Many emigrants who fled to America found passage on a ship bound not for the United States, but for Canada. Most of Irish travelled in overcrowded British sailing ships, poorly built and often unseaworthy, that became known as "coffin ships". In fact most British ships were not especially built for the emigrant trade, they were converted cargo ships transporting emigrants as a kind of ballast on the westward voyage. So great was the demand for passages that direct sailings began from Ireland, it was mainly from smaller Irish ports that those notorious ships sailed, where, in 1847 many small, poorly constructed ships were put into service to meet the needs of the thousands of people bound for North America. These ships were death traps, "coffin ships" as they became known, due to the fact that their passengers were poorly provided with food and water and were forced to live in overcrowded conditions that became breeding grounds for fever and typhus. Whatever the cause, the deaths on board the British ships enormously exceeded the mortality on board the ships of any other country.¹⁴⁷ Although the health and safety standards on these ships were minimal, the fares were substantially cheaper (often a third or a fourth the price) and therefore more attractive, that often ships sailing to the United States were booked, and the only passage available was to Quebec. Almost half of the emigrants in Black '47 chose to sail to Canada since the cost of a ticket was about half of that to New York, thus, after a passage costing \$12 to \$15 for journey on those ships, many of Irish found the conditions on arrival little better than those they had left.¹⁴⁸

The first coffin ships headed for Quebec, Canada. The three thousand mile journey, depending on winds and the captain's skill, could take from 40 days to three months. Two immediate problems faced the authorities in ports along the Atlantic Seaboard: widespread disease among the debarking passengers and destitution among those who had already arrived. However, the real killer of Irish emigrants was disease: dysentery, cholera and mostly typhus, it epidemic had occurred in Ireland and many who boarded ships were sick before they ever set foot on deck, thus, many passengers brought the highly contagious "ship fever" with them, and as already noted above, emigrants had to endure appalling conditions during the crossing. These conditions were often ideal for the propagation of disease. So, ships arriving in Quebec were required to stop for a medical inspection in a

¹⁴⁷T.W Moody and F. X. Martin, *Op.Cit.*, p.225; Kem Knapp Sawyer, *Op.Cit.*, p.23; P. Dolan, *Op.Cit.*, p.77; Karen Price Hossell, *Op.Cit.*, p.35; Denny Hatch, *Op.Cit.*, p.40; Marjorie R. Fallows, *Op.Cit.*, p.24; John Francis Maguire, *Op.Cit.*, pp.180-181; Kerby A. Miller and Patricia Mulholland Miller, *Op.Cit.*, p.7; Kerry A. Graves, *Op.Cit.*, p. 40; *Irish Immigrants in America during the 19th Century*: <http://www.kinsella.org/history/histira.htm>. 14/05/2013, 04:35pm; *Irish potato famine*: <http://www.historyplace.com/worldhistory/famine/before.htm>. 15/04/2011, 08:32pm.

¹⁴⁸Kem Knapp Sawyer, *Op.Cit.*, p.23; P. Dolan, *Op.Cit.*, p.77; Marjorie R. Fallows, *Op.Cit.*, p.24.

quarantine station at Grosse Isle, located on the St. Lawrence, where, upon arrival in the Saint Lawrence River, the ships were supposed to be inspected for disease and any sick passengers removed to quarantine facilities. Quarantine stations were immediately set up to receive the sick, both in Canada and in the United States, with the most notorious stations located at Grosse Isle and on Staten Island in New York harbor.¹⁴⁹

The sick were at first sent to a quarantine hospital, but the huge numbers of people afflicted soon made a quarantine impossible to enforce, where, in the spring of 1847, shipload after shipload of fevered Irish arrived, quickly overwhelming the small medical inspection facility, which only had 150 beds.¹⁵⁰ On May 19, 1847 the "Cork Examiner", knowing that people still in Ireland would be interested in the fate of the emigrants, printed an excerpt from the "New York Sun" that referred to the hardship people encountered aboard ship: "The paupers who have recently arrived from Europe give a most melancholy account of their sufferings. Upwards of eighty individuals, almost dead with the ship fever, were landed from one ship alone, while twenty-seven of the cargo died on the passage, and were thrown into the sea."¹⁵¹

Meanwhile at Grosse Isle, by the middle of the summer of 1847, imposing a quarantine for fever had been abandoned as hopeless. The line of ships waiting for inspection had grown several miles long, and to make quarantine effective, twenty to twenty-five thousand contacts should be isolated, for whom there was no room on the small island. Therefore to carry out the quarantine regulations was, wrote Dr. Douglas, 'physically impossible,' and at the end of May passengers on ships with fever were allowed to stay, after the fever cases had been removed, and to perform their quarantine on board, the period to be fifteen days instead of ten. Dr. Douglas believed that a simple washing down and airing would make the holds healthy, so, the passengers remained in the holds, with disastrous consequences. By June, 40 vessels containing 14,000 Irish immigrants waited in a line extending two miles down the St.

¹⁴⁹Marjorie R. Fallows, Op.Cit., p.24; Denny Hatch, Op.Cit., p.42; Kem Knapp Sawyer, Op.Cit., p.23; p. Dolan, Op.Cit., p.77; Karen Price Hossell, Op.Cit., p.35; Kerby A. Miller and Patricia Mulholland Miller, Op.Cit., p.7; Kerry A. Graves, Op.Cit., p. 40; PRONI: 19th Century Emigration to the North Americas, Hospitals: http://www.proni.gov.uk/index/exhibitions_talks_and_events/19th_century_emigration_to_the_north_america_online/the_promised_land/hospitals.htm. 01/05/2011, 10:30am; Irish potato famine: <http://www.historyplace.com/worldhistory/famine/before.htm>. 15/04/2011, 08:32pm.

¹⁵⁰Kem Knapp Sawyer,Op.Cit., pp.23; Gerard Moran, *Sending Out Ireland's Poor: Assisted Emigration to North America in the Nineteenth Century*, Dublin 2004, pp. 99-101; Tyler Anbinder, "Lord Palmerston and the Irish Famine Emigration," *The Historical Journal*, Vol. 44, No. 2, 2001, pp.441-469, 459-460; Irish potato famine: <http://www.historyplace.com/worldhistory/famine/before.htm>. 15/04/2011, 08:32pm.

¹⁵¹Quoted in: Karen Price Hossell, Op.Cit., p. 36. Further details are giving in: Robert Whyte, Op.Cit., p.15. See: Excerpt from Jack Corbett, *Mariner &endash: Burial At Sea*: http://www.dennyhatch.com/jackcorbett/doc/excerpts_burial.html. 11/11/2013, 04:50pm.

Lawrence, and it took up to five days to see a doctor. Thus, so great was the number of sick that 'a fatal delay of several days' occurred before fever cases were taken away; meanwhile, sick and 'healthy' were cooped up together, and fresh infection took place, thus many healthy Irish succumbed to typhus as they were forced to remain in their lice-infested holds. With so many dead on board the waiting ships, hundreds of bodies were simply dumped overboard into the St. Lawrence, for example, the ship "Agnes", which arrived with 427 passengers, had only 150 alive after a quarantine of fifteen days. Dr. Douglas was instructed to let the 'healthy' go from the ships without insisting on the full term of quarantine, and by the end of July imposing a quarantine for fever at Grosse Isle, had virtually been abandoned as hopeless. A doctor came on board and inquired how many sick were below, choosing not to go into the hold, but placed himself at a table and called all emigrants able to walk to come up on deck; they filed past him, and anyone who seemed to him to be feverish was ordered to show his tongue. Those passed as 'healthy' were usually taken up to Montreal in a steamer, which picked up passengers at different vessels and had an appearance of gaiety because a fiddler and dancers were in the prow.¹⁵²

The journey up the St. Lawrence, from Grosse Isle to Montreal, took two to three days, and "the emigrants were literally crammed on board the steamers, exposed to the cold night air and the burning sun...bringing the seeds of disease with them."¹⁵³ A number invariably developed fever on the way, and more than half had been known to arrive at Montreal in a dying condition. On June 8 Dr. Douglas gave 'real fair warning to the authorities of Quebec and Montreal' that an epidemic was bound to occur, quarantine regulations were impossible to enforce, and the division between 'healthy' and sick was meaningless. Thus, the quarantine had been abandoned, and the Irish were sent on to their next destination without any medical inspection or treatment. From Grosse Isle, the Irish were given free passage up the St. Lawrence to Montreal and cities such as Kingston and Toronto. By September, 1847, the date was not far distant when the St. Lawrence would be closed by ice; the last ships had left Britain in August, and the number of patients in hospital at Grosse Isle had at last begun to decrease. About 1,200, sent to the new sheds which had at last been

¹⁵²Colonial Land and Emigration Office to Earl Grey, 30 April 1847, "Seventh General Report of the Colonial Land and Emigration Commissioners", 1847, in: P. Ford, and G. Ford, series ed, Irish University Press Series of British Parliamentary Papers: General Reports of the Colonial Land and Emigration Commissioners with Appendices: Emigration, Volume 10, Shannon, Ireland: Irish University Press, 1969, p.6-7; Cecil Woodham-Smith, *Op.Cit.*, pp.230-231; Robert Whyte, *Op.Cit.*, p.p.82-84,88; Kem Knapp Sawyer, *Op.Cit.*, pp.23-24; Karen Price Hossell, *Op.Cit.*, pp.35-36; Irish potato famine: <http://www.historyplace.com/worldhistory/famine/before.htm>. 15/04/2011, 08: 32pm.

¹⁵³Quoted in: Cecil Woodham-Smith, *Op. Cit.*, p.231; Kem Knapp Sawyer, *Op.Cit.*, p.24.

completed at the eastern end of the island, so on 30 October the quarantine at Grosse Isle closed.¹⁵⁴

As many as 5,424 of the dead were buried in a mass grave at Grosse Isle. Many more of Irish immigrants died at sea or soon after landing in Canada by hunger and disease. It is worthy of mention that of the hundred thousand emigrants who sailed to Canada in 1847, an estimated thirty thousand died. But if you add those who died in the coffin ships while en route to the United States, then the total number of dead on these coffin ships was about fifty thousand. Thus, these deaths gave the ships their frightening nickname, “coffin ships.”¹⁵⁵ In a wooded hollow, one of the most beautiful of the miniature valleys of Grosse Isle, once the site of the emigrant cemetery, a four-sided monument commemorates those who died and memorializes this tragic chapter in the history of Irish emigration. On the first side the inscription it reads: “In this secluded spot lie the mortal remains of 5,424 persons who fleeing from Pestilence and Famine in Ireland in the year 1847 found in the America but a Grave.”¹⁵⁶ A second side bears the names of Dr. Benson, of Dublin, and of three other doctors who died while attending the sick; where, during the relief of these sick in Quebec, medical men fallen victims to the epidemic which carried off so many thousand individuals. The third, the names of two doctors who died on Grosse Isle during the cholera epidemic of 1832-34; and the fourth records that the monument was erected by Dr. Douglas and eighteen medical assistants who were on duty during the epidemic of 1847.¹⁵⁷

Thus, as horrible as the journey to Canada was in Black '47, most emigrants survived the transatlantic journey during the famine years. But, as historian David

¹⁵⁴More details see: Cecil Woodham-Smith, *Op.Cit.*, pp.231-237; Kem Knapp Sawyer, *Op.Cit.*, pp.24-25; Marcus Lee Hansen, *Op.Cit.*, p.256; “Quebec Gazette”, September 13, 1847; Irish potato famine: <http://www.historyplace.com/worldhistory/famine/before.htm>. 15/04/2011, 08:32pm.

¹⁵⁵P. Dolan, *Op.Cit.*, p.78; T.W Moody and F. X. Martin, *Op.Cit.*, p.225; Timothy J. Paulson, *Op.Cit.*, p. 35; Kem Knapp Sawyer, *Op.Cit.*, p.6; Karen Price Hossell, *Op.Cit.*, p.35; André Charbonneau and Doris Drolet-Dube, *A Register of Deceased Persons at Sea and on Grosse Île in 1847*, Ottawa 1997, p.p.101,108; Kerby A. Miller and Patricia Mulholland Miller, *Op.Cit.*, p.7; Irish potato famine: <http://www.historyplace.com/worldhistory/famine/before.htm>. 15/04/2011, 08:32pm.

One such ship, the Elizabeth and Sarah, built in 1762 to accommodate 155 persons, sailed from County Mayo in 1846 with 276 persons. The sleeping berths were in such disrepair that only thirty-six could be used and most passengers slept on the floor. She should have stored 12,532 gallons of water, but only carried 8,700 gallons. Forty-two persons died during the voyage. Kem Knapp Sawyer, *Op.Cit.*, p.6.

Further details are giving in: Robert Whyte, *Op.Cit.*, pp.15-18.

¹⁵⁶Quoted in: Cecil Woodham-Smith, *Op.Cit.*, p.237; Kem Knapp Sawyer, *Op.Cit.*, pp.24-25; PRONI: 19th Century Emigration to the North Americas, Hospitals: http://www.proni.gov.uk/index/exhibitions_talks_and_events/19th_century_emigration_to_the_north_america_online/the_promised_land/hospitals.htm. 01/05/2011, 10:30am; P. Dolan, *Op.Cit.*, p.78.

¹⁵⁷Copy of a dispatch from Governor-General the Right Hon. the Earl of Elgin to Earl Grey, PR, Papers relative to emigration to the British provinces in North America (In continuation of the papers presented December 1847), H.C, 1847-1848[932][964][971][985],p.80; Cecil Woodham-Smith, *Op.Cit.*, p.237; Kem Knapp Sawyer, *Op. Cit.*, p. 25.

Fitzpatrick noted, “The lingering nightmare of the coffin ships did not impede emigration, serving merely to divert it elsewhere and to instill a lasting distaste for Canada as a destination . . . Neither death nor discomfort could staunch the flow out of Ireland.”¹⁵⁸ It is clear that the large proportion of emigration to Canada in 1847 was Irish, and the state of destitution in which the greater part of these people had embarked, presented features of inconceivable misery on their arrival in this country. Apart from the effects of disease, the mass of the Irish emigration, suffering from long privation, showed in every feature a great reduction in its physical standard, while its moral character evinced more plainly than under former ordinary circumstances the general absence of industrial education and the extreme want of such a counteracting force to oppose the native tendency towards sloth and apathy. Up to half of the men that survived the journey to Canada walked across the border to begin their new lives in America, as they had no desire to live under the Union Jack flag in sparsely populated British North America. They viewed the United States with its anti-British tradition and its bustling young cities as the true land of opportunity, so many left their families behind in Canada until they had a chance to establish themselves in the U.S. The Irish emigrant of the lowest class, finding in America a wide and open field for industry, and a plain prospect of ample recompense for labour, does, very generally, become as active and as persevering as any of those among whom he is cast. But it is in the highest degree unfortunate that his early habits are, in most instances, such as to subject him to a severe trial in the course of his emigration and progress towards improvement in his condition.¹⁵⁹ However, the legislatures both of England and of America have taken important steps to abolish the most flagrant abuses of the emigration system.

3.3 Enforcing the Law

3.3.1 Strengthening the Passenger Acts:

Three-Fourths at least of the emigrants arriving in the land of United States at the port of New York. During the six years of the potato famine, from 1845 to 1851, an average of 300 Irish disembarked daily in the New York harbor. The emigrant ships were crowded, poorly stocked, unsanitary, and often in disrepair.¹⁶⁰ In

¹⁵⁸ Quoted in: Jay P. Dolan, *Op.Cit.*, p.78.

¹⁵⁹ Copy of a dispatch from Governor-General the Right Hon. the Earl of Elgin to Earl Grey, PR, Papers relative to emigration to the British provinces in North America (In continuation of the papers presented December 1847), H.C.1847-48[932][964][971][985], p.86; Irish potato famine: <http://www.historyplace.com/worldhistory/famine/before.htm>. 15/04/2011, 08:32pm.

¹⁶⁰ Extract from Edith Abbott, “Immigration: Select Documents and Case Record”, in: Kem Knapp Sawyer, *Op. Cit.*, p.29; Edward E. Hale, *Op.Cit.*, p.24.

1847 and 1848, the majority of those arriving quarantine stations in Grosse Isle and New York were either sick or destitute, or both, having brought few resources to make a start in the new country. In New York, the Staten Island quarantine Station was similarly overwhelmed—in Grosse Isle—by the hundred and more diseased immigrants arriving on each ship. In an effort to bring some control to the situation, the New York Commissioners of Emigration had imposed, in 1847, a payment of \$1.50 for each immigrant: to help pay for quarantine, find jobs, and reimburse the counties if they became public charges, but such measures scarcely touched the problem.¹⁶¹ In Baltimore, a quarantine ground was set up to protect the inhabitants from disease and Louisiana had authorized a tax on each passenger arriving from foreign ports. In comparison to other ethnic groups the amount of return migration for the Irish migrants was very low, as only one in twelve Irish migrants returned.¹⁶² These provisions were found to be inconvenient to the shipowner, owing to the great increase of emigration from the year 1840 to the year 1847, and were altogether insufficient as a means of protection to the emigrant against the consequences of disease or destitution. The bonds were onerous to the respectable shipowner, so, he adopted a means of evading his responsibility by transferring it to the shipbroker, a person generally of an inferior class ; and the shipbroker thus consenting to stand in the place and assume the responsibility of the owner, the ship and her living freight were unreservedly surrendered to him. The shipowner had the alternative either to give bonds of indemnity to the city against possible chargeability, or compound for a certain sum per head, and thus rid himself of all future responsibility; but he found it more convenient to deal with the broker than with the city authorities.¹⁶³

The resolution of the New York Legislature was passed on February 5, 1847 in an attempt to improve the conditions of the vessels.

“Whereas, The regulation of commerce between foreign countries and the United States belongs, by virtue of the Constitution, to the Congress of the latter; and

Whereas, From the increase of emigration within the last few years the transportation of steerage passengers from the nations of Europe to this country has become a large and lucrative branch of commerce, profitable in proportion to the number of persons who can be induced to take passage on board of each vessel employed in this trade; and

¹⁶¹Marjorie R. Fallows, *Op.Cit.*, p.24; John Francis Maguire, *Op.Cit.*, p.185; Robert Whyte, *Op.Cit.*, p.16; Rev. Stephen Byrne, *Op.Cit.*, p.30.

¹⁶²Roger Daniels, *Op.Cit.*, p. 127.

¹⁶³Further details are giving in: John Francis Maguire, *Op.Cit.*, pp.185-186.

Whereas, Many inhumane persons, careless of the wants, the health, and comfort of their passengers and eager only for gain, are now engaged in such transportation; and

Whereas, Almost weekly some such vessel, swarming with human beings, arrives at our port, and the details of their sufferings arising from the crowded state of such vessel, the neglect of the master to see secured a sufficiency of provisions and water for the voyage, and the conveniences of preparing food, the inattention of such master to the cleanliness of the steerage and the comfort and health of the passengers, are shocking to our sense of humanity and disgraceful to any country possessing the power to prevent the recurrence of such enormities: Therefore

Resolved, that our Senators in Congress be instructed, and our Representatives requested, to use their best efforts to obtain the passage of a law limiting and defining the number of passengers for each vessel engaged in the transportation of passengers from any foreign country to the United States ...determining the quantity of provisions and water for each passenger on the voyage, securing the presence of a physician on shipboard...to prevent the great and crying evils which at present so often occur...”¹⁶⁴

Thus, emigrant and other vessels wishing to enter the port of New York were inspected by the port physician; any passenger or member of the crew found to be sick was sent to hospital at the Quarantine Station, Staten Island, and the vessels detained for thirty days' quarantine as against ten days at Grosse Isle, Quebec. The Irish of the famine emigration, however, arrived at New York in the same deplorable state as at Quebec and Boston; scarcely a vessel with Irish emigrants came in without fever; often fifty or more had died on the voyage and more than a hundred sick were sent to the quarantine hospital on landing. Dr. John Griscom, a well-known New York physician and a pioneer in public health, newly arrived at Staten Island from Liverpool, and found every horror of the 'ocean plague'. Most fever cases were Irish emigrants from British ships; indeed, a representative of the New York Tribune reported that he did not notice one fever patient in the hospital who was not Irish.¹⁶⁵

American passenger ship regulations caused most of the starving Irish to turn to Canada, where in 1847, American Congress alarmed and passed severe Passenger Acts in 22 February and 2 March 1847, a set of laws regulating the number of passengers ships coming to America could carry as well as their minimal accommodations, where, it giving passengers more room and raising taxes for landing indigent immigrants. Ostensibly with the humanitarian purpose of reducing the numbers that greedy shipowners could crowd on their vessels, but

¹⁶⁴ Quoted in: Kem Knapp Sawyer, *Op.Cit.*, pp.29-30.

¹⁶⁵ Cecil Woodham-Smith, *Op.Cit.*, pp.254-255; “New York Daily Tribune”, May 1, 1847.
See: William Smith, *An Emigrant's Narrative or a Voice from the Steerage*, pp.11-13.

with the secondary aim of reducing the total immigration. Thus, Congress reacted to the surge of Irish immigration by tightening the laws and reducing the number of passengers allowed per ship, thereby increased fares which led to discouraging destitute emigrants to America, especially, congressmen had complained that America was becoming Europe's "poor house".¹⁶⁶ The immense numbers of emigrants arriving, with an unprecedented amount of fever among them, and the fatal proximity of Staten Island to New York, combined to make medical inspection more or less useless. Hundreds of emigrants passed as 'healthy' went on to New York and developed fever there.¹⁶⁷

It can say that there was one way to limit immigration was to make it more expensive to get to America. So, even though all manner of ill-equipped ships had been called into service for the human traffic from Irish and British ports, prices for the passage soared, and the fare to New York doubled. Regulations already in existence governing the landing of passengers at the Atlantic ports were stringently enforced, where state and municipal legislatures also passed their own acts, New York and Boston, for instance, had the power to require masters of vessels to give a bond, a financial fee that no passenger would become a burden on the community; alternatively, a sum could be put down for each passenger, called a commutation fee, which released the shipowner from tier responsibility. New York, which had adopted commutation, the fee to ten dollars for each passenger, while Boston required a bond of \$1,000 bond from the shipmaster as a guarantee that the aged, infirm, and poor would not become public charges for ten years. Boston also refused to give ships carrying any sick passengers permission even to enter the harbour.¹⁶⁸ These acts discouraged Irish immigrants from going to the United States directly because the route was so expensive. Canadians believed that American policies negatively affected Canada because Canadians now had to care for more sickly and indigent Irish immigrants than usual, most of whom were attempting to reach the United States. A report from the Executive Council on Matters of State for Canada blamed the devastating influx of Irish to Canada on the "misery and

¹⁶⁶Marjorie R. Fallows, *Op.Cit.*, pp.24-25; Marcus Lee Hansen, *Op.Cit.*, p.256; Edward E. Hale, *Op.Cit.*, p.p.7,11; Congressional Globe, 29th Congress, 2nd Session, Feb 18, 1847, p.446, in: <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/amlaw/lwgcg.html>. 10/03/2013, 11:20am; Irish potato famine: <http://www.historyplace.com/worldhistory/famine/before.htm>. 15/04/2011, 08:32pm.

¹⁶⁷City Inspector's Annual Report, 1847, Document No. 21, Board of Aldermen, New York, in: Cecil Woodham-Smith, *Op.Cit.*, p.257; William Smith, *An Emigrant's Narrative or a Voice from the Steerage*, pp.27-30; BL, "The Cork Examiner" Vol. VI No. 904, Ref: 025CKEX18470621

¹⁶⁸Copy of a dispatch from Lieutenant-Governor Sir E. Head, Bart., to Earl Grey, P.R, Papers relative to emigration to the British provinces in North America (In continuation of the papers presented December 1847), H.C., 1847-48[932][964][971][985], pp.143-145; Marjorie R. Fallows, *Op.Cit.*, p.25; "Boston Advertiser", June 28, 1847; Irish potato famine: <http://www.historyplace.com/worldhistory/famine/before.htm>. 15/04/2011, 08:32pm. For more details about Quarantine and Inspection in New York see: Edward E. Hale, *Op.Cit.*, pp.24-28.

distress” in Ireland, but at least equally on the “stringent measures adopted by the Government of the United States...for regulating the transportation of indigent immigrants to their ports.”¹⁶⁹ In the first two weeks of April 1847, 2,938 Irish emigrants departed Cork for Canada, while only 960 went to the United States.¹⁷⁰ Canadians wanted immigrants, but not diseased Irish who could not provide for themselves. Imperial or local governments were unable to affect American laws, but Canadians believed that American laws had a negative impact on them.

Since it was widely believed at the time that Britain was, as a matter of policy, deporting Irish convicts and paupers to the United States in order to get rid of them, attempts to limit access to American ports were viewed as justified. British Canada, it was felt, should and could take in the arrivals. The British government, in fact, was already stung by criticism of its callousness toward the Irish during the famine and could scarcely have risked calling attention to the problem by officially encouraging Irish emigration to the United States. Even landlords in Ireland, anxious to consolidate their estates by "shoveling out" their tenants, sometimes offered them cheap passage to Canada while speaking righteously of providing colonists for British North America.¹⁷¹

As we previously mentioned, the first British Passenger Act was passed in 1803. The principal British Act for the regulation of emigrant vessels in force up to 1849, was the Act passed for that purpose in 1842 (5 and 6 Vic. c. 107). The 1842 British Passenger Act required cargo areas to have some accommodations to make them suitable for human transport. Ships had to be retrofitted (modification or installation of new parts) with bunks for the emigrants, and additional regulations and restrictions had to be followed. Some of these included providing water and food for the emigrants or providing cooking facilities for the preparation of the food they brought with them. This Act had been subsequently amended by Acts passed in 1847 and 1848 (10 and 11 Vic., c. 103, and 11 Vic. c. 6).¹⁷² In this context, the emigration commissioners pointed out, that the principal objects of the Act amendments are, 1st, to regulate the number of passengers in each ship, and to provide for then proper accommodation on board; 2dly, to ensure a proper supply of provisions and water for

¹⁶⁹Quoted in: Extract from a Report of a Committee of the Executive Council on Matters of State, dated 7th December 1847, approved by his Excellency the Governor General in Council on the 8th instant, 7 December 1847, “Papers Relative to Emigration to the British Provinces in North America, and to the Australian Colonies, Part I: British Provinces in North America,” 1847, in BPP: Colonies: Canada, Vol. 17, p. 386.

¹⁷⁰Colonial Land and Emigration Office to James Stephen, 22 April 1847, “Papers Relative to Emigration to the British Provinces in North America, and to the Australian Colonies, Part I: British Provinces in North America,” 1847, in BPP: Colonies: Canada, Vol. 17, p. 360.

¹⁷¹Further details are given in: GRC, Tenth general report of the Colonial Land and Emigration Commissioners, 1850, H.C, 1850 [1204], pp.7-8; Marjorie R. Fallows, *Op.Cit.*, p.25.

¹⁷²GRC, Tenth general report of the Colonial Land and Emigration Commissioners, 1850, H.C, 1850 [1204], p. 15; Deirdre Mageean, *Op.Cit.*, p.45; Denny Hatch, *Op.Cit.*, p.44; Kerry A. Graves, *Op.Cit.*, p.44.

their use; 3dly, to provide for the seaworthiness of the vessels; and, 4thly, to protect the emigrants from the numerous frauds to which at various stages of their undertaking their helplessness and inexperience expose them. It had become notorious that the provisions of the former Act had proved insufficient for those objects. It became our duty therefore to suggest such amendments as the exigencies of the case required, bearing however steadily in view the object of almost paramount importance.¹⁷³

Due to a competition with the United States for cheap labour and an increase in the settler population, the British government encouraged immigrants to settle in Canada. They hoped to increase the colony's success and maintain the strength of the British Empire.¹⁷⁴ Demonstrating the British government's goals, Lord Monteaule, a Member of Parliament, remarked in 1847 that parliament should "contribute to make the colonies [in Canada] as attractive to the emigrant as the U. States."¹⁷⁵ As we mentioned earlier, the government stimulated migration to Canada, part of the Commonwealth, instead of the United States in several ways. The emigration to Canada has always been subject to fluctuation, and considerable differences have been observed between the numbers arriving in consecutive years. Between 1839 and 1846, however, its average extent for the whole term is not very greatly different from the return for any particular year. But in 1847 there appeared a very large increase, produced, no doubt, to a great extent, by a concurrence of circumstances unconnected with the province, but in some degree promoted by the facility with which passages to Quebec were obtained at English and Irish ports, or engagements made for transport, not merely from these ports to Quebec, but to the emigrant's ultimate destination. Moreover, the improvements effected in the navigation of the St. Lawrence were rendering this route both more economical and more easy than that by New York for the emigrant family, whether proceeding to Upper Canada or the Western States.¹⁷⁶

¹⁷³ GRC, General Reports of the Colonial Land and Emigration Commissioners, H.C, 1842 [567], p.15.

¹⁷⁴ David Dykstra, *The Shifting Balance of Power: American-British Diplomacy in North America, 1842-1848*, 1999, p. xix, xxxiii, xxxiv; Margaret M. Mulrooney, *Op.Cit.*, p.47.

¹⁷⁵ "Cleveland Herald", July 15, 1847.

¹⁷⁶ A.C. Buchanan to Earl of Elgin, 20 December 1848, P.R, Papers Relative to Emigration to the British Provinces in North America 1848: H.C, 1849[1025], p.30; GRC, Tenth general report of the Colonial Land and Emigration Commissioners, 1850, H.C, 1850[1204], p.6.

For more details about the superior advantages of the St. Lawrence over the American route, for the transport of goods and passengers from Europe to the United States see: Extract from a Report of a Committee of the Honourable the Executive Council on Matter of State, dated the 5th February 1850; approved by his Excellency the Governor-General in Council on the 8th of the same month, GRC, Report from the Chief Agent of Emigration in Canada for year 1849, and other documents, H.C, 1850 [173], p.24.

The following is a Comparative statement of the number of Emigrants arrived at the port of Quebec. Since the year 1829 inclusive:

Country	Years from 1829 to 1833	Years from 1834 to 1838	Years from 1839 to 1843	1844	1845	1846	1847	1848	1849
From England	43,386	28,624	30,813	7,698	8,833	9,163	28,725	6,034	8,980
From Ireland	102,264	54,898	74,981	9,993	14,208	21,0	50,360	16,582	23,123
From Scotland	20,143	10,998	16,289	2,234	2,174	1,645	3,628	3,086	4,984
From Germany	15	485	. .	. .	. .	890	7,437	1,395	436
From lower ports, & c.	1,889	1,346	1,777	217	160	. .	. .	842	948
Total	167,697	96,351	123,860	20,149	25,375	32,753	90,150	27,939	38,494

The number of migrants on vessels travelling to the United States was restricted. British passenger acts made it much more expensive to travel to the latter. The passenger fares to the U.S. in 1847 were up to three times higher than fares to Canada, as the British government intentionally kept fares to Quebec low to encourage the Irish to populate Canada and also to discourage them from emigrating to England. So, a ticket to New York would cost four to five pounds, while a ticket to the Canadian Maritime Provinces would cost only fifteen shillings, moreover, ships to Canada left from Ireland, while for the United States; the Irish migrants first had to travel to Liverpool, that made, a substantial part of the Irish migrants who ended up in America travelled via Canada. The main departure point for the north western area of Ireland was the Irish port of Derry, where it had commercial links with Canada which went back a long way. Migrants could easily travel on timber ships to Canada.¹⁷⁷

The competition with the United States also meant that Canadian government officials searched for methods to draw settlers from the United States. The Lieutenant Governor of New Brunswick, William M. G. Colebrooke, hoped that the immigrants who had gone over to the United States could be “attracted [back] to Canada by the public employment held out to them in this quarter.”¹⁷⁸ In the same year, Lord Stanley, British Colonial Secretary, initially supported a plan by Charles Franks, the head of a land sales company, to set up a British agent in New York to encourage imperial subjects to settle in Canada. Franks wrote that, for immigrants in Canada “little is necessary to secure for them a high degree of prosperity” and more settlers

¹⁷⁷ Cecil Woodham-Smith, *Op.Cit.*, p.210; Irish potato famine:

<http://www.historyplace.com/worldhistory/famine/before.htm>. 15/04/2011, 08:32pm.

¹⁷⁸ Sir William M. G. Colebrooke to Lord Stanley, 27 May 1842, *Colonial Lands and Emigration, Correspondence Relative to Emigration, Part I: British North America, 1843*, in: P. Ford, and G. Ford, series ed, *Irish University Press Series of British Parliamentary Papers: Reports, Correspondence, and Other Papers Relating to the Affairs of Canada, 1842-46*, *Colonies: Canada, Volume 16*, Shannon, Ireland: Irish University Press, 1970, p. 499.

would be “a vast addition to British power in North America.”¹⁷⁹ Since settlers really were needed in Canada, enticements were made available in the form of extremely low fares, and many destitute famine victims took advantage of the situation with the intent of migrating south to the United States—legally or illegally—as soon as the opportunity arose. A special aura attached to America which Canada simply did not share: America had violently broken the tie with Britain, moreover, economic opportunities in Canada were not as attractive as in the United States, as a result, many Irish bought cheap tickets to Canada, only to travel to the United States. Canada's population was so limited, however, that it could not offer work to the large numbers of unskilled Irish laborers, but most important of all, the United States, with a population of more than 23,000,000 and a seemingly unlimited territory, offered the prospect of certain employment to any number of emigrants. The native Irishman had become convinced that no justice or opportunity could exist for him under the Union Jack, and he shrank from the British North American colonies, so, the consequence was that more Irish landing in Canada were passing southward across the border to the United States.¹⁸⁰ In this context, Thomas Colley Grattan wrote: “The Irishman looks on America as the refuge of his race, the home of his kindred, the heritage of his children and their children.”¹⁸¹ And although officials attempted to keep exact counts, most of them could not be sure how many people Canada was losing to the United States. Buchanan thought that 7,000 immigrants left Canada East (Quebec) and Canada West (Ontario) in 1846, but could not accurately count the number who went “from Canada to the United States along our extensive frontier.”¹⁸²

However, Canada appalled with the influx of sufferings, so in June 1847, Montreal mayor John E. Mills beseeched Queen Victoria to stop destitute and sickly Irish people from coming to Canada. As thousands of dying immigrants overran Montreal and filled its poorhouses and hospitals, Mills reported that “Canadians could not exclude the ship-loads of famishing beings arriving in search of food and

¹⁷⁹Charles Franks to Lord Stanley, 11 November 1842, Colonial Lands and Emigration, Correspondence Relative to Emigration, Part I: British North America, 1843, in *Ibid*, p. 452.

¹⁸⁰A.C. Buchanan to Earl of Elgin, 20 December 1848, P.R, Papers Relative to Emigration to the British Provinces in North America 1848: H.C,1849[1025], p.43; Extract from the Emigration Agent's Return of Arrivals in Quebec, from the 19th to 31st May 1850, in: P.R, Copies or extracts of any despatches relative to emigration to the North American colonies; in continuation of the papers presented to the House of Commons in July 1849, H.C,1851[348], pp.20-22; Census of Ireland, The census of Ireland for the year 1851, Part VI, General report, H.C,1856[2134], pp.9-10; Marjorie R. Fallows, *Op.Cit.*, p.25; Roger Daniels, *Op.Cit.*, p.128; Arnold Schrier, *Op.Cit.*, p.17; Cecil Woodham-Smith, *Op.Cit.*, pp. 209 -210. See: Conor Cruise O'Brien, *States of Ireland*, New York 1972, p.44 .

¹⁸¹Quoted in: Cecil Woodham-Smith, *Op.Cit.*, p.210.

¹⁸²A. C. Buchanan to Earl Cathcart, 24 December 1846, “Papers Relative to Emigration to the British Provinces in North America”, 1847, in: P. Ford, and G. Ford, series ed, Irish University Press Series of British Parliamentary Papers: Correspondence and Other Papers Relating to Canada and to Immigration in the Provinces, 1847-48, Colonies: Canada, Volume 17, Shannon, Ireland: Irish University Press, 1969, p. 55.

shelter.”¹⁸³ Canadians had more than financial reasons to be angry in 1847. Irish immigrants brought a deadly disease that infected communities and alarmed Canadians.¹⁸⁴ In this year, however, American and British policies caused more Irish immigrants than usual to travel to Canada, where the Irish could not easily be excluded, as they were subjects of the British Empire. The sickly Irish immigrants—many of whom were attempting to reach the United States—drained Canada’s finances, threatened its populace with disease and frustrated the Canadians who had provided for them by leaving Canada when they had the opportunity. Canada urged the British government to stop dumping paupers in Canada; the government responded by altering the Passenger Acts in 1847 and 1848, which changed the flow of immigrants to the United States. The British Passenger Acts were parliamentary laws which regulated the transportation of emigrants from the British Isles, dictating such details as the cleanliness and food aboard ships and the amount of space required for each passenger. If shipping companies could not cram as many emigrants into their ships because of space restrictions, they raised their prices to maintain a profit. The increased price meant that the routes to Canada and the United States were more comparable in price, so immigrants chose to sail directly to their desired destination, the United States. In this context, some newspapers advertised the existence of ships directly from British ports, especially Liverpool to the Boston and New York.¹⁸⁵

Canadians might have been willing to help poor immigrants if they had intended to stay to develop the country, but many Irish immigrants had no such intention. Canadians believed the aid they gave Irish immigrants was a total loss, as this transitory population simply sapped the resources of Canada before moving to the United States.¹⁸⁶ So, Canadians successfully pushed parliament to amend the passenger act in late 1847, where, the emigrant Act passed by the Canadian Legislature in 1848, which subjected emigrants and shipowners to heavy charges, especially in case of sickness breaking out at Sea. Where, it imposed stiffer penalties on ships for quarantine measures and raised taxes for passenger fees. Although the price for an adult passage was only five shillings higher than in 1847, the price for an

¹⁸³John E. Mills to Her Majesty the Queen, 23 June 1847, *Ibid.*, p. 204.

¹⁸⁴Further details are given in: John Roblin, Foreman: Grand Jury of the Prince Edward District, 9 October 1847, “Papers Relative to Emigration to the British Provinces in North America”, 1848, in BPP: Colonies: Canada, Vol. 17, p.390; G. M. Douglas to Earl of Elgin, 27 December 1847, in “Papers Relative to the Emigration to the British Provinces in North America,” 1848, *Ibid.*, p. 541.

¹⁸⁵GRC, Tenth general report of the Colonial Land and Emigration Commissioners, 1850, H.C, 1850 [1204], p. 15; Donald McKay, *Flight from Famine: The Coming of the Irish to Canada*, Toronto 1990, p.p. 161, 182; Cecil J. Houston and William J. Smyth, *Irish Emigration and Canadian Settlement: Patterns, Links, and Letters*, Toronto 1990, pp. 21-28; Margaret M. Mulrooney, *Op.Cit.*, p.p.135, 138; “The Liverpool Mercury and Lancashire General Advertiser” NO. 1885-VOL. XXXVII, Ref: 025LPMR18470511; “The Cork Examiner” Vol. VII No. 985, Ref: 025 CKEX18471229; “The Cork Examiner” Vol. VI No. 862, Ref: 025 CKEX18470315.

¹⁸⁶Further details are given in: “Morning Courier”, April 15 and July 21, 1847.

entire family's passage was now doubled. The burden of the act, while it lasted, was really severe on passenger vessels to Canada and in discouraging the adoption of the Quebec route by the emigrants of 1848.¹⁸⁷ The new passenger act did more than Canadians or the imperial government intended and dissuaded many immigrants from coming to Canada. Buchanan reported from Quebec that the number of immigrants arriving in 1848 was reduced because the passenger acts "terms were interpreted in a more severe sense than was intended," and he feared continued "misinterpretation to the same hurtful result."¹⁸⁸ The Committee of Executive Council on Matters of State communicated to the Earl of Elgin in January 1849 that the increased tax for passengers in Canada had "led to the erroneous opinion that there is a desire on the part of the Canadian Legislature to discourage immigration." Canadian and British officials had wanted to halt pauper immigration to Canada, not cut off all immigration. But they realised too late that increasing the cost of the trip to Canada would mean fewer immigrants choosing the route to British North America, as it will be explained later¹⁸⁹

Before the year of famine, however, a large emigration from Canada across the border and from the Atlantic Provinces to American ports went on. A recent Canadian act, refunds half the head money to passengers who go immediately to the western states by the Canadian public works. Of 253,221 emigrants who landed in Canada and New Brunswick, between 1845 and 1850 more than 73,000 proceeded instantly to the United States, while of 32,648 who landed in Canada in 1850, 13,723 took this course at once. In New Brunswick, in 1850, only 1,507 arrived at all; showing a great decrease from former years.¹⁹⁰

¹⁸⁷A.C. Buchanan to Earl of Elgin, 20 December 1848, P.R, Papers Relative to Emigration to the British Provinces in North America 1848, H.C, 1849[1025], p.31; GRC, Tenth general report of the Colonial Land and Emigration Commissioners, 1850, H.C, 1850 [1204], p.6; Copy of a dispatch from Governor-General the Right Hon. the Earl of Elgin to Earl Grey, PR, Papers relative to emigration to the British provinces in North America (In continuation of the papers presented December 1847), H.C, 1847-48[932][964][971][985], p.90; Edward E. Hale, Op.Cit., p.20; Arnold Schrier, Op. Cit., p.17.

¹⁸⁸Quoted in: A.C. Buchanan to Earl of Elgin, 20 December 1848, P.R, Papers Relative to Emigration to the British Provinces in North America, 1849, H.C, 1849[1025], p.31.

¹⁸⁹ Extract from a Report of a Committee of the Honourable the Executive Council on Matters of State, dated 17th January, 1849, approved by his Excellency the Governor-General, in Council on the same day, 17 January 1849, "Papers Relative to Emigration to the British Provinces in North America," 1849, in: P.Ford, and G. Ford, series ed, Irish University Press Series of British Parliamentary Papers: Reports, Correspondence, and Other Papers Relating to The Red River Settlement, the Hudson's Bay Company, and Other Affairs in Canada," 1849, Colonies: Canada, Volume 18, Shannon, Ireland: Irish University Press 1969, p. 479.

¹⁹⁰See: GRC, Tenth general report of the Colonial Land and Emigration Commissioners, 1850, H.C, 1850 [1204], pp.6-7; Extract from the Emigration Agent's Return of Arrivals in Quebec, from the 19th to 31st May 1850, P.R, Copies or extracts of any despatches relative to emigration to the North American colonies, in continuation of the papers presented to the House of Commons in July 1849, H.C, 1851[348], p.20; Edward E. Hale, Op.Cit., pp.20-21; Irish potato famine:

At this period, however, the United States was far from extending an indiscriminate welcome to emigrants. To be acceptable, they must be of good quality, healthy, and possessed of some resources. The United States was very conscious of her growing power and prosperity, and 'nativism', America for the Americans, was strong. Crossing the Atlantic in a United States ship to a United States port was more expensive than in a British ship to Canada; the U.S. Passenger Acts were stricter and fewer persons could be carried in relation to the size of the ship.¹⁹¹ The experience of the awful suffering of emigrants in 1847, when more who embarked for Canada in British vessels died on the way, or after arrival, called the attention of the British Government to the necessity of a more stringent law for passenger vessels. As we pointed out, the American laws, amending former statutes, had passed in February and March 1847, and no such terrible suffering took place on the American vessels, while the British law to regulate immigrant vessels and passengers, passed 15th March, 1848 covered the ground with care, though it was not yet so strict as American statute.¹⁹² It introduced several important alterations, in regard to the space to be allotted to emigrants; their medical examination at the port of departure; their treatment on the voyage, and the enforcement of cleanliness and order on board. The Act, however, was limited to emigrant vessels proceeding to North America. On the other hand, American ships were held to higher standards than British ships by the U.S. Passenger Acts. These Acts were to save American vessels from the terrors of the summer passage of 1847, and have done much to give a preference to American emigrant vessels, in which the general health of passengers has been better than could have been anticipated. Suffering, in cases where it has been made public, has more often come from the emigrant's negligence to supply his own stores sufficiently, than from other mismanagement. In a considerable degree this difficulty has been met by American Act of May 17, 1848, and the British Act of 1849.¹⁹³ The latter which was passed by Parliament in the Session of 1849 for regulating the carriage of passengers in merchant vessels, and which came into

<http://www.historyplace.com/worldhistory/famine/coffin.htm>. 15 /04/2011, 08:50pm.

¹⁹¹ Cecil Woodham-Smith, *Op.Cit.*, p.212.

¹⁹² Copy of a dispatch from Lieutenant-Governor Sir E. Head, Bart., to Earl Grey, PR, Papers relative to emigration to the British provinces in North America (In continuation of the papers presented December 1847), H.C,1847-48[932][964][971][985], p.152; Edward E. Hale, *Op.Cit.*, p.7; Denny Hatch, *Op.Cit.*, p. 45; BL, "The Cork Examiner" Vol. VII No. 985, Ref: 025CKEX18471229.

¹⁹³ GRC, Tenth general report of the Colonial Land and Emigration Commissioners, 1850, H.C, 1850 [1204], p. 15; Irish potato famine, Coffin Ships: <http://www.historyplace.com/worldhistory/famine/coffin.htm>. 15/04 / 2011, 08:50pm; Edward E. Hale, *Op.Cit.*, pp.11-13; Karen Price Hossell, *Op.Cit.*, p.37. For more details about the American Act 1848 see: P.R, Copies or extracts of any despatches relative to emigration to the North American and Australian colonies; in continuation of the papers presented to this House in August 1848 and February 1849, since those moved for on the 15th day of May last. (Part II.—North American colonies), H.C, 1849[593][593-II], pp.366-367.

operation on the 1st October in this year, was in the main a consolidation of the three Acts previously in force(1842,47,48).¹⁹⁴

Thus, we may conclude that in reaction to the conditions aboard the emigrant ships, both Great Britain and the United States attempted to reform the already-existing Passenger Acts. In 1849 the Passenger Acts were amended and shipboard conditions improved, so, vessels with emigrants from Great Britain to the United States, must comply with the provisions, both of the British Acts of 1849, its amendments of 1850; and the U.S. Passenger Acts of Feb. 22, March 2, 1847; and May17,1848. The Violations of the important parts of these statutes are comparatively few.¹⁹⁵

3.4 The situation of Ireland 1848-1850

O'Connell was unable to persuade Parliament to take quick action to deal with the Irish Famine. In his last speech in the House of Commons on 8 February 1847, he predicted that unless more aid was forthcoming from the British Government for Ireland one quarter of her population will perish, after that, O'Connell died on 15th May 1847 —as we mentioned in the first chapter. It was left to young Ireland to point the future directions of the nationalist movement, and it was obvious that his methods of winning repeal had failed utterly. New ideas became dominant, not least those propagated by the Young Ireland, but there were latent divisions within young Ireland itself, therefore the quarrels continued between them.¹⁹⁶

¹⁹⁴For more details about the British Act of 1849 see: GRC, Tenth general report of the Colonial Land and Emigration Commissioners, 1850, H.C, 1850[1204], pp.15-16; Extract from the Emigration Agent's Return of Arrivals in Quebec, from the 19th to 31st May 1850: P.R, Copies or extracts of any despatches relative to emigration to the North American colonies; in continuation of the papers presented to the House of Commons in July 1849, H.C, 1851[348], pp.19-20.

¹⁹⁵Further details are given in: Extract from the Emigration Agent's Return of Arrivals in Quebec, from the 19th to 31st May 1850: Ibid, pp.10-11, 19-20; Edward E. Hale, Op.Cit., pp.11-13; Karen Price Hossell, Op. Cit., p.37; Denny Hatch, Op.Cit., p.45.

¹⁹⁶Emily Lawless, Op.Cit., pp.388-393; John O'Beirne Ranelagh, Op.Cit., pp.103-107; Lawrence J. McCaffrey, Op.Cit., p.50; James Lydon, Op.Cit., p.296; Karl S. Bottigheimer, Op.Cit., p.183; Seán McConville, Op.Cit., pp.12- 21; Daniel O'Connell (1775-1847): <http://www.clarelibrary.ie/eolas/coclare/people/daniel.htm>. 30/ 05 /2010,09:50am; Daniel O'Connell: <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/11200c.htm>. 17/07/2010, 11: 05pm; Daniel O'Connell: http://multitext.ucc.ie/d/Daniel_OConnell.24/04/2010,10:15pm; Daniel O'Connell: <http://www.spartacus.schodnet.co.uk/Proconnell.htm>. 22/03/2010, 08:40am; Daniel O'Connell, one of the most remarkable men who ever lived: <http://altanews.blogspot.com/2010/10/daniel-oconnell-one-of-most-remarkable.html>. 22/03/2010, 08:55am.

Early in 1848, 'Young Ireland' decided the time was right for an armed uprising against the British. But the British, with spies everywhere, quickly became aware of this and reacted by bringing in even more troops and by enacting yet another law curtailing liberty. In desperation the Young Irelanders attempted an insurrection on the Tipperary– Kilkenny border in late July, but this was easily suppressed and the British pressured on the young Irelanders in this premature rebellion through coercion laws and the arrest of many leaders and other young Irelanders left the country for exile in France or north America,¹⁹⁷ where they contributed to the fierce hostility to English misrule in Ireland. James Stephens and others reached Paris and later helped to found the Fenian movement which was to keep alive the tradition of rebellion against British injustice, so the legacy of 1848 was to live on. John Mitchel, in his Jail Journal, insisted that as a result of the rebellion “The breach [with England] is every way widened and deepened; arms are multiplied, notwithstanding proclamations and searches; a fund of treason and disaffection is laid up for future use; and it will burn into the heart of the country till it find vent.”¹⁹⁸

In reality the rebellion of 1848 never posed a serious threat, as the Young Irelanders were not good planners or organizers, they failed to secure any firearms and most importantly could not provide food to the starving men of Ireland, so, without weapons, food, or adequate planning, the movement to violently oust the British fizzled and by autumn had disintegrated entirely. However, their movement was important to the future pattern of Irish republican nationalism.¹⁹⁹ On the other hand the rebellion in 1848 led Britain to more indifference towards the poverty and famine in Ireland.

This was the situation of Ireland in 1848, in addition to, in the fall of 1848; the blight returned in full and once again destroyed the entire potato crop. The famine continued until 1850, when the blight disappeared as suddenly as it had appeared,²⁰⁰ but weather conditions, cool and moist, had been ideal for the spread of fungus.

¹⁹⁷ Karl S. Bottigheimer, *Op. Cit.*, p.183; Emily Lawless, *Op.Cit.*, pp.394-395; Lawrence J. McCaffrey, *The Irish Diaspora in America*, p.50; John O'Beirne Ranelagh, *Op.Cit.*, pp.107-108; T. W. Moody and F. X. Martin, *Op.Cit.*, p. 216 ; James Lydon, *Op. Cit.*, p.301; Irish Potato famine: <http://www.historyplace.com/worldhistory/famine/before.htm>. 15/04/2011,08:32pm; Daniel O'Connell and Catholic Emancipation: <http://www.irishhistorylinks.net/History Links/Catholic Emancipation.html>. 11 /01 / 2010, 08: 20 am. For more details about rebellion of 1848 see: Seán McConville , *Op.Cit.*, pp.17-44.

¹⁹⁸ Quoted in: James Lydon, *Op. Cit.*, p.301. For more details about Fenian movement see: Seán McConville, *Op.Cit.*, pp.113-120.

¹⁹⁹ See: O'Beirne Ranelagh, *Op.Cit.*, p.108; Lawrence J. McCaffrey, *The Irish Diaspora in America*, pp.50-51; R. F. Foster, *Op.Cit.*, p.191; Richard B. Finnegan, *Op.Cit.*, p.20; T. W. Moody and F.X. Martin, *Op. Cit.*, p. 216; Irish Potato famine: <http://www.historyplace.com/worldhistory/famine/before.htm>.15/04/2011,08.32pm; John. see: Further details are giving in: Seán McConville , *Op.Cit.*, pp.49-79.

²⁰⁰ Gearoid O Tuathaigh, *Op.Cit.*, p.182; Karen Price Hossell, *Op.Cit.*, p.23; T.W Moody and F.X. Martin, *Op.Cit.*,p.226; Jay P. Dolan, *Op.Cit.*, p.68; Irish Potato famine: <http://www.historyplace.com/worldhistory/famine/before.htm>. 15/04/ 2011, 08:32 pm.

Massive amounts of potatoes had been planted all over Ireland, as the people had sold off any remaining possessions or borrowed money to buy seed potatoes, so, everyone gambled that it would be a good potato harvest and that the old way of life would soon return, but all over Ireland, the people watched in horror as their potato plants blackened and withered. The Irish became in this time more than ever need to depend on the British for their very survival, but British officials were in no mood to help, since the British were utterly flabbergasted the Irish had chosen once again to depend entirely on the potato after all that had happened, moreover, they also had deep anger over the failed insurrection and growing resentment toward a people they increasingly perceived as ungrateful.²⁰¹

Historians, both English and Irish, generally see the outbreak of the famine as inevitable, but think that disaster on the scale which actually occurred could have been avoided by more determined governmental action.²⁰² Some of them said “It is possible that they would: governments and economists of the period were inclined to regard the sufferings of the poor, of whatever nationality, as part of the natural order of things. But it is also true that English governments had never interested themselves energetically in the affairs of Ireland, except when these presented, or seemed to present, a threat to the security of England.”²⁰³ Based on that, there is some validity to the arguments of Irish nationalists that Britain was guilty of grave atrocities in her response to famine in Ireland. The government of the world's richest and most powerful nation could undeniably have done more to prevent the deaths of over a million people. By the Act of Union in 1800, Ireland had become part of the United Kingdom of Great Britain, but the government failed to provide for its people, causing ruin and starvation rather than prosperity. So, in a way, many of the famine dead and exiled were victims of a kind of ideological torture and murder, because British politicians administered relief within the narrow confines of *laissez faire* dogma. Because the ideology of political economy was more important than people—particularly poor Irish peasants—Tory and Whig governments did not make an all-out effort to save lives in Ireland, where, the measures adopted were pathetically inadequate to the scale of the unfolding disaster, and much of the bitterness the famine engendered resulted from the callous disregard for Irish life and suffering which those measures betrayed. A fundamental reason for such an inadequate response to the famine was the cultural imperialism of the English toward the Irish. Rather than being an equal partner in the

²⁰¹Irish Potato famine: <http://www.historyplace.com/worldhistory/famine/before.htm>. 15/04/2011, 08:32pm.

²⁰²Marie and Conor Cruise O'Brien, *A Concise History of Ireland*, New York 1972, p.106; Kerby A. Miller, *Op.Cit.*, p.286.

²⁰³Quoted in: Marie and Conor Cruise O'Brien, *Op.Cit.*,p.106.

United Kingdom, Ireland was looked upon as an inferior colony whose people were in need of reform.²⁰⁴

Thus, religious and cultural prejudices as well as laissez faire dogma influenced British attitudes toward misfortune in Ireland, as we previously mentioned, in addition to its influence on the opinion of some British economists with famine, such as Nassau Senior, a prominent economist who advised Whig political leaders, viewed the Great Famine as a solution to the Irish population problem, regretting only its limited efficiency. Moreover, some British newspapers and periodicals of the time also reflected British racial and religious prejudices. They argued that the Irish rebellion in 1848 had demonstrated that Irish ingrates did not deserve British help or sympathy. The influential Tory Quarterly Review in the late 1840s claimed that the famine attacked an inferior race, people who were victims of their own vices: “all of civilization, arts, comfort, wealth that Ireland enjoys she owes exclusively to England . . . all of her absurdities, errors, misery she owes to herself . . . this unfortunate result is mainly attributable to that confusion of ideas, that instability of purpose, and above all, that reluctance to steady work which are indubitable features of the national character.”²⁰⁵

For the Irish, the winter of 1848-49 would be the long night of sorrow as Trevelyan and the British Parliament enacted one harsh measure after another amid all of the suffering. Landlords and gentry, now deeper in debt than ever, forcibly ejected remaining tenants then pulled down their houses to save on taxes. Eviction in winter usually meant death, where, the people clothed in filthy rags, wandered aimlessly or headed in the general direction of the workhouse, often collapsing from fever and exposure long before getting there.²⁰⁶ People remembered these brutal evictions for years to come, as one eyewitness described what happened to a family in Tipperary when they were evicted “.....It was a sight I have never forgotten. The winter of 1848-49 dwells in my memory as one long night of sorrow.”²⁰⁷

Reports of the conditions reached London, but there was little compassion for the Irish left in Britain, where, an exasperated Prime Minister Russell declared: “We have subscribed, worked, visited, clothed, for the Irish, millions of money, years of debate, etc., etc., etc. The only return is rebellion and calumny. Let us not grant, lend, clothe, etc., any more, and see what that will do...”²⁰⁸ Thus, the Irish would continue to pay for their own relief without any help from the British treasury. Farmers and

²⁰⁴Jay P. Dolan, Op.Cit., pp.73-74; Lawrence J. McCaffrey, *The Irish Diaspora in America*, p.57; Karl S. Bottigheimer, Op.Cit., p.179.

²⁰⁵ Quoted in: Lawrence J. McCaffrey, *The Irish Diaspora in America*, pp.57-58.

²⁰⁶ Irish Potato famine: <http://www.historyplace.com/worldhistory/famine/before.htm>. 15/04/2011, 08:32pm.

²⁰⁷ Quoted in: Jay P. Dolan, Op.Cit., p.71.

²⁰⁸ Quoted in: Irish Potato famine: <http://www.historyplace.com/worldhistory/famine/before.htm>. 15/04/2011, 08: 32 pm.

landlords, Trevelyan decided, would in this time be taxed at an increased rate to provide minimal relief to starving paupers. But the alarming news that there would be yet another tax increase, impossible for most to pay, simply ignited the desire among any remaining mid-sized farmers and proprietors to quit Ireland entirely and head for America,²⁰⁹ thus, the potato disaster of 1848 had sparked a new exodus to America. By the tens of thousands, the Irish boarded ships and departed their beloved homeland, heading to Boston, New York, Charleston, Savannah, and New Orleans, arriving there in tattered clothes, sick from the voyage, disoriented, afraid, perhaps even terrified, but with a glimmer of hope.²¹⁰ The thousands of emigrants who received support and assistance in Saint John Emigrants Hospital, New Brunswick, between April 30th 1848 and August 1st 1849. The 'sick return' recorded such information as the patient's name, age, place of birth, circumstances of disability, date of death or discharge, time spent in hospital, where they had sailed from, where they landed, and the date they had arrived in port. Most common ailments recorded were: Dysentery, Fever, Destitution, and Venereal Disease.²¹¹

A description of the suffering from starvation on the ship "Speed," of St. John, which had twelve weeks passage to New York, in the autumn and winter of 1848 the most terrific accounts of lingering distress. But it was a case, which belongs of course, rather to the general hazards of the sea than, to this particular emigration. After all, the comfort or discomfort, the health or the sickness in a particular passage, depends upon the weather, the winds, the conditions of the passengers, and a world of other unmanageable circumstances.²¹² Some government reports described the suffering of emigrants on the ships, this seems clear in letter from Dr. Douglas the Medical Superintendent at the quarantine station at Quebec, in 16 May 1848 to Governor-General of Canada, describing the wretched state in which the majority of the passengers of the ship "Governor" have been sent from Limerick. He stated that this vessel cleared with 174 souls, 120 of whom were tenants from the estates of Colonel Wyndham; these people were huddled on board, almost destitute of clothing and without beds and bedding. He added: "Out of 174 who left, 120 have died up to last night, and as many more are sent to hospital."²¹³ Also, when the Government Emigration Officer in St. John, reported the arrival of ship "John Francis" from Cork,

²⁰⁹ Gearoid O Tuathaigh, *Op.Cit.*, p.182 .

²¹⁰ Irish Potato famine: <http://www.historyplace.com/worldhistory/famine/before.htm>. 15/04/2011, 08: 32 pm.

²¹¹ See: PRONI: 19th Century Emigration to the North Americas, Hospitals: http://www.proni.gov.uk/index/exhibitions_talks_and_events/19th_century_emigration_to_the_north_america_online/the_promised_land/hospitals.htm. 01/05/2011, 10:30 am.

²¹² Edward E. Hale, *Op.Cit.*, pp.15-16.

²¹³ Quoted in: Copy of a dispatch from Governor-General the Right Hon. the Earl of Elgin and Kincardine to Earl Grey, in: PR, Papers relative to emigration to the British provinces in North America (In continuation of the papers presented December 1847), H.C,1847-48[932][964][971][985], p.131.

with 183 passengers in June 8, 1848, he pointed out that the passengers by this vessel, being peasantry from the extreme south west of Ireland, are quite destitute, and there is a larger number than usual of aged persons among them. And they intend proceeding to the United States as soon as they can raise means.²¹⁴

It can say that some of the finest vessels, under careful captains, bring in, after a short run, a sickly and suffering freight of passengers, on the same day when a heavy built, carelessly arrayed ship, with a commander unused to the trade. The reason for such difference, is sometimes that the passengers of the first have been at sea in another ship, and have put back, so as to sail already exhausted, or they have been long waiting passage at the port they sailed from, or for some other reason, were, not in good condition for the restriction and other hardships of the voyage. The provision for detained passengers, humane enough in its intention, of the British passage act, aggravates danger of such passengers' sailing unprepared. It provides that: "in a case a failure of the voyage arises from wreck or any other accident or default after the voyage has actually begun, the passengers are entitled, within six weeks at farthest, to a passage in some eligible vessel, and in the meantime to be maintained by the master."²¹⁵ This, seems clear in the ship "Princess" which sailed in June 1848, from Dublin for Boston with 80 passengers was compelled, after landing all her passengers except eighteen, who were sick, to put into the port of Dorchester. On her arrival at Boston, bonds to the amount of 1000 dollars for each passenger who was sick were demanded by the authorities there. In Dorchester, Dr. Murphy of Sackville took charge of the emigrants, and of five of the crew who were also ill with fever. After the passengers recovered, they were desirous of proceeding to Boston, their place of destination, for which their passage-money has been paid.²¹⁶

Although, by 1849 the blight was less severe, however, of the 130 unions in Ireland, up to seventy were now on the verge of financial ruin due to insufficient tax revenues. Responding to this, Trevelyan decided that prosperous unions should be forced to provide funds to the distressed unions, meaning that, there would be a drain of money from the few remaining stable areas into ruined areas, breaking all of Ireland financially.²¹⁷ For the British, this served several purposes: It was a

²¹⁴ For more details about the immigrants by the ship "John Francis" see: Ibid, p.141.

²¹⁵ Quoted in: Edward E. Hale, Op.Cit., p.16.

²¹⁶ Copy of a dispatch from Lieutenant-Governor Sir E. Head, Bart., to Earl Grey, in: PR, Papers relative to emigration to the British provinces in North America (In continuation of the papers presented December 1847), H.C,1847-48[932][964][971][985], pp.143-145; Edward E. Hale,Op.Cit.,pp.16-17; Marjorie R. Fallows, Op.Cit., p.25.

For more details about the state of the Irish Immigrants in the other ships in 1848 see: PR, Papers relative to emigration to the British provinces in North America (In continuation of the papers presented December 1847), pp.145-148.

²¹⁷ Gearoid O Tuathaigh, Op.Cit.,p.182; Irish Potato Famine, Financial Ruin (The Long Night of Sorrow) :

continuation of the punitive mentality toward the Irish; left Ireland entirely dependent upon itself for relief; and perhaps most importantly, a financially ruined Ireland would be compelled "to abandon the treacherous potato" once and for all. Thus, the long-awaited opportunity to reform Ireland had finally arrived, but the plan also had the potential for catastrophic consequences, recognized by some of the British officials who spoke out, including Poor Law Commissioner Edward Twisleton who resigned his post in Ireland stating: "The destitution here is so horrible and the indifference of the House of Commons to it so manifest...". Moreover, Lord Lieutenant Clarendon also criticized the lack of government funds: "...it is enough to drive one mad, day after day, to read the appeals that are made and to meet them all with a negative...I don't think there is another legislature in Europe that would disregard such suffering as now exists in the west of Ireland..."²¹⁸

Fears began to surface within the British government of the Irish suddenly dropping dead by the tens of thousands and the possible impact such scenes might have upon world opinion of the British Crown. In spite of this, nothing further was done, even after an outbreak of cholera ravaged the overflowing workhouses. The whole population of the starving country began to move about, so cities, villages and entire districts were abandoned, and western Ireland was nearly depleted of its population. Moreover, among country folk, the centuries-old communal way of life with its traditional emphasis on neighborly sharing, now collapsed, it was replaced by a survival mentality in which every family, every person fended for themselves, and family bonds also disintegrated as starving parents deserted their children and children likewise deserted their parents.²¹⁹

Thus, in the winter of 1849-50 some ships were obliged to put back, after having been out for 70 days;-their passengers were, of course transferred, as soon as possible, to other vessels by the masters, who were responsible. It is not surprising that among such passengers, thus reduced, ship-fever should break out, whatever the vessel's accommodations, that the ship-fever, commonly so called, is a severe form of Irish typhus;—a disease wholly different from the typhoid fever, long known, under various names, in New England.²²⁰ Moreover, the cholera appeared among the emigrants of 1849 on board the Quebec passenger-ships, and in this context, Buchanan the Chief Agent, pointed out to the deaths caused by cholera on the passage and in quarantine, where, he stated that among 27,660 from Ireland, including Liverpool, since, as in former years, the emigrants from this port are almost altogether

<http://www.historyplace.com/worldhistory/famine/before.htm>. 15/04/2011, 08:32 pm.

²¹⁸ Quoted in: *Ibid.*

²¹⁹ *Ibid.*

²²⁰ Edward E. Hale, *Op.Cit.*, pp.16-17.

Irish, were 898, equal to 3,25 per cent. The greatest proportionate mortality occurred on board of vessels from the ports of Newry, Limerick, Dublin and Liverpool.²²¹

The following is a statement of number of passenger, deaths, and births among the emigration of 1849 on board the Quebec passenger-ships from Ireland, excluding Liverpool, according to report of Buchanan, in the same year.

Ports whence sailed	Number of vessels	Passengers		Deaths		Number of births	Landed in the colony
		steerage	Cabin	At sea	In quarantine		
Belfast	11	2,487	25	8	. .	4	2,508
Cork	11	1,109	27	34	. .	2	1,104
Donegal	4	474	14	4	1	1	484
Dublin	10	2,253	24	84	7	8	2,191
Galway	2	20	. .	6	. .	1	196
Killala	2	210	13	. .	. .	. .	223
Kilrush	2	218	2	. .	. .	1	221
Limerick	43	7,031	254	313	40	14	6,946
Londonderry	4	467	12	. .	. .	2	481
New ross	8	1,938	8	63	6	3	1,880
Newry	6	851	10	60	1	. .	802
Sligo	12	1,516	25	44	1	. .	1,496
Tralee	8	895	2	40	..	2	859
Waterford	17	2,764	66	39	6	6	2,791
Westport	6	822	32	34	7	5	818
Wexford	1	8	. .	. .	. .	. .	8
Wicklow	1	1	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .
Youghall	2	115	3	1	. .	. .	23,126
	150	23,357	517	730	69	51	23,126

Nevertheless, Buchanan stated that from May 1849 onward, in general, emigrants landed at Quebec in good health, with the exception of those on board several vessels, especially from Limerick and Sligo, where, the mortality occurred on board these vessels from cholera and dysentery. Although the first mentioned disease broke out among the passengers, but after a few days disappeared.²²² Moreover, report of the emigration officer at St. John, New Brunswick, in May 1849, described the situation of emigrants on the six emigrant vessels (British Queen, Magog, Londonderry, Goliah, Pallas and John), where, pointed out that these emigrants

²²¹Further details are giving in: GRC, Report from the Chief Agent of Emigration in Canada for year 1849, and other documents, H.C, 1850[173], pp.4-5; GRC, Tenth general report of the Colonial Land and Emigration Commissioners, 1850, H.C, 1850[1204], p. 27.

²²²Extracts from the notes appended to the periodical reports of arrivals of passenger-ships at the Ports of Quebec and Montreal, in the Season of 1849, GRC, Report from the Chief Agent of Emigration in Canada for year 1849, and other documents, H.C, 1850 (173), pp.20-23.

arrived at St. John from Ireland and Liverpool in April and May 1849, in good health and cleanly condition and they will, with few exceptions, proceed almost immediately to Boston.²²³ In 1850, the Colonial Land and Emigration Commissioners said “when we consider the extent to which cholera prevailed last year in this country (Canada), and in Ireland at the ports from which emigrants sailed, and remember the effect produced by it in 1833 among the emigrants to Canada, we cannot but feel that there is great cause to be thankful that the suffering and mortality last year were no greater.” So, they attributed this result, under providence, to the greater care in this time observed in the medical inspection of emigrants before they are allowed to embark,—to the better regulations on board,—and to the limitation of the numbers in proportion to space and tonnage. And they added: “Nor can we omit the stricter enforcement of sanitary regulations at Liverpool among the efficient causes of the smaller mortality from cholera in the masses of emigrants who sailed from that port.”²²⁴

It is worthy to mention that the Irish in this time continued in shunned the British colonies not only because of a deep-seated hatred of England but for practical reasons as well, which some of them were pointed out previously.²²⁵ After the new passenger acts went into effect, emigration officials noticed that the emigrants departing Ireland were almost all headed to the United States. Charles Friend, an inspecting officer for the Royal Navy, reported from his post at Cobh, Ireland in 1849 that although there was “every prospect of a large emigration to the United States this season, that to the North American Colonies will be very small. Indeed, there is no intention at present to charter any vessels for them.” He added that the “heavy tax on emigrants seems quite to have driven emigration to the United States.”²²⁶ So, from 1848 to 1851, Irish departures for the United States outnumber those for Canada as a result of the increased price of passage to Canada and other British colonies, moreover, a voyage from Liverpool to New York was about ten days shorter than a similar one to Quebec although the latter passage was slightly cheaper.²²⁷ It can say also that so long as the emigration was comparatively small, the proportion for which

²²³For more details about the situation of emigrants on the six emigrant vessels see: Copy of a despatch from Lieutenant-Governor Sir E. Head, Bart., to Earl Grey, Copies or extracts of any despatches relative to emigration to the North American and Australian colonies; in continuation of the papers presented to this House in August 1848 and February 1849, since those moved for on the 15th day of May last. (Part II.—North American colonies), H.C., 1849[593] [593-II], pp.331-337.

²²⁴GRC, Tenth general report of the Colonial Land and Emigration Commissioners, 1850, H.C., 1850[1204], p. 27.

²²⁵ See: pp. 52-53 in this chapter.

²²⁶Quoted in: P.R., “Papers Relative to Emigration to the British Provinces in North America”, 1849: Charles Friend, R.N. to Emigration Commissioners, 31 January 1849, in BPP: Colonies: Canada, Vol. 18, p. 491.

²²⁷GRC, Tenth general report of the Colonial Land and Emigration Commissioners, 1850, H.C., 1850[1204], p.p.1,6; GRC, Twelfth General Report of the Colonial Land and Emigration Commissioners 1852, H.C., 1852[1499], p.14; Arnold Schrier, Op.Cit., p.17; Roger Daniels, Op.Cit., p.128; Cecil Woodham-Smith, Op.Cit., p. 206.

the British American Provinces could find employment and a home formed no inconsiderable part of the whole. But as emigration increased, without any corresponding increase in the means of employment in British North America, the numbers who were compelled to look for a home in the United States became larger. These again, by sending home funds to enable their friends and relations to emigrate, assisted, to keep up the stream of emigration to the States and at the same time other circumstances, such as the superior accommodation on board the American liners, and the comparative shortness of the voyage to New York; conduced to the same end.²²⁸ However, it appears, from the reports of the several Poor Law inspectors in Ireland, that the pauper emigrants sent out by the Boards of guardians in country Kerry have chiefly gone to Canada, and that the unions made some provision for the emigrants on landing, in most cases not less than 10s.²²⁹ In this context, Buchanan pointed out in his report in 1849, that the number aided in their emigration from Ireland was 4,992, being an increase over the same class in 1848 of 2,487. He stated also that they had been sent out by the Poor Law Unions or private individuals in Ireland, and some emigrants received from 10 s. to 20 s. each person, to assist them in reaching their destination.²³⁰

In 1849, in details the process of Irish emigration from Britain to the United States, beginning with the arrival of the emigrants to Liverpool which was the great port to connect with the United States, the first care of the emigrants, if their passage have not previously been paid for them by their friends in New York, is to pay their passage-money, and make the best bargain they can with the passenger-brokers. The competition in this trade is very great, and fares, accordingly, vary from day to day, and even from hour to hour, being sometimes as high as 5 Pounds per passenger in the steerage, and sometimes as low as 3 pounds 10 shillings. The walls of Liverpool are thoroughly placarded with the notices of the days of sailing of the various packets, for which many firms act as passenger-brokers, and set forth in large letters the excellent qualities of such well known and favourite packets as the Yorkshire, the New World,

²²⁸ Further details are given in: GRC, Tenth general report of the Colonial Land and Emigration Commissioners, 1850, H.C, 1850[1204], pp.6-7; Extracts from the notes appended to the periodical reports of arrivals of passenger-ships at the Ports of Quebec and Montreal, in the Season of 1849: GRC, Report from the Chief Agent of Emigration in Canada for year 1849, and other documents, H.C, 1850 [173], p.20; GRC, Eleventh general report of the Colonial Land and Emigration Commissioners, 1851, H.C, 1851[1383], p.6.

²²⁹ P.R, Copies or extracts of any despatches relative to emigration to the North American colonies, in continuation of the papers presented to the House of Commons in July 1849, H.C, 1851 [348], p.55.

²³⁰ For more details about the numbers of persons assisted to emigrate by the Unions or private individuals in Ireland see: GRC, Report from the Chief Agent of Emigration in Canada for year 1849, and other documents, H.C, 1850[173], pp.7-8.

the Isaac Webb, the West Point, the Constitution, the Isaac Wright, the London, the Star of the West, the Queen of the West, and scores of others.²³¹

The average number of steerage passengers that can be accommodated in these fine vessels (which are mostly owned in New York) is 400; but some of them, such as the Isaac Webb, can comfortably make room for double that number. After the emigrant has chosen the ship by which he will sail, and perhaps run the gauntlet through scores of designing and unscrupulous 'man-catchers'-a class of persons who get a commission from the passenger-brokers for each emigrant that they bring to the office-his next duty is to present himself at the Medical Inspector's Office.²³² Before an emigrant could go on board at Liverpool, he must be examined by a medical inspector. Medical men are licensed by the authorities to make the requisite examinations, and allowed a fee of one guinea for every hundred persons inspected. They must certify that the emigrant has no contagious disease; and they also examine the ship's medicine chests, to see that they are properly provided. If the emigrant is free from contagious disease, the physician stamps his ticket with a certificate to that effect, and then the passengers go on board ships at the time directed by the passenger broker.²³³ All persons who may be discovered to be affected with any infectious disease, either at the original port of embarkation or at any port in the United Kingdom into which the vessel may subsequently put, are to be re-landed, with those members of their families, if any, who may be dependent upon them, or unwilling to be separated from them, together with their clothes and effects. Passengers re-landed are entitled to receive back their passage-money, which may be recovered from the party to whom it was paid, or from the owner, charterer, or master of the ship, by summary process, before two or more justices of the peace.²³⁴

The scene in the Waterloo dock, at Liverpool, where all the American sailing packets are stationed, is at all times a very busy one; but, on the morning of the departure of a large ship, with a full complement of emigrants, it is peculiarly exciting and interesting. The passengers have undergone inspection, and many of them have taken up their quarters on board for twenty-four hours previously, as they are entitled

²³¹ "Illustrated London News", July 6, 1850; The Tide of Emigration to The United States and to the British Colonies: <http://www.cornwall-online.co.uk/history/cmi/emi.htm>. 07/09/2011, 02:00 pm.

²³² "Illustrated London News", July 6, 1850; The Tide of Emigration to The United States and to the British Colonies: <http://www.cornwall-online.co.uk/history/cmi/emi.htm>. 07/09/2011, 02:00 pm.

²³³ Edward E. Hale, Op.Cit., p.14; "Illustrated London News", July 6, 1850; The Tide of Emigration to The United States and to the British Colonies: <http://www.cornwall-online.co.uk/history/cmi/emi.htm>. 07/09/2011, 02:00 pm. For more details about the New Passenger Act 1849 See: Abstract of the New Passenger Act, 12 and 13 Vic. cap. 33, as regards to voyages to North America: <http://www.theshipslist.com/Forms/passengeract1849.htm>. 07/09/2011, 02:30 pm.

²³⁴ "Illustrated London News", July 6, 1850; The Tide of Emigration to The United States and to the British Colonies: <http://www.cornwall-online.co.uk/history/cmi/emi.htm>. 07/09/2011, 02:00 pm.

to do by terms of the act of Parliament. Many of them brought, in addition to the boxes and trunks containing their worldly wealth, considerable quantities of provisions, although it must be confessed that the scale fixed by the government to be supplied to them by the ship to keep in health and comfort all among them. There are usually a large number of spectators at the dock-gates to witness the final departure of the ship, with its large freight of human beings,²³⁵ in this context, the correspondent of the *Morning Chronicle*, on the Liverpool Labor and the Liverpool poor, gave a graphic description of the scene, he went down the Mersey in an emigrant vessel, he said “There was not a wet eye on board; there had been no fond leave-takings; no farewells to England; no pangs at parting, possibly there was no necessity for any. To ninety-nine out of a hundred of these emigrants the Old Country had been in all probability an "unkind mother", a country of sorrow and distress, associated only with remembrances of poverty and suffering.”²³⁶

A ship is generally towed by a steam-tug five or ten miles down the Mersey; and during the time occupied in traversing these ten miles, two very important ceremonies have to be gone through: the first is 'the Search for Stowaways'; and the second is the 'Roll-call of the Passengers', thus, before the ship leaves Mersey, a search is made for stowaways. These are persons who have secreted themselves, with the concurrence, perhaps, of passengers, in hope of getting a passage for nothing. Moreover, the ship has to pay a poll-tax of one dollar and a half per passenger to the State of New York; and if any of the poor emigrants are helpless and deformed persons, the owners are fined in the sum of seventy five dollars for bringing them, and are compelled to enter in a bond to the city of New York that they will not become a burden on the public. To avoid this risk, the medical officer of the ship passes them under inspection; and if there be a pauper cripple among the number who cannot give security that he has friends in America to take charge of him of arrival, and provide for him afterwards, the captain may refuse to take him. The process of verification and inspection generally takes two to four hours, according to the number of emigrants on board; and, during its progress, some noteworthy incidents occasionally arise, especially with regard to the stowaways.²³⁷ In general, it can say that most

²³⁵“*Illustrated London News*”, July 6, 1850; *The Tide of Emigration to The United States and to the British Colonies*: <http://www.cornwall-online.co.uk/history/cmi/emi.htm>. 07/09/2011, 02:00 pm.

²³⁶ Quoted in: Edward E. Hale, *Op.Cit.*, p.14.

²³⁷Further details are giving in: P.R, Copies or extracts of any despatches relative to emigration to the North American colonies; in continuation of the papers presented to the House of Commons in July 1849, H.C, 1851[348], pp.19-20; Letter from H. U. Addington, Esq. Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, enclosing Copies of Laws respecting Immigration, passed in the State of New York: P.R, Copies or extracts of any despatches relative to emigration to the North American and Australian colonies; in continuation of the papers presented to this House in August 1848 and February 1849, since those moved for on the 15th day of May last. (Part II.—North American colonies), H.C, 1849[593][593-II], pp.361-365; Edward E. Hale, *Op. Cit.*, pp.14-15; “*Illustrated London News*”, July 6, 1850; *The Tide of Emigration to The United States and to the British Colonies*: <http://www.cornwall-online.co.uk/history/cmi/emi.htm>. 07/09/2011, 02:00 pm.

vessels complied with the provisions of the Passenger Act, and Legal proceedings were taken against the masters of several vessels at Liverpool, Limerick and Cork for violation of the Act.²³⁸

By 1850, although some counties did suffer a substantial failure, it was clear that the blight was on the wane and the worst of the famine was over. In this time the maximum number receiving poor relief outside the workhouses had fallen to 148,000, less than a fifth of the previous year's total, and this trend was to continue in succeeding years,²³⁹ so, Irish emigration in 1850 falls considerably short of the emigration during 1849. In this context, the emigration commissioners stated that they were not possessed information which would enable them to offer an opinion as to the causes of this change; but they thought that it may be caused by a diminution of the pressure of distress on the labouring classes. This reason also explains decrease the emigration in some years after 1850.²⁴⁰

It deserves to be noticed, that to estimate properly the conveniences or inconveniences of the passage, you must take the certainly of seasickness into account, and that, too, it must be remembered, is the sickness of people quite unused to caring for themselves.²⁴¹ Although passengers crossing the Atlantic were still subject to seasickness contagious diseases in this time, they were much more likely to survive the voyage than they would have been in earlier years. Many had crossings similar to that of Samuel Laird, who wrote to his mother in May 1850 after arriving in Philadelphia: "I am safely arrived after a passage of 28 days, nothing transpired worth noticing on the passage only one great blessing that we all enjoyed good health."²⁴² Also, the Colonial Land and Emigration commissioners stated: "We are happy to be able to state that from the report of the emigration agent at Quebec, which has been recently received, as well as from the report of the emigration agent in New Brunswick, it appears that the emigrants to Canada and New Brunswick suffered little

²³⁸Further details are given in: Extracts from the notes appended to the periodical reports of arrivals of passenger-ships at the Ports of Quebec and Montreal, in the Season of 1849: GRC, Report from the Chief Agent of Emigration in Canada for year 1849, and other documents, H.C, 1850 [173], pp.20-23.

²³⁹ Gearoid O Tuathaigh, *Op.Cit.*, p.182,193.

²⁴⁰ GRC, Tenth general report of the Colonial Land and Emigration Commissioners, 1850, H.C, 1850[1204], pp. 36-37; GRC, Seventeenth general of the Emigration Commissioners, H.C, 1857, Session 2, [2249], pp.4-6.

For more details about the numbers of Irish who emigrated after 1850 see: GRC, Fourteenth general report of the Colonial Land and Emigration Commissioners 1854, H.C, 1854[1833], pp.6-8; GRC, Fifteenth general report of the Colonial Land and Emigration Commissioners, 1855, H.C, 1854-55[1953], pp.5-8; GRC, Seventh annual Report of the Commissioners for Administering the Laws for Relief of the Poor in Ireland: with appendices, H.C, 1854[1785], pp.13-14.

²⁴¹ Edward E. Hale, *Op.Cit.*, p.15-16.

²⁴² Quoted in: Karen Price Hossell, *Op.Cit.*, p.37.

during last year from sickness on the voyage or immediately after arrival.”²⁴³ No matter what hardships they suffered during the voyage, these were only the first of many challenges the emigrants would face, but their next challenge was making themselves at home in their new country.²⁴⁴

Thus, most Irish emigrants, who arrived at Canada in May 1850, were in excellent health and they were farmers, labourers, servants, and mechanics. The amended Passenger Act, which came into operation this spring, has so far worked most satisfactorily; “not a single complaint has been made by the passengers of any of these vessels, and the increased scale of provisions has, no doubt, tended to the comfort and health of the passengers.”²⁴⁵ The emigration commissioners pointed out that the emigrants from Ireland were on the whole of a somewhat better class in 1850 than in former years. Still the great bulk must have been, the mere labouring population, and were no doubt enabled to emigrate principally by the assistance of friends and relations who had preceded them. These sums returned them as paid for passages in America, or sent home to relations and friends, principally in Ireland. In 1848 and 1849, were respectively £460,000 and £540,000, but in the course of 1850 upwards of £957,000.²⁴⁶

	£
In 1848 upwards of	460,000
1849	540,000
1850	957,000
1851	990,000
1852	1,404,000
1853	1,439,000

It is worth mentioning that the when money was first sent home in 1847 or 1848, it was, almost exclusively intended to enable those who were left behind in the mother country to join their more fortunate relatives who had preceded them; indeed, it has been stated that at that time it was the practice to make up a sum to send out one

²⁴³ Quoted in: GRC, Eleventh general report of the Colonial Land and Emigration Commissioners, 1851, H.C, 1851[1383], p.6.

²⁴⁴ Further details are giving in: Karen Price Hossell, *Op.Cit.*, pp.36-37.

²⁴⁵ Quoted in: Periodical reports of arrivals of Passenger Ships at the Ports of Quebec and Montreal in the Season of 1850: P.R, Copies or extracts of any despatches relative to emigration to the North American colonies; in continuation of the papers presented to the House of Commons in July 1849, H.C, 1851 [348], p. 36.

²⁴⁶ Census of Ireland, The census of Ireland for the year 1851, Part VI, General report, H.C, 1856 [2134], pp. 54-55; GRC, Fourteenth general report of the Colonial Land and Emigration Commissioners 1854, H.C, 1854 [1833], p.6; GRC, Eleventh general report of the Colonial Land and Emigration Commissioners, 1851, H.C, 1851 [1383], p.6.

member of a family in order that he might earn and remit the amount necessary to purchase passages for the remainder. But the remittances in 1853-1854 had far exceeded the amounts necessary for such a purpose. The whole expense of Irish emigration in 1853 did not probably exceed £ 825,000, while the amount remitted was upwards of £1,439,000. The expense of the same emigration in 1854 could scarcely have exceeded £616,000, while the amount remitted reaches to £1,730,000. It is probable that in both years the amount appropriated from these remittances towards emigration was considerably less than the whole expense.²⁴⁷

By 1851, the year of greatest emigration from Ireland to America, minimum provisions of food and hygiene were much higher than thirty years earlier. New regulations also required each passenger to undergo a medical examination before being allowed on board and to prove they had the minimum amount of clothing as laid down in the regulations.²⁴⁸ So, report of the Medical Superintendent at the Quarantine Station of Grosse Isle, showing the excellent general health and condition of the immigrants who have already arrived at Quebec this season: "I have much satisfaction in being able to report, that the general health and condition of these passengers is superior to that of any passengers whom I have inspected since 1845."²⁴⁹

Finally, the emigration commissioners stated in 1851 that the emigration through Liverpool has increased very largely during the last three years, while the emigration direct from Irish ports has decreased, though not quite to the same extent. This has no doubt been caused by the cheapness of the ships from Liverpool, and by their superior accommodation, and they added: "As there seems good reason to expect that before long screw steam- vessels will be introduced into the emigrant

²⁴⁷ Census of Ireland, The census of Ireland for the year 1851, Part VI, General report, H.C, 1856 [2134], pp.54-55; Fifteenth general report of the Colonial Land and Emigration Commissioners, 1855, H.C,1854-55 [1953], p.8; GRC, Eleventh general report of the Colonial Land and Emigration Commissioners, 1851, H.C, 1851 [1383], p.6; GRC, Twelfth general report of the Colonial Land and Emigration Commissioners, H.C, 1852 [1499], p.7. Further details are giving in: John Francis Maguire, *Op.Cit.*, pp.321-332.

²⁴⁸For more details about the Emigrant's manual see: PRONI: 19th Century Emigration to the North Americas, Passenger Acts:

http://www.proni.gov.uk/index/exhibitions_talks_and_events/19th_century_emigratin_to_the_north_americaonline_helping_hands/passenger_acts.htm, 01/05/2011, 09:10 am; Enclosure to Lord Hobart's Letter of 13 January 1851 to the Colonial Land and Emigration Commissioners: GRC, Copy of a letter from Lord Hobart to the Colonial Land and Emigration Commissioners; enclosing letter detailing the treatment of the passengers on board the emigrant ship "Washington," on the passage to New York, H.C, 1851[198], p.2.

²⁴⁹Quoted in: P.R, Copies or extracts of any despatches relative to emigration to the North American colonies, in continuation of the papers presented to the House of Commons in July 1849, H.C, 1851[348], p.10.

trade between Liverpool and New York, we may expect that the flow of emigration through Liverpool will rather increase than diminish.”²⁵⁰

3.5 Features of the Great Famine Emigration

The history of Ireland and America changed forever when famine struck in the mid-1840s, where, spurred the largest influx of Irish emigration to the United States in American history, and consequently intertwined the fates of Ireland and America. William Shannon stated that, “The main story of the Irish in America begins with the famine generation who began to come to this country after 1830.”²⁵¹ In the early nineteenth century Ireland had experienced several famines, but because it was so devastating, the famine of 1845-50 has become known as the Great Famine, or the Great Hunger, that for five years, hunger and disease hounded victims across the fields and lanes of rural Ireland, eventually claiming more than a million lives. Although 1849 was the last year for a diseased potato crop, but the effects of hunger, scurvy, fever, cholera, and low morale survived into 1851. The harrowing nightmare of the previous five years had effected some radical changes in the structure of Irish society; and the size, if not the full significance, of some of these changes stood out clearly in the census figures of 1851.²⁵²

The key change was evident in the population statistics, which showed that between 1841 and 1851 the population of Ireland had fallen by about twenty percent. The drain upon Irish population has been immense, as the census of 1851, showing a diminution not less than 1,289,000 souls in the population of Ireland in ten years. Between March 1851 and December 1854 not less than 800,000 more Irish quitted the country; making a total of upwards of 2,000,000 of souls, or nearly one fourth of the population of 1841, in 14 years.²⁵³

Nine tenths of emigration from Liverpool	813,844
Emigration direct from Ireland	441,237
Irish in ships chartered by the Guardians of Unions	34,052

²⁵⁰Quoted in: GRC, Eleventh general report of the Colonial Land and Emigration Commissioners, 1851, H.C, 1851 [1383], p.7.

²⁵¹Quoted in: William V. Shannon, *The American Irish. New York: The Macmillan Company*, 1966 in Sinon J. Talty, Op.Cit., p.2.

²⁵²Jay P. Dolan, Op.Cit., p.68; Kerby A. Miller, Op.Cit., p. 281; Lawrence J. McCaffrey, Op.Cit., p.55; Gearoid O Tuathaigh, Op.Cit., p.182.

²⁵³GRC, Sixteenth general report of the Emigration Commissioners, H.C, 1856 [2089], p.6; GRC, Twelfth general report of the Colonial Land and Emigration Commissioners, 1852, H.C, 1852[1499], pp.5-6; Census of Ireland, The census of Ireland for the year 1851, Part VI, General report, H.C, 1856 [2134], pp.53-54; Edward E. Hale, Op.Cit., p.22; Gearoid O Tuathaigh, Op.Cit., p.182; Marjorie R. Fallows, Op.Cit., p.17; Kem Knapp Sawyer, Op.Cit., p.5.

Total Irish emigration in the 10 years 1,289,133
Or more than three-fourths of the whole decrease of the United Kingdom

The population was about 8,2 in 1841 according to census of Ireland in this year, and in 1845, the estimated Irish population was approaching 9 million, with at least a third of that number below the poverty level, had fallen to 6,6 million by 1851. The high numbers of population loss were unusual compared to the rest of Europe, since other European countries saw an increase of population during the same period. It seems clear that the reasons for the Irish population decline are twofold; on the one hand the country suffered a famine in the 1840s, which killed many Irish, and on the other hand, most of Irish migrated to other countries, where, potato blight and the failure of the British to provide relief, led to a massive immigration of Irish, especially, to the United States.²⁵⁴

Thus the Great Famine transformed the demography of Ireland by increasing the level of emigration. The Irish had been leaving home in large numbers since 1815, when the economy went into a downturn, but even before the famine the numbers emigrating were not large—in 1844, the year before the first failure, it is estimated that about 68,000 sailed, but once the Great Hunger took hold, emigration became a flood. In 1847, one of the worst years of the famine, more than 230,000 people, fleeing disease and starvation, left Ireland, which was double the number of the previous year. Then, in 1848 when the potato crop failed again, another mass exodus took place, while in 1849 and 1850 more than 200,000 left each year, but the exodus reached its peak in 1851, when more than 250,000 emigrated.²⁵⁵ In this context, Edward Laxton concludes that, “Death by Famine or departure by emigration, can logically claim a loss to Ireland in real terms, of two and a half million people—more than one in four.”²⁵⁶ Thus, Irish emigration during the Great Famine thereby achieved the able distinction of being the only migratory movement in modern history to have embraced a considerable proportion of a country's population and to have led directly to a definitive population decline. The future of Ireland was forever changed by the Famine, and its people are still living in its wake. The Famine prompted a trend of

²⁵⁴Further details are given in: Census of Ireland, General Reports, Abstract of the census of Ireland for the year 1841, H.C, 1843[459], p.1; Census of Ireland, The census of Ireland for the year 1851, Part VI, General report, H.C, 1856[2134], p.54; GRC, Fifteenth general report of the Colonial Land and Emigration Commissioners, 1855, H.C, 1854-55[1953], pp.5-6; GRC, Twelfth general report of the Colonial Land and Emigration Commissioners, 1852, H.C, 1852[1499], pp.5-6; S. H. Cousens, Op.Cit., p.55; Lawrence J. McCaffrey, *The Irish Diaspora in America*, p.55; Éamon Ó Cuív, Op.Cit., p.2; T.W Moody and F. X. Martin, Op.Cit., p. 226; P.J. Blessing, Op.Cit.,p. 20; Kerby A. Miller and Patricia Mulholland Miller, Op.Cit.,pp.4-5; “Illustrated London News”, July 6, 1850; The Tide of Emigration to The United States and to the British Colonies: <http://www.cornwall-online.co.uk/history/cmi/emi.htm>. 07/09/2011, 02:00 pm.

²⁵⁵ Jay P. Dolan, Op.Cit., p.74; Edward E. Hale, Op.Cit., p.10; Cecil Woodham-Smith, Op.Cit., p.209.

²⁵⁶ Quoted in: Edward Laxton, *The Famine Ships*. New York 1996, p.248; Simon J. Talty, Op.Cit., p.2.

emigration that would continue for another century, making Ireland the only country in contemporary Western Europe that has fewer people than it did in the 1840's.²⁵⁷

Although in the first year of the Famine, deaths from starvation were kept down due to the imports of Indian corn and survival of about half the original potato crop, poor Irish survived the first year by selling off their livestock and pawning their meager possessions whenever necessary to buy food. Some borrowed money at high interest from petty money-lenders, known as gombeen men, and they also fell behind on their rents. The potato crop in Ireland had never failed for two consecutive years, so everyone was counting on the next harvest to be blight-free, but the blight was here to stay and three of the following four years (1846-1849) were potato crop disasters, with catastrophic consequences for Ireland.²⁵⁸ As a direct result of the famine, one might say an approximately that nearly a million people died of starvation and sickness in Ireland between the years 1846 and 1851. Nevertheless, to give a precise figure for deaths during the famine would be impossible, even the data in the 1851 census clearly defective. At the height of the famine the classification system in many institutions had been overwhelmed, especially, the deaths of many thousands who expired in cabins or in the fields went unrecorded. So, the statistics, give little idea of the terrifying reality of famine conditions as experienced by its victims, and as reported by relief workers, newspaper reporters, doctors and clergymen. Corpses left unburied for days, either because no one knew they were dead or because neighbours feared the contagion of fever; unreported deaths and furtive burials, overcrowded workhouses the sinking despair as workers on relief schemes felt their strength ebbing away; the coffins with sliding bottoms to facilitate their repeated use.²⁵⁹ Although the deaths had a major impact on the personal life of the Irish, they were not the most important effect of the famine and not the biggest contributor to the decline in population, where, even though Ireland suffered the worst, other European countries also had crop failure because of the same potato blight that raged in Ireland, yet on the whole their populations continued to grow. So, major cause of death in Ireland during the famine was not actual starvation, but such attendant famine diseases as typhus, relapsing fever and dropsy, moreover, during the first half of 1849 a serious outbreak cholera (particularly severe in the large towns) added its own grim quota to the death total.²⁶⁰

²⁵⁷Arnold Schrier, *Op.Cit.*, p.3; Julius Isaac, *Economics of Migration*, London 1947, p.143; Sinon J. Talty, *Op.Cit.*, p.3.

²⁵⁸Irish Potato famine: <http://www.historyplace.com/worldhistory/famine/before.htm>. 15/04/2011, 08:32 pm.

²⁵⁹Karen Price Hossell, *Op.Cit.*, pp.23-24; Gearoid O Tuathaigh, *Op.Cit.*, p.p.182,184; Cormac Ó Gráda, *Op. Cit.*, p.p.38, 39, 41, 43; Kerby Miller, *Op.Cit.*, pp. 280-284. See: Census of Ireland, The census of Ireland for the year 1851, Part VI, General report, H.C, 1856 [2134], pp.46-49; Excerpt from Jack Corbett, *Mariner Burial At Sea*: http://www.dennyhatch.com/jackcorbett/doc/excerpts_burial.html. 11/11/2013, 04:50pm.

²⁶⁰Marcus Lee Hansen, *Op.Cit.*, p.242; Census of Ireland, The census of Ireland for the year 1851, H.C, 1856 [2087-1] [2087-11], p.p.248-249, 440-441; S. H. Cousens, *Op.Cit.*, p.56; Gearoid O Tuathaigh, *Op.Cit.*, p.182; Karl S. Bottigheimer, *Op.Cit.*, p.179; Reginald Byron, *Irish America*, New York 1999, p. 47.

And as we previously mentioned, the biggest effect on the fall in population numbers was the other effect of the famine: mass emigration. More and more tenants' estates were cleared to make way for grasslands, so, landowners even encouraged their tenants to migrate. This was the case even in the years before the potato crops started to rot,²⁶¹ and increased, especially after 1846, when the Corn Laws which had guaranteed preferential treatment for Irish grain on English markets were abolished, former tillage land was turned into pasture, the small ten-acre farm became less economical, and additional land could not be acquired by those who wanted to improve their situation. The average farmer could achieve a higher standard of living only by giving up farming in Ireland. Thus, for the young and adventurous, emigration was an exciting alternative to a bleak future; for others it was an act of desperation in order to survive; but for others still it was a recognition that they could only lose what little status and security they had if they remained in Ireland.²⁶²

In regional terms the famine caused its highest death toll, suffering and emigration in those counties where dependence on the potato was greatest, sub-division most acute, trade and communications least developed, in short, in counties of the west and south-west. It is true, of course that no area of the country escaped entirely the misery of those years—the movement throughout the country of fever-carrying paupers, in search of food or work, ensured this. Conditions differed even within particular counties, but in general, Sligo, Leitrim, Mayo, Galway, Clare, Limerick, Cork, Kerry and parts of Tipperary, together with Cavan and Laois, were the hardest hit, while Counties near the east coast were least affected. Despite high population density, the north-east was not badly hit, due to the better balance in the region's economy. The high mortality in the cities reflected the heavy influx of fever victims from the countryside.²⁶³ So, it can say that where famine struck the hardest, emigration was the heaviest, namely in Connacht and Munster, provinces in the west and southwest. In fact, Connacht lost half of its young population in the 1840s because of emigration or death. Prior to the famine, emigration was heaviest in counties in Ulster and Leinster located in the north and east, while later, more people left from the centre and northwestern counties. The small farm economy in much of Ireland was incapable of supporting a relatively large number of dependants. This explains why during the famine, only a small part of the migrants came from Ulster and the region south of Mayo, the more industrialized regions where there were alternate sources of income. It seems clear that the famine changed the patterns, henceforth; Ireland's emigrants

²⁶¹ P. J. Drudy, *Op.Cit.*, p. 3; Karl S. Bottigheimer, *Op.Cit.*, pp. 179-180.

²⁶² Marjorie R. Fallows, *Op.Cit.*, p.24; T.W Moody and F. X. Martin, *Op.Cit.*, p.222; Robert E. Kennedy, Jr., *The Irish: Emigration, Marriage, and Fertility*, Berkeley 1973, p. 88; Gearoid O Tuathaigh, *Op.Cit.*, pp.185-186; Irish Potato famine: <http://www.historyplace.com/worldhistory/famine/before.htm>. 15/04/2011, 08:32pm.

²⁶³ Gearoid O Tuathaigh, *Op.Cit.*, pp.182-183; R. F. Foster, *Op.Cit.*, p.202; Miller, Kerby A. and Miller, Patricia Mulholland, *Op.Cit.*, p.4; Kerry A. Graves, *Op.Cit.*, p.30.

would come from its poorest rural counties located in the west and southwest, thus the famine removed a poverty trap that had prevented some of the poorest from emigrating before 1845. But those who left were not the poorest of the poor, as we mentioned earlier, they were people of “some means, because the cost of the passage required some accumulated savings or other assets that could be converted into ready cash.” As historian Cormac O Grada noted, “In the hierarchy of suffering the poorest of the poor emigrated to the next world; those who emigrated to the New World had the resources to escape.”²⁶⁴

Related to the question of where in geographical terms the famine hit hardest, is the question of where in terms of social groups its effects were felt most severely. Here the evidence is clear, that the labourer and cottier classes were the chief victims of the famine, so, the people most affected by the famine were not landowners, but tenant farmers who could no longer afford to pay the rent, and as the landlords evicted them, they became homeless as well as hungry. Almost half the landholdings in Ireland in the early 1840s –as we previously mentioned–had been below the desired size of five to fifteen acres, so those with less than five acres were hardest hit by the famine,²⁶⁵ and the small-farmer class scarcely fared much better. Those most heavily dependent on the potato for subsistence, and most vulnerable to fever (through poor housing, bad sanitation, and defective diet), were those likely to feel the full devastation of the famine, especially, many of them were also in parts of the country where communications and retail trade facilities were least developed, that was a severe handicap to attempts for their relief. So, It was not only the subsistence men who had their numbers reduced during the famine years; there was also a significant thinning in the ranks of small farmers in more comfortable circumstances, cultivators of holdings up to fifteen acres in size, but for many of these latter class 1848 was the decisive year. Having survived the ravages of 'black 47' they needed a good harvest in 1848 to restore their faith in the desirability of remaining on the land. When the potato failure in 1848 was accompanied by a poor grain harvest the resolution of many small-farmers to 'hold on' was finally broken, and they set out on the emigrant ship for a 'new start'.²⁶⁶

Before the famine, emigration did not come easily to the Irish. In this context, Lord Stanley said “The warm attachment of the Irish peasant to the locality

²⁶⁴Quoted in: Jay P. Dolan, *Op.Cit.*, p.74; Cormac Ó Grada, *Op.Cit.*, pp.109-113; Drudy, P. J., *Op.Cit.*, p. 45.

Further details are giving in: Census of Ireland, The census of Ireland for the year 1851, Part VI, General report, H.C, 1856[2134], pp.11-12; Joel Mokyr, *Why Ireland Starved: A Analytical and Quantitative History of the Irish Economy 1800-1850*, London 1984, pp.264-265; S. H. Cousens, *Op.Cit.*, pp.55-74 .

²⁶⁵Gearoid O Tuathaigh, *Op.Cit.*, p.183; Kem Knapp Sawyer, *Op.Cit.*, p.16; Robert E. Kennedy, *Op.Cit.*, p.88.

²⁶⁶Gearoid O Tuathaigh, *Op.Cit.*, p.183; Sherwin Rosen, *Op.Cit.*, p. S308; Irish Potato famine:
<http://www.historyplace.com/worldhistory/famine/before.htm>. 15/04 / 2011, 08:32 pm.

where he was born and brought up, will always make the best and most carefully conducted scheme of emigration a matter of painful sacrifice for the emigrant.”²⁶⁷ But, the poor people had not inducements to stay, as a plough could hardly have turned in their potato gardens, they had neither seed, nor horses, nor even food, to carry them through the winter, with no difference of tenure would have saved them, therefore their only chance of life was to get away-some to the poor-house, others to America.²⁶⁸ Thus, the most severely affected by the potato blight were the Catholic subsistence farmers, who were as ill-prepared either for frontier or urban life as any immigrants who had come to America. It had taken real disaster at home to overcome their reluctance to leave Ireland, for most of them were people with deep roots in the familiar soil, and bound by the web of family and religious ties, but the misery which they had for many years endured has destroyed their attachment to their native soil; the numbers who have already emigrated and prospered remove the apprehension of going to a strange and untried country, while the want of means is remedied by the liberal contributions of their relations and friends who have preceded them. The famine experience was, however, in Robert E. Kennedy's view, only the final 'convincer' added to a set of conditions which encouraged emigration.²⁶⁹ So, all agreed that in the famine years there could be no doubt that the failure of the potato crop was the most important initial impulse to the vast emigration of that period, but the influence of the Catholic Clergy of Ireland, on the whole, was turned against the emigration of their flocks. Such is the statement of high authorities, who say that the reason is that they dislike the necessary loss of power, which this Celtic exodus of course brings upon them.²⁷⁰

It is notable, the returns of houses in the census years from 1841 provide evidence on the variable quality of the housing stock. Over one third of all housing in 1841 was comprised of the lowest class of dwelling (fourth class), defined as one-roomed mud cabins. But it appears that in all Ireland there has been a decrease between 1841 and 1851, in the proportion of fourth-class houses to the total number of houses of twenty-four in every 100. The dramatic decline in this lowest class by 1851 is indicative of the cataclysmic impact of the Great Famine and emigration on the poorest section of society in the second half of the 1840s.²⁷¹

²⁶⁷ Quoted in: Cecil Woodham-Smith, *Op.Cit.*, p.206.

²⁶⁸ The Rt. Hon. Lord Dufferin, K.P., *Op.Cit.*, pp.53-54.

²⁶⁹ Census of Ireland, The census of Ireland for the year 1851, Part VI, General report, H.C, 1856 [2134], p. 54; GRC, Twelfth general report of the Colonial Land and Emigration Commissioners, H.C, 1852 [1499], pp.6-7; Robert E. Kennedy, *Op.Cit.*, p. 43; Marjorie R. Fallows, *Op.Cit.*, p.23.

²⁷⁰ Arnold Schrier, *Op.Cit.*, p.7; “Illustrated London News”, July 6, 1850; Edward E. Hale, *Op.Cit.*,p.23; The Tide of Emigration to The United States and to the British Colonies:

<http://www.cornwall-online.co.uk/history/cmi/emi.htm>. 07/09/2011, 02:00 pm.

²⁷¹ Census of Ireland, The census of Ireland for the year 1851, Part VI, General report, H.C, 1856 [2134], p.24; Andy Bielenberg, *Op.Cit.*, p.154.

During the famine a sizable family emigration did take place, but the proportion of single, young male emigrants increased, setting a pattern that continued in the post famine period for seeking a better life, and for the first time, large numbers of women were leaving Ireland, which was unusual in Europe, where the typical emigrant was a young, single male. The large number of female emigrants would become a trademark of Irish emigration throughout the rest of the nineteenth century. In part this was due to the fact that Irish girls were in great demand as domestic servants in nineteenth-century American homes.²⁷²

Unskilled laborers comprised more than half of the emigrants during the famine, as these emigrants were poorer and had fewer skills than those who had emigrated prior to the famine. While Protestants made up the majority of prefamine emigrants, as many as 90 percent of the famine emigrants were Catholic.²⁷³ It can say that the Irish famine emigration is unlike most other emigrations because it was of a less-civilized and less-skilled people into a more-civilized and more-skilled community. Other emigrations have been of the independent and the sturdy in search of wider horizons, and such emigrants usually brought with them knowledge and technical accomplishment which the inhabitants of the country in which they settled did not possess. The Irish, from their abysmal poverty, brought nothing for America.²⁷⁴

Another feature of the famine emigration was the large number of Irish-speakers who left Ireland. One plausible estimate concluded that as many as half a million of them were Irish-speakers. Their presence in the United States strengthened the Gaelic character of Irish America, which was already very noticeable in the early nineteenth century, but the historian Bottigheimer pointed out that by 1841 probably no more than 20 percent of the population of Ireland spoke Irish exclusively. Literacy in English spread rapidly throughout the remainder of the nineteenth century, spearheaded on by the educational efforts of the Catholic Church. So, he said: "It would be possible—but almost certainly wrong—to assume that immigration occurred predominantly among the exclusively Irish-speaking."²⁷⁵ In fact, many Irish-speakers came to America, and Irish-language newspapers (for the literate among them) appeared in New York and other major cities, but English was the language of the majority, and knowledge of the Irish language died out even faster among the Irish in

²⁷² Jay P. Dolan, *Op.Cit.*, pp.74-75; Arnold Schrier, *Op.Cit.*, p.4; Karl S. Bottigheimer, *Op.Cit.*, p.257; Kerry A. Graves, *Op.Cit.*, p.15.

²⁷³ Jay P. Dolan, *Op.Cit.*, p.75.

²⁷⁴ Cecil Woodham-Smith, *Op.Cit.*, pp.206-207.

²⁷⁵ Quoted in: Karl S. Bottigheimer, *Op.Cit.*, p.258.

For more details about the number of persons who could speak Irish only; also those who could speak Irish and English; and the proportion per cent, of these persons to the Population, see: Census of Ireland, The census of Ireland for the year 1851, Part VI, General report, H.C, 1856 [2134], pp.44-46.

America than it was doing among the Irish in Ireland. Irish immigrants were discriminated against on social and religious grounds in many parts of the United States, but it is correct to distinguish the Irish from other European immigrants who faced an acute language barrier.²⁷⁶

A key determinant to emigration was the correspondence of the emigrants themselves, as those who had already fled Ireland wrote back to their friends or relatives encouraging them to emigrate. Such letters, known in Ireland as the "Amerikay letter," had become common long before the famine, and it is estimated that "between 1833 and 1835 over 700,000 letters from New York passed through the Liverpool post office, eleven times the reverse correspondence; the bulk of these were probably letters from Irish settlers." For those thinking about emigrating, these letters—as we pointed out earlier—provided the best information about the United States. Commenting on this, the American correspondent of the *London Daily News* wrote: "What brings such crowds to New York by every packet ship is the letters which are written by the Irish already here to their relations in Ireland, accompanied, as they are in a majority of cases, by remittances to enable them to pay their passage out. It is from this source, and this mainly, if not only, that the Cork or Galway peasant learns all he knows about the United States, and he is not in the least likely to trust to any other."²⁷⁷

When the Amerikay letter arrived in the village, friends and family would gather together waiting for the letter to be read, and since many Irish were illiterate, they would seek the assistance of someone who could read the letter. Often known locally as the "scholar," this person would read the letter to a keenly interested audience, this scholar was often the parish priest. The priest in Schull in county Cork remarked, "When they write home, the friends come to me to read them. The accounts are very flattering. The general observation that they make in the letter to friends is, that there is no tyranny, no oppression from landlords, and no taxes."²⁷⁸ The next day the letter would travel through the village so those who could not be present for the official reading could find out information about their relatives and friends in America, and for days afterward the entire village would talk about the news in the letter. Also in this context, a parish priest from County Armagh testified to the magnetic effect these letters had upon the people in his community, something he was well qualified to do since he read one third of all the American letters which came to his parish as a service for those who were illiterate. Thus, these letters, along with

²⁷⁶ Karl S. Bottigheimer, *Op.Cit.*, p. 258.

²⁷⁷ Quoted in: Jay P. Dolan, *Op.Cit.*, p.75; Arnold Schrier, *Op.Cit.*, p.18; "London Daily News", September 9, 1864.

²⁷⁸ Quoted in: Jay P. Dolan, *Op.Cit.*, pp.75-76.

enclosed money to purchase ship tickets for brothers and sisters, stimulated the process of emigration during the period of the Great Famine ²⁷⁹

Finally we must say also that, the famine not only produced suffering, death, and emigration; it also effected a profound consolidation of land-holdings, so the monoculture potato patch became the exception rather than the rule. Larger farms tended to concentrate on cereals, especially oats, and also meadow for grazing cattle. The value of livestock on Irish farms actually increased by 38 percent from 1841 to 1852 as the country turned on the awful hinge of the famine toward a more productive, and efficient, agriculture. A great deal of land was brought within the limits of profitable cultivation between 1841 and 1851. It was accordingly reported by the Census Commissioners in 1851, that the arable land of Ireland had increased from 13,464,300 acres in 1841, to 14,802,581 acres in 1851, and the waste land had diminished. So, the pattern of modern Irish agriculture was beginning to emerge from the ruin caused by the potato blight –a family farm–engaged in mixed tillage and livestock production, with the stock rather than grain increasingly providing cash income. The Great Famine and its aftermath further increased the demand for milled cereals. This is evident from the rise in imports of Indian corn in particular from 1846, and also in the rise in net imports of wheat over the following decades. ²⁸⁰ In this context, the emigration commissioners stated: “Notwithstanding our sudden depopulation, we have every cause for thankfulness that years of suffering have been followed by years of prosperity; for Ireland has increased in wealth and progressed in the development of her resources; as it appears that in 1851 the extent of land under cultivation, the value of agricultural stock and crops, and the proportionate number of educated among the people, were greater than at any previous period of which we have a record.”²⁸¹

Moreover, subdivision as a means of providing for the others had begun to die out by the mid-1840s. With the disappearance of the franchise formerly conferred by forty-shilling freeholds, proprietors no longer encouraged subdivision in order to increase their political influence, and with the decline in the price of agricultural product which followed the conclusion of the Napoleonic Wars, subletting was no longer economically profitable. When this was, then followed by the impact of the famine and the lesson it brought home on the dangers of excessive subdivision, the tide

²⁷⁹Ibid, p.76; Arnold Schrier, Op.Cit., p.18; Lawrence J. McCaffrey, *The Irish Diaspora in America*, pp. 61-62; PRONI: 19th Century Emigration to the North Americas, The homeland: http://www.proni.gov.uk/index/exhibitions_talks_and_events/19th_century_emigratin_to_the_north_america_online/the-homeland.htm. 01/05/2011, 09:10am.

²⁸⁰Karl S. Bottigheimer, Op.Cit., p.180; The Rt.Hon. Lord Dufferin, K.P., Op.Cit., pp.43-44; T.W Moody and F. X. Martin, Op.Cit., p.227; Andy Bielenberg, Op.Cit., pp.59-61.

²⁸¹Quoted in: Census of Ireland, The census of Ireland for the year 1851, Part VI, General report, H.C, 1856 [2134], p.p.14, 56.

was finally turned and after 1852 the practice almost completely disappeared. The halt to subdivision, of necessity, brought fundamental social changes in Ireland as well. Malnutrition and its numerous physical and psychological by-products finally persuaded the Irish to abandon their traditional attitudes toward marriage and reproduction. Starting in the 1850s, famine memories encouraged fewer and later marriages, a decrease in the birth rate, and a reluctance to divide small farms. So, gone were the days of early marriage and a countryside thronged with young people and children. For many, the price of holding together the family farm was to remain unmarried, while for many others, there could be no staying in Ireland, and their energies went to the building of the United States or other new lands across the seas.²⁸²

Thus emigration became more than a corollary to the Irish; it became an accepted fact of life. So natural and normal did emigration seem to them that at the turn of the century the Frenchman L. Paul-Dubois considered it to be one of their customs. He declared "'Children' are brought up with the idea of probably becoming emigrants" Irishmen themselves were aware of this phenomenon and a contemporary of Paul-Dubois noted that "Emigration is a settled habit, and as a nation we are strongly wedded to our habits"²⁸³ Thus, the going to America had become "the fashion" in the country—"fatally fashionable," one journal called it. In 1853, at the very beginning of this period, the *Newry Examiner* warned that emigration was no longer a casual circumstance but a settled system, and a generation later the *Cork Examiner* spoke of emigration as a "phenomenon beyond our control, like the weather." Almost a century afterward the leading authority on Irish emigration, William Forbes Adams, went so far as to contend that for thirty years prior to the famine of 1846-48 the spirit of emigration had been spreading steadily through the country until it became the "favorite remedy for hard times." If emigration became a custom among the Irish, it also became a tradition to go to America, the reasons are not far to seek, as Adams has shown, a considerable number of Irishmen already had established themselves in the United States long before the ravages of the famine descended upon the home country and opened the flood gates of the later emigration. Once the road to America had been laid down it became the principal highway out of Ireland and few would deviate from it.²⁸⁴

The resentment in Ireland against English handling of the famine crisis was deep and slow to heal, and worse still was the bitter hostility between landlord and tenant. Change in such conditions was necessarily slow, and even today it might be

²⁸² Arnold Schrier, *Op.Cit.*, p.15; Lawrence J. McCaffrey, *The Irish Diaspora in America*, p.61; T.W Moody and F.X. Martin, *Op.Cit.*, pp.226-227; Lawrence J. McCaffrey, *The Irish Diaspora in America*, p.61; Kerby A. Miller and Patricia Mulholland Miller, *Op.Cit.*, p.16.

²⁸³ Quoted in: Arnold Schrier, *Op.Cit.*, p.15; L. Paul-Dubois, *Op.Cit.*, p.359.

²⁸⁴ William Adams, *Op.Cit.*, p.392; Arnold Schrier, *Op.Cit.*, p.16 .

argued that Irish still have much to do to repair the damage that the Irish economy suffered in the early nineteenth century and to heal the scars that the famine left on their society.²⁸⁵ Without a doubt, the great famine was the most dramatic and decisive event in modern Irish history. The experience of mass hunger, disease, death, and emigration had negative influence on the Irish personality, encouraging despair, insecurity, paranoia, and hatred for all things British. In Ireland famine memories left permanent psychological scars; in the ghettos of America Irish emigrants were even more bitter. They accused Britain of tyranny and murder and blamed her for their poverty and exile. The Irish of the Diaspora, nurturing famine hatreds and educated on the cultural nationalism of Young Ireland, became even more passionately pro-Irish and anti-English than those who remained at home. They would become a decisive factor in the Irish fight for freedom, and their experiences with Anglo-Saxon and Anglo-Irish Protestants in the United Kingdom would colour their responses to the Anglo-American Protestant culture in the United States.²⁸⁶ Such a vast tragedy, the famine has inspired numerous songs, poems, and stories. For years its memory shaped the attitudes of the Irish toward the English, whom many blamed for the famine. As John Mitchel, one of Ireland's most outspoken nationalists, put it, "The Almighty sent the potato blight, but the English created the famine."²⁸⁷

It is notable, the emigration scarcely slowed in the post-famine period, and in this context, historian David Fitzpatrick wrote: "No other country lost so large a proportion of its people during the nineteenth century or experienced such consistently heavy emigration over so long a period."²⁸⁸ It can say that the large proportion of the Irish emigrants to the United States was the result of the great number who in the years immediately following the famine of 1847 proceeded thither, and who naturally attract their relations and friends. And as we previously mentioned, this result is quickened by the large amounts remitted to Ireland in money; or prepaid passage by the emigrants of former years. The amount returned as remitted during 1857, or expended in prepaid passages, was £ 593, 165. The total amount in the ten years since 1848 has been in round numbers £ 9,937,000 or nearly a million a year. In this context, the Emigration Commissioners pointed out that these sums included only the remittances through the large mercantile houses and banks, and there were not information respecting the sums, probably considerable, sent home through private

²⁸⁵ T.W Moody and F.X. Martin, *Op.Cit.*, p. 227.

²⁸⁶ Lawrence J. McCaffrey, *The Irish Diaspora in America*, p.p. 56, 58; Kerby A Miller, *Op.Cit.*, pp.4-5.

²⁸⁷ Quoted in: Jay P. Dolan, *Op.Cit.*, p.68.

²⁸⁸ Quoted in: David Fitzpatrick, *Irish Emigration 1801-1921: Economic and Social History Society of Ireland*, Dublin 1984, p.1; Jay P. Dolan, *Op.Cit.*, p.78; Kerby A Miller, *Op.Cit.*, p.p. 345-346, 570-571.

For more details about the emigration in the post-famine period see: GRC, Sixteenth general report of the Emigration Commissioners, H.C, 1856 [2089], pp5-8.

hands, or through merchants or bankers.²⁸⁹ Moreover, the journey out of Ireland changed dramatically in the post famine period. Gone were the coffin ships and the perilous month long trip across the North Atlantic in sailing vessels. Replacing them by the 1860s were steamships. These ships were far more comfortable, with adequate space and sanitary facilities for those on board, greatly reducing the incidence and spread of illness. Passenger ticket prices dropped to an average of four to six pounds, comparable to the earlier steerage prices. Steam power greatly increased the speed of the ship, reducing the duration of the trip to 10 to 14 days on average to reach North America, making malnutrition en route a thing of the past. As a result, the mortality in the emigration to North America has been extraordinarily small, and the mortality appears to have been scarcely greater in large than in small ships.²⁹⁰

Thus, we may conclude that the Irish emigrants faced the terrible conditions during their travel to America, weakened by disease and lack of food, and faced an unknown future in a strange country, the Irish emigrants shared a number of characteristics, the primary one was poverty. These emigrants had lived their entire lives in ragged clothing, living under primitive conditions and subsisting on a meager diet. Most had always been rural inhabitants and had no experience living in the towns or cities of Ireland. Though destitute, the emigrants often viewed arrival in the United States as a new opportunity for a better life than what they had left behind. The second characteristic they had in common was their hatred of the British, whom they held responsible for much of the hardship they had faced in Ireland. Most of the emigrants shared their Catholic faith, which gave many of them the strength, hope, and ambition to succeed in America.

²⁸⁹GRC, Fourteenth general report of the Colonial Land and Emigration Commissioners 1854, H.C, 1854 [1833], p. 6; GRC, Sixteenth general report of the Emigration Commissioners, H.C, 1856 [2089], pp7-9; GRC, Seventeenth general of the Emigration Commissioners, H.C, 1857, Session 2, [2249], pp.5-6; GRC, Eighteenth general report of the Emigration Commissioners 1858, H.C, 1857-1858 [2395], pp.6-7; Edward E. Hale, *Op.Cit.*, pp.6-7.

²⁹⁰Jay P. Dolan, *Op.Cit.*, p.78; GRC, Seventeenth general of the Emigration Commissioners, H.C, 1857, Session 2, [2249], p.6; GRC, Eighteenth general report of the Emigration Commissioners 1858, H.C, 1857-1858 [2395], pp.7-8. For more details about the steamships see: Denny Hatch, *Op.Cit.*, pp.47-48; Kerry A. Graves, *Op.Cit.*, p.48.

Document 41

Extract from Earl Fitzwilliam's 'Emigration Account', telling us that the Earl was paying for people too poor to afford the fares themselves, to emigrate to America

Emigration Account

1847 June	To Cash paid sundry persons towards their support, getting clothes, paying for cars to take their luggage to Ross etc on their way to America as per Cash book	1109	19	8
	Paid William Graves and Son of New Ross on a/c of passage of emigrants to Quebec	2100	-	-
	Expence of materials and making 713 sea-chests as per Joseph Exley's a/c	99	1	8
	Balance due to Wm Graves and Son for passage of Emigrants up to 9 th inst as per a/c	888	2	6
		£4197	2	6

863½ Adults at the above cost of £4197:3:10 would average about £4:17:2½ each.

Emigration account

1847

June	Cash paid sundry persons towards their support, getting clothes, paying for cars to take their luggage to Ross etc on their way to America as per Cash book	1109	19	8
	Paid William Graves and Son of New Ross on a/c of passage of emigrants to Quebec	2100	-	-
	Expence [sic] materials and making of 713 sea-chests as per Joseph Exley's a/c	99	1	8
	Balance due to William Graves and Son for passage of Emigrants up to 9 th inst as per a/c	888	2	6
		£4197	2	6

863½ Adults at the above cost of £4197:3:10 would average about £4:17:2½ each.

Document 42

A letter to Earl Fitzwilliam from Robert Chaloner, his agent in Ireland

Coollattin
 Carnew
 18th March 1849
 Dear Lord Fitzwilliam
 I hope you
 are progressing satisfactorily.
 We are preparing for
 emigration. The first
 vessel goes on 29th
 from New Ross.

We are preparing for
 emigration for its charges the first vessel will
 take 400 adults - which principally from the
 have remaining about 193 families on the
 list applying to go - which is far more than
 your present directions will meet. £2000 is the
 sum named which will land about 400 adults -

Coollattin
 Carnew
 March 1849

Dear Lord Fitzwilliam

I hope you are progressing satisfactorily.

We are preparing for emigration. The first vessel goes on 29th from New Ross. We are preparing 43 families for it, about equal to 220 adults. I shall have remaining about 193 families on the list applying to go - which is far more than your present directions will meet. £2000 is the sum named which will land about 400 adults.

Applications are coming in daily.

Robt. Chaloner

MIGRATION FROM THE UNITED KINGDOM (FROM THE of LIVERPOOL TO THE NEW WORLD AND THE COLONIES) DURING THE TWENTY-FIVE YEARS, FROM 1825 TO 1849 INCLUSIVE.

Years.	North American Colonies.	United States.	Australian Colonies and New Zealand.	All other Places.	Total.
1825	8,741	5,551	485	114	14,891
1826	12,818	7,063	903	116	20,900
1827	12,648	14,526	715	114	28,003
1828	12,084	12,817	1,056	135	26,092
1829	13,307	15,678	2,016	197	31,198
1830	30,574	24,887	1,242	204	56,907
1831	58,067	23,418	1,561	114	83,160
1832	66,339	32,872	3,733	196	103,140
1833	28,808	29,109	4,093	517	62,527
1834	40,060	33,074	2,800	288	76,222
1835	15,573	26,720	1,860	325	44,478
1836	34,226	37,774	3,124	293	75,417
1837	29,884	36,770	5,054	326	72,034
1838	4,577	14,332	14,021	292	33,222
1839	12,658	33,536	15,786	227	62,207
1840	32,293	40,642	15,850	1,958	90,743
1841	38,164	45,017	32,625	2,786	118,592
1842	54,123	63,852	8,534	1,835	128,344
1843	23,518	28,335	3,478	1,881	57,212
1844	22,924	43,660	2,229	1,873	70,686
1845	31,803	58,538	830	2,330	93,501

The Great Famine emigration 1845-1850

1846	43,439	82,239	2,347	1,826	129,851
1847	109,680	142,154	4,949	1,487	258,270
1848	31,065	188,233	23,904	4,887	248,089
1849	41,367	219,450	32,091	6,590	299,498
Total	808,740	1,260,247	185,286	30,911	2,285,184

Average Annual Emigration from the United Kingdom (from the port of Liverpool to the New World and the Colonies) for the last twenty five years: 91,407

Source: "Illustrated London News", July 6, 1850; The Tide of Emigration to The United States and to the British Colonies: <http://www.cornwall-online.co.uk/history/cmi/emi.htm>. 07/09/2011, 02:00 pm.

CHAPTER FOUR

Irish Americans

Chapter 4

Irish Americans

4.1 Arrival of the Irish immigration *to the United States of America*

4.1.1 New Irish Arrivals Join Earlier immigrants

Like other immigrant groups, the Irish faced many hardships upon their arrival in the United States. Particularly, Americans stereotyped the Irish as unintelligent, lazy and unlawful. Due to these stereotypes and few connections when the Irish began to arrive to the U.S. in large numbers in the 1800s, they struggled to make ends meet as menial laborers and often lived in tenements. Some employers specifically excluded Irish workers as applicants, which will be explained later. Much of the oppression the Irish suffered in the U.S. was rooted in the English's maltreatment of them in the United Kingdom. The Irish would eventually overcome the low opinions Americans had of them.¹ So, the effects which Irish immigration produces; these may be conveniently referred to two things: 1st. Its influence on the condition and character of the Irish settlers themselves; and 2ndly. The influence of the Irish settlers on the condition and character of the natives.

As we pointed out in the preceding chapters that the Irish immigrants had arrived in America in a steady stream throughout the 18th century. Most of the first voluntary Irish immigrants came from Ulster in the north of Ireland. We mentioned also that these immigrants were generally, although not exclusively, Protestants. They were known as "Scotch-Irish" because of the large number of Scots who settled in

¹ Quoted in: Nadra Kareem Nittle, Facts About the Irish American Experience:
<http://racerelements.about.com/od/diversitymatters/tp/Facts-About-The-Irish-AmericanExperience.htm.25/03/2013, 09: 00 pm>.

Ulster during the seventeenth century. They quickly became an established component of U.S. society.²

Moreover, we explained that in the 19th century, when factoring a rapidly expanding population combined with a series of potato failures, millions of Irish decided to make the trip to the New World. Although the Scotch-Irish immigrants continued to arrive, the vast majority of the new arrivals were Catholics from the south of Ireland. Irish immigrants began to arrive in the United States' eastern cities in large numbers in the 1820s and then flooded in during the years of the famine. They headed mostly for the big cities — New York, Philadelphia, Boston, Baltimore and Chicago — and they usually stayed there. These new immigrants tended to have a tougher time of it than their Protestant predecessors, and they faced a great deal of anti-Irish prejudice from the people already living in the United States, as we will explain that later. So, the story of Irish Americans includes a battle against prejudice and poverty and their attendant hardships. Yet this is a story of triumph over these adversities.³

While social history tends to focus on the trauma created by the later waves of Irish in the 1800s, it would be a mistake to overlook the presence of the Scotch-Irish who were already there. On the frontiers they had inadvertently contributed to the restructuring of American society, and in many cities along the eastern seaboard they had established thriving Irish communities and social organizations. They were sympathetic with the plight of the Irish remaining in Ireland, and ready to help reasonable numbers of Irish arriving in America. Yet, also, many could not quite define the Catholic Irish as "their kind of people" in America, any more than they had defined them as "their kind of people" while they were still in Ireland.⁴ In later years there would be outstanding leaders from the Protestant Irish community who would attempt to guide and help the later arrivals from the Catholic southern and western counties, but there would be others whose anxiety to proclaim themselves as proper Protestant Americans would contribute to violent clashes when the two groups met. It was not a foregone conclusion, by any means, that the presence of earlier Irish immigrants would markedly ease the way for the later arrivals, for they represented

² Kem Knapp Sawyer, *Op.Cit.*, pp. 4-5; Jay P. Dolan, *Op.Cit.*, p.8; Karl S. Bottigheimer, *Op.Cit.*, p.247; Amy Hackney Blackwell and Ryan Hackney, *The Immigrant Experience in the United States*: <http://www.netplaces.com/irish-history/the-immigrant-experience/the-immigrant-experience-in-the-united-states.htm>. 05/03/2013, 02:20pm.

³ Amy Hackney Blackwell and Ryan Hackney, *The Immigrant Experience in the United States*: <http://www.netplaces.com/irish-history/the-immigrant-experience/the-immigrant-experience-in-the-united-states.htm>. 05/03/2013, 02:20pm; Karen Price Hossell, *Op.Cit.*, p. 8.

⁴ Marjorie R. Fallows, *Op.Cit.*, p. 22.

different social and religious backgrounds. To become Scotch-Irish was to signify this difference.⁵

For most Irish Americans, especially the famine immigrants, the first chapters in their story are of difficulty and deprivation. Forced by starvation to leave their country, Irish famine immigrants, the largest group of Irish to arrive in the United States, came with little more than the clothes they carried in battered trunks. When they arrived they were generally anything but welcome, and they usually were forced to disembark onto the streets of a foreign land. Far from finding easy riches, all they could hope for was a menial job that would pay enough to allow them to buy food and shelter. The newly arrived Irish had to use every means they knew just to survive.⁶ Thus, Irish immigrants who survived passage on the coffin ships and were admitted to the United States or Canada had bleak prospects for the future. Entire families needed to find food, shelter, and work immediately. In this situation, the Irish differed from other immigrant groups of the time, such as Italians or Germans, who often sent just the head of the family to America. These immigrants would find jobs, send money back to their homeland, and, in time, when they became established, send for the rest of the family. Pushed out of Ireland by the famine, the Irish did not have that option.⁷

During the famine many ports along America's eastern coast received the emigrant ships. The main ports of entry were New York, Boston, Baltimore, Philadelphia and New Orleans. Baltimore and Philadelphia had regular sailings of trading ships going east across the Atlantic and captains would chose whatever cargo was available to carry for the return journey. Savannah and Charleston joined the emigrant trade too. Further South, and to a greater extent, so did New Orleans, which had great appeal for the emigrants who wanted to continue their journey westward into Texas or up the Mississippi river to the frontier lands. The journey to New Orleans was longer and more expensive so this destination was not open to all.⁸

Table 1. Emigrants entering at the chief American Ports for three sample years of the Famine period

	New York	Boston	Philadelphia	Baltimore	New Orleans	Total
1846	98,000	13,000	7,000	9,000	22,000	158,000
1851	294,000	25,000	18,000	8,000	52,000	408,000
1855	161,000	17,000	7,000	6,000	20,000	230,000

⁵ Ibid, p. 22 .

⁶ Karen Price Hossell, *Op.Cit.*, p.8.

⁷ Timothy J. Palson, *Op.Cit.*, p. 36.

⁸ Denny Hatch, *Op.Cit.*, p.52; Kerry A. Graves, *Op.Cit.*, p.49.

These figures show that Boston only had about one tenth of New York's direct traffic but its population was swollen by the masses coming from Canada so that New York and Boston were the two main towns receiving emigrants. In fact the majority of Irish arriving on America's eastern seaboard arrived in New York. No American port approached New York in the emigrant trade. Indeed, according to the previous table, New York's share of emigrants was 62% in 1846, 72% in 1851 and 70% in 1855. Between 1846 and 1851 an average of three hundred people were disembarking daily, and on some days more than one thousand would arrive on a single tide.⁹

Quarantine was essential for the health of the city of New York. In 1799 the State legislature empowered health commissioners to set up a marine hospital on Staten Island, about four miles from Manhattan. And as we previously mentioned, by 1846 all vessels coming into New York had to anchor in the quarantine ground and from May 1847, each emigrant had to pay one dollar fifty cents and was then entitled treatment if he fell ill within a year. If any sick passengers were discovered they were sent to the hospital and the ship was quarantined for thirty days. However the inspection was not much more thorough than the one at Liverpool. As the masters of ships and their officers did not want to be quarantined they did what they could to help emigrants pass the inspection, by hiding them if necessary, or by landing sick passengers illegally on the New Jersey shore. Moreover when a ship was quarantined passengers sometimes took themselves off in boats and lighters to the city. For several reasons the quarantine station at Staten Island was far from ideal.¹⁰

Once they passed the inspection, or after a stay in the quarantine hospital, most emigrants landed at the quays on South Street, Manhattan. Thus, after embarking on a long and often perilous journey from Ireland to America, weary travellers were thrilled at the sight of their new homeland. Combined with their excitement at making a new life in a new land, however, were feelings of confusion and fear. Nearly everything Irish immigrants encountered in America was new and strange, and the only security lay in sticking together. For this reason, most Irish immigrants in the United States gravitated to cities that were home to Irish who had arrived earlier.¹¹

Thus the immigrants' first few hours in the United States left them feeling confused and frightened. There would be no formal processing center for immigrants until 1855, when the state of New York opened a center called Castle Garden, located at the southern tip of Manhattan and run by the New York State Commission of

⁹ Ibid, p. 52 .

¹⁰ Further details are given in: Ibid, pp.52-53; ; Kerry A. Graves, Op.Cit., p.50.

¹¹ Ibid, p.53; Karen Price Hossell, Op.Cit., p. 38.

Emigration. The only requirement dating to 1824 was that a ship's captain report to New York City Officials the name, birthplace, last known residence, age and occupation of each immigrant on his ship. Besides registering this information with the captain—and in other U.S. cities, this information was not even required—immigrants were also directed to pay what was called "hospital money", the mentioned above. Other than those two brief procedures, immigrants who arrived in New York during the late 1840s and early 1850s simply stepped off the boat and onto the streets. If they were lucky and their ship's arrival time had been posted, they might be met by friends or relatives who had preceded them. Usually, though, they wandered off the ships, unsure of what to do or where to go next.¹² The newcomers had just undergone a tumultuous experience in the Atlantic and now they had arrived in New York, the third largest city in the western world. On arrival they were generally greeted by runners, even more villainous and much better organised than those in Liverpool.¹³

4.1.2 Runners

Most of the Famine immigrants had no official welcome to the United States. If the family had been lucky enough to notify relatives of the name of their ship before leaving Ireland or Liverpool, they may have been met by friendly faces who had a spare room to share until they could find work and a permanent place to live. Even so, immigrants were met by the clamor and bustle of the largest collection of people they had ever seen in their lives. New York City had more than 500,000 inhabitants in 1850, far more than in any Irish city. This was a bewildering, frightening, and disheartening experience for most immigrants. Weak, hungry, and homesick, they gathered their few belongings together and disembarked from the ship. At that point, they huddled dockside, confused as to what to do next. Pickpockets and con artists found the recent arrivals easy targets.¹⁴

The emigrant inexperience left him completely at mercy of bandits who assumed many forms, such as brokers, runners, boarding-house keepers, commission agents, sellers of 'bogus', tickets, and others; and from their number and audacity they appeared to set all law and authority at defiance. As soon as ships arrived in port, runners who worked for local landlords would board the vessels. Sometimes even before they paid the hospital fee, immigrants encountered runners similar to those the immigrants had encountered in Liverpool. Runners were to be found operating at

¹²Karen Price Hossell, *Op.Cit.*, pp.38-39; Kerry A. Graves, *Op.Cit.*, pp.49-51. For more details about Castle Garden see: The Rev. Stephen Byrne, *Op.Cit.*, pp.28-30.

¹³ Denny Hatch, *Op.Cit.*, p.53; Karen Price Hossell, *Op.Cit.*, p. 39.

¹⁴ Kerry A. Graves, *Op.Cit.*, pp.53-54.

every port in the United States, in British North America and in Europe, but it was in New York that their iniquities were at their worst. These runners did not wait on the docks in New York; instead, they would jump on the boats that were used to ferry immigrants ashore and accost the new arrivals even before they had set foot on dry land. Even while the emigrant ship was still at quarantine, he was accosted by a runner, speaking in his native language, where, similarly to Liverpool, runners who plundered Irish emigrants were usually Irish-born.¹⁵ In New York the evil appears to be as great, so, the Legislature, in 1846, appointed a Select Committee to investigate their practices. It was stated by witnesses before a Committee of the Assembly of New York in 1847, that from the time an emigrant arrived until he reached his destination he was subjected to every species and extent of fraud; that he was cheated in the lodging houses in the price of his meals; cheated to the extent of (sometimes) six times the fare he ought to pay for his passage to the interior; cheated by then receiving a ticket only to some intermediate place, instead of the place he had contracted to be conveyed to; and further cheated by being compelled, after he had started, to pay freight for his luggage.¹⁶ Thus, in their first annual report, the Commissioners are compelled to acknowledge how little was the practical good resulting from the inquiry and its consequent disclosures; for they say “It is a matter of almost daily observation by persons in the employ of the Commissioners, that the frauds exposed in the Report of the Select Committee, appointed last year to examine frauds upon emigrants, continued to be practised with as much boldness and frequency as ever. A regular and systematic course of deception and fraud is continually in operation, whereby the emigrant is deprived of a large portion of the means intended to aid him in procuring a home in the country of his adoption.”¹⁷

The runners aim was to rob the emigrants, which they did in four different ways: First, by simply stealing luggage. Second by seizing luggage and carrying it to a boarding house and then ask for a great fee for a service the emigrant did not want. Moreover, once in the house, the owner of the place would charge them extortionate rents for vile lodgings. Third by taking a cut from the boarding-house owner for bringing customers. Four by overcharging river, canal, or railroad tickets to take emigrants to the interior. This last activity was the most profitable line of business. The story of James Heeslop clearly shows how profitable the sell of tickets could be.

¹⁵P.R, Report of Select Committee appointed to investigate frauds upon emigrant passengers, Documents of the Assembly of the State of New York, Session 1847, Vol. VIII, Document No. 250, December 6, 1847, p.p.2-3, 8; John Francis Maguire, *Op.Cit.*, pp.187-188; Timothy J. Palson, *Op.Cit.*, p.40; Denny Hatch, *Op.Cit.*, p.53; Robert Ernst, *Immigrant Life in New York City 1825-1863*, New York 1994, p.28; Karen Price Hossell, *Op.Cit.*, p.39; Cecil Woodham-Smith, *Op. Cit.*, p. 259; Kerry A. Graves, *Op.Cit.*, p.52.

¹⁶GRC, Twelfth general report of the Colonial Land and Emigration Commissioners, 1852, H.C, 1852 [1499], p.11; John Francis Maguire, *Op.Cit.*, p.188; Kerry A. Graves, *Op.Cit.*, p.54.

¹⁷ Quoted in: John Francis Maguire, *Op.Cit.*, p.188.

In 1847, James Heeslop told a committee of New York State looking into frauds on emigrants that he had been extorted \$145 for fare from New York to Port Washington in Ohio whereas the ordinary fare for that destination was \$8.61.¹⁸

Beginning in 1847, New York runners were required to purchase licenses to ply their trade and they wore badges indicating that they were "official". However, this did nothing to change their behavior toward immigrants. Still, because they wore official-looking badges, immigrants were more likely than before to trust them, and the runners continued to defraud as many people as they could find. One man, for example, immigrant William Lalor, wrote home about his troubles with runners and others who defrauded him, acknowledging that part of the problem was his "total ignorance of the ways, manners, customs, prices . . . of the country by which I got fooled out of all my money within three weeks after landing."¹⁹

For most Irish immigrants who had fled the famine, the rough conditions they faced in the cities and towns of America were a step up from life in Ireland. In their homeland, a countryside dotted with small cottages, even finding shelter or getting enough food to survive had been a struggle. In America, Irish immigrants were arriving in great cities with smoke-belching factories and towering, five- and six-story buildings. Finding a place to live was one of the first things they had to do, so, the runner's first move was to recommend the comfort and economy of a boarding-house managed by one of his friends. Often, these runners were fellow Irishmen who used their Irish background to con newly arrived Irish immigrants into giving them their bags or following them to overpriced accommodations. The runners often bullied the surprised and confused immigrants into following them to buildings where they were told they could find shelter for a fair price. But once the immigrants arrived at the shelters, they were charged outrageous prices to stay in filthy conditions. Having no other choice, the immigrants usually stayed in these buildings, called tenements. The runners would then be paid off by the landlords for putting more money in their pockets. Tenements were apartment buildings designed to hold as many people as possible at the least possible cost. The first tenements were simply old factory buildings converted into apartments. In 1833, the first true tenement building was built in a neighborhood of New York City called the Lower East Side. Before long, hundreds of these cheap dwellings had sprung up, and then its number increased in the second half of the nineteenth century. Tenement rooms were small, given how many people had to live in them, and there might be a stove for cooking and for heat. In the earliest tenements, there was no running water and toilets known as outhouses

¹⁸ Denny Hatch, *Op.Cit.*, p.54; John Francis Maguire, *Op.Cit.*, pp.189-193 .

¹⁹ Quoted in: Mark Wyman, *Immigrants in the Valley: Irish, Germans, and Americans in the Upper Mississippi Country, 1830-1860*, Chicago 1984, p.39; Karen Price Hossell, *Op.Cit.*, p.39.

were outdoors, to be shared by dozens of people. Later, toilets were in the hall and shared by the residents on each floor of the building.²⁰

Room and board were promised at reasonable rates, but the boarding-house keepers induced their guests to stay several days, for which they charged three or four times the rate for the first day. To this sum they added outrageous charges for cartage and storage of baggage. If the boarder could not pay, he was turned penniless into the street, while his belongings were held as security. Not only did such boardinghouse keepers fleece their customers, but they deliberately misinformed them about employment conditions in New York or transportation routes to the West, and they even prevented the stranger from obtaining reliable advice. In 1848 the state legislature recognized the seriousness of the situation and adopted regulations for these boarding-houses, which resulted in some improvement.²¹

Poor Irish immigrants had often lived together in small cottages in Ireland, so cramped quarters were familiar enough. But life in the tenements was nothing like the village life with which many Irish were familiar. There was no fresh air, the quiet of the Irish countryside was replaced by the clash of trolley wheels, the cries of street vendors, the endless chatter of pedestrians and the rumble of horse-drawn traffic. Farmers who had rarely left their small plot of land in Ireland now heard dozens of languages every day as they shared the streets with other immigrants. These included Germans, Jews, Italians and Russians. The workday, too, was now ruled, not by the weather or by the seasons, as it was in farming, but by the steam whistles and time clocks of factories.²²

To be a successful runner, one had to be strong and aggressive, and the good ones were well paid. One New York Tribune article written during that period said that a runner “must be a man, or rather a brute, that fire would not burn, rope hang, nor water drown; with a fist like a sledgehammer, and muscle enough to overthrow a bull. With such qualifications, in proportion to his smartness, he would receive from \$50 to \$100 a week from his employer the broker.”²³ Runners were dangerous men, they worked in gangs, and each gang had its own bullies; fights, with bloodshed, were waged for the possession of terrified emigrants. Captain Boudinot, Police Captain of the 3rd Ward, in which the docks were situated, told the Committee which was

²⁰Timothy J. Palson, *Op.Cit.*, p.40; Cecil Woodham-Smith, *Op.Cit.*, p. 259; Karen Price Hossell, *Op.Cit.*, pp.39 -40; William Adams, *Op.Cit.*, p.343; John Francis Maguire, *Op.Cit.*, p.190; ; Kerry A. Graves, *Op.Cit.*, p.54; *Irish Immigrants in America during the 19th Century*: <http://www.kinsella.org/history/histira.htm>. 14/05/2013, 04:35 pm. See: Robert Ernst , *Op.Cit.*, p.28.

²¹Further details are giving in: Robert Ernst, *Op.Cit.*, p.28; John Francis Maguire, *Op.Cit.*, p.p.189-190,194-195.

²² Timothy J. Palson, *Op.Cit.*, p.41.

²³ Quoted in: Terry Coleman, *Going to America*, New York 1973, p. 201; Karen Price Hossell, *Op.Cit.*, p.40 .

appointed in 1847 to investigate frauds upon emigrant passengers arriving in New York that newly-landed emigrants who refused to fall in with the runners' suggestions had their luggage seized from them by force, unless protected by armed police. Emigrant boarding-houses were generally kept by men who had formerly been runners, and they retained one or more ex-colleagues to bring them victims from the docks.²⁴

Runners also promised to help immigrants arrange for travel to their final destination, whether to another city or to unclaimed lands in the nation's interior, so, among the most fruitful means of fraud was the sale of tickets. Often, however, these tickets for travel by railroad or canal barge were worthless forgeries or were for a destination far short of where the immigrant wished to go.²⁵ Runners acted as decoys for the sellers of bogus rail and boat tickets, in this context, the Special Committee wrote, "The worst frauds are in the sale of passage tickets." Also, an Irish journalist said: "These tickets were of various kinds—tickets sold at exorbitant prices, but good for the journey; tickets which carried the passenger only a portion of his journey, though sold for the entire route; and tickets utterly worthless, issued by companies long-since bankrupt, or by companies which existed only in imagination."²⁶ Thus, everywhere the new arrivals turned someone was prepared to take advantage of them. Money changers also frequented the docks, waiting to victimize, unsuspecting immigrants hoping to exchange their British pounds and shillings for American dollars. The money changers charged high rates for their services and cheated the unsuspecting immigrants, who were unfamiliar with exchange rates and could ill afford to lose even a penny.²⁷

There were two investigating committees between 1845 and 1855. As was just seen there was one in 1847, and the other one was in 1852. Reports of both committees are full of dubious witnesses exonerating themselves and accusing each other.²⁸ Moreover, although New York passed two Acts in 1849, for the regulation of runners and lodginghouse keepers and put a stop to these frauds, but these laws have not accomplished their object. It seems that of the difficulty of devising any cure for these cruel frauds, the strongest proof was the failure of every scheme which had been devised for that purpose. The emigration commissioners had distributed notices through Ireland, warning emigrant against the runners, and they had, by the

²⁴ Cecil Woodham-Smith, *Op.Cit.*, pp. 259-260 .

²⁵ Karen Price Hossell, *Op.Cit.*, p.40; John Francis Maguire, *Op.Cit.*, pp.194-196 .

²⁶ Quoted in: P.R, Report of Select Committee on frauds upon emigrant passengers, pp.3-4; Cecil Woodham Smith, *Op.Cit.*, p. 261.

²⁷ Karen Price Hossell, *Op.Cit.*, p.40; John Francis Maguire, *Op.Cit.*, p.193 .

²⁸ See: Denny Hatch, *Op.Cit.*, p.54.

permission and with the concurrence of the dock trustees, affixed notices to the same effect on the walls of the docks. Moreover, they likewise prepared a card, to be delivered to all adult emigrants proceeding to New York, warning them against the frauds of the runners in that city, and pointing out to them the names and addresses of those to whom they should apply for assistance or advice on their arrival. Also in this context, the commissioners confirmed that the most effectual protection for the emigrant would of course be to avoid the places where runners exist. However, they observed the increase in the proportion of the emigration taking the route from Liverpool to New York and they pointed out that as regards Liverpool, its superior advantages both in respect to the class of shipping, the facility of access and the cheapness of passage, will probably always make it the principal port of departure from the United Kingdom ; but, as regards the port to which emigrants should go, there can be no doubt that to those whose destination is the Western States, the route by the St. Lawrence is better and cheaper than that by New York. The first and most important advantage is, the escape from runners, who do not exist in Quebec or Montreal, and who, if they should hereafter come in to existence there, could easily be controlled; while the presences in each of those cities of a responsible government, officer, charged with the duty of assisting and protecting emigrants, is a guarantee against their being defrauded or ill-used.²⁹

In general, it can be said that, it was easier to disclose frauds and injustices than to prevent them, and the special committee investigating frauds was criticized because the abuses they uncovered continued to flourish. The underworld of New York's waterfront, corrupt officials, runners, saloonkeepers, passage-brokers and forwarding agents, was powerful, and although few honest agencies existed to help emigrants arriving at New York— as it will be explained later —frauds were not checked until, in 1855 instead of being landed at different quays in New York harbour, all emigrants were landed at immigrant depot was instituted at Castle Garden near the Battery, under the eye of the police. There, secure from exploitation, they could change their money, arrange for reliable accommodation, buy railroad tickets and seek advice about jobs.³⁰ However, we can say that most Famine immigrants did have relatives or neighbors from Ireland who had arrived in America before them, so, reuniting with familiar faces eased the transition of the new arrivals to their home.

²⁹GRC, Twelfth general report of the Colonial Land and Emigration Commissioners, 1852, H.C, 1852[1499], pp.11-13.

³⁰Cecil Woodham-Smith, *Op.Cit.*, p. 261; Robert Ernst, *Op.Cit.*, p. 32; Denny Hatch, *Op.Cit.*, p.54. Further details are giving in: John Francis Maguire, *Op.Cit.*, p.p.188-189,197-199.

4.1.3 Assistance societies

The greater relative poverty of the famine refugees as compared with earlier migrants meant that they needed an Irish network even more than their more prosperous predecessors. Nonetheless, even the most established Irish in the Old South craved relations with their fellow countrymen in Ireland, Hibernian societies,, in particular, filled that need. The Catholic Church was of vital importance in helping immigrants gain a foothold in America, but secular organisations set up by the Irish themselves provided aid as well. Thus as more of their countrymen arrived throughout the 1800s, Irish immigrants formed Hibernian societies and agencies to help the new arrivals find work and housing and connect to the existing Irish community in many cities. These organizations date back to 1737, when the Charitable Irish Society of Boston began to give aid to their fellow Irish "who may be reduced by sickness, shipwreck, old age and other infirmities and unforeseen Accidents....". In Philadelphia, the Hibernian Society for the Relief of Emigrants from Ireland began in 1790, and a similar group formed in Savannah in 1812. The huge population of Irish immigrants in New York City could turn to many agencies, such as the Emigrant Assistance society, formed in 1825.³¹

As we mentioned earlier, the need for organizations that catered for, represented and gave a voice to the wider Irish community in America was heightened from 1827. For many Irish immigrants one way to find support and connect with their homeland was to become a member of the Ancient Order of Hibernians (AOH). The organisation founded in New York City in 1836, it modeled itself on a secret society of the same name that had existed in Ireland for more than 300 years, originally to protect Irish Catholics from persecution by the English. The American AOH, provided relief and support, such as help in finding jobs and housing, for bewildered and overwhelmed immigrants who needed a community that was free of crime and violence. Over the years, the AOH became very influential, educating its members on the social and political issues affecting the Irish community. So, we can say also that the Ancient Order of Hibernians was a club that provided a chance for Irish immigrants to socialize, in addition, it helped them keep abreast of what was going on back in Ireland and among Irish immigrants in America. The Hibernians also provided life insurance policies at affordable prices. Hibernian societies in New Orleans and Savannah provided social distractions for the more prominent Irish

³¹David T. Gleeson, *Op.Cit.*, p.60; Karen Price Hossell, *Op.Cit* p.p 47; Denny Hatch, *Op.Cit.*, p.54; Kerry A. Graves, *Op.Cit.*, p.57. Gleeson pointed out that Hibernian societies founded by the earliest Irish settlers, often refugees of the 1798 rebellion.

citizens, particularly on St. Patrick's Day. The celebrations became more elaborate in the 1820s and 1830s and continued through the famine immigration.³²

Thus, before the famine years, Irish immigrants who had settled in the United States in earlier years made some effort to help newcomers avoid the ordeals that they had had to face. For example, Irish fraternal organisations were already established in Philadelphia by the time the famine Irish arrived, and these proliferated with the social needs of the newcomers for interaction and mutual aid. The Friendly Sons of Saint Patrick—founded in 1771 and later combined with the Hibernian Society for the Relief of Emigrants from Ireland—included both Protestant and Catholic Irish. Also, Irish military and fire brigades provided what Clark has called: “a medium for association, celebration and nationalistic activity. They were based partly upon nostalgia for the old country and a concern for its welfare and partly on the need for ethnic solidarity and interaction. . . . They were also channels for business or political advancement, and an arena for the exercise of personal influence or the assertion of social status.”³³ Moreover, a group of volunteers formed the Irish Emigrant Society in 1839 to help immigrants as they tried to settle into life in New York City through protecting them from exploitation by swindlers and boarding-house keepers, and to give advice on travelling inland and establishing themselves in America, but the sudden influx of destitute famine Irish was more than it was equipped to handle. Members of the society would meet with immigrants soon after they arrived and provide them with advice and information. The society opened the Emigrant Savings Bank in 1850, and through that institution Irish Americans were able to send money to Ireland to pay for the passage of family members who had stayed behind. The society made a profit by keeping 12.5 percent of the money sent to Ireland and also it warned prospective emigrants still in Ireland that life in the United States would not be as easy as they might imagine.³⁴ In 1849 the society published a leaflet that stated, “We desire, preliminarily, to caution you against entertaining any fantastic idea, such as that magnificence, ease and health, are universally enjoyed in this country. . . . It is natural for persons who have adventured to leave home and to seek their fortunes in a foreign and distant country, to give highly coloured accounts of a success, which in reality, has been but the obtaining of a labourious employment.”³⁵ In 1843, Irish building labourers helped organised the first mutual-aid society for the city's unskilled, the Labourers' Union Benevolent Association; by the decade's end, the LUBA had called for higher wages and the elimination of sweating, and had enlisted

³²Timothy J. Palson, *Op.Cit.*, p.44; Karen Price Hossell, *Op.Cit.* p.50; David T. Gleeson, *Op.Cit.*, p.60. Further details are giving in: Mike Cronin and Daryl Adair, *Op.Cit.*, p.p.11-17,34-38.

³³ Quoted in: Dennis Clark, *Op.Cit.*, p.110-11; Marjorie R. Fallows, *Op.Cit.*, p.36.

³⁴ Karen Price Hossell, *Op.Cit.*, pp.47-48; Kerry A. Graves, *Op.Cit.*, p.57; Denny Hatch, *Op.Cit.*, p.54.

³⁵ Quoted in: Karen Price Hossell, *Op.Cit.*, p.48.

more than six thousand members, making it the largest labour "society" in any American city.³⁶

Gradually, as famine conditions eased in Ireland, Irish American organisations grew to meet the needs of the growing numbers of Irish women who, seeing little future in their poverty-stricken homeland, were emigrating. The women had led sheltered lives in Ireland and therefore were easy marks for a wide variety of con artists in America. During the 1850s the Women's Protective Emigration Society was formed to help female emigrants from Ireland. The society's volunteers helped young women find jobs or paid their fare to travel on to other cities to find work. Another organisation, the New York Magdalen Female Benevolent Society, even provided women a place to live, even though women housed there, though, were forced to follow strict rules. Also helping new arrivals negotiate the often-bewildering environment of American cities were several newspapers. As early as 1810, the Shamrock newspaper was operating in New York City, and in 1836 the Boston Pilot began circulation in that city, offering job listings, news about the lives of the Irish in the United States, and articles about what was happening back in Ireland. Other cities, including Philadelphia and Charleston, South Carolina, also had newspapers specifically meant for Irish immigrants. Other organisations formed to provide social activities, as well as security, for Irish immigrants. Besides the Ancient Order of Hibernians, there was the Society of St. Vincent de Paul was organised in 1846 to preserve family life among poor Catholic immigrants and to provide them relief in the form of food, money and medicine, among other things. Moreover, Irish literary organisations were formed during the 1840s that provided, along with organised discussions about literature, disability and life insurance. And organisations known as county societies were founded in most large American cities and helped Irish Americans find others who had come from the same part of Ireland as they did, so these county societies would hold dances, concerts and picnics. Thus, societies and clubs were vital elements of American urban culture, and being a member of one was a sign of status and sophistication³⁷

In addition, with regard to song, emigrant songs and ballads sung by Irishmen on both sides of the ocean usually expressed a "pervasive note of sadness." It can say that by these songs, the Irish brought to America a great love of music. Many of the early Irish ballads refer to the hopes and dreams of the emigrants as well as the severe hardships they encountered on their journeys. In this ballad the emigrant remembers the one he left behind. Thus, they sang in America the songs they had sung in Ireland, adding some new ones drawn from the emigration movement itself;

³⁶ Sean Wilentz ,Op.Cit., p.353.

³⁷ See: Karen Price Hossell, Op.Cit., pp.49.50; David T. Gleeson, Op.Cit., pp.60-61.

they had the same sort of parties, dances and clubs. So, whether commercial or folk compositions, the ballads often sang of inconsolable homesickness.³⁸

The acculturation of the famine Irish was seriously retarded because their sheer numbers were bound to disrupt the earlier, settled pattern of social relationships in their adopted communities. The Irish neighbourhood groupings which developed out of necessity in shantytowns and city slums and which presented a glaring contrast with the culture of established Anglo-Americans, nevertheless came to provide social satisfactions that were hard to abandon. The reward of such ethnic enclaves found their expression in the nationalistic, religious and political associations that became the lifeblood of the Irish American community. As the first sizable Catholic immigrant group to pioneer in hostile territory, the Irish may have identified short-cuts for those who followed but they themselves set few records for speed in winning acceptance as fully acculturated Americans.³⁹

4.2 Regions of stability of the Irish immigrants in the United States:

4.2.1 The Urbanised Irish

During the colonial period, the Scotch-Irish settled in the southern Appalachian backcountry and in the Carolina piedmont. They became the primary cultural group in these areas, and their descendants were in the vanguard of westward movement through Virginia into Tennessee and Kentucky, and thence into Arkansas, Missouri and Texas. By the 19th century, Ulster Irish emigrants followed the pattern of settlement that their eighteenth-century ancestors had established, settling in western Maryland, Virginia and the Carolinas. Charleston, Savannah, Mobile and New Orleans were the Southern cities where sizable numbers of Irish settled. Along with avoiding the ravages of the "Great Hunger," the prefamine immigrants were also fortunate to have arrived in the South during its greatest economic boom. By 1820, short-staple upland cotton had surpassed all other southern produce in value. Despite volatile prices, the cotton supply continued to grow over the next three decades, nearly doubling in ten years, so some Irish settlers took full advantage of this boom.⁴⁰ On the other hand in the early 19th century, many Irish migrated individually to the

³⁸See: Kerby A Miller, *Op.Cit.*, p.5; William Adams, *Op.Cit.*, p.346; Kem Knapp Sawyer, *Op.Cit.*, p.15.

³⁹ Marjorie R. Fallows, *Op.Cit.*, p.144.

⁴⁰James G. Leyburn, *Op.Cit.*, pp. 317–319; David T. Gleeson, *The Irish in the south 1815-1877*, 2001, p.p.26-32,42-43; Jay P. Dolan, *The Irish Americans*, p.38; Irish Americans: <http://www.answers.com/topic/irish-american>. 16/04/ 2013, 04:10pm.

interior for work on large-scale infrastructure projects such as canals and railroads where, these Jobs brought Irish immigrants to the Midwest. Thus, by the 1840s, the United States already held a considerable Irish immigrant population. In fact, just before the huge influx of Famine immigrants, there were already an estimated 415,000 Irish living in the United States. The indentured servants who arrived during the colonial era were joined by Northern Irish settlers who helped carve out the American frontier after the American Revolution. By the turn of the century, Irish immigrants could be found throughout the United States. The construction of the canal system, which reached its high point in the 1820s and 1830s, employed tens of thousands of Irish workers, many directly recruited in Ireland. This pre-industrial transportation system opened up 4,000 miles of quick, cheap routes to move goods and travelers and led to the further dispersion of Irish immigrants across America. The canals joined the northeastern states of New York and Pennsylvania to the southwestern Great Lakes region and the Mississippi River system through Ohio and into Illinois. As the canals progressed west, workers formed Irish shantytowns that later grew into small towns across the region. Other men opted for a more settled lifestyle when the canals were completed and chose to bring their families to reside in midwestern cities.⁴¹ The West was home to Irish miners and rail workers, and Irish men formed a large part of the population in the early history of cities such as San Francisco, Butte, and Denver.

Therefore we may conclude that despite some signs of prosperity in rural areas, the Irish immigrants, particularly the famine immigrants, found more chances for success in urban areas. For Irish Catholics, who began to arrive in sizable numbers in the 1830s and 1840s, the South was not appealing. The principal reason was that the slave-based cotton economy of the South did not provide enough job opportunities to attract large numbers of unskilled laborers, and unlike the East and the Midwest, the South did not develop a large urban-industrial market base to attract Irish laborers, moreover, the major immigration ports were located in the North, not the South, with New Orleans being the lone exception. The Irish pattern of settlement began to become concentrated in the port cities along the Northeastern seaboard where their ships arrived, they had already established strong communities.⁴²

With regard to famine immigrants, most Irish men and women who arrived during the famine years had no extra money when they landed in America, often sick and weak from their journey, they had to take whatever employment was available close at hand and settled for the cheapest housing they could find. These were the

⁴¹ Kerry A. Graves, *Op.Cit.*, p.p.18,54,56.

⁴² David T. Gleeson, *Op.Cit.*, pp. 42-43; Jay P. Dolan, *The Irish Americans*, p.38; Irish Americans: <http://www.answers.com/topic/irish-american>. 16/04/ 2013, 04:10pm.

determining factors in Irish settlement patterns in the United States. So, most of the famine immigrants like their predecessors tended to congregate in the large urban areas along the eastern seaboard. During this period the immigrants' disorientation was made all the worse by the disorder and confusion around them. Those who managed to avoid being conned by runners still found themselves wandering through streets, and as darkness fell, immigrants with nowhere to spend the night would feel increasingly apprehensive, some ended up sleeping on the sidewalks, with their bags for pillows, but most found shelter in boardinghouses, damp cellars, crowded apartments, single rooms, or shacks hastily built on the city's outskirts. Most of the lodgings teemed with flies, bedbugs and rats, and many Lodgers shared beds, sometimes in shifts.⁴³

It seems that the greatest Irish influx to the United States occurred simultaneously with the amazing growth of cities, so the overwhelming majority of Irish emigrants when they arrived in the United States headed for the cities, where, even though conditions in the cities were appalling, famine immigrants showed little interest in settling in rural areas. The vast majority of them had lived in rural Ireland, but in the United States, about three-quarters of Irish immigrants settled in urban areas. The concentration of the Irish in urban residences and in industrial occupations in the United States seemed to contradict their agrarian heritage.⁴⁴ According to the brilliant anthropogeographer, E. Estyn Evans, "The whole nature of Gaelic society was opposed to urban living";⁴⁵ cities were associated with foreign invaders and an alien culture. But in the United States, the Irish as a group scorned the vast and fertile open lands of the West and the opportunity to buy farms at bargain prices, preferring to live in cities. In fact no other immigrant group was as concentrated in urban areas as the Irish, especially in East coast states, the reason was primarily financial. Most Irish just did not have the money that was necessary to travel to a rural area and take up farming, so, some, especially those who came to the United States during the peak

⁴³Kerry A. Graves, *Op.Cit.*, p.p.58,66-67; David T. Gleeson, *Op.Cit.*, p.21; Terry Coleman, *Op. Cit.*, p.174; Karen Price Hossell, *Op.Cit.*, p.40; Lawrence J. McCaffrey, *The Irish Diaspora in America*, p.67; Denny Hatch, *Op.Cit.*, p.55; Kerby A. Miller and Patricia Mulholland Miller, *Op.Cit.*, pp.12-13; Malcolm Campbell, *Op.Cit.*, p.65.

⁴⁴ David T. Gleeson, *Op.Cit.*, p. 23; Karen Price Hossell, *Op.Cit.*, p.p.44, 61; Jay P. Dolan, *Op.Cit.*, p.85; Lawrence J. McCaffrey, *The Irish Diaspora in America*, p.63; Lawrence J. McCaffrey, *Textures of Irish America*, p.p.1,15; Edward Laxton, *Op.Cit.*, p. 166; Kerry A. Graves, *Op.Cit.*, pp.56-57; Denny Hatch, *Op.Cit.*, p.54; Amy Hackney Blackwell and Ryan Hackney, *The Immigrant Experience in the United States*: <http://www.netplaces.com/irish-history/the-immigrant-experience/the-immigrant-experience-in-the-united-states.htm>. 05/03/2013, 02:20pm

⁴⁵ Quoted in: E. Estyn Evans, *The Personality of Ireland*, New York 1973, p.82; Lawrence J. McCaffrey, *The Irish Diaspora in America*, p. 63.

famine years, had no choice. When they arrived at port cities such as Boston or New York, they could not afford to travel any farther, moreover, most were rural peasants, whose idea of farming was digging potatoes, therefore, lack of skills was far more important than a shortage of funds in determining the Irish-Americans' decision to become city dwellers. Because manorialism and serfdom had not encouraged agrarian skills or knowledge, Irish peasants were among the most inefficient farmers in Europe and were not equipped for life in rural America. Irish agriculture traditionally was more a cultural life-style than an economic system, and Irish peasants still used only simple tools—the spade, the scythe and the hoe. Unable to cope with the techniques of large-scale American farming, so the Irish in America, like those in Britain, had to start at the bottom of the urban, unskilled labor force, especially, in the minds of most of them farming was associated with insecurity, turbulence and unrest, while good wages in a lively city offered far more attractions. Thus, lacking both the funds as well as the skills needed to settle on the rural frontier, they chose the city instead. On the other hand even some who could have moved on did not, regard cities as a refuge; they found comfort in being among large numbers of Irish people, whose customs and religion were familiar, especially, the Irish were a gregarious people drawn to city neighbourhoods where there was a sense of community reminiscent of the rural villages where they grew up. The gregariousness, is so noticeable a feature of Irish character, so the Irish were not psychologically suited for existence in rural America, as they were community-minded, gregarious by nature, fond of visiting and talking. In Ireland small farms were so close together that they really constituted peasant villages. During the day there was considerable conversation across hedges and stone walls. In the evening neighbours visited, talked, sang and danced in each other's cottages. In rural America, on the other hand, farms were often miles apart and families had to be self-sufficient, seeing neighbours only on Saturday shopping excursions into town or at Sunday church services, so some of the Irish who did settle in rural America sent letters home commenting on the depth of their loneliness. American cities were rough, tough, corrupt, dirty, violent and unhealthy places to live, but the extroverted Irish found such urban areas congenial because they could live close to ethnic friends and neighbours.⁴⁶

Another reason that many Irish did not settle in rural areas in America was that there were few Catholic churches in the rural areas of the United States. For Irish

⁴⁶Lawrence J. McCaffrey, *The Irish Diaspora in America*, pp. 63-65; Lawrence J. McCaffrey, *Textures of Irish America*, p.p.15; Karen Price Hossell, Op.Cit., p.44; Jay P. Dolan, Op.Cit., p.85; William Adams, Op.Cit., pp.341-342; Timothy J. Palson, Op.Cit., p.36; Sean Wilentz, *Chants Democratic: New York City and the Rise of the American Working Class 1788-1850*, New York 2004, p.352; Denny Hatch, Op.Cit., pp.54-55; John Francis Maguire, Op.Cit., pp.214-215; Kerby A. Miller and Patricia Mulholland Miller, Op.Cit., p.p.9,12; Kerry A. Graves, Op.Cit., p.p.49,57-59.

Catholics, the church had long been a center around which to build a life, and they wanted one nearby. And because discrimination and prejudice against Catholics was common in much of America, many Irish felt that it was better to live among other Irish, where one's religion was the norm and they knew they would be accepted. Perhaps, too, the very familiarity with farm life drove some Irish to stay in the cities, as some historians suggest that the Irish were not drawn to farming in the United States because it reminded them of the oppressive conditions that were forced upon them by their landlords on farms back in Ireland. Those memories, combined with unfamiliarity with American climate, soil and farming technology, contributed to keeping the majority of Irish immigrants close by the cities where they landed.⁴⁷ Further, most Irish immigrants flocked to the cities on the East coast, where many had great difficulties finding good jobs or comfortable homes. So, the new immigrants flocked towards large cities, such as Boston, New York, Philadelphia, Savannah, Chicago and St. Louis, where many found homes in tenements in Irish neighbourhoods.⁴⁸ Thus, for the rural Irish who emigrated to America, cities offered the only way they saw to improve their social and economic positions, but perhaps the most attractive element of the city was the presence of established Irish communities. A friendly face, a familiar voice, a recognizable church, and an Irish-run saloon— it is what appealed to the newcomers. A few, however—about 15 percent— turned to farming.⁴⁹

In this context, the first chronicler of the Irish diaspora in America, John Francis Maguire, M.P., lamented the “evil consequences of the unhappy tendency of the Irish to congregate in the large towns of America.” Surprised by this phenomenon, he wrote: “in no country have the peasantry exhibited a stronger or more passionate attachment to the land than in that country from which such myriads have gone.”⁵⁰ Although Maguire was referring to the large cities of the northeastern and mid-Atlantic States, this Irish “tendency” also applied to the South. Maguire should not have been so surprised at this attraction of immigrants to town, since most Irish immigrants in America were escaping from the land because the rural life from which they had fled had provided nothing but heartache. They had firsthand knowledge of how precarious life there could be, and similarly, life in the nineteenth-century rural South—as we previously mentioned— did not have many attraction for the newly arrived immigrant. Numbers of them may have dreamt of owning their own farms, but

⁴⁷Karen Price Hossell, *Op.Cit.*, pp.44-45; Jay P. Dolan, *The Irish Americans*, p.85; John Francis Maguire, *Op. Cit.*, p.425.

⁴⁸See: Edith Abbott, *Historical Aspects of the Immigration Problem: Select Documents*, Chicago 1969, pp. 298-299; Kem Knapp Sawyer, *Op.Cit.*, p.p. 6, 31; Denny Hatch, *Op.Cit.*, pp.54-55.

⁴⁹See: Marjorie R. Fallows, *Op.Cit.*, p.27; Jay P. Dolan, *Op.Cit.*, p.85; Mark Wyman, *Op.Cit.*, p.42; Karen Price Hossell, *Op.Cit.*, p. 61.

⁵⁰ Quoted in: John Francis Maguire, *Op.Cit.* , p.214; David T. Gleeson, *Op.Cit.*, p.p. 21, 23.

they were not prepared for the isolation of the southern backcountry, this reality quickly dashed aspirations of proprietorship among many, as getting started in farming was a problem, particularly the cash-crop variety, which most Irish contemplating a rural life would have wanted instead of the subsistence farming they already knew, however raising cash crops required substantial capital investment, but arriving with ready capital for venture in good cotton land was impossibility for the vast majority of the Irish immigrating to the south, where, as many had barely escaped Ireland with their lives. Most of the Irish who did manage to acquire farms, and in a few instances plantations, were not famine migrants but earlier, they combated isolation by forming Irish settlements. In contrast to the solitude of the backcountry, the vitality of southern towns attracted Irish immigrants. Opportunity was greater there for the penniless immigrant than in the countryside, especially after the great famine in Ireland, but nevertheless, the Irish remained a negligible part of the region's total population.⁵¹

So, in every eastern and southern city, Irish immigrants were forced into the poorest neighbourhoods. In addition to people, cows, pigs, goats and chickens lived in these neighbourhoods, which came to be known as "Irish towns," or shantytowns. Other names were even more descriptive of conditions under which people lived; for example, one Irish slum in New York was known as Hell's Kitchen. Living in such poor conditions took a physical toll on the Irish immigrants. As a consequence, the average famine immigrant lived only about five or six years after arriving in the United States, often dying from diseases such as tuberculosis, typhoid, cholera and pneumonia. The children of the immigrants were particularly hard-hit and suffered from many illnesses to which malnutrition and neglect contributed greatly. The psychological stress that such living conditions imposed was high, resulting in various social problems even among women of Irish neighborhoods, such as alcohol abuse, prostitution and mental illness. Often, both parents in a family would die, leaving behind young children. When children were orphaned, few Irish Americans could afford to take them in, so these youngsters would take to the streets, begging and taking shelter wherever they could. Often, well-meaning citizens would step in to help the children, putting them on what were called "orphan trains" and sending them into rural areas and small towns where couples and families supposedly wanted to adopt children.⁵²

⁵¹ Further details are giving in: David T. Gleeson, *Op.Cit.*, pp.23-27.

⁵² Karen Price Hossell, *Op.Cit.*, pp. 43-44; William Adams, *Op.Cit.*, p.347; Lawrence J. McCaffrey, *The Irish Diaspora in America*, pp.67-68; Denny Hatch, *Op.Cit.*, p.55; Kerry A. Graves, *Op.Cit.*, pp.68-69; Irish Immigrants in America during the 19th Century: <http://www.kinsella.org/history/histira.htm>. 14/05/2013, 04: 35 pm.

4.2.2 Irish communities Form

For the Irish immigrant family, settling in America was an enormous transition. Most of them felt cut off and set adrift from the close ties of community and family they had left behind. They were homesick and felt that they had been forced to leave. This shared emotional exile was largely responsible for the Irish immigrants banding together so closely after they had reached America. By living together in Irish communities they tried to recreate some of their own Irish customs and culture. However, even living with fellow Irish immigrants, the noisy, crowded tenements (apartment houses meeting minimum standards) were far different from their thatched cottages in the Irish countryside. Rather than spending their lives surrounded by a small group of close family and friends, they found themselves in huge cities among hundreds of thousands of strangers. The lifestyle of the average Irish immigrant changed instantly from that of a rural agricultural laborer, who toiled according to the natural dictates of the weather and harvests, to an urban factory worker, controlled by schedules, production quotas, and the time clock. Though work hours were usually very long and wages were low, most immigrants felt it was preferable to starving to death in Ireland.⁵³

Regardless of where they settled, the Irish displayed a remarkable ability to adapt to city living. Three cities in particular were especially key destinations for the arriving Irish multitudes. Cities were already expanding at this time, between 1830 and 1860 the U.S. urban population had increased nine times, where such an urban explosion meant that jobs for labourers were plentiful, especially in the Northeast, which was the economic core of the nation. The Irish male—young, strong, unskilled and eager for work—fit the profile of the type of worker needed to build the streets and the housing in these expanding cities. What happened in New York was repeated in many cities from Boston to San Francisco.⁵⁴

New York, which provided the largest Irish-American community, was the most striking example of Irish concentration. In the decade of the 1840s, which marked the first significant confrontation of the famine Irish with American life, New York City, with 350,000 people, was already a competitive, wealthy and heterogeneous city with a large Irish Protestant community, among whom figured professional men, merchants and established Irish politicians. Philadelphia, with over

⁵³ Kerry A. Graves, *Op.Cit.*, pp.60-61.

⁵⁴ Karen Price Hossell, *Op.Cit.*, p.45; Jay P. Dolan, *Op.Cit.*, p.p.38,85; Kerry A. Graves, *Op.Cit.*, p.58; Malcolm Campbell, *Op.Cit.*, p.9.

220,000 people, was just entering a period of burgeoning growth in industry, transportation and commerce, with room for physical expansion, openings for new workers, and existing Irish social organisations. Boston was at that time a tightly knit commercial town of 85,000 people, with limited resources, an aristocratic leadership and a bustling port through which countless immigrants had already passed on their way to more promising places. Stamford, Connecticut, before the completion of the New York-New Haven railroad line in 1848, was a quiet village of 3,500 people, most of whom were well established Yankees. Governed by a coterie of Yankee leaders and facing a period of apparent stagnancy or decline. But the completion of the railroad put Stamford within easy travelling distance of both New York and New Haven and brought with it hundreds of newly arrived Irish immigrants looking for work in Stamford's rapidly expanding industries.⁵⁵

On the face of it, any immigrant with choice in the matter and advance knowledge of these few facts might have headed for Philadelphia as the place most likely to offer a chance for both sociability and advancement. But these facts were not known, and scarcely any of the famine Irish had a choice in the matter. They were fleeing Ireland rather than embracing a future for which they had planned. Except that some already had kin in a particular city where they would be met, almost any American port would do. The majority landing in Eastern ports came to New York or Boston; very few came by direct immigration from Ireland to Philadelphia; none came directly to Stamford. Thus, arriving in large numbers and with few resources, many of the famine immigrants simply remained near the ports where they had landed. Their subsequent perception of American society derived largely from their limited interaction with Americans in that specific locale.⁵⁶ And although the urban dwellings were bleak and depressing, at least American cities provided the company of their own misery-sharing people and formed slum communities in cities such as New York, Philadelphia, Boston, Baltimore, and New Orleans.

4.2.2.1 The Irish Community in New York City

One can question why New York was the main port of arrival. Several factors contributed to New York having the largest share of the emigrant trade. Firstly, its geographical position, at the north of the eastern coast, was an important factor. Thus the journey from Britain to New York was shorter than to other towns further south. Secondly, the economic situation of the city was very favourable. New

⁵⁵ Marjorie R. Fallows, *Op.Cit.*, p.p.31, 39; Denny Hatch, *Op.Cit.*, p.55.

⁵⁶ Marjorie R. Fallows, *Op.Cit.*, pp. 31-32; Kerby A. Miller and Patricia Mulholland Miller, *Op.Cit.*, p.7.

York was an affluent city, and also was a fast growing city, the third largest city in the western world after London and Paris. The majority of Irish emigrants chose New York to settle. In 1820 there were close to 25,000 Irish people in New York City, and as early as the 1830s it had replaced Philadelphia as the Irish capital of the United States. In the early nineteenth century New York was not only becoming a major industrial centre, but was also undergoing a population explosion, reaching over three hundred thousand people by 1840, in 1845; 516,000 in 1850 ; 630,000 in 1855. It is notable by 1840 about one of every four New Yorkers was a foreign-born Irishman or Irishwoman. As the city expanded, new streets had to be constructed, more housing was needed, and laborers were in demand. The growing city had an expanding economy offering numerous jobs, especially, after the completion of the Erie Canal in 1825 which established a transportation link between New York and the sprawling interior of the Midwest. Thirdly, New York had been the most important port for at least thirty years. Trade was well established there and so the ships followed the concentration of trade, in turn, more trade followed the ships. Thus, because of its huge harbour, which could accommodate a large number of sizable ships, as well as its ready access to the Erie Canal, New York emerged as the nation's leading centre of trade with a large percentage of the nation's imports and exports passing through its harbor, moreover, New York was a great shipbuilding city. Finally, before 1845 the largest Irish community abroad was to be found in New York. A substantial Irish community, already in place in the city, served as an unofficial welcoming committee to the newcomers and this seemed clear, especially in famine immigration because the emigrants, like most migrating groups, preferred to go where they could find friends and relatives, thus setting a chain reaction in motion, most of them travelled to New York, which had also become the primary destination for the emigrant ships sailing from Liverpool. All of these factors made New York the favoured destination for large numbers of Ireland's emigrants.⁵⁷

In the face of the pressures of their new homeland, the Irish in communities across the country banded tightly together, and supporting one another seemed to be the only way to cope with poverty. In New York City, Irish settled in distinct neighbourhoods, chiefly the Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth Wards, located south of Chambers Street at the lower end of Manhattan, where the Sixth Ward was the epicenter of the city's Irish community. By the 1830s it was reputed to be the largest Irish community in the nation, and it was also home to the Five Points, a neighbourhood that became one of the country's most notorious slums. Visitors to New York never failed to comment on the squalidness of the neighbourhood. As one New York fireman recalled,

⁵⁷ Denny Hatch, *Op.Cit.*, p.52; Jay P. Dolan, *Op.Cit.*, p.39; David T. Gleeson, *Op.Cit.*, p.19. See: "Desirable Companions and Lovers: Irish and African Americans in the Sixth Ward, 1830-1870," in Ronald H. Bayor, Timothy J. Meagher, *The New York Irish*, New York 1997, pp.,108-110.

“No decent person walked through it; all shunned the locality.” A recent study concluded that it was a “neighborhood rife with vice, crime and misery.” People were packed into wooden tenements “two or two and a half stories tall.”⁵⁸ These buildings were some of the city's worst tenements with families often living, sleeping and eating in a single room. Rents, however, were cheap, for example, a tiny, dark room in the basement of a tenement in the Five Points cost \$2 a month.⁵⁹

Thus, we may conclude that concentration of Irish in slum areas had already become apparent as early as the 1830s, especially in the area known as Five Points. From here the extent of Irish settlement gradually spread during the next generation until it included the entire Lower East Side. The Five Points represented just one slice of New York's Irish, other streets and neighbourhoods housed an Irish middle class. A study of the Sixth Ward's Catholic Church, Transfiguration, suggested that in 1840 the majority of its parishioners were skilled workers, these included tailors, carpenters, masons and blacksmiths, in addition to, a sizable number of petty entrepreneurs lived in the area. They were engaged in small neighbourhood trades, such as groceries, porterhouses and saloons. The trustees of Transfiguration parish included doctors, merchants and neighbourhood grocers. A number of the emigrants of 1798 were also distinguished doctors, lawyers and journalists, so the diversity of class evident in New York in the 1830s and '40s had been present among New York's Irish since the late eighteenth century, but with one significant difference. With the new waves of immigration after 1815, more lower-class Catholics had settled in the city. As their numbers increased, they began to reshape the nature of New York's Irish community. On the other hand, the filth, squalor, and crowded conditions of slums like the Five Points led to outbreaks of disease, for example, Typhoid fever and cholera, struck New York's Irish community in the 1830s and 1840s, these and other diseases, along with poor nutrition, claimed so many lives that the average immigrant could not expect to live past the age of 40.⁶⁰

The large Irish influx to America before the famine paled in comparison with the immigration later caused by the Great Famine. Where, the most popular U.S. destination for Irish immigrants fleeing the famine was New York City, which would

⁵⁸ Quoted in: Jay P. Dolan, *Op.Cit.*, p.39; Timothy J. Palson, *Op.Cit.*, pp.42-43; Robert McNamara, *The Five Points, New York's Most Notorious Neighborhood*:

<http://history1800s.about.com/od/urbanconditions/p/fivepointsnyc.htm>. 05/03/2013, 02:20 pm.

⁵⁹ Jay P. Dolan, *Op.Cit.*, p.39; Timothy J. Palson, *Op.Cit.*, p. 42; Kerry A. Graves, *Op.Cit.*, p.68.

⁶⁰ Marjorie R. Fallows, *Op.Cit.*, p.33; Denny Hatch, *Op.Cit.*, p.55; Jay P. Dolan, *Op.Cit.*, p.40; Timothy J. Palson, *Op.Cit.*, p.44; Karen Price Hossell, *Op.Cit.*, p. 44.

eventually house about 13 percent of all the Irish-born people in the United States.⁶¹ Between 1845 and 1855 close to one million Irish, most of whom had never before travelled more than a few miles from their birthplaces in rural Ireland, arrived in New York City. The Irish Emigrant Society, founded in 1814, had been attempting to provide free advice to new arrivals to protect them from exploitation by swindlers and boarding-house keepers, and to give advice on travelling inland and establishing themselves in America, but the sudden influx of destitute famine Irish was more than it was equipped to handle. Thus while New York City was merely a port of entry for many, it became home for thousands.⁶² One New York resident at the time wrote that “crazy old buildings—crowded near tenements in filthy yards—dark, damp basements—leaky garrets—shops, outhouses, and stables converted into dwellings though scarcely fit to shelter brutes—are the habitations of our fellow-beings, in this wealthy Christian city.”⁶³ In one ten-room New York building, fourteen immigrant families made their home. By the late 1840s, the Irish constituted the largest immigrant group in the city, and, by all accounts, the most miserable, with more than thirty thousand Irish immigrants were living in basements in New York, often these cellars flooded with sewage as the city's inadequate sewage system overflowed. As a result of the unsanitary conditions, diseases increased spread quickly. Few buildings had running water, so residents had to get water from fire hydrants on the streets or from one of New York's rivers. There was not enough water for bathing or washing clothes, and a few businesses opened specifically for that purpose, such as the People's Washing and Bathing Establishment in New York City. These businesses soon failed, though, probably because poor immigrants had money only for essentials such as shelter and food. Moreover, the toilet facilities were also inadequate and usually consisted of one outhouse, or privy, in a building's yard, which was to be used by all tenants. Because one privy could not withstand use by an entire building, the facilities overflowed into the yard. In New York, it was common to encounter waste water and sewage in alleys, yards, streets and gutters.⁶⁴

Conditions were not much different for Irish immigrants who settled in other cities. From Boston to Charleston, South Carolina, to New Orleans, immigrants found that they were forced by poverty to live in the least desirable parts of town. Everywhere, accommodations were substandard, consisting of single rooms occupied

⁶¹ David T. Gleeson, *Op.Cit.*, p.19; Timothy J. Palson, *Op.Cit.*, p.38; Robert McNamara, *The Five Points, New York's Most Notorious Neighborhood*: <http://history1800s.about.com/od/urbanconditions/p/fivepointsnyc.htm>. 05/03/2013,02:20 pm.

⁶² Marjorie R. Fallows, *Op.Cit.*, p.32.

⁶³ Quoted in: Terry Coleman, *Op.Cit.*, p.174; Karen Price Hossell, *Op.Cit.*, pp.40 -41; John Francis Maguire, *Op.Cit.*, p. 220.

⁶⁴ Sean Wilentz, *Op.Cit.*, p.352; Karen Price Hossell, *Op.Cit.*, pp.41-42; Kerry A. Graves, *Op.Cit.*, pp.68-69. Further details are given in: John Francis Maguire, *Op.Cit.*, pp.220-229.

by as many as thirty people, or cellars or attics— some with ceilings so low that an adult could not stand up straight. There was no sanitation system and no garbage pickup, so rubbish was thrown out of windows into streets and yards. Hungry immigrants sometimes roamed the streets, foraging through trash for something to eat.⁶⁵

4.2.2.2 The Irish Community in Boston

In the early of 19th century, Boston also attracted increasing numbers of emigrante from Ireland, particularly from its southern districts. This rising presence of Irish Catholic in this city was, in part, a consequence of newfound religious freedoms for American Catholics. So, later many of them settled in and around this city, clustered in the North End and Fort Hill, two of the most congested and depressed neighborhoods of the city. Overcrowding was notorious in the cellar apartments, where through cool in the summer, these dwellings, built beneath street level, offered little light or air and were frequently flooded. The Irish chose these neighborhoods because the rents were cheap and they were located near the docks and factories where they could find work, so, immigration rates rose in this city from 4,000 in 1820 to 117,000 in 1850,⁶⁶ where, it became a haven for Irish immigrants, and the city's population began to reflect the makeup of the new residents. Before the famine, there were fewer than 5,000 Irish immigrants in Boston, where, prior to 1845, this city had served merely as a port of debarkation, but Boston's Irish immigrants stayed and by 1850 made up 31 percent of the city's population. Since 75 percent were unskilled, the ready supply of cheap labour attracted construction bosses, who advertised for as many as 2,000 men for unskilled work elsewhere—work that Anglo-Americans disdained. Leaving women and children behind in Boston, these men departed for the job of building roads, canals and railroads in distant places.⁶⁷

As we pointed out earlier, some of the poorest immigrants sailed from Liverpool to Canada; because the fare was cheaper than passage to the United States. The immigrants would then walk or find other transportation to Boston or elsewhere in New England. In fact, about seventy-three thousand famine immigrants sailed first

⁶⁵ Karen Price Hossell, *Op.Cit.*, p.42; Marjorie R. Fallows, *Op.Cit.*, p.27.

⁶⁶ Mike Cronin and Daryl Adair, *Op.Cit.*, p.12; Karl S. Bottigheimer, *Op.Cit.*, p. 260; Oscar Handlin, *Boston's Immigrants, 1790-1880: A Study in Acculturation*, Cambridge 1991, p. 113; Jay P. Dolan, *Op.Cit.*, p.88; Karen Price Hossell, *Op.Cit.*, p.42; Kerry A. Graves, *Op.Cit.*, p.67; Irish American: <http://www.answers.com/topic/irish-american>. 16/ 04/ 2013, 04:10pm.

⁶⁷Marjorie R. Fallows, *Op.Cit.*, pp.36-37; Denny Hatch, *Op.Cit.*, p.55; Jessica McElrath, Anti-Irish Catholic Sentiment in Boston: <http://www.netplaces.com/john-f-kennedy/the-fitzgeralds-and-the-kennedys/anti-irish-catholic-sentiment-in-boston.htm>. 05/03/2013, 05:10pm.

to Canada then immediately crossed the border hit the United States and on to Boston. Of the arrival of Irish immigrants in Boston, historian Oscar Handlin says that “By their immobility the Irish crammed the city, recasting its boundaries and disfiguring its physical appearance; by their poverty they introduced new problems of disease, vice, and crime, with which neither they nor the community were ready to cope.”⁶⁸

The overwhelming influx of Irish immigrants alarmed Bostonians, who reacted with suspicion and outright bigotry. Based on that, Irish immigrants fleeing the famine who arrived in the city of Boston faced discrimination especially by their own country-people. Sharp divisions between poor and middle-class Irish Americans grew as earlier immigrants, mainly Protestants who had arrived before the 1840s and managed to establish businesses and professions that supported a middle-class lifestyle, chose to separate themselves from the desperate Irish immigrants who had fled the famine. So, intolerance to Irish Catholics was rampant in Boston.⁶⁹ City leaders were not prepared for such an influx of new residents and were dismayed by the resulting overcrowding, for instance, in 1848 city leaders in Boston commissioned a study on the living conditions among the Irish in order to find a way to combat the disease and death that spread through their tenements. The subsequent report of the Committee of Internal Health, Boston, 1849 found in some places “grown men and women sleeping together in the same apartment, and sometimes wife and husband, brothers and sisters, in the same bed.”⁷⁰ South Boston emerged as an urban slum, a congested and frightening district soon deserted by native Americans. Crime soared by as much as 400 percent, and the death rate among the Irish climbed to 37 per 1,000—three times that of Philadelphia.⁷¹

Unable to spread out because of the physical layout of the city, the Irish became an ingrown group surrounded by hostility. Handlin describes the "inability of the native-born to understand the ideas of their new neighbours," a mental set that perpetuated social segregation and led to a growing fear among Bostonians that the Irish could never be assimilated. To the Irish it seemed that Bostonians were tolerant and helpful to all but them. Social and political antagonisms recurrently took the form of confrontations between Irish and Boston Yankees, for during the forty-year period

⁶⁸ Quoted in: Oscar Handlin, *Op.Cit.*, p. 113; Karen Price Hossell, *Op.Cit.*, pp.42-43.

⁶⁹ Timothy J. Palson, *Op.Cit.*, p.42; Jessica McElrath, *Anti-Irish Catholic Sentiment in Boston*: <http://www.netplaces.com/john-f-kennedy/the-fitzgeralds-and-the-kennedys/anti-irish-catholic-sentiment-in-boston.htm>. 05/03/2013, 05:10pm.

⁷⁰ Quoted in: Oscar Handlin, *Op.Cit.*, p.113; Karen Price Hossell, *Op.Cit.*, p.43; Jay P. Dolan, *Op. Cit.*, pp.88-89.

⁷¹ Marjorie R. Fallows, *Op.Cit.*, p.37.

following the famine influx no other ethnic groups came in sizable enough numbers to dilute the impact of the Irish.⁷²

4.2.2.3 The Irish Community in Philadelphia

Because of its port and its commercial links with Ireland, Philadelphia had been before 1830 the Irish capital of America, with a well-established and distinguished Irish community that attracted the newcomers.⁷³ Six generations of Irish immigrants had settled in Philadelphia prior to the 1840s, but nothing had fully prepared the city for the seventh generation—the famine Irish. In his study of ten generations of Irish in Philadelphia, Dennis Clark observed that it was this seventh generation which would “greatly change Philadelphia's composition and its posture with respect to immigrants.”⁷⁴ Because Philadelphia did not receive the direct impact of newly landed immigrants that the port cities of Boston and New York did, its percentage of Irish-born was consistently lower. At mid-century, the Irish-born constituted 21 percent of the city's population— about 72,000 Irish in a city which had grown from 220,000 to 340,000 in the previous decade, and which was just then entering a rapid expansionary phase of its growth.⁷⁵

In Philadelphia the Irish settled along the Delaware and Schuylkill rivers in Kensington, Southwark and Moyamensing. As in Boston these were the industrial neighborhoods where Irish laborers were in demand.⁷⁶ Philadelphia was already a broad-based industrial center, a thriving port, and the hub of an expanding rail network, Philadelphia was also known for the quality of its education, the extent of its charitable work and its support of the arts. Clark sums up Philadelphia's feeling about itself in these words: “To the upper class and the comfortable middle class of the city, what had been created was good.... the exciting and profitable economic development of Philadelphia was a source of pride....the labor supplied by the immigrants was essential... they were a valuable pool of laborers and servants for a city intent on industrial greatness and residential enjoyment.”⁷⁷

⁷² Oscar Handlin, *Op.Cit.*, p. 185; Marjorie R. Fallows, *Op.Cit.*, pp.37-38.

⁷³ Jay P. Dolan, *Op.Cit.*, p.38.

⁷⁴Quoted in: Dennis Clark, *The Irish in Philadelphia: Ten Generations of Urban Experience Philadelphia*, Philadelphia 1974, p. 24; Marjorie R. Fallows, *Op.Cit.*, p.34.

⁷⁵ Marjorie R. Fallows, *Op.Cit.*, p.34; Jay P. Dolan, *Op.Cit.*, p.38.

⁷⁶ Jay P. Dolan, *Op.Cit.*, p.89.

⁷⁷ Quoted in: Dennis Clark, *Op.Cit.*, p.33-34; Marjorie R. Fallows, *Op.Cit.*, pp.34-35.

Those arriving in Philadelphia were primarily young and single persons who had disembarked in New York. Philadelphia was not without its tensions during those years, as violent conflicts erupted early in the 1840s between Irish newcomers and nativists—which will be explained later. Newspapers reinforced the stereotyped image of the Catholic immigrants as socially troublesome and inferior—a lower order of mankind. As in other cities, the Irish responded by creating their own separate organizations, banding together in ethnic neighborhoods, and remaining semi-alooft from the Philadelphians who needed them economically but did not accept them socially. At the same time, both natives and newcomers were caught up in the excitement of an expanding city. Peasants starved for property in Ireland found that they could become property owners in Philadelphia, where a two-story house was within the range of possibility for a thrifty working-man and where home ownership became a common pattern unknown to New York or Boston Irishmen. This appeared clear especially after 1850, where, loans were difficult to get, Irish building and loan associations developed as people's banks—often as adjuncts to Catholic churches, fraternal organizations, and Irish neighborhood and workingmen's groups—to finance home ownership and encourage thrift and family improvement. Those who eventually prospered as bankers, lawyers, physicians, editors, politicians and the like found they could move into more prestigious middle- and upper-class neighborhoods.⁷⁸

Philadelphia was not as congested as New York or Boston, but the Irish neighborhoods still housed some of the city's worst tenements. Although the majority of the famine immigrants were at first concentrated in slum areas, their arrival coincided with a boom in residential building such that within a short time even in the less desirable areas up to half of the property owners were Irish,⁷⁹ living in “tidy row houses on an orderly city street.”⁸⁰ By comparison with the conditions they had known, the immigrants were able to aspire to, or were already living in, unbelievable affluence and security. Even the death rate for Philadelphia Irish, at 12 per 1,000, was little more than half that of New York, and only one-third that of Boston, reflecting not only the hardiness of those who found their way to Philadelphia but also the less crowded and disease-infested living conditions. Moreover, Irish fraternal organizations were already established in Philadelphia by the time the famine Irish arrived—which will be explained later—and these proliferated with the social needs of the newcomers for interaction and mutual aid.⁸¹

⁷⁸ Marjorie R. Fallows, *Op.Cit.*, p.35; Karl S. Bottigheimer, *Op.Cit.*, pp. 263-264.

⁷⁹ Marjorie R. Fallows, *Op.Cit.*, p.35; Jay P. Dolan, *Op.Cit.*, p.89; Karl S. Bottigheimer, *Op.Cit.*, p. 263; Dennis Clark, *Op.Cit.*, p.44.

⁸⁰ Quoted in: Marjorie R. Fallows, *Op.Cit.*, p.35.

⁸¹ *Ibid*, pp.35-36; Karl S. Bottigheimer, *Op.Cit.*, p. 263.

Thus, Philadelphia, at mid-century, proved able to include the Irish in its vision of the future. Troublesome as they might appear, stereotyped as they might be in the imagination, they did not prove to be a serious threat. What Philadelphia was in a position to offer was exactly what the famine Irish most desired: diversification in jobs which started at the unskilled level but which could offer advancement for the enterprising, decent housing and association with others who shared a sense of ethnic identity. Because the proportion of Irish-born to native Americans was lower than in New York or Boston, and because the Irish in Philadelphia were active in, but never controlled, the political life of the city, they were finally able to move in steady steps toward the respectability they craved—respectability both within their own ethnic subsociety and in the eyes of the larger Philadelphia.⁸²

4.2.2.4 Other Cities:

San Francisco the most famous of the fair cities of the United States and there the most heavily Irish neighborhoods bordered the waterfront. But as in New York and Boston the Irish were well dispersed throughout the city. This same pattern of concentration in certain neighborhoods as well as dispersal throughout the rest of the city could be found in such Southern cities as New Orleans, Charleston, and Mobile. There the Irish lived near the docks, where they could find work.⁸³ It is notable, like the prefamine immigrants, a large number of the newer migrants did not come directly to southern towns but travelled south after having landed in the northern states or Canada first. Charleston's and Savannah's excellent links with northern ports made it easy for the Irish to get there from Atlantic ports farther north. A sizable section of Charleston's Irish immigrants came from New York City in the winter, when work was scarce there, and many returned north in the summer to avoid the dreaded southern heat. It can be noted that the Irish Catholics dominated immigration to Southern cities before the Civil War (1861–1865); New Orleans was the second-largest port of arrival after New York by 1850.⁸⁴

Irish immigrants had a remarkable "hunger for home ownership." Though this was not unique to the Irish, their level of property ownership compared favorably with that of other immigrant groups. Moreover, the longer they lived in the United States, the more they outperformed other groups in terms of property ownership. In Ireland, owning one's own home was but a dream for most Irish, especially for those who

⁸² Marjorie R. Fallows, *Op.Cit.*, p. 36; Karl S. Bottigheimer, *Op.Cit.*, p. 264.

⁸³ John Francis Maguire, *Op.Cit.*, p. 273; Jay P. Dolan, *Op.Cit.*, p.89; David T. Gleeson, *Op.Cit.*, pp. 38-39.

⁸⁴ See: David T. Gleeson, *Op.Cit.*, pp.28-32; Irish Americans: <http://www.answers.com/topic/irish-american>. 16/04/ 2013, 04:10 pm.

would emigrate, where, driven from the land by famine and hard-hearted landlords, they hoped to realize that dream in the United States. This would provide them with the security that they so lacked in Ireland, where many had forcibly been evicted from their homes.⁸⁵

4.3 Working

4.3.1 Digging Canals and Dangerous Work

Before 1800 Irish Protestant immigrants became farmers; many headed to the frontier where land was cheap or free and it was easier to start a farm or herding operation. From 1815 to 1835 Irish labor vital to a boom in road and canal building in the United States. At the beginning of 1820s Irish immigration had greatly increased due to the need for labor in canal building, lumbering and civil construction works in the Northeast. The large Erie Canal project was one such example where Irishmen were many of the laborers. Thus, long before the arrival of famine immigrants, Irish workers had built the Erie Canal, which connects the Hudson River with Lake Erie. Its construction began in 1817 to 1825, and from the beginning employed a large number of Irish, about three thousand Irishmen, were digging the Canal as did the Pennsylvania road-builders during this period. And as the nineteenth century progressed, Irish workers continued to dig canals, so, many workers were needed that companies advertised for workers in Irish newspapers and would send agents to the docks in New York City to hire men as they walked off ships from Ireland.⁸⁶

After 1840 most Irish Catholic immigrants went directly to the cities, mill towns, and railroad or canal construction sites in the east coast. In the East, male Irish laborers were hired by Irish contractors to work on canals, railroads, streets, sewers and other construction projects, particularly in New York state and New England. Some moved to New England mill towns, such as Holyoke, Lowell, Taunton, Brockton, Fall River, and Milford, Massachusetts, where owners of textile mills welcomed the new low-wage workers.⁸⁷

During the great famine, besides finding a place to live, one of the first things Irish immigrants had to do after arriving in America was find work. Irish men bore the main responsibility of earning a living to support the family. Some immigrants

⁸⁵ Jay P. Dolan, *Op.Cit.*, p.89.

⁸⁶ Kerry A. Graves, *Op.Cit.*, p.p. 54,56; William D. Griffin, *The Irish in America*, p.14; Karen Price Hossell, *Op.Cit.*, p.52; Lawrence J. McCaffrey, *The Irish Diaspora in America*, p. 64; Irish Americans: <http://www.answers.com/topic/irish-american>. 16/04/ 2013, 04:10 pm

⁸⁷ Irish Americans: <http://www.answers.com/topic/irish-american>. 11/04/ 2013, 04:10 pm

had assistance from benevolent organisations in the cities they settled in, such as New York's Irish Emigrant Society, others had friends or relatives who had already been in America for a while and could help them find work. The influx of immigrants, however, provided a huge labor pool of unskilled workers for employers, but also resulted in lower wages for all. In the 1830s, these laborers earned from \$1 to \$1.25 each day. The additional numbers of employees, willing to work for any wage to feed their families, brought the average daily wage down to \$0.75 by 1850. This was the wage for men, with women averaging even less, and children earning half an adult's wage for the same number of hours worked. Even with these poor wages, Irish men, women, and children all entered the workforce. This added to the growing animosity of the American unskilled laborer, who blamed the immigrant for his loss of pay. Working and living conditions were abysmal in many fields, yet there were no labor unions to help ease the suffering of the Irish.⁸⁸

Thus, the majority of famine emigrants had few prospects for earning a living, and because most of them had few marketable skills, they were forced to take menial, sometimes dangerous jobs. Men worked as stable boys, bartenders, bouncers, and pot boys in saloons, street sweepers, dockers and canal diggers. To their sorrow many young Irish who had great expectations rapidly discovered that the streets were not paved with gold and that it was rather them who had to pave the streets, for very low wages, and they had to work harder than at home. Moreover they found many social and economic doors closed to them,⁸⁹ so, the majority of the Irish who lived for example in Five Points worked as day labourers, work described as “the hardest, most dangerous, and most financially precarious.” They worked at laying sewer lines, digging foundations for new buildings, paving streets with cobblestones, or loading and unloading cargo from the many ships docked along the city's wharves. Their background in Ireland did not really qualify Irish emigrants for any other type of work. “Uneducated, accustomed to a marginal existence, a stranger to the refinements, thankful for a job at cash wages, [the immigrant] entered into the lowest stratum of free white labour as the hewer of wood and drawer of water, with his sole capital a brawny back and two strong hands.” It was rough work, but for a poor Irish immigrant, it was better than his native land could offer. As one of them put it, America “is the best poor-man's country in the world.”⁹⁰

⁸⁸ Kerry A. Graves, *Op.Cit.*, pp.69-71.

⁸⁹ Karen Price Hossell, *Op.Cit.*, p.51; Lawrence J. McCaffrey, *The Irish Diaspora in America*, pp.63-64; Timothy J. Palson, *Op.Cit.*, p.36; Denny Hatch, *Op.Cit.*, p.55; Lawrence J. McCaffrey, *Textures of Irish America*, p.15; Amy Hackney Blackwell and Ryan Hackney, *The Immigrant Experience in the United States*:<http://www.netplaces.com/irish-history/the-immigrant-experience/the-immigrantexperience-in-the-united-states.htm>. 05/03/2013, 02: 20 pm.

⁹⁰ Quoted in: Jay P. Dolan, *Op.Cit.*, pp.39-40. See: Kerry A. Graves, *Op.Cit.*, p.71

The great wave of Irish immigration happened at a time of tremendous growth in American cities and industries. Many of earlier Irish Immigrants went to work on the canals and railroads that were a part of the growing American economy. So, by the time the large influx of immigrants arrived during the 1840s and 1850s, some Irish Americans—those who had come several decades earlier—were hard at work, building the nation's transportation system. The Industrial Revolution was under way, creating a need to move both raw materials and finished goods long distances, moreover, the nation was expanding, and more and more people needed to travel, so canals, roads and railroads were all needed, and these earlier immigrants had found plenty of demand for their labour in building them. Such construction jobs required only physical strength and a willingness to work long hours—qualities that Irishmen accustomed to farm work back home had in abundance.⁹¹ Although many of their British landlords back in Ireland had disparaged the Irish as lazy, Americans were finding this to be an unfair characterization. One American newspaper editor wrote early in the nineteenth century that “America demands for her development an inexhaustible fund of physical energy, and Ireland supplies the most part of it. There are several sorts of power working at the fabric of this Republic—waterpower, steam-power and Irish power. The last works hardest of all.”⁹² For example, when Erie Canal was built, builders worked long and hard, often twelve to fifteen hours a day, and the work was dangerous: More than once the muddy canal banks collapsed as they were being dug, burying workers alive. Those who were not killed or injured in construction accidents were often laid low by diseases such as cholera or malaria, which they contracted while working and living in mosquito-ridden marshes and other low-lying areas. So, the mortality rate on those projects was high that a popular saying during the nineteenth century was that one Irish canal worker died “for each six feet of canal built.” Thus, life for canal builders was arduous, besides the risk of death from disease and accidents; they faced foul living conditions, as the labourers lived in makeshift shacks along the canals, they could have their families with them, but that did not relieve the hardship, and for the families of the workers, the general

⁹¹George Rogers Taylor, *The Transportation Revolution 1815-1860*, New York 1951, p. 290; Karen Price Hossell, Op.Cit., pp.51-52; Lawrence J. McCaffrey, *The Irish Diaspora in America*, p. 64; William Adams, Op.Cit., p. 340; Kerry A. Graves, Op.Cit.,p. 58; Amy Hackney Blackwell and Ryan Hackney, *The Immigrant Experience in the United States*:
<http://www.netplaces.com/irish-history/the-immigrant-experience/the-immigrantexperience-in-the-united-states.htm>. 05 /03/ 2013, 02: 20pm; Irish Immigrants in America during the 19th Century:
<http://www.kinsella.org/history/histira.htm>. 14/05/2013, 04: 35 pm.

⁹² Quoted in: Karen Price Hossell, Op.Cit., p.52; Amy Hackney Blackwell and Ryan Hackney, *The Immigrant Experience in the United States*:
<http://www.netplaces.com/irish-history/the-immigrant-experience/the-immigrantexperience-in-the-united-states.htm>. 05 /03/ 2013, 02: 20pm. See: Kerry A. Graves, Op.Cit., pp.71-72

disorder and squalor was only part of the picture. Wages were sometimes partially paid in whiskey, and in those cases the cash a worker earned was inadequate to buy enough food. Worse, the head of the household, when payday came around, might well spend his evening drinking and fighting. Brawls, in fact, were a part of life for Irish immigrant labourers, who often fought one another just for recreation.⁹³

Still, there was plenty of work, if not digging canals, then building railroads, as factories of all kinds, all over the country, were now driven by steam engines that increased productivity. Since the factories were producing more goods, more railroads were needed to transport the goods to market. Immigrants, many of them Irish, laid thousands of miles of track across New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Illinois, Iowa, Georgia, and Wisconsin. Railroad jobs allowed many immigrants, and sometimes their families as well, to relocate to other parts of the country where they found other employment. Work on the railroad was hard and dangerous, as immigrant workers broke rocks with sledgehammers and heaved rails into place, moreover, to build railroad across the American frontier, labourers had to blast tunnels through rock and rugged terrain, so, the work could be dangerous because dynamite was used to carve away solid rock to make way for rails, often in precarious spots like cliff faces. In such locations, workers in straw baskets were lowered to the place to be blasted and set the charges, and then they were quickly pulled up, sometimes, though, they were caught in the explosion and killed. The death rate was so high that a popular saying of the time was that for each railroad, there was “an Irishman buried under every tie.”⁹⁴

If building railroads took a heavy toll among the Irish, even more deadly was coal mining. Many Irish immigrants who looked for work outside the cities found jobs in mines, where miners worked long, hard hours underground. The labour was harsh, but the pay seemed better than that of the jobs available to city dwellers. Mining was dangerous work, and miners faced cave-ins, explosions, and flooding, furthermore, while a miner’s pay had seemed good at first, the men and their families quickly discovered that they were being tricked. Miners, living in towns owned by the mining companies, were forced to buy everything they needed at stores that were also owned by the companies. These stores charged high prices for basic foods like eggs and flour, the stores also charged a lot of money for the tools that the miners needed for

⁹³ David T. Gleeson, *Op.Cit.*, p.19; “Dublin Evening Post”, July 22, 1817; Kerby A. Miller, Arnold Schrier and others, *Op.Cit.*, p.44; Karen Price Hossell, *Op.Cit.*, pp.52-53; Kerry A. Graves, *Op.Cit.*,p.72.

⁹⁴ Quoted in: Timothy J. Palson, *Op.Cit.*, p.53; Karen Price Hossell, *Op.Cit.*, p.54; Margaret J. Goldstein, *Irish in America*, 2005, p.30; Kerry A. Graves, *Op.Cit.*,pp.71-72; Kimberly Powell, Pittsburgh’s Scotch Irish Heritage: http://pittsburgh.about.com/library/weekly/aa_scotch_irish.htm. 22/02/2013,11:50pm; Irish Immigrants in America during the 19th Century: <http://www.kinsella.org/history/histira.htm>. 14/05/2013, 04: 35 pm. See: Kerby A. Miller and Patricia Mulholland Miller, *Op.Cit.*, p.10.

their jobs, so, through these stores, the mining companies got back some of the money they had paid the miners. On the other hand miners worn down by heavy labour and the constant breathing of coal dust, they died prematurely, usually leaving wives and children without any means of supporting themselves.⁹⁵ The workers were expendable, and they knew it; one Irish immigrant wrote that in America, after ten or twelve years of hard labour, a worker “is of very little use afterwards—he becomes old before his time, and generally dies unheeded.”⁹⁶ Particularly galling was the fact that simply feeding oneself should require risking death. As one Irish American wrote: “How often do we see such paragraphs in the paper as an Irishman drowned—an Irishman crushed by a beam—an Irishman suffocated in a pit—and other like casualties in the hard toils for his daily bread?”⁹⁷

Sometimes, the Irish found themselves given the riskiest jobs for purely economic reasons. In the South, Irish immigrants found themselves placed in an odd position within the rigid socioeconomic hierarchy. Although they were white, their foreign origin placed them socially below the poorest white planter, this seems clear when the plantation owners chose to hire the Irish workers at a wage rather than risk their slaves as workers because of the high risk of injury or contracting malaria in the humid, mosquito-ridden area. Thus, the Irish American performed tasks that plantation owners would not allow their slaves to do. From the plantation owner's perspective, slaves were valuable property; Irishmen, on the other hand, were, as historian Kevin Kenny writes, “Cheap and expendable.” As a result, Irish labourers in New Orleans lived in the swampy lowlands along a ditch called the Irish Channel and worked there dangerous, grueling jobs, such as digging ditches in swamps teeming with snakes, alligators, and mosquitoes.⁹⁸

The competition extended to the waterfront area, where gangs of Irish men fought black laborers for jobs loading and unloading ship cargo. The struggle for employment led to animosity and racial rivalry, this seemed clear later when most Irish did not favor the emancipation of slaves during the Civil War, because they feared abolition would flood the market with a huge supply of unskilled laborers, a population of nearly 4 million men, women, and children with whom they would have to compete for their livelihood and survival.⁹⁹

⁹⁵ Timothy J. Palson, *Op.Cit.*, p.47; Karen Price Hossell, *Op.Cit.*, p.55; Kerry A. Graves, *Op.Cit.*, pp.72-73 .

⁹⁶ Quoted in: Mark Wyman, *Op.Cit.*, p.102; Karen Price Hossell, *Op.Cit.*, p.55.

⁹⁷ Quoted in: Karen Price Hossell, *Op.Cit.*, p.55; Jay P. Dolan, *Op.Cit.*, p.40; Michael Coffey, *The Irish in America*, New York 1997, p. 146.

⁹⁸ Kevin Kenny, *The American Irish: A History*, New York 2000, p.63; Kerry A. Graves, *Op.Cit.*, p.65; Karen Price Hossell, *Op.Cit.*, p.55; Kerby A. Miller and Patricia Mulholland Miller, *Op.Cit.*, p.10.

⁹⁹ Kerry A. Graves, *Op.Cit.*, p.66; Timothy J. Palson, *Op.Cit.*, pp.58.

It seems clear from what is mentioned that the famine immigrants were some of the poorest people ever to set foot on North America's shores, in this context, New York bishop John Hughes described them as “the poorest and most wretched population that can be found in the world—the scattered debris of the Irish nation.” And in a letter to a colleague in Ireland, an Irish priest working in Newburyport, Massachusetts, described the plight of the famine immigrants in his congregation who were dependent on day wages: “Many cannot even find employment owing to the crowds that have come from Ireland this year and many of the latter arrive in such a needy helpless utterly destitute state that it requires the utmost effort which their friends or countrymen can make to keep them from starving even in this land of reputed plenty.”¹⁰⁰ In Philadelphia half of the people in the poorhouse were Irish immigrants, and in southern cities where they settled it was the same scenario, as they filled the poorhouses, where disease and death were widespread. Given their poverty and lack of marketable skills, the Irish filled the ranks of the lowest-paying jobs. In New York nine out of ten labourers were Irishmen, but this represented only 20 percent of the Irish male workforce, whereas in Boston, San Francisco and New Orleans almost half of all Irish workers worked as labourers. In Philadelphia about one fourth to one third of the Irish workforce were labourers. Among Irish-women, domestic work was preferred.¹⁰¹

Nevertheless one must not paint too black a picture of the emigrant life. Irish-Americans were not all unskilled since about a quarter of them were not poor. So, not all Irish immigrants were stuck at the bottom of the urban workforce, as a good percentage of them were employed as skilled blue-collar workers such as carpenters, bricklayers, cooper, painters, or mechanics. In New Orleans as many as one third of Irish workers were employed in skilled or semiskilled jobs, in San Francisco the ratio was similar, whereas in New York about half of the Irish workforce had skilled or semiskilled occupations. Then there were the Irish-born bookkeepers, clerks, peddlers, lawyers and merchants— positions that enjoyed a measure of prestige in the community. An overwhelming proportion of the emigrants went into the wage-earning groups, for example, shop-keeping, which has long been a favoured occupation in Irish opinion, absorbed one or two out of every hundred immigrants, the majority were probably Ulstermen, who have done well in American trade and commerce. They began usually by catering to their own people, and a few rose to positions of prominence in the business life of their cities.¹⁰²

¹⁰⁰ Quoted in: Jay P. Dolan, *Op.Cit.*, p.86.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 86-87.

¹⁰² Denny Hatch, *Op.Cit.*, p.56; Jay P. Dolan, *Op.Cit.*, p.87; William Adams, *Op.Cit.*, p.341.

Finally, it must be said that although throughout the nineteenth century the working class Irish helped build the nation by working in factories and mines, building roads, digging canals and laying tracks, many of their dreams for achieving prosperity in America were dashed when they were confronted with appalling working conditions: low wages, long hours, child labour, no paid holidays, and sickness or childbirth resulted in the loss of a job and an uncertain future. So, in the second half of the nineteenth century, many Irish Americans became leaders in the labour movement, organising trade unions and campaigning for more humane work practices.¹⁰³

4.3.2 Women's Work

Many Irishwomen emigrated to the United States, seeking for domestic work which became the preferred occupation. Single, Irish immigrant women quickly assumed jobs in high demand but for very low pay. Many of them preferred domestic work because it was constantly in great demand among middle- and upper-class American households, so the best place to find such work was in the city. So the majority of these immigrant women became domestic servants in the United States and were employed by middle- and upper-class families in Philadelphia, New York, Boston and other cities, where, housewives of these classes were in desperate need of domestic servants, so it can be noted that seven out of ten domestic servants in New York were Irishwomen.¹⁰⁴

Although wages differed across the country, they were consistently higher than those of the other occupations available to Irish women and could often be negotiated because of the lack of competition. Also, the working conditions in well-off households were significantly better than those of factories or mills, where, working as a servant assured a woman a place to live, it offered steady paycheck, housing and comfortable workplace for young women who had known nothing but poverty and hunger in Ireland. But nevertheless some of the benefits of domestic work, Irish women's job requirements were difficult and demeaning, because

¹⁰³ Kem Knapp Sawyer, Op.Cit., pp.6-7.

¹⁰⁴ Jay P. Dolan, Op.Cit., p.p84,87; Karen Price Hossell, Op.Cit., p.58; Margaret J. Goldstein, Op.Cit., p.31; Timothy J. Palson, Op.Cit., p.48; Lawrence J. McCaffrey, *The Irish Diaspora in America*, p.64; Kerby A. Miller and Patricia Mulholland Miller, Op.Cit., pp.16-17; Kerry A. Graves, Op.Cit., p.75; American and Irish-American Views of the Famine, Narrating the Famine in Bessy Conway; or, The Irish Girl in America, 1861: <http://xroads.virginia.edu/~HYPER/SADLIER/Bessy/Bessy1.htm>. 14/08/2013,09:15am; Amy Hackney Blackwell and Ryan Hackney, The Immigrant Experience in the United States: <http://www.netplaces.com/irish-history/the-immigrant-experience/the-immigrantexperience-in-the-united-states.htm>. 05/03/2013, 02:20pm; Irish Americans: <http://www.answers.com/topic/irish-american>. 16 /04/ 2013, 04:10 pm.

domestics were expected to be available the entire day, which meant they often worked from as early as four or five a.m. to ten p.m. and sometimes later, and they were usually on their feet the entire time, cooking, ironing, mending, washing and dusting and more. Moreover, because most servants lived in the home where they worked, they were separated from their communities. They earned about twenty dollars a month, and since they rarely had to pay for room or board, they could save their money. Many Irish servant women sent much of their salaries back to Ireland to support their families left behind or to pay relative passage to America. For example, when the potatoes rotted in Ireland in 1845, one of Irishwomen travelled to Philadelphia and got a place for general housework, and saved enough money to bring her sister to Philadelphia, where at the beginning, they got \$2 a week, then \$3 and then \$4.¹⁰⁵ Thus, Irishwomen soon predominated in what was known simply as "service," and during the 1850s, for example, about 75 percent of domestic servants in New York were Irish. The position was usually alive-in one, where sometimes domestic servants were treated as members of the family, but many were treated impersonally, as they were often treated harshly by their employers, where, they were mocked for being unsophisticated or treated with suspicion because they were Catholic, and often, no matter what their given name was, these women were called by popular Irish names "Bridget" or "Maggie," and many employers never did know their maid's real name.¹⁰⁶

When the Irish domestics married, most of them resigned, although some were reluctant to do so because it meant leaving a large, comfortable house to live in a tenement apartment. In addition, married women had to rely on their husband's wages rather than earn their own, but it must be said that the Irish women often found jobs more easily than did their husbands or sons. As the first servant class in the urban North, Irish women paved the way for other minority-group women who followed them into the ghettos. But high male unemployment and the availability of only seasonal work or travelling labour jobs on the railroads and canals for men, coupled with high female employment, frequently had disastrous effects on family life and relations between the

¹⁰⁵ Karen Price Hossell, *Op.Cit.*, p.58; Hamilton Holt, *The Life Stories of Undistinguished Americans As Told by Themselves*, New York 1906, pp.144-146; Margaret J. Goldstein, *Op.Cit.*, p.31; Timothy J. Palson, *Op.Cit.*, pp.48-49; Jay P. Dolan, *Op.Cit.*, p.84; Lawrence J. McCaffrey, *Textures of Irish America*, pp.12-13; John Francis Maguire, *Op.Cit.*, p.p. 275, 314-316,319-331; Kerry A. Graves, *Op.Cit.*, pp.75-76; Living Conditions for Immigrants: <http://xroads.virginia.edu/~HYPER/SADLIER/Life.htm>. 01/05/2012,06:00am; Encyclopedia of US History: Irish Americans: <http://www.answers.com/topic/irish-american>.16/04/2013, 04:10 pm.

¹⁰⁶ Karen Price Hossell, *Op.Cit.*, p.58; Timothy J. Palson, *Op.Cit.*, p.49; Kerry A. Graves, *Op.Cit.*, p.76.

sexes. Irish economic and social problems in the early and mid-nineteenth century were similar to present-day difficulties in urban, minority-group neighborhoods.¹⁰⁷

Moreover, the majority of Irishwomen worked in mills, factories and private households, and were considered the bottommost group in the female job hierarchy, alongside African American women.¹⁰⁸ But because pay was so low and the threat of work-related injury or death so high for men, to support their families most immigrant Irishwomen took jobs outside their homes. Many, particularly in New England, found work in factories, and the area, specifically Lowell, Massachusetts, was home to several textile mills. Moreover, the "needle industries" employed many Irishwomen, and most of the women who worked were employed in the neighbourhood's garment industry doing needlework of some type, either at home or in one of the workshops. Seamstresses were not only poorly paid, but they also experienced periodic unemployment throughout the year. Women who worked in their homes were paid by the piece; those with small children particularly preferred this kind of work.¹⁰⁹ A few Irishmen also learned to sew and became tailors, in fact, so accomplished were the men that in 1850 there were 1,547 tailors in Boston, and at least 1,000 of them were Irish. In garment factories the Irish learned to sew both by hand and, with the invention of the sewing machine in 1846, using machines. They benefited by learning a skill, and because Irish immigrants were willing to work for such low wages, employers benefited as well, in this context, author and historian Oscar Handlin wrote that "in the two decades after 1845 the Irish energised all aspects of industrial development in Boston by holding out to investors magnificent opportunities for profits from cheap labour costs."¹¹⁰

Workers considered mill work in cotton textiles and needle trades the least desirable because of the dangerous and unpleasant conditions. But nevertheless some women deliberately chose to work in a factory rather than in a private home as a servant. At least, they said, factory hours were regular—usually about ten hours a day—and one's privacy was respected. However, many Irishwomen who worked in factories lived in nearby boardinghouses that were crowded and noisy. At work they

¹⁰⁷ Karen Price Hossell, Op.Cit., p.p.58, 60; Lawrence J. McCaffrey, *The Irish Diaspora in America*, pp.64-65.

¹⁰⁸ Encyclopedia of US History: Irish Americans: <http://www.answers.com/topic/irish-american>. 16/04/2013, 04:10 pm; Living Conditions for Immigrants: <http://xroads.virginia.edu/~HYPER/SADLIER/Life.htm>. 01 / 05 / 2012, 06: 00am.

¹⁰⁹ Karen Price Hossell, Op.Cit., p.57; Jay P. Dolan, Op.Cit., p.87; Timothy J. Palson, Op.Cit., pp.47-48; Kerry A. Graves, Op.Cit., p. Kerry A. Graves, Op.Cit., pp.74-75; Amy Hackney Blackwell and Ryan Hackney, *The Immigrant Experience in the United States*: <http://www.netplaces.com/irish-history/the-immigrant-experience/the-immigrantexperience-in-the-unitedstates.htm>. 05/03/ 2013, 02:20 pm.

¹¹⁰ Quoted in: Karen Price Hossell, Op.Cit., pp. 57-58.

were on their feet all day, usually in large rooms filled with noisy machines. Over time, Irishwomen began to enter skilled profession, as they often became nuns, nurses and teachers.¹¹¹

4.4 Political and Religious Troubles of the Irish in America

4.4.1 Irish Americans and the Catholic Church

The spiritual condition of the Irish in America cannot be otherwise, than a matter of the deepest interest, inasmuch as their material progress in the New World must of necessity, and to a considerable extent, depend on the moral and religious influence brought to bear upon them and their children. The great mass of the Irish in the United States, as in Ireland, are of the Catholic faith, therefore, in order to ascertain what is the spiritual condition of the Irish in America, what the spiritual provision for them, we must enquire as to the position and prospects of the Catholic Church in that country.¹¹²

The relationship between the Irish and the Catholic Church is a recurring theme in any discussion of the Irish experience. Both in the support that the faith gave to a disheartened and downtrodden people during years of subjugation in their homeland and in the continuity of tradition that the parishes and their priests provided in those difficult early years in America, Catholicism was a basic part of Irish identity. There were some statements confidently stated that the moment the Irish touch the free soil of America, they lose the old faith that there is something in the very nature of republican institutions fatal to the Church of Home. But it seems that the Church fortified by suffering and trial at home, and inheritors of memories which intensify devotion rather than weaken fidelity, the Irish brought with them a strong faith, the power to resist as well as the courage to persevere, and that generosity of spirit which has ever prompted mankind to make large sacrifices for the promotion of their religious belief. So, the historian Maguire stated: “Those who foolishly think, or pretend to think, that there is something in republican institutions fatal to the extension and influence of the Catholic Church, must be ignorant of, or wilfully ignore, the evidence of history, or what is going on in the world at the present day; or must have conceived the most erroneous impressions concerning the actual position of the Church in the "United States.” Not only, throughout her long and chequered history, has the Church nourished under republican governments, and that among her

¹¹¹Karen Price Hossell, *Op.Cit.*, p.60; Margaret J. Goldstein, *Op.Cit.*, p.31; Encyclopedia of US History: Irish Americans: [http:// www.answers.com/topic/irish-american](http://www.answers.com/topic/irish-american).16/04/2013, 04: 10 pm.

¹¹² John Francis Maguire, *Op.Cit.*, p. 345.

faithful subjects at that time are to be found the most strenuous supporters of republican institutions, as in America and others; but it is one of the striking characteristics of the Church conceded to her even by her enemies that she has the marvellous faculty of adapting herself to every form of government, and to every description of human institution.¹¹³

In the late eighteenth century and early nineteenth century the Irish community in New York was fairly egalitarian and inclusive. Class may have divided the community, but not religion. Religion did not define Irish identity, as Catholics and Protestants joined the same organisations, such as the Friendly Sons of St. Patrick, the Irish Emigrant Society and the Shamrock Friendly Association. For the emigrants of 1798, most of whom were Protestant, religious toleration was central to their value system. And as the number of lower-class Irish Catholic immigrants increased, the inclusive, middle-class values of the early republican period became less influential in shaping the Irish community. The expansion of the city's Catholic Church gives some indication of how sizable this increase was. York's first Catholic Church, St. Peter's, was organised in 1785, when was twenty years before another church, St. Patrick's, opened its doors. Then in the next thirty years the increase in the number of Catholic immigrants was so substantial that fourteen parishes were organised, eleven of these could be described as Irish parishes.¹¹⁴

Before the Irish arrived in large numbers in the mid-nineteenth century, American Catholics were too few in number to raise alarm among the Protestant majority. In the late 1700s, the total Catholic population was little more than 30,000, under the authority of a single bishop and served by only 30 priests. By 1820, the number had risen to roughly a quarter of a million Catholics, and by 1830 to three-quarters of a million.¹¹⁵ Based on that many sources refer that between 1607 and 1820, the majority of emigrants from Ireland to America had been Protestants who were described simply as "Irish". The religious distinction became important after 1820, when large numbers of Irish Catholics began to immigrate to the United States. These Catholic immigrants brought with them a more sectarian, less inclusive attitude that contrasted sharply with the nonsectarian viewpoint of the middle-class emigrants. The increase in religious and political conflict in Ireland itself in the early nineteenth

¹¹³ Marjorie R. Fallows, *Op.Cit.*, p.127; John Francis Maguire, *Op.Cit.*, pp. 346-347.

¹¹⁴ Jay P. Dolan, *Op.Cit.*, pp.40-41; John Francis Maguire, *Op.Cit.*, pp. 357.

¹¹⁵ Marjorie R. Fallows, *Op.Cit.*, p.129; Lawrence J. McCaffrey, *The Irish Diaspora in America*, pp.88-89; Encyclopedia of US History: Irish Americans: [http:// www.answers.com/topic/irish-american](http://www.answers.com/topic/irish-american). 16/04/2013, 04: 10 pm.

century was now being reflected in America.¹¹⁶ There was in some quarters a religious-born fear and distrust of that Catholic Church which has been built up by means of the Irish population to its position of wealth and influence at the time. An interesting work has been published by the Right Rev. Dr. Spalding, Bishop of Peoria, United States, on the religious mission of the Irish race, which gives authoritatively some information upon the aims and scope of the Roman Catholic Church in America, as well as of the religious aspect of the Irish question. Speaking of the progress of Catholicism in America, he said “The thirteen American colonies which a hundred years ago declared their independence of the power by which they had been founded were intensely and thoroughly Protestant. . . . At the breaking out of the War of Independence there were not more than twenty five thousand Catholics in a population of three millions. They had no bishops, they had no schools, they had no religious houses, and the few priests who were scattered among them generally lived upon their own lands, or with their kinsfolk, cowed by the fearful force of Protestant prejudice. . . . An observer who a hundred years ago should have considered the religious condition of this country, could have discovered no sign whatever that might have led him to suppose that the faith of this little body of Catholics was to have a future in the American Republic; whereas now there are many reasons for thinking that no other religion is so sure of a future here as the Catholic.”¹¹⁷

When the immigrant Irish came to the United States, they brought their religion with them. In fact, among the Catholic Irish it was difficult to distinguish between nationality and religion. In the early nineteenth century, Ireland was struggling with Protestant England for political and religious freedom, and the two issues became inextricably interwoven. The passing away of the old Gaelic culture in the late eighteenth century had given rise to an intensified Catholicism, and, as one historian has put it, the Irish “found their securities in the Church and their leadership in the priesthood.” The church in Ireland became a fighting church enjoying no vested privileges, and during the struggle on behalf of Catholic emancipation, religion and nationalism were united in a common cause.¹¹⁸ An Irishman in America observed that the St. Patrick's Day festival “represents the two prominent traits of the Irish people, fidelity to their faith and loyalty to their country . . . religion and patriotism so closely interwoven, so thoroughly identified. The English Government, by banning both, made religion dearer and patriotism more noble; by placing the love of God and

¹¹⁶Stephen A. Brighton, *Historical Archaeology of the Irish Diaspora: A Transnational Approach*, Knoxville 2009, p.41; Jay P. Dolan, *The Irish Americans*, p.41; Encyclopedia of US History: Irish Americans: <http://www.answers.com/topic/irish-american>.16/04/2013, 04: 10 pm.

¹¹⁷Quoted in: Philip H. Bagenal, *Op.Cit.*, pp.61-62.

¹¹⁸ Jay P. Dolan, *The Immigrant Church: New York's and German Catholics 1815-1865*, Baltimore 1975, p. 54.

the love of country in the same category, it made martyr and patriot synonymous terms.” This union between God and country was strengthened in the United States by the prevalence of the Protestant culture with its anti-Catholic tendencies. Bishop Hughes believed that the anti-Catholic and anti-Irish attitudes “tended powerfully to unite Catholics.”¹¹⁹ The Irish-American press reflected this sense of group consciousness; by emphasising the religious and ethnic distinctiveness of its readers it reinforced their self-identity at a time when they were under severe criticism in the United States.¹²⁰

The difference could be seen in New York's two Irish American newspapers, the *Shamrock* and the *Truth Teller*. The *Shamrock*, edited by United Irish emigrant Thomas O'Connor, reflected the values of middle-class emigrants. The *Truth Teller*, which in 1825 succeeded the *Shamrock* as New York's leading Irish newspaper, appealed to the lower-class Irish. Its founding editor was an Irish-born priest, John Powers. The "mouthpiece of the Catholic Irish American community," it adopted a sectarian, militant tone when discussing Protestantism, Irish organisations also mirrored this shift. The Hibernian Universal Benevolent Society contrasted sharply with the more exclusive Friendly Sons of St. Patrick. Its members came from the working class, and included in their holiday parades "were painters, coopers, tailors and cordwainers." The Ancient Order of Hibernians, founded in New York in 1836, also identified with the lower classes. Class divisions among the Irish even showed up in church, when, in 1820, lower-class Irish clashed with the upper-class trustees of St. Peter's parish over the renting of pews in church—a practice that discriminated against the poor members of the parish.¹²¹

The largely Protestant Irish who had emigrated to America before 1830 had already established themselves at various social class levels before the arrival of the famine immigrants at mid-century. So, symptomatic of this change in attitude among the Irish was the introduction of the term Scotch-Irish into the Irish American vocabulary. As we mentioned earlier, the term had been in use during the eighteenth century to designate the Ulster Presbyterians who emigrated to the United States. From the mid-1700s through the early 1800s, however, the term Irish was more widely used to identify both Catholic and Protestant Irish. As long as the Protestants comprised the majority of the emigrants, as they did until the 1830s, they were happy to be known simply as Irish. But as political and religious conflict between Catholics and Protestants both in Ireland and the United States became more frequent, and as Catholic emigrants began to outnumber Protestants, the term Irish became

¹¹⁹Quoted in: *Ibid*, pp.53-54.

¹²⁰ *Ibid*, p. 54 .

¹²¹ Jay P. Dolan, *Op.Cit* ., p.41.

synonymous with Irish Catholics. For most Protestants, Irish now was a word filled with negative stereotypes such as superstitious papists and illiterate ditch-diggers. As a result Scotch-Irish became the customary term to describe Protestants of Irish descent, and by adopting this new identity, Irish Protestants in America dissociated themselves from Irish Catholics. The broader meaning of Irish faded from memory. The famine migration of the 1840s and '50s that sent waves of poor Irish Catholics to the United States, together with the rise in anti-Catholicism, intensified this attitude. In no way did Irish Protestants want to be identified with these ragged newcomers, so they took on a new identity, an identity, some boasted, that did not include a drop of blood of the old Celtic (i.e., Catholic) Irish.¹²²

Before the impact of the famine Irish, Lawrence McCaffrey notes, “American Catholics were culturally Anglo-Saxon, and like their English counterparts they were humble and quiet in their religious observances, tiptoeing about so as not to disturb or antagonise the Protestant majority.”¹²³ Small in number, inconspicuous and respected, the early Catholic leaders (many of whom, like John Carroll, the first American Catholic bishop, were of Irish origin themselves) cultivated a style of Catholicism that would merge into the mainstream of Anglo-American culture. But the famine years changed all that.¹²⁴

Within the short span of three decades, a massive religious explosion had occurred in America. From a membership of under 1,000,000 in 1830, Catholics numbered over 3,000,000 by 1860. The vast majority of these were Irish whose religious and social characteristics were in striking contrast to those of the existing Catholic population.¹²⁵ When the Irish left their homeland, they brought with them a religious heritage that was fast becoming parish-oriented. Upon arrival in the United States they found a church that also was parish-centered. By the 1830s American Catholicism was beginning to consolidate the modest expansion that had taken place since the appointment of the first Catholic bishop in 1789. As in Ireland, diocesan synods and national councils sought to organise ecclesiastical affairs. Thus, when the Irish arrived in the New World the parish church was a familiar landmark; it provided a link with the old country.¹²⁶

Fearing that the aggressive and culturally unsophisticated Irish would incur the wrath of native-born Catholics, Ambrose Marechal, the Frenchman who had succeeded

¹²² Marjorie R. Fallows, *Op.Cit.*, pp.127-128; Jay P. Dolan, *Op.Cit.*, pp.41-42.

¹²³ Quoted in: Lawrence J. McCaffrey, *The Irish Diaspora in America*, p.89; Marjorie R. Fallows, *Op.Cit.*, p.129.

¹²⁴ Marjorie R. Fallows, *Op.Cit.*, p.129. See: Lawrence J. McCaffrey, *The Irish Diaspora in America*, pp.89-90.

¹²⁵ Karen Price Hossell, *Op.Cit.*, p.46; Marjorie R. Fallows, *Op.Cit.*, p.129.

¹²⁶ Jay P. Dolan, *The Immigrant Church*, p. 46.

Carroll as head of the American Catholic Church, and who sympathised with Carroll's desire for a distinctly American-Catholic church, complained of the unreliability of the Irish priests. Those missionary priests who had accompanied the immigrants to America had been, in fact, among the least disciplined and most unruly of the Irish ecclesiastics and were frequently almost as culturally and intellectually unpolished as their parishioners, were aggressive rather than passive Catholics. So, Marechal was determined to prevent the Irish clergy from gaining control. He disliked their crude peasant manners and lack of sophistication which limited their ability to raise the cultural level of their turbulent parishioners. And the archbishop feared that the coarse and aggressive Irish would alienate American nativists, causing persecution of Catholics.¹²⁷

When Irish priests arrived in the United States, they continued to indulge their vices and resist the authority of the American hierarchy. Some Irish priests encouraged lay boards of trustees to declare their independence from the control of American bishops. Marechal complained to Rome that priests from Ireland were unreliable and sources of scandal. After the Irish finally gained control of the American church, Irish bishops like John England¹²⁸ from Charleston, South Carolina, took steps to improve the quality of the clergy. They built seminaries to educate the priests and they insisted that bishops in Ireland send only good men to the American mission. The vast numbers of the Irish, their concentration in urban areas, and their demand for Irish clergy inevitably led to the transformation of the Catholic Church in America from an institution under native-born and French leadership to one primarily Irish and urban-based rather than a rural institution. But despite these concessions, American Catholicism had been imprinted with a different stamp from the one chosen by the Church's earlier leaders. From this point on, McCaffrey observed, "American Catholicism became and for a long time remained part of an Irish-Catholic religious empire that dominated the English-speaking world."¹²⁹

In religion, as in so much else, the famine period provided the catalyst for change both in Ireland and in America. Not only lives, but institutions as well, were structured differently in the aftermath of the famine. Prior to the 1850s, Irish Catholicism had been loosely structured, closely identified with the daily life of the Irish peasants, and more sensitive to Irish needs than to Vatican policy. It was a rural,

¹²⁷Marjorie R. Fallows, *Op.Cit.*, p.129; Lawrence J. McCaffrey, *The Irish Diaspora in America*, p.90; Jay P. Dolan, *The Immigrant Church*, p.46.

¹²⁸For more details about like John England see: John Francis Maguire, *Op.Cit.*, pp. 381-391.

¹²⁹Quoted in: Lawrence J. McCaffrey, *The Irish Diaspora in America*, p. 91; Marjorie R. Fallows, *Op.Cit.*, pp. 129-130; Encyclopedia of US History: Irish Americans: [http:// www.answers.com/topic/irish-american](http://www.answers.com/topic/irish-american). 16/04/2013, 04: 10 pm .

richly communal, traditional, peasant religion, stripped of the cultural richness normally associated with Catholicism.¹³⁰

4.4.1.1 Conflict in the Church

American Catholicism experienced exceptionally few instances of schism. Indeed, conflict often erupted in the church, and Catholics argued openly over control of church property, the appointment of pastors, and recognition of national religious traditions. The major reason for conflict was the presence of various immigrant subcultures under the aegis of a single church. But these disagreements were not centered on the core of religious beliefs; cultural and not theological issues were at stake. As an institution the church possessed a degree of elasticity and was able to tolerate such disagreement, since beneath the strife existed a fundamental consensus based on a common faith that was strong enough and sufficiently widespread to sustain such differences.¹³¹

Concentrated in the city, Catholicism was necessarily vulnerable to the social conflict latent in a multi-ethnic community. In the early decades of the nineteenth century French and Irish openly argued over the control of St. Peter's Church in New York. Ostensibly the issue centered around the authority of parish trustees, but national prejudices were so intermingled with the trustee debate that it was difficult to separate the two. Frenchmen described the Irish as "an ignorant and savage lot," and the Irish feared a French takeover of the parish. When the Frenchman John Dubois became bishop of New York in 1826, the Irish fear of a French coup increased. Dubois wrote to an episcopal colleague "I wish to gratify the Irish as much as possible,"¹³² but his efforts were not very successful. The schism never erupted, but conflict continued until the French founded their own parish in 1841, by which time the Irish had gained control of New York Catholicism by the sheer strength of their numbers.¹³³

The Germans were the next group to challenge the hegemony of the Irish. Their general complaint was that the Irish exercised an "undue influence" in church affairs. Some priests expressed the fear that if Dubois's successor was an

¹³⁰ Marjorie R. Fallows, *Op.Cit.*, p.130.

¹³¹ Jay P. Dolan, *The Immigrant Church*, pp.88-89; Lewis A. Coser, *The Functions of Social Conflict*, 1956, pp.95-103.

¹³² Quoted in: Jay P. Dolan, *The Immigrant Church*, p.89.

¹³³ *Ibid*, p. 89.

Irishman, German Catholics would not fare well. When the Irishman, John Hughes, was appointed as Dubois's successor, the fears of the Germans became more real, and conflict inevitably emerged.¹³⁴

The Irish were also prone to conflict and division. Shortly after the founding of St. Peter's Church in 1785, open dissension surfaced in the parish; at this time the debate centered around the pastor and his preaching skill. The community divided its allegiance between two Irish-born priests, and the struggle lasted for several months. During the school controversy of 1840 Catholic Irish again divided into factions supporting or opposing the organisation of a separate school system. The custom of the Irish wake was another incident of division; in this case the people challenged the authority and advice of the clergy. Later, political controversies were frequent.¹³⁵

4.4.1.2 The Importance of the Catholic Church to the Irish immigrant community in America

Although the neighbourhood provided a strong sense of security for Irish Americans, the most important institution in these communities was the Catholic Church, and as a consequence, the Catholic Church and its importance grew tremendously in America. Irish Catholics had left behind the small, rural villages for American cities, but they re-created a kind of small village in city neighbourhoods, centered on the church. The Catholic Church helped the Irish maintain memories of home and sense of identity, and with this comfortable, familiar foundation, Irish immigrants felt better equipped to build new lives in America,¹³⁶ so, as the center of Catholic life the neighbourhood church occupied a position of significance not unlike that of its counterpart in Ireland. One parish that became the spiritual center for Irish immigrants was Transfiguration Church in New York City, which served the needs of the Sixth Ward Irish. The baptismal and marriage records reflect the hegemony of the Irish, and the list of parish officers resembles a roll call of the Ancient Order of Hibernians, hence, it is ironic that the founding pastor, Felix Varela, was a Cuban refugee. Like most parishes at this time, Transfiguration Church was incorporated in

¹³⁴See: Ibid, p.89.

¹³⁵Cf. Leo R. Ryan, *Old St. Peter's: The Mather Church of Catholic New York 1785-1935*, New York 1935, pp. 61ff; Jay P. Dolan, *The Immigrant Church*, p.92.

¹³⁶ Karen Price Hossell, *Op.Cit.*, p.46.

the name of a board of trustees, who were laymen, elected annually by the parish community, and their task was to manage the temporal affairs of the parish.¹³⁷

Based on a sacramental index, Transfiguration was the largest parish in New York in 1840. The trustees represented the upper levels of the occupational hierarchy—professional men, proprietors of small neighbourhood businesses and skilled artisans. Although a large number of the people in the parish were poor, the occupational status of the trustees indicates that by 1840 Irish Catholics in New York were represented at all levels of society. The Irish of Transfiguration Church were not prominent in the upper levels of the occupational hierarchy, nor did the bulk fall in to the class of the unskilled labourer. Rather, the skilled and semiskilled trades, such as the building trades, tailoring, and shoemaking, claimed the majority of the people. This large representation of Catholic Irish in the middle ranges of the occupational hierarchy, together with their smaller representation at both ends of the scale, reflected the social distinctions present within the community. Despite such occupational differences, the local Catholic community was united by its common bond of faith. The culture of poverty might have separated the labourer and the craftsman from the lawyer and the politician, but a shared faith and nationality were able to bridge this gap in the neighbourhood parish. For the post-Famine immigrants the link between religion and nationality appeared even stronger. The devotional revolution forged this bond, so that “Irish and Catholic have become almost interchangeable terms in Ireland.” This was the cultural heritage they transplanted to America.¹³⁸

The Irish considered religion "as the most important of all topics." They preserved it at great personal sacrifice, and whether they practiced it or not, religion was ingrained in their life. “Beliefs maintained at great personal sacrifice were not lightly held,” Oscar Handlin correctly judged, “and among those Irish who came to America the Church gained particular prestige, for it was one of the few familiar institutions that followed them across the Atlantic.”¹³⁹ There was never, at any time, on the part of the Irish catholic, a lack of zeal for religion, or indifference as to procuring a place for the worship to which, from his infancy, he had been accustomed in his own country. Indeed, one of the inducements which the Irish had to remain in the great cities, instead of pushing on to take possession of the land, was the facility afforded, through their churches and their staff of clergymen, for practising their religion, and training their children in the knowledge of its principles. So, when they

¹³⁷ Jay P. Dolan, *The Immigrant Church*, p.p. 46,48; Joseph and Helen McCadden, *Father Varela: Torch Bearer from Cuba*, New York 1969, p.p.165,167.

For more details about Felix Varela see: Jay P. Dolan, *The Immigrant Church*, pp. 46-47.

¹³⁸ See: Jay P. Dolan, *The Immigrant Church*, pp.50-54.

¹³⁹ Quoted in: *Ibid*, p. 54; Oscar Handlin, *Op.Cit.*,p.128.

arrived in New York City, they followed the paths of earlier immigrants to Irish settlements. In these ethnic villages the local church enjoyed a conspicuous position, and as a house of worship it provided a familiar experience for the newly-arrived Irish. The parish was the center of their devotional life, and if religion was not visible there, then it scarcely existed anywhere.¹⁴⁰

For Catholics the principal act of worship was the Mass. In the middle of the nineteenth century frequent communion was not customary for Catholics in the United States, and the same was true in Ireland. Yet, practicing Catholics received communion at least once a year, generally at Easter time. In a letter to Rome recounting his twenty years experience in New York, John Hughes said that “a great body of people received communion "once or twice a year; and very many, once a month, and even once a week. For Catholics the Mass was “the most sacred, and the very essential part” of the church's liturgy.¹⁴¹

Worship took place daily in the parish, but Sunday services were the principal events of the week. Church law required Catholics to attend Mass on Sunday and other special feast days, and to hear Mass on these occasions was "a necessary duty," and Catholics were reminded that "to be absent without a strong reason is a mortal sin," but in spite of such admonitions, not all Catholics attended Mass regularly. The pre-Famine Irish were not avid churchgoers, due to many reasons account for this; one is obvious—the dearth of priests and churches, which resulted in the absence of a regular church-going tradition for many years. A recent study concludes that about 40 percent of the Catholic population in pre-Famine Ireland regularly attended church, but only in later years did regular Mass attendance reach extraordinary proportions. In New York the inadequate supply of priests and churches also prevented many people from attending Sunday services. A rapidly increasing population aggravated the problem, and in this context, wrote John Hughes in 1858, “The insufficient number of churches has been, and is now, an immense drawback on the progress of religion.”¹⁴²

The lack of personnel and facilities helps to explain the low level of church attendance, but such an analysis might naturally lead one to conclude that all that was necessary to increase church attendance was to multiply the number of clergy and churches. Dolan stated that “this does not logically follow”, explaining that

¹⁴⁰John Francis Maguire, *Op.Cit.*, p.425; Jay P. Dolan, *The Immigrant Church*, pp. 54-55; Karen Price Hossell, *Op.Cit.*, p.44.

¹⁴¹ Quoted in: Jay P. Dolan, *The Immigrant Church*, p.55; John Milner, *The End of Religious Controversy*, New York, n.d, p. 245; The Rev. Stephen Byrne, *Op.Cit.*, p.49.

¹⁴² Quoted in: Jay P. Dolan, *The Immigrant Church*, pp. 55-56; The Rev. Stephen Byrne, *Op.Cit.*, p.50. Further details are giving in John Francis Maguire, *Op.Cit.*,pp.427-430.

examination of church attendance figures in recent years when there was an abundance of clergy and churches illustrates this point. Thus, one has to look for other reasons as well to account for the religious indifference of the Irish immigrants. In his opinion one persuasive explanation was the high level of religious ignorance among the newcomers. In 1834 there were in the entire of the State of New York and the portion of New Jersey combined with it in the diocese, but nineteen churches, not a few of which were miserable wooden shanties, hastily run up by poor congregations; and the number of priests for this enormous territory, which is now divided into five dioceses, did not exceed five-and-twenty. Too many of the scattered congregations of this vast diocese had not for years seen the face of a priest, or heard the saving truths of religion; and the young people grew up to manhood and womanhood with only such imperfect knowledge of sacred subjects as the scanty information of simple parents could afford them. One may easily imagine how difficult it was, under those circumstances, for the Irish Catholic to preserve the faith. Thus, while all sects of Protestantism enjoyed comparatively ample means and opportunities for public worship, the Catholic lacked them altogether in too many instances.¹⁴³ Thus, a study of London's Irish clearly indicates that many pre-Famine immigrants were strikingly ignorant of basic Catholic beliefs and practices. Missionaries frequently bemoaned the low level of religious understanding among Catholics, and people did not even know if there was one God or three, and one priest recorded that "many young men were exceedingly ignorant with regard to religion, some of them not knowing the principal mysteries." Even such a simple ritual as the sign of the cross had to be taught to people for the first time. Many young adults and "not a few quite advanced in life" had never received communion and appeared to be Catholic in name and little more. As one New York priest described the situation, "half of our Irish population here is Catholic merely because Catholicity was the religion of the land of their birth." The reason he gave was that their instruction in religion had been neglected. Many Catholic immigrants simply "had no clear explicit knowledge of Catholic doctrines."¹⁴⁴

It is clear that all Catholics did not come to the United States in sound spiritual condition, as many had not regularly attended worship services in Ireland, and others had not received the sacraments of confession or communion for years. In their adopted homeland such habits were not quickly discarded, a fact priests giving parish missions noted time and again. The task of the church was not only to preserve the faith of the immigrants; in many instances it was to change nominal Catholics into

¹⁴³ Jay P. Dolan, *The Immigrant Church*, p.56; John Francis Maguire, *Op.Cit.*, pp.423-424.

¹⁴⁴ Quoted in: Jay P. Dolan, *The Immigrant Church*, p.57; Sean Wilentz, *Op.Cit.*, p.352.

practicing believers. Such a spiritual climate among Irish immigrants goes a long way toward explaining why church attendance figures were so low.¹⁴⁵

The custom of attaching a financial obligation to Sunday Mass also seems to have influenced the pattern of church attendance. All New York parishes favoured the system of pew rents, since it was a major source of revenue, but the poor could not always afford the price. The custom did come in for criticism precisely because it excluded those "who are too poor to have pews." "Free churches" were encouraged so that the indigent and floating population would feel at home, but only one parish in the city inaugurated the practice and for only a brief period of time. Pew rentals became the norm, and some parishes even locked the benches vacant at Solemn Mass "to prevent the poor from occupying them." At the early Masses, however, the pews were "open to every comer." In addition to renting out the seats in church, some parishes went a step further by charging an entry fee to Mass. Commenting on this, a priest acknowledged that "it is very hard to ask money when the people go to mass, but the necessity of the church seems to require that those who are willing to pay are admitted in preference to those who are unwilling; we have not enough church room for all."¹⁴⁶ The price of admission at some Masses was only ten cents, but it appeared sufficient enough to dissuade the unwilling, such practices not only would have discriminated against the poor, but they also would have discouraged the lukewarm and the indifferent from attending Sunday services.¹⁴⁷

The distinction between churchgoers and nonchurchgoers illustrates the division within the Irish immigrant community. Some newcomers, Catholic by birth and heritage but not in practice, lived on the fringe of parish life. In the final analysis it can be said that the immigrants reproduced in the United States the type of religious activity with which they were familiar in the old country. For some it was an active spiritual life centered in the parish; for others it was an indifferent attitude toward religion, and the immigrant parish was hard-pressed to change these patterns of tradition.¹⁴⁸

Despite the limited success of the city parish and the corresponding low level of Mass attendance, churches were always crowded on Sunday. The crowds were made up of the immigrants who were concerned with their religion, and they filled the pews and overflowed into the galleries that were open to all comers, so in Transfiguration Church men had to be appointed to keep order. The important point,

¹⁴⁵ Jay P. Dolan, *The Immigrant Church*, p. 57.

¹⁴⁶ Quoted in: *Ibid*, pp. 57-58.

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid*, p. 58.

¹⁴⁸ see: *Ibid*, p. 58; John Francis Maguire, *Op.Cit.*, pp.345-348.

however, is not that the churches were always crowded but that they were inadequate to the needs of a large Catholic population.¹⁴⁹

The church buildings reflected the initial poverty of the Catholic community. Like many new pastors, Father Varela began his ministry in a church basement; once funds were available he bought an old Protestant church and converted it to use for Catholic services, this was a common practice in New York at the time. Protestant congregations were moving out of the old city below Fourteenth Street, and Catholics, eager for more houses of worship, purchased these abandoned churches. The churches that Catholics built or purchased in the early decades were very plain stone structures.¹⁵⁰

In addition to their Sunday obligations, parish priests were busy every day of the week performing marriages and baptising newborn members of the community. Death frequented the neighbourhood, and funerals among the Irish were unique events. Mourning and merrymaking highlighted wakes in Ireland for many decades, against which strange custom bishops and priests spoke out. This tradition was brought to the United States, where it again evoked criticism from the clergy. In the early years the custom of a funeral Mass was not widespread, and tradition favoured a wake at home followed by a procession to the cemetery. The number of carriages in the procession measured the status of the family, and benevolent societies often provided the funds. In the 1840s John Dillon and his brother Christopher had a large part of the funeral trade, and they advertised for rental everything needed for a successful funeral—scarves, crepe, and gloves together with carriages and hearses. Bishop Dubois and others spoke out against the high cost of dying, and Dubois alluded to the fact that the funerals were more like festivals with “frequent drinking instead of holy water, distasteful conversation instead of prayers.”¹⁵¹ Despite the displeasure of the hierarchy, festive funerals continued.

The controversy over the Irish wake did not center only on its festival spirit, but a more important reason for the controversy was that the custom challenged the central position of the parish church in the religious life of the people. Bishops legislated that the ceremonies of baptism, marriage and death must take place in the church, where the names of the faithful could be officially recorded in the parish registers. The pioneer conditions of early American Catholicism often did not allow this, but as parishes multiplied, the possibility of meeting these directives increased, and baptisms and marriages became regular church events. Such ceremonies enhanced the authority of the priest and underlined the importance of the parish

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid*, pp. 58-59.

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid*, p.59.

¹⁵¹ Quoted in: *Ibid*, pp.60-61.

church. The Irish went along with baptism and marriage, but the custom of the wake was not readily abandoned. To bury an Irishman was as much a social event as a religious one, and the parish church did not enter into the ceremony. A wake at home followed by an elaborate procession to the cemetery and burial was the order of events. The bishops wanted to change this tradition and make it less social by abolishing the wake and more spiritual by requiring a Mass at the local church. The Irish eventually accepted the latter and in doing so accepted the role of the parish church in the burial of the dead. But the wake was slow to disappear, or in fact it never disappeared. The church, unable to abolish it, simply incorporated the wake into its prolonged ceremony of death, and the parish priest became a regular figure at the Irish wake, where holiness and hilarity were combined in a strange mixture of events.¹⁵²

The key person in the spiritual life of the parish was the priest, and respect for the priesthood was only one tradition that the Irish carried to the United States. Their devotional life, the confraternities they formed and the churches they built all exhibited the stamp of Irish Catholicism. So pervasive was this influence that the Irish parish was a recognised institution in New York City and elsewhere by the middle of the nineteenth century. As a religious institution the Irish parish exhibited the spiritual fervour of the people, which at first this did not appear extraordinary. In the 1820s Bishop Dubois bemoaned the spiritual neglect of several hundred Irish living on the outskirts of the city; a continual refrain of New York Catholics was the inadequate number of priests and churches. In 1840 the average population of a Catholic parish was 8,500, then after middle of the nineteenth century it increased more.¹⁵³

One thing appears certain, however: emigration did not cause a radical loss of faith among the Irish, and for the immigrants who carried their religion with them, the neighbourhood parish was the institution that helped to preserve this faith,¹⁵⁴ moreover, the church served not only as a religious center but also as the center of all aspects of life for many Irish. Andrew M. Greeley, a Catholic priest and writer living in the United States, says that “the parish was a symbol of loyalty around which the immigrants and their children and grandchildren could rally in a society that was at first hostile and then not especially friendly.” “For many of us, it is no exaggeration to say that the parish was the center of our lives; it provided us with education, recreation, entertainment, friendships, and potential spouses, it was a place to belong. When asked where we came from, we named the parish rather than the street or neighbourhood.” Lawrence J. McCaffrey, a professor at Loyola University and a

¹⁵² Jay P. Dolan, *Ibid*, pp. 61-62.

¹⁵³ See: *Ibid*, pp. 64-66.

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid*, pp.67.

leading authority on the Irish in America, notes that the church provided spiritual guidance and solace for the Irish: “Irish neighbourhoods, focused around the Catholic parish, served as psychological havens, preserving faith, tradition and values, perpetuating a sense of community that could have disintegrated into an oppressive situation.”¹⁵⁵

4.4.2 Discrimination against the Irish immigrants

4.4.2.1 The Catholic Education and Nativists

Education provided a persistent, fundamental and highly emotional issue in the many conflicts between nativists and Catholics. The "common schools" of the 1700s had been locally supported and controlled, and reflected the religious doctrines of the communities they served. As religious homogeneity began to break down in the early 1800s, with Irish immigration and Protestant schisms, state and local governments began to adopt the principle of universal, publicly supported, compulsory education. Although these schools subscribed to no particular religious doctrine they had a strong Protestant bias, and in many Irish parishes the pressure to send children to such schools was interpreted as both patronising and proselytising.¹⁵⁶

As the number of Catholic Irish in America rose, the matter of providing their children with a Catholic education became a concern. Early immigrants from Ireland felt that American schools were too Protestant, because using the King James Version of the Bible, state-supported public schools provided religious and moral training. This version was not approved by the Catholic Church's leaders in Rome, and remembering bitter experiences in the old country, Irish-American Catholics were convinced that religious education in public schools was a cover for Protestant proselytism, so, in response to this perceived shortcoming in American schools, they established their own denominational schools and demanded state aid. The Irish community pooled its resources to pay to bring nuns from Ireland to teach in schools established in cities such as New York and Charleston, South Carolina.¹⁵⁷

¹⁵⁵ Quoted in: Karen Price Hossell, *Op.Cit.*, pp.46-47.

¹⁵⁶ Lawrence J. McCaffrey, *The Irish Diaspora in America*, p.91; Marjorie R. Fallows, *Op.Cit.*, pp.131-132.

¹⁵⁷ Lawrence J. McCaffrey, *The Irish Diaspora in America*, p.91; Philip H. Bagenal, *Op.Cit.*, p.51; Karen Price Hossell, *Op.Cit.*, p.47; William Adams, *Op.Cit.*, p.361; Texts and Contexts: The Sadlier Archive, Anti-Immigrant Sentiment in Nineteenth-Century America:

<http://xroads.virginia.edu/~HYPER/SADLIER/Prejudic.htm>. 14/ 08/2013, 09:30am; Jessica McElrath, Anti-Irish Catholic Sentiment in Boston:

<http://www.netplaces.com/john-f-kennedy/the-fitzgeralds-and-the-kennedys/anti-irish-catholic-sentiment-in-boston.htm>. 05/03/2013, 05:10pm; Sean Baker, *The American Religious Experience, American Nativism,*

Nativist suspicions over Catholic loyalty was inflamed by Catholic protests against the public school systems. Many native-born Protestants interpreted Catholic protests as separatism, and proof that Catholics were a “distinct and alien cult in American society.” Moreover, organized Catholic opposition to public schools intensified “Nativist suspicions that they threatened the American traditions of civil and religious liberty.”¹⁵⁸ Thus, during the late 1830s and early 1840s, New York was the scene of intense emotional conflicts between nativists and Catholics over the school question, where, for nearly two years the School Question, fiercely agitated in New York, attracted the attention of the country at large. The system of education against which the Catholics protested was more than insidiously dangerous—it was actively aggressive; and not merely were the book replete with sneer and libel against that church which all sects usually delight in assailing, but the teachers, by their explanations, imparted new force to the lie and additional authority to the calumny.¹⁵⁹ Hope came to New York Catholics in 1840, when Governor William H. Seward in his annual address to the state legislature urged public financial support for Catholic schools.¹⁶⁰ Bishop John Hughes¹⁶¹ addressed the School Commissioners of New York, and requested, as the guardian of the faith of Catholic children, that the Protestant Bible might not be used for a reading-book in the public schools. Hughes campaigned for public funding of Catholic education in response to the bigotry, he requesting that, as the Catholic population were taxed to support the school system, he might be allowed to have them separately instructed, and be allowed the same sum for the education of Catholic children as was paid by the public for the instruction of the others. This request of Bishop Hughes raised a storm of indignation; the School Commissioners declined to grant the request, and it was finally referred to the decision of the ballot-boxes or a popular election. So, while never successful in obtaining public money for private education, the debate with the city's Protestant elite spurred by Hughes' passionate campaign paved the way for the secularisation of public education nationwide.¹⁶²

1830-1845: <http://are.as.wvu.edu/baker.htm>. 03/03/2013,10:35am; Encyclopedia of US History: Irish Americans: <http://www.answers.com/topic/irish-american>. 16/04/2013, 04: 10 pm.

¹⁵⁸Quoted in: Texts and Contexts: The Sadlier Archive, Anti-Immigrant Sentiment in Nineteenth-Century America: <http://xroads.virginia.edu/~HYPER/SADLIER/Prejudic.htm>. 14/ 08/2013, 09:30am.

¹⁵⁹ Lawrence J. McCaffrey, *The Irish Diaspora in America*, p. 91; John Francis Maguire, Op.Cit., p. 433.

¹⁶⁰ Jay P. Dolan, *The Immigrant Church*, p. 103; Vincent P. Lannie, *Public money and parochial education; Bishop Hughes, Governor Seward, and the New York school controversy*, Cleveland, 1968, p.21.

¹⁶¹ For more details about John Hughes see: John Francis Maguire, Op.Cit., pp.430-436; School: The Story of American Public Education, John Joseph Hughes (1797-1864):

<http://www.pbs.org/kcet/publicschool/innovators/hughes.html>. 30/04/ 2013, 12: 45 pm.

¹⁶²Jay P. Dolan, *The Immigrant Church*, p.10; Philip H. Bagenal, Op.Cit., p.51; ; Encyclopedia of US History: Irish Americans: <http://www.answers.com/topic/irish-american>. 16/04/2013, 04: 10 pm.

As American public education, itself a relatively new phenomenon in the mid-1800s, attempted to deal with the problem of ever increasing numbers of immigrant children and the questions of religious orientation and of centralised versus local control, at least two theoretical models emerged as possibilities. The pluralist model, proposed in 1840 by New York Governor William Seward to the state legislature, would have permitted immigrant children to be taught in schools by teachers who spoke the same languages and professed the same faith. Although, at most, probably no more than one-third of Irish children spoke Irish (Gaelic) rather than English, even at that early date, such a model would have opened the way for schools in which the native cultures and religions of other groups would be retained. At the other extreme, the assimilationist model, in line with the schools as they were then developing, would have enforced cultural and religious assimilation through funding only those schools which reflected the Anglo-American culture and taught the Protestant faith. The pluralist model was acceptable to Catholics, and the assimilationist model was acceptable to Protestants. Concerned about the education of immigrant children, Gov. William Seward was sympathetic to Catholic requests for public funds, but other politicians preferred a second solution. In 1842, the New York state legislature secularised public schools, setting a precedent which led to the national principle of separation of church and state in tax-supported, educational institutions.¹⁶³

At the time, neither Catholics nor Protestants were satisfied with secularisation as a compromise solution to their conflicting positions, so, they were not pleased by the compromise model that eventually was adopted. According to this solution, cultural assimilation would proceed within a presumably classless and religiously neutral school system. Since both Catholics and Protestants felt that religious education had a place in the school, it was a compromise by which both sides lost, but Catholics, however, lost most, for at that time instructional materials were heavily biased toward a Protestant outlook, and given the teachers and the texts at hand, there was simply no way to make the schools religiously neutral. With Irish immigration rapidly increasing, the fear grew among Catholics that American Catholicism could survive only by preserving the faith in the security of a separate school system, even if this must be maintained at great sacrifice by the Catholic community. So, Hughes responded by building an elaborate parochial school system that stretched to the college level, setting a policy followed in other large cities.

¹⁶³Marjorie R. Fallows, *Op.Cit.*, p.132; Lawrence J. McCaffrey, *The Irish Diaspora in America*, pp.91- 92; Encyclopedia of US History: Irish Americans: [http:// www.answers.com/topic/irish-american](http://www.answers.com/topic/irish-american). 16/04/2013, 04: 10 pm; Sean Baker, *The American Religious Experience, American Nativism, 1830-1845*: <http://are.as.wvu.edu/baker.htm>.03/03/2013,10:35am. Further details are giving in: Jay P. Dolan, *The Immigrant Church*, pp.103-104.

While the goal of a parish school for each American parish was never met, the Catholic Church did develop and maintain the most extensive, non-governmentally funded denominational school system to be found in any modern country. About 50 percent of American Catholic children have been able to receive at least some part of their education in church-supported schools.¹⁶⁴ Thus, Catholics continued to expand the parochial school system as a defense against proselytism and secularism and futilely continued to demand state funds; Protestants denounced Catholic opposition to Bible reading in public schools as a clear example of the difference between the high moral tone and truths of scriptural Protestant Christianity and the ignorance and pretensions of popery. They also criticised parochial schools as the purveyors of alien ideas and values and as barriers preventing the assimilation of immigrants into the American cultural system. By the 1850s, however, the Irish became prominent in the leadership of the Catholic Church in the United States.¹⁶⁵

4.4.2.2 Anti-Irish Feeling and Nativism

U.S. immigration records indicate that by 1850, the Irish made up 43 percent of the foreign-born population. Irish emigration to America continued to rise until 1855, when it was severely disrupted by the outbreak of the Civil War. Such large numbers of Irish people coming to America over a relatively short period had a significant effect on nineteenth-century America. The sheer numbers of Irish pouring into the U.S. meant that Catholicism was on the verge of becoming the single largest Christian denomination in America. Many American Protestants held the simplistic view that if the numbers of Roman Catholics were increasing then the power and influence of the Papacy in America was also increasing, threatening America's political independence. Fear of the Papacy thus became fear of the Irish and resulted in outright violence. On the other hand, the majority arrived while there were substantial economic advantages to be gained by the host society through incorporating the Irish into the economic life of the country. They were the backbone of an industrial expansion the likes of which had never been seen anywhere before. Irish immigrants were very active in the American economy, politics and the Catholic Church. It was in the urban centers that the Irish in the United States really made their mark, where, they also encountered their greatest difficulties. As the new republic's

¹⁶⁴Marjorie R. Fallows, *Op.Cit.*, p.132; Lawrence J. McCaffrey, *The Irish Diaspora in America*, p. 92.

¹⁶⁵Lawrence J. McCaffrey, *The Irish Diaspora in America*, p.92; Encyclopedia of US History: Irish Americans:<http://www.answers.com/topic/irish-american>.16/04/2013,04:10 pm; Sean Baker, The American Religious Experience, American Nativism, 1830-1845: <http://are.as.wvu.edu/baker.htm>. 03/03/ 2013, 10:35 am.

first major foreign immigrants, the Irish were not welcomed, with the fact that they were Catholics was particularly troublesome to many natives. So, Catholic Irish immigrants often met with hostility and contempt from the more established American populations. The Irish represented competition for jobs and political power.¹⁶⁶

As famine immigrants became accustomed to their new society, they quickly realized that America was not the land of opportunity for all, as they had been led to believe. In fact were subject to discrimination based on stereotypes that had been formed in the minds of East Coast residents decades before their arrival. The attitudes toward the Irish had been influenced a great deal by earlier Irish settlers. So, long before the potato famine, a bias against the Irish had arisen in the United States. More than 150,000 Irish lived in the United States by 1820, and most of them shared their Protestant faith with Americans and they also shared their strong work ethic, desire to succeed, and tendency toward temperance. These earlier, wealthier immigrants did not identify with their poorer countrymen fleeing the Famine. By the 1840s, the Ulster natives widely used the term Scots-Irish to distinguish themselves from the southern Catholics settling in America, where, they felt superior to their poor Irish Catholic neighbours from southern Ireland.¹⁶⁷ Centuries of antagonism between Catholics and Protestants -- prejudice on both sides -- carried over into the United States. The descendants of British Protestants comprised a large part of the United States population and who controlled most social and economic structures. Native-born Americans, to a great extent, prided themselves on their British ancestry and their liberal Protestantism, and retained many British stereotypes of the Irish. So, if lower class Irish-Americans were the most subject to discrimination and segregation, Protestant prejudices embraced almost all classes of Irish-American Catholics, even middle class Irish Catholics experienced religious barriers to success and respect. Most Native Americans believed laziness, immorality and ignorance were inseparable from Irishness and Catholicism. Initially Americans distinguished between two groups of Irish immigrants: The educated and generally affluent newcomers, both Protestant and Catholic, who mingled with the native-born society; and the poor Catholics who clustered in the developing urban slums. But

¹⁶⁶David T. Gleeson, *Op.Cit.*, p.20; Marjorie R. Fallows, *Op.Cit.*, p.145; James Patrick Byrne, Philip Coleman, Jason Francis King, *Op.Cit.*, p.47; Amy Hackney Blackwell and Ryan Hackney, *The Immigrant Experience in the United States*:http://www.netplaces.com/irish-history/the-immigrant-experience/the-immigrant_experience_in-the-united_states.htm. 05/03/2013, 02:20pm; Irish Potato famine, Gone to America (Anti-Irish Sentiment):<http://www.historyplace.com/worldhistory/famine/america.htm>. 15/04/2011, 08:32 pm.

¹⁶⁷Kerry A. Graves, *Op.Cit.*, pp.63-64; Timothy J. Palson, *Op.Cit.*, pp.55-56; Amy Hackney Blackwell and Ryan Hackney, *The Immigrant Experience in the United States*:http://www.netplaces.com/irish-history/the-immigrant-experience/the-immigrant_experience_in-the-united_states.htm. 05/03/2013, 02:20pm.

after the late 1830s, as peasants fled the famine in overwhelming numbers, Irish became synonymous with poverty, particularly along the Atlantic Coast.¹⁶⁸

After 1820, the numbers of Catholic Irish immigrants rose, prompting fear and mistrust as they constructed separate churches and schools, so, prejudice toward Catholics sometimes found violent outlets as happened in the 1830s and 1840s, riots broke out in some towns and cities, especially, in some convents and churches. Scotch-Irish and other Protestant Americans resented the arrival of so many Catholics, especially since they were poor, so that the Protestants elected politicians who shared these nativist views. The politicians warned that this new crop of Irish would ruin the “purity” of America’s population and weaken the ethnic unity of the nation. They also warned that Catholic Americans would always be loyal to the pope in Rome first and to their adopted country second. In short, nativists believed that the Irish could not be trusted to be good, patriotic citizens who valued their country above everything else.¹⁶⁹

Without a doubt, anti-Catholicism was the leading American neurosis in the 1830s, 1840s and 1850s. The immigration of large numbers of Irish and German Catholics to the United States during these years made religious differences between Catholics and Protestants a political issue. During the 1830s, probably a majority of Americans actually believed that an international conspiracy directed by European despots was using Catholicism as an instrument to smother the American beacon of freedom. Prominent people like Lyman Beecher and Samuel F. B. Morse warned the public that the Hapsburg empire, under the evil influence of von Metternich, and the Vatican wanted to destroy the United States. They warned that Catholic Europe had picked the Mississippi Valley as the most vulnerable point and planned to flood the area with immigrants. Protestant newspapers concentrated on the Mississippi Valley Catholic conspiracy, and Protestants from all over the United States contributed large sums of money to the crusade to save the West from popery.¹⁷⁰

The anti-Irish feeling which existed in the late 1830s and early 1840s developed into virulent nativism in the 1850s. It seems clear that the causes of the Anti-Irish sentiment were based upon emotions of fear and hatred from the natives who held European governments, especially the British, responsible for deliberately dumping the poor, vicious and the degraded upon the shores of the United States of America. Emotions of fear were partly due to the fact that Native Americans were worried about their own jobs and the desperate Irish represented a cheap labour force

¹⁶⁸ Texts and Contexts: The Sadlier Archive, Anti-Immigrant Sentiment in Nineteenth-Century America
<http://xroads.virginia.edu/~HYPER/SADLIER/Prejudic.htm>. 14/08/2013, 09:30 am.

¹⁶⁹ Kerry A. Graves, *Op.Cit.*, p.64; Timothy J. Palson, *Op.Cit.*, pp.56-57.

¹⁷⁰ Lawrence J. McCaffrey, *The Irish Diaspora in America*, p. 92.

which they feared would depress wages. However the two biggest fears were probably the fear of contagion and the fear of infiltration or conspiracy. They believed that Catholicism was incompatible with American traditions and ideals. Their clannishness was interpreted as a threat, a deliberate effort to resist Americanization. Americans feared their political and religious disloyalty, as we mentioned above, they could not be loyal to the Pope and to the United States, and their high level of participation in politics was also seen as threatening. Natives wanted to keep the Anglo-Saxon Protestant dominance and the Irish 'disloyalty' to the American values was seen as a menace to American society. There was an enormous gap between modern American and traditionalist Irish societies. Feelings of hatred were mainly due to the new problems emerging from this wave of immigration: pauperism, disease and criminality. These evils were a consequence of social maladjustment to the American environment. Indeed the harsh and unfamiliar conditions to which they were condemned because of their poverty was bound to have strong consequences.¹⁷¹

The sectarian bitterness of the American Protestants found its first vent in violence in Massachusetts. For some time previous to 1834, "a wild course of fanaticism and bigotry had been pursued by certain Protestants in our country against the Roman Catholic Church." These are the words used by a "Protestant native of Philadelphia"¹⁷² in a pamphlet published in 1844. No-popery also served as a stimulant to American publishing businesses, and Protestant clergymen in Boston made impassioned no-Popery harangues; pamphlets and tracts of the most inflammatory character were published. The very newsboys sold sheets by announcing the contents to be articles against the Catholic religion, and Protestant readers devoured anti-Catholic books, pamphlets and newspapers. Much of the nativist propaganda had originated in England during the controversy over Catholic Emancipation in the 1820s. Pornography was an important anti-Catholic element, as many books, pamphlets and platform speakers described the sexual depravity associated with Catholic religious practices. Thus, a scandalous book was published, reflecting upon the moral character of Roman Catholic religieuses,¹⁷³ and newspapers reinforced the stereotyped image of the Catholic immigrants as socially troublesome and inferior, for example, the newspapers in New York, Boston and elsewhere often depicted the Irish as violent and drunken, even as subhuman, more akin to apes than native-born Americans. Thomas Nast's cartoons for magazines such as Harpers typically depicted the Irish as ape-like brutes prone to wife-beating, drunkenness and

¹⁷¹ Denny Hatch, *Op.Cit.*, p.57.

¹⁷² Quoted in: Philip H. Bagenal, *Op.Cit.*, p.50.

¹⁷³ See: Lawrence J. McCaffrey, *The Irish Diaspora in America*, pp. 92-93; Philip H. Bagenal, *Op.Cit.*, p.50; Sean Baker, *The American Religious Experience, American Nativism, 1830-1845*:

<http://are.as.wvu.edu/baker.htm>. 03/03/2013, 10:35 am.

general anarchy. The Irish responded by creating their own separate organizations, banding together in ethnic neighbourhoods and remaining semi-alloof for example from the Philadelphians who needed them economically but did not accept them socially.¹⁷⁴

Thus the no-popery crusade was violent as well as pornography. The evangelical revivals of Charles G. Finney and others in the 1820s resurrected religious anti-Catholicism and combined it with nativism. Instead of focusing on the influence of Catholics in the world, Finney and his successors saw the growing number of papist Irishmen and Germans coming to America as the greater enemy, especially when the immigrants began to exercise their political power. The ever-more-hostile atmosphere caused an increase in physical attacks by natives on the Irish, their property and the symbols of their presence in American society. For example, the climax of the odium theologicum came in the burning down in 1834, by a Boston mob, of the Ursuline convent in Charlestown, Massachusetts, an act which was the outbreak of a population that had been excited by the fiery sermons of well-known Protestant clergymen. The burning of convent started a wave of shootings, hangings and burnings that did not subside until the 1860s. Irish-Catholic ghettos and churches were the main targets of Anglo-Saxon Protestant, nativist violence.¹⁷⁵ When John England became the first Catholic bishop in Charleston, South Carolina, he defended the Catholic minority against Protestant prejudices during 1820s and '30s. In 1831 and 1835, he established free schools for free African American children. England led Charleston's "Irish Volunteers" to defend the school, but soon after this, however, all schools for "free blacks" were closed in Charleston, and England acquiesced.¹⁷⁶

In 1844, when Francis Kendrick, bishop of Philadelphia, insisted on the right of parochial schools to public financing, a Protestant mob invaded the Irish ghetto,

¹⁷⁴ Marjorie R. Fallows, *Op.Cit.*, p.35; Texts and Contexts: The Sadlier Archive, Anti-Immigrant Sentiment in Nineteenth-Century America: <http://xroads.virginia.edu/~HYPER/SADLIER/Prejudic.htm>. 14/08/2013, 09:30 am.

¹⁷⁵ Lawrence J. McCaffrey, *The Irish Diaspora in America*, pp. 93-94; Philip H. Bagenal, *Op.Cit.*, pp.50-52; David T. Gleeson, *Op.Cit.*, p.101; John Francis Maguire, *Op.Cit.*, p.p.407-409,418; William D. Griffin, *The Irish in America*, p.15; Kerry A. Graves, *Op.Cit.*, p.64; Texts and Contexts: The Sadlier Archive, Anti-Immigrant Sentiment in Nineteenth-Century America: <http://xroads.virginia.edu/~HYPER/SADLIER/Prejudic.htm>. 14/08/2013, 09:30 am; Know-Nothing Party: <http://legal-dictionary.thefreedictionary.com/American+Party>. 01/03/2013,12:37am; Sean Baker , *The American Religious Experience, American Nativism, 1830-1845*: <http://are.as.wvu.edu/baker.htm>. 03/03/2013, 10: 35am; Irish Immigrants in America during the 19th Century: <http://www.kinsella.org/history/histira.htm>. 14/05/2013, 04: 35 pm.

¹⁷⁶ Joseph Kelly, "Charleston's Bishop John England and American Slavery", *New Hibernia Review* Vol. 5, (N.4), 2001, pp.48-56; Encyclopedia of US History: Irish Americans: <http://www.answers.com/topic/irish-american>. 16 / 04 /2013, 04:10.

burning homes and dynamiting Catholic churches. Mob leaders justified their foray by claiming that the Irish were storing arms in church basements as a prelude to a Catholic revolution. Moreover, as a result of the evangelists' constant haranguing, the local nativist party, the "American Republican Party,"—which will be explained later—grew stronger and organised throughout Philadelphia. When the "Republicans" attempted to open a branch of their party in the predominantly Irish Kensington ward in May 1844, the local Irish broke up their meetings. Nativist mobs responded by invading the Irish neighbourhood and precipitating the worst of the rioting, and events in Philadelphia also encouraged New York nativists to attack the Irish. While the nativists were busy planning their offensive, Archbishop John Hughes surrounded Catholic churches with armed Irish guards and threatened to turn New York into another blazing Moscow if one Catholic Church was desecrated. City officials and nativist leaders got the message, and the Philadelphia atrocity story did not have a New York addendum, but anti-Irish violence in Boston, New York, Louisville and New Orleans continued to disturb the calm of urban America.¹⁷⁷ The Native-American movement subsided after this climax of horror, but the anti-Catholic feeling only slumbered to burst out again in a few years. Thus, it seems that ethnic tensions were far more intense in the mid-1830s than earlier. In 1837, one immigrant newspaper suggested that at least some native workers had grown wary of the Irish newcomers, leaving the immigrants in a difficult position when they go to work at the old price.¹⁷⁸

For the famine immigrants, they were the first group to arrive by the hundreds of thousands, creating a distinct community within the American culture. They faced discrimination, fought off poverty and withstood horrible living conditions as they bore the brunt of American anti-foreign and anti-Catholic attitudes. For many of them, life in the crowded, dirty cities of America or work in the dangerous mines of the West was better than starving in their homeland, and wages were low but at least there were jobs. Ironically, it was precisely because the Irish took the lowest-paying jobs that most people did not want that they were ostracized by some segments of American society. For example, because of racial prejudice, free blacks working in the North were largely limited to menial jobs, but when the Irish arrived and proved themselves willing to take these same jobs for lower wages, resentment was inevitable. Although their own discrimination limited the types of jobs and the salaries Irish immigrants could earn, the American Protestants still found fault with the Irish for not "getting

¹⁷⁷Lawrence J. McCaffrey, *The Irish Diaspora in America*, p. 94; John Francis Maguire, *Op.Cit.*, p.p.437,440-442; William D. Griffin, *The Irish in America*, p.16; Kerry A. Graves, *Op.Cit.*, p.64; Malcolm Campbell, *Op.Cit.*,p.p.36,51;Texts and Contexts: The Sadlier Archive, Anti-Immigrant Sentiment in Nineteenth-Century America: <http://xroads.virginia.edu/~HYPER/SADLIER/Prejudic.htm>. 14/ 08/ 2013, 09:30 am.

¹⁷⁸ See: Philip H. Bagenal, *Op.Cit.*, pp.52-53; Sean Wilentz, *Op.Cit.*, pp.266-267.

ahead" economically or socially. Since many Irish families were sending any spare wages home to relatives in Ireland to pay debts and purchase passage fees, they continued to live in the worst slums in the northern cities, which promoted the stereotype that they were a lazy and uncivilized race.¹⁷⁹

Life of the poor immigrant labourers in crowded, dirty conditions in the cities was hard for any new immigrant at the time, but the Irish were treated worse than most other immigrant groups. Not only were they poor foreigners, but as we previously pointed out, most of those who fled the famine were Catholic as well. At that time in American history, many Americans were suspicious of Catholics. Even though the first amendment to the American Constitution prohibited religious discrimination, most of the powerful people in America were Protestants, descended from the earliest settlers who arrived from England. Having the "right" religious background often meant the opportunity for better education and better jobs, but being Catholic in the United States during the mid- 19th century was a stumbling block.¹⁸⁰

Burdened by poor education and victims of discrimination, the Irish experienced little occupational mobility. A rural, peasant background did not prepare them well for an emerging industrial economy, and being Irish and Catholic at midcentury clearly a handicap that kept most Irish stuck at the lower end of the occupational hierarchy. The neighbourhoods of the famine immigrants revealed the depth of their poverty. In midcentury New York, the Irish were still clustered in Lower Manhattan, in the Fourth, Fifth and Sixth Wards, where these neighbourhoods a mingling of tenements, factories, stables, slaughterhouses, saloons and retail stores. The pattern of settlement in New York was duplicated in many other cities,¹⁸¹ but despite this, some people in New York, Boston, and Philadelphia, began to believe that Irish immigrants were taking jobs away from native-born Americans. A nativist way of thinking began to take hold more in this period, thus, the nativism was the belief that native-born, established inhabitants of a nation should be favoured over those who immigrate to that country. Evidence of nativism was everywhere, like when Irish immigrants looked for work, they found many jobs in labour and service, but they were sometimes subject to blatant discrimination. So, job discrimination occurred routinely with the words "No Irish Need Apply" posted on many a job notice, and it was customary for newspaper advertisements to restrict applicants to

¹⁷⁹Kerry A. Graves, *Op.Cit.*, p.p.18,65; Timothy J. Palson, *Op.Cit.*, p.55; Karen Price Hossell, *Op.Cit.*, p.55; Amy Hackney Blackwell and Ryan Hackney, *The Immigrant Experience in the United States*: <http://www.netplaces.com/irish-history/the-immigrant-experience/the-immigrant-experience-in-the-united-states.htm>. 05/03/ 2013, 02:20pm.

¹⁸⁰ Timothy J. Palson, *Op.Cit.*, pp.36-37.

¹⁸¹ Jay P. Dolan, *Op.Cit.*, pp.87-88; Sean Wilentz, *Op.Cit.*, p.352.

American or Protestant heritage. Thus, newspaper advertisements announcing job openings sometime openly excluded Irish people from applying for a job. An advertisement in the September 4, 1830, edition of the *New York Evening Post* announced this: "Wanted. A Cook or a Chambermaid, they must be American, Scotch, Swiss, or Africans—no Irish." Signs also appeared in storefronts or business windows that read "No Irish Need Apply."¹⁸²

Therefore we can conclude that there were several reasons Americans discriminated against the Irish. As we mentioned earlier, besides that these new arrivals were Catholic, first of all, they were mostly poor farmers and unskilled labourers. These immigrants who deluged American cities in the 1840s were especially unwelcome because of their extreme poverty and poor health. So, the massive influx of newcomers caused a strain with the existing populations, who were often of English and Protestant heritage. In the years when the majority of the Irish arrived, American cities had not yet figured out how they would handle immigrants. Some employers; were also reluctant to hire Irish workers because they saw them as dirty or lazy. Moreover, many Irish immigrants drank heavily; the group as a whole had a disproportionately high level of alcoholism, and the Irish were notorious for public drunkenness, which did not endear them to established citizens. However, the Irish did have some advantages over many other immigrants at the time, for one thing, they spoke English, and many employers hired them because they could easily communicate with them, moreover, they were willing to do almost any job. They also presented a cheerful demeanor, particularly Irishwomen, who were known to be loyal servants who were grateful to work in the homes of the wealthy.¹⁸³

With regard to insobriety, for many immigrants, the neighborhood pub was a popular gathering place. alcoholism was a serious social problem in numerous immigrant families and it seems that it was the social characteristic which most affected Irish success in America. America was not unusually temperate nor exacting in its demands, but Irish addiction to drunkenness and to its public display antagonised many groups beside the employers. So, the most serious obstacle to the advancement of the Irish in America was drink; meaning thereby the excessive use, or abuse, of that

¹⁸² Timothy J. Palson, *Op.Cit.*, p.44; Karen Price Hossell, *Op.Cit.*, p.60; ; Kem Knapp Sawyer, *Op.Cit.*, p.6; Kerry A. Graves, *Op.Cit.*, p.65; Jessica McElrath, *Anti-Irish Catholic Sentiment in Boston*: <http://www.netplaces.com/john-f-kennedy/the-fitzgeralds-and-the-kennedys/anti-irish-catholic-sentiment-in-boston.htm>.05/03/2013,05:10pm; Irish Immigrants in America during the 19th Century: <http://www.kinsella.org/history/histira.htm>. 14/05/2013, 04: 35 pm.

¹⁸³ Karen Price Hossell, *Op.Cit.*, p.60; Kerby A. Miller and Patricia Mulholland Miller, *Op.Cit.*, p.13; Amy Hackney Blackwell and Ryan Hackney, *The Immigrant Experience in the United States*: <http://www.netplaces.com/irish-history/the-immigrant-experience/the-immigrant-experience-in-the-united-states.htm>. 05/03/2013, 02: 20pm.

which, when taken in excess, intoxicates, deprives man of his reason, interferes with his industry, injures his health, damages his position, compromises his respectability, renders him unfit for the successful exercise of his trade, profession, or employment which leads to quarrel, turbulence, violence, crime.¹⁸⁴ In 1839, Father Theobald Mathew, a Capuchin priest based in Cork, Ireland, started a temperance crusade throughout Ireland. Highly successful, Mathew's efforts quickly gained support across the Atlantic Ocean. During Father Matthew's crusade, the temperance of immigrants called forth general commendation, but in 1846 that influence ceased, and so long as contractors found it worth their while to get every last ounce out of their workmen by frequent doses of whisky, no serious modification of Irish habits in this respect could be expected. American opinion, however, would not tolerate the normal consequences of intoxication in so far as they took the shape of riots. American government, like Irish, rested largely in the hands of the wealthy classes, and it was equally determined to maintain the sanctity of property. The "low Irish" never recognized that sanctity, and in Ireland frequently invaded it with impunity, but American society with its greater solidarity was more effective in repression. Personal crimes aroused less reprobation in an age which still tolerated private vengeance, and American police were scarcely more effective than Irish. Brawling and petty disturbances aroused no more than a half-amused contempt, but in any case, the decreased incentive to crime and the progress of the superior immigrants put a severe check upon this Irish propensity.¹⁸⁵

It seems that the Irish drink did not more than the people of any other nationality in America as Maguire confirmed, and added that there were many and various reasons why this was so. In the first place, they were strangers, and, as such, more subject to observation and criticism than the natives of the country. They were, also, as a rule, of a faith different to that of the majority of the American people; and the fact that they were so did not render the observation less keen, nor does it render the criticism more gentle. Then, be it constitution, or temperament, or whatever else, excess seems to be more injurious to them than to others. They were genial, open-hearted, generous, and social in their tendencies; they love company, court excitement, and delight in affording pleasure or gratification to their friends. And not only were their very virtues leagued against them, but the prevailing custom of the country is a

¹⁸⁴ William Adams, *Op.Cit.*, p.346; John Francis Maguire, *Op.Cit.*, p.p.9-10, 281-282; The Rev. Stephen Byrne, *Op.Cit.*, pp.51-53; David T. Gleeson, *Op.Cit.*, pp.61-62; Amy Hackney Blackwell and Ryan Hackney, *The Immigrant Experience in the United States*:

<http://www.netplaces.com/irish-history/the-immigrant-experience/the-immigrant-experience-in-the-united-states.htm>. 05/03/2013, 02:20pm; *Living Conditions for Immigrants*:

<http://xroads.virginia.edu/~HYPER/SADLIER/Life.htm>. 01/05/2012, 06:00am.

¹⁸⁵ David T. Gleeson, *Op.Cit.*, pp.61-62; William Adams, *Op.Cit.*, p.346; John Francis Maguire, *Op.Cit.*, p.284.

perpetual challenge to indulgence. The Americans drink, the Germans drink, the Scotch drink, the English drink all drink with more or less injury to their health or circumstances; but whatever the injury to these, or any of these, it was far greater to the mercurial and light-hearted Irish than to races of hard head and lethargic temperament.¹⁸⁶

Thus, the Irish in America faced discrimination and ostracism that confined them to the lowest rung of the socioeconomic ladder. They lived in the worst neighbourhoods, did the worst work, suffered the highest mortality rates and were overrepresented in prisons, poorhouses and mental asylums. To survive they turned inward, refusing to integrate and they embraced their ghetto status. They had their churches, societies and a continued interest in Irish politics to keep them going. This isolation, however, merely perpetuated their position at the bottom of American society. Based on that, other groups of Americans accused the Irish of keeping too much to themselves, rather than trying to fit into American society and become more “American.” But the alternative moving to nicer neighbourhoods was not possible unless the immigrants found higher-paying jobs, so, the Irish settled where the rents were low and where other immigrants from their homeland lived. Since discrimination often prevented them from improving their situation, their neighbourhoods grew more and more run-down and dangerous. As more Irish arrived in America, hope largely lay in sticking together and looking to one another for support. As the Irish settled in, Americans mostly welcomed them only for the cheap services and labour they provided.¹⁸⁷

Despite some of positive examples which provided the Irish opportunity for success, the pessimistic view of the Irish in America has not died. Supporting his concept of Irish immigrants as members of diaspora, Kerby Miller has used thousands of immigrant letters to highlight how difficult a time the famine Irish had in adjusting to America. Miller believed that the typical Irish man, who landed in the United States before 1860, came from a peasant quasi-collectivist society to a country where the people were enraptured with capitalism and rampant individualism. The contrast between the dynamic, urban, modern and protestant United States and the conservative, rural, traditional and catholic experience of the Irish emigrant was too much of a dislocation to allow for easy integration. On the contrary, the famine-generation Irish Americans were isolated and longed for home, as they stayed in America not by choice but because of economic necessity. Rather than adapting quickly to the bustling United States, they remained exiles, depending for survival in

¹⁸⁶ Further details are giving in: John Francis Maguire, *Op.Cit.*, pp.282-284.

¹⁸⁷ William Forbes Adams, *Op.Cit.*, p.346; David T. Gleeson, *Op.Cit.*, pp.20-21; Timothy J. Palson, *Op.Cit.*, p.45; Karen Price Hossell, *Op.Cit.*, pp.8-9; Philip H. Bagenal, *Op.Cit.*, p.47; Sean Wilentz, *Op.Cit.*, p.352.

a very strange land on their Church and on dreams of returning home to free Ireland from British rule. This inward-turning ghettoisation isolated them even further from the American mainstream.¹⁸⁸

Many who have shown a more successful Irish experience in America accept Miller's basic premise. They agree that the Irish were insecure and self-segregated, but they see strength in numbers. By concentrating in urban areas, the Irish in the United States took over their towns and cities. Their heightened ethnic awareness made them stick together and forge success out of difficult circumstances. Where the Irish failed to concentrate and exploit their numbers, they usually met with less success. Moreover, the fact that they felt isolated and alienated stimulated even more an awareness of their identity. The typical Famine emigrant was a cultural conservative, turned towards the past, towards their country of origin.¹⁸⁹ Thus, American discrimination against the Irish, when combined with their poverty on arrival, resulted in their banding together to support one another in close-knit Irish communities. The 1850 census for the Irish Five Points neighborhood of New York City records that 75 percent of the immigrants came in family groups or met relatives on arrival. About 86 percent lived with at least one relative by blood or marriage, and 93 percent lived in nuclear family households. Of the unmarried men and women who did not live with relatives, only 5 percent roomed in boarding houses, most preferring to board with a family instead.¹⁹⁰

Therefore, by the 1850s Irish Catholics in the United States had set up what historian Oscar Handlin calls "a society within a society." He goes on to write, "The institutions they established, had no counterpart in the Old World, where the community was a unified whole, adequately satisfying all the social desires of its members."¹⁹¹ The all-inclusive society they developed in America meant that the Irish were, therefore, largely self-reliant. They rarely had to venture outside their communities for spiritual, social or economic support. Although this separation from the rest of society was in part not voluntary after all, the Irish were not made to feel welcome in most parts of the United States it quickly became the preferred way of life for most of the immigrants. This separation would prove difficult to overcome, even after its value to the Irish had ended. Many Americans already viewed these Irish immigrants with suspicion; the self-imposed isolation practiced by Irish Catholics did little to relieve those suspicions. But if more than a tiny minority of Irish Americans were to have any hope of escaping a seemingly endless cycle of

¹⁸⁸ David T. Gleeson, *Op.Cit.*, p.21.

¹⁸⁹ *Ibid*, pp.21-22; Denny Hatch, *Op.Cit.*, p.p. 21-22.,57.

¹⁹⁰ Further details are giving in: Kerry A. Graves, *Op.Cit.*, pp.66-67.

¹⁹¹ Quoted in: Karen Price Hossell, *Op.Cit.*, p. 50 .

poverty, they would have to have jobs that would earn a living wage. To do that, the Irish would have to overcome misconceptions and outright bigotry on the part of their fellow Americans.¹⁹²

Complaints of the poverty and criminality of immigrants were loudest in the states and cities through which the bulk of immigrants flowed, leading to strong anti-immigrant feeling and even riots. In fact the opposition to these 'foreign elements' took several forms. It also took a political form, beginning with secret societies like the Order of the Star-Spangled Banner in the 1840s, the party known as the Know-Nothings, and the American Party.¹⁹³

4.4.3 Irish-America and the Course of Irish Nationalism

American Protestant nativism, Irish nationalism jelled and flourished in the ghettos of urban America as a search for identity, an expression of vengeance and a quest for respectability. As one historian has written, "The Irish Catholic immigrant of that day and for many years had a triple battle: to establish himself as an American, to preserve his faith in a subtly antagonistic setting and to continue to fight for the freedom of his homeland".¹⁹⁴ Before the Great Famine rapidly expanded the communities of the Diaspora, Irish nationalism was more hope and aspiration than reality. Before the Great Famine rapidly expanded the communities of the Diaspora, Irish nationalism was more hope and aspiration than reality. While O'Connell's Catholic and repeal associations helped the Irish to develop skill in manipulating public opinion, helped them unite and mobilize for agitation, and helped to lay the structural foundations of Irish nationalism, there was much to be done before the Irish people could think of themselves as distinctly Irish and before they could realize the implications of that conceptual identity.

As an eighteenth-century, cosmopolitan, Whig patriot, O'Connell did not understand the significance of cultural identity as a dimension of nationalism. On the hand, when Young Irelanders in the 1840s began to push beyond the frontiers outlined by O'Connell, in the process creating an Irish cultural nationalism, most of the Irish population were illiterate peasants unable to comprehend the complete message of the

¹⁹² Ibid, p. 50.

¹⁹³ Denny Hatch, *Op.Cit.*, p.57.

¹⁹⁴ Quoted in: *Texts and Contexts: The Sadlier Archive, Anti-Immigrant Sentiment in Nineteenth-Century America*: <http://xroads.virginia.edu/~HYPER/SADLIER/Prejudic.htm>. 14/08/2013, 09:30 am; Denny Hatch, *Op.Cit.*, p. 56.

Young Ireland newspaper, the *Nation*. And priests, fearing that Young Irelanders were the Paracletes of Continental secularism, radicalism, and anticlericalism, remained loyal to the memory, message and tactics of O'Connell. On the other hand, Geography and the manorial economy also obstructed the advance of Irish nationalism. Although a little country, Ireland is divided by a number of small mountain ranges, and in the early nineteenth century primitive transportation facilities strengthened regional boundaries. "Ireland" meant less than terms like townland, parish, county, or province. And as we previously mentioned, Irish tenant farmers functioned as serfs within a primitive social and economic system, existing without adequate legal rights or weapons to protect them from exorbitant rents or arbitrary evictions. The tension between Protestant landlords and Catholic tenant farmers was only one aspect of class divisions and conflicts. Among the rural Irish masses, the major concern was survival rather than national freedom. Tradition, fear-induced allegiances to landlords, and land hunger diluted much of the Catholic unity and patriotism that O'Connell had forged.¹⁹⁵

In America Catholicism was only one characteristic that brought scorn upon the Irish. Two interrelated aspects of Irish Catholic culture presented problems not encountered by earlier Irish settlers of the Ulster migration: Their rural peasant culture was ill-suited for the urban industrial lives they faced in America, and their Catholic faith was at odds with the Protestant ethos of nineteenth-century America. The transition from rural peasant to urban industrial worker may well have produced culture shock for many of those uprooted during the famine years, but it was an adaptation with which other Americans were struggling at about the same time, and it did not necessarily involve renunciation of a crucial part of their identity. On the other hand, Catholicism was a cultural characteristic for which the Irish had already paid a heavy price in Ireland and which had, in the process, become highly valued as part of their heritage. The Catholic Church—the strongest supportive institution brought over from Ireland—was linked with Irish history and identity and became the focus of major, enduring cultural differences for the Irish in America. Possibly the strength of Anglo resistance to Catholicism in Ireland only served to intensify its importance for the American Irish, who perceived themselves as surrounded by Protestant hostility. Those who might wear their religion lightly under less strained conditions could scarcely avoid responding defensively when Irish Catholicism was attacked, for as Gordon has suggested, “Man defending the honour or welfare of his ethnic group is man defending himself. Irish defensiveness was a cultural attribute born of centuries

¹⁹⁵ Lawrence J. McCaffrey, *The Irish Diaspora in America*, pp.107-108.

See: Karl S. Bottigheimer, *Op.Cit.*, pp.181-182; T. W. Moody and F.X. Martin, *Op.Cit.*, pp. 214-215; John O'Beirne Ranelagh, *Op.Cit.*, pp.104-105; Paul F. State, *Op.Cit.*, p.182; R. F. Foster, *Op. Cit.*, pp.191-192; James Lydon, *Op.Cit.*, pp. 296-298; Denny Hatch, *Op.Cit.*, p. 9.

of domination. Nothing in the early experience of the Irish Catholics in America contributed to its rapid erosion.¹⁹⁶

Thus when the Irish came to the United States they brought their town-land, parish, county, regional, and clan loyalties with them, but the common ghetto experience and Anglo-American Protestant hatred contributed to the creation of a larger Irish identity. Men from all parts of Ireland worshipped together in the same Catholic churches, voted as a bloc for Democratic Party machines, and worked side by side on the railroads and in the mines and factories. Anglo-American contempt for all things Irish deepened an already festering Irish inferiority complex, necessitating a search for pride through identity. Irish-Americans soon cultivated their own "racial" myths to match those of their persecutors, rejecting what they considered to be O'Connell's "West British" patriotism and turning to the poems, essays, and doctrines of Young Ireland as the source their cultural and revolutionary nationalism.¹⁹⁷

Young Ireland refugees from the rebellion of 1848 left Ireland as dismal failures; they arrived in America heroes. Emigration and the development of an Irish identity among American immigrants speeded the progress of Irish nationalism on both sides of the Atlantic. The editorials, essays, and ballad poetry of the Nation became the scriptures of Irish cultural nationalism. Exiles took the gospel of young Ireland with them on their journeys across the Irish Sea and the Atlantic Ocean, cultivating it in the fertile soil of ghetto discontent, thus, the Young Ireland has had so great an influence on the thinking of later generation of Irishmen, where, throughout the nineteenth century Irish-Americans read literature that created and sustained cultural and revolutionary nationalism. In the immediate post-famine period, Thomas Davis, Charles Gavan Duffy, James Clarence Mangan and John Mitchel were the evangelists of cultural nationalism. Many a second-generation Irish-American lad listened in awe, reverence, and pulsing anger as his Irish-born father or grandfather recited Robert Emmet's defiant speech from the dock.¹⁹⁸ Moreover, in the United States the American Irish formed societies study and preserve the Irish language, and in Catholic halls they attended concerts featuring Thomas Moore's Irish Melodies,

¹⁹⁶ Marjorie R. Fallows, *Op.Cit.*, pp.143-144; Kerry A. Graves, *Op.Cit.*, pp.64-65.

¹⁹⁷ Lawrence J. McCaffrey, *The Irish Diaspora in America*, pp.108-109; David T. Gleeson, *Op.Cit.*, pp.21-22; Denny Hatch, *Op.Cit.*, p.p. 21-22.,57.

¹⁹⁸ See: O'Beirne Ranelagh, *Op.Cit.*, p.108; Lawrence J. McCaffrey, *The Irish Diaspora in America*, p.p.50-51, 109; John Savage, *Fenian heroes and martyrs*, Boston 1868, p.51-52; R. F. Foster, *Op.Cit.*, p.191; Richard B. Finnegan, *Op.Cit.*, p.20; T. W. Moody and F.X. Martin, *Op. Cit.*, p.216; Irish Potato famine: <http://www.historyplace.com/worldhistory/famine/before.htm>. 15/04/ 2011, 08:32 pm; John. see: Further details are giving in: Seán McConville , *Op.Cit.*, pp.49-79.

where as we previously mentioned, the Irish brought to America a great love of music.¹⁹⁹

Irish-American nationalism was saturated with hate; many Irishmen harbored a deeper hatred of England than love for Ireland. Despising England was a catharsis for Irish-American tensions and frustrations, a way of expressing and explaining Irish failure, a way of striking out at real and imaginary enemies. Britain had to be punished and humiliated, not only as a step toward Irish freedom but as an atonement for her sins against the Irish. British laws, cruelty, religious bigotry, insensitivity and indifference to Irish needs had contributed to the deaths and exile of millions of Irish people. To the American Irish, Britain was the source of Irish disgrace and humiliation at home and abroad. There were those who never reconciled themselves to physical or spiritual exile from Ireland or whose need for a scapegoat to explain their lack of success in the United States formed the core of a paranoid Irish nationalism. But other Irish-Americans, people who had achieved social and economic mobility, worked for an Irish nation-state that could earn them respectability in the general American community. They believed that an independent Ireland would help them be assimilated in the United States. These searchers for status and respectability argued that an Ireland wearing the British collar and leash was a symbol of Irish inferiority and degradation, encouraging the contempt of Anglo-Americans. But a free Ireland "numbered among the nations of the earth" would elevate her exiled children in the eyes of other Americans. The Irish may have been the first but they were certainly not the last minority group in the United States to link their destiny to the sovereignty of their homeland.²⁰⁰

Because respectability was such a strong motivation in Irish-American nationalism, the middle class tended to be more active in Irish freedom movements than the lower class. With the tremendous improvement in the quality of Irish immigrants after 1870 and the rapid occupational and economic mobility of first, second and third-generation Irish-Americans, increasing psychological needs for recognition and social status aided the forces of nationalism.²⁰¹

It is worthy of mention that Daniel O'Connell until his death, in 1847, had as much of a purchase on Irish-American enthusiasm as any parish priest, although it failed to lead masses of immigrants into broader currents of social reform, the Repeal

¹⁹⁹ Lawrence J. McCaffrey, *The Irish Diaspora in America*, p.109; Kerby A Miller, *Op.Cit.*, p.5; William Adams, *Op.Cit.*, p.346; Kem Knapp Sawyer, *Op.Cit.*, p.15.

²⁰⁰ Lawrence J. McCaffrey, *The Irish Diaspora in America*, p.p. 56, 58, 110-111; Kerby A Miller, *Op.Cit.*, pp. 4-5.

²⁰¹ Lawrence J. McCaffrey, *The Irish Diaspora in America*, p.111; Jay P. Doland, *The Irish Americans*, pp.82-83.

agitation in New York contributed mightily to what one Historian has called “the first major Irish nationalist movement of consequence in America.”²⁰² Thus it seems clear, that the beginnings of Irish-American nationalism already were evident during the Catholic Emancipation agitation in the 1820s, when American Irish-Catholics, with some Protestant support, vocalized their interest in Catholic civil rights in Ireland. But the repeal movement in the 1840s actually initiated Irish-American nationalism. Almost every Irish community in the United States had a local repeal club which sent dollars to swell the treasury of the organization in Dublin. In his speeches, O'Connell emphasized that the Irish of the Diaspora had joined with their kinsmen back home in the repeal movement, warning the British that Irish nationalism had international implications. Pro-repeal speeches and statements from prominent Americans like Gov. William Seward of New York and Pres. John Tyler indicated the potential importance of Irish nationalism as a factor in the American political arena.

In order to consolidate the energies of Irish-American nationalism and publicize its cause and aims, American-Irish leaders organized two national repeal conventions in the 1840s, but the conclaves revealed dissension in Irish-American ranks. Many American proponents of repeal, particularly from the South, criticized O'Connell's attacks on slavery and his demands that Irish-Americans remain true to the liberal, democratic values that they learned at home and to the basic principles of the American Declaration of Independence. O'Connell encouraged them to empathize with the slaves, another group that had suffered from cruelty and enslavement, to join the abolitionist crusade, and to demand full civil rights for blacks once they were free. O'Connell went so far in his denunciation of black slavery that he would not accept donations from repeal clubs in the South, insisting that dollars stained with the blood of black suffering could never be used to free slaves in Ireland. Irish-American rejection of O'Connell's stand on slavery revealed their commitment to American institutions and values and their sensitivity to outside attacks, even from Ireland, on the American way of life.²⁰³

Famine and revolution in Ireland escalated the development of Irish-American nationalism. The many deaths from hunger and fever and the mass exodus from Ireland convinced many of the Irish at home and abroad that the British were attempting to solve the Irish Question through a policy of extermination. The 1848 rebellion sent Young Irelanders fleeing to the United States, providing the leadership and rhetoric to mobilize Irish discontent in a counteroffensive against Anglo-Saxon, Protestant nativism. In developing a rationale for a war on British imperialist Irish-American nationalist propagandists emphasized their Americanism, praising the

²⁰² Quoted in: Sean Wilentz, *Op.Cit.*, pp.352-353.

²⁰³ Lawrence J. McCaffrey, *The Irish Diaspora in America*, pp.111-112; Philip H. Bagenal, *Op.Cit.*, p.p.47,50.

United States as the cradle of human liberty, in contrast to aristocratic and imperialistic Britain. They insisted that the United States had a moral obligation to lift the burden of oppression from Ireland. The Irish were the first Americans to use ethnicity as a political tool to manipulate American foreign policy in support of a European freedom movement, a precedent to be followed later by a large number of minority groups.²⁰⁴

After the revolutionary fiasco of 1848, nationalist agitation in Ireland returned to its constitutional channels. Charles Gavan Duffy resurrected the two conflicting strategies-agrarian and political-debated in the Irish Confederation in 1847, fusing them into one movement. Along with two other newspapermen and supporters, Duffy created an independent Irish party dedicated to the achievement of secure tenures at fair rents for tenant farmers. Duffy and his friends hoped that a coalition between Protestant tenant farmers from Ulster and Catholic farmers from throughout Ireland could eventually break down sectarian animosities and lead to an ecumenical nationalist movement. Unfortunately, the Independent Irish Party that emerged from the general election of 1852 with forty-eight seats in British House of Commons was more than an agrarian, issue-oriented "League of the North and South." Duffy and his friends had also accepted the collaboration of the Irish Brigade to mobilize Catholic opinion in the United Kingdom against anti-Catholicism as expressed in the Whig government's Ecclesiastical Titles Bill. However, Duffy suspected that many members the brigade were unscrupulous opportunists using popular Irish causes to get elected to Parliament where they could intrigue for place and preferment. Duffy's suspicions were quickly confirmed and eventually the new party collapsed in 1859.²⁰⁵

Therefore we may conclude that during the 1850s, Irish-American nationalists worked out a revolutionary strategy that remained consistent for much of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. They decided to use United States as an arsenal for Irish freedom by providing money and guns for liberation movements in Ireland and by using Irish political power to shape American foreign policy in an anti-British context. Thus, during the 1844-1846 dispute between America and Britain over the Oregon boundary, the American Irish were in the front ranks of the war hawks. They constantly tried to promote armed conflicts between Britain and her continental

²⁰⁴ Lawrence J. McCaffrey, *The Irish Diaspora in America*, p.p. 50-51, 56, 58, 112-113; Kerby A Miller, *Op.Cit.*, pp.4-5; Jay P. Dolan, *Op.Cit.*, p.68; James Lydon, *Op. Cit.*, p.301; O'Beirne Ranelagh, *Op.Cit.*, p.108; R. F. Foster, *Op.Cit.*, p.191; Richard B. Finnegan, *Op.Cit.*, p.20; T. W. Moody and F.X. Martin, *Op. Cit.*, p. 216; Irish Potato famine: <http://www.historyplace.com/worldhistory/famine/before.htm>. 15/ 04/ 2011,08.32 pm.

²⁰⁵ Lawrence J. McCaffrey, *The Irish Diaspora in America*, pp.113-114.

enemies, emphasizing the slogan "England's difficulty is Ireland's opportunity."²⁰⁶ It seems clear that at the same time that they were harnessing political power to help themselves in America, Irish Americans were also banding together to further the cause of a free Ireland. Some of the groups wanted what was called home rule-an Irish parliament separate from England's. Others wanted complete freedom from British rule. Whatever the long-range goal, the cause of Irish nationalism was a popular one among Irish Americans during the nineteenth century. The largest group working for Irish independence was called the Fenian Brotherhood, which began in New York City in 1858. By 1860 the Fenian movement had spread across the country and quickly attracted thousands of young supporters both in Ireland itself and America. Many were Civil War veterans who wanted to use their newly acquired military skills in the fight for Ireland's freedom.²⁰⁷

4.4.4 Irish Americans and their influence on Politics:

In the early nineteenth century, the Irish were as yet too few to count politically. Freedom and democracy, or at least the semblance of democracy contained in political equality, have so long , catch-words of American patriotism that one hesitates to discount their influence. From 1830 to 1850, travellers of every nationality sought to elucidate the American political system as something unique, and significant for the future of their own countries, and they believed that their emigrants were moved primarily by political considerations, but for the most part they were mistaken. Even the first years after 1815, however, republicanism and democracy were less alluring than freedom from tithes and taxes. Not until 1848, when the last vain attempt at a united Irish revolt, did political exile again enrich the American world. The myriads who poured forth in the intervening decades asked little of their governments, and most of it they obtained. Tithes existed only in British America, and there in a less obnoxious form than in Ireland. Religious discrimination for office disappeared in the United States only just before its abolition in Ireland. Property qualifications for voting continued to exclude the majority of Irish in many states until after 1845; yet the poor settled as freely in Pennsylvania and Rhode Island where they could not vote as in New York and Massachusetts where they could. Political ambitions were clearly a minor cause of their migration, and of these the desire for liberty was more important

²⁰⁶ Ibid, p. 117.

²⁰⁷ For more details about the Fenian Brotherhood see: Karen Price Hossell, *Op.Cit.*, pp.73-74; John Savage, *Op.Cit.*, p.p.51-66; The Fenian Movement: http://www.historylearningsite.co.uk/fenian_movement.htm. 15/05/2014,11:05pm; Irish Republican History: <http://irishrepublican.weebly.com/fenian-brotherhood.html>.15/05/ 2014, 10: 30 pm.

than the belief in democracy. Once established in America, however, the Irish immigrant could no more resist the lure of politics than the sociability of the dram shop.²⁰⁸

As the number of Irish Americans grew, they soon were able to wield considerable political influence, but yet that clout was not easily gained. Just as some other Americans had hesitated to hire Irish workers, some old-line politicians worked aggressively to stop Irish Americans from gaining political power. These politicians harnessed the resentment many Americans felt toward Irish immigrants—resentment born of Irish resistance to a number of popular social reforms. In this context, Historian Oscar Handlin wrote “Their resistance, he goes on to write, could also be the result of their living for so long under "enforced obedience," which had made them resigned to the idea that things should remain as they had always been.”²⁰⁹

One reform that most Irish opposed was the abolition of slavery, as many Irish followed the Catholic Church's teachings on slavery at the time: Abuse of slaves was wrong, but slavery in itself was not inherently wrong. Irish Americans also had practical reasons for opposing the abolition of slavery: They would have to compete for jobs with the newly freed blacks who would be leaving the plantations. But we have to say here that the coming of the Irish also aided the development of white freedom. Indentured servitude was still common in Pennsylvania, Maryland and Virginia in 1815, though it was beginning to decline. A few redemptioners from Ireland and some hundreds from Germany arrived in the succeeding years, and the Pennsylvania legislature found it necessary to pass a new act in 1818 for the protection of these servants. But the arrivals of large numbers of free labourers, combined with the abolition of imprisonment for debt, rapidly wiped out a system which had proven uneconomic.²¹⁰

At the same time, the tendency of Irish Catholics to send their children to parochial schools aroused resentment among those who were pressing for publicly supported education. Some politicians fueled this resentment by promoting the idea that Irish Catholics thought American schools were not good enough for their children. Further fueling anti-Irish sentiment was the refusal of many Irish to support the movement to ban the sale of alcoholic beverages. Some Irish Americans did join the temperance movement, forming the Catholic Sons of Temperance, and some

²⁰⁸ William Adams, *Op.Cit.*, p.p.126,347-348; “Dublin Evening Post”, June 22, 1816.

For more details see: Carl Edward Skeen, *1816: America rising*, Kentucky 2003, pp.222-232; James V. Marshall, *The United States Manual of Biography and History*, Philadelphia 1856, pp.166-168.

²⁰⁹ Quoted in: Oscar Handlin, *Op.Cit.*, p. 131; Karen Price Hossell, *Op.Cit.*, p.66.

²¹⁰ Karen Price Hossell, *Op.Cit.*, pp. 66-67; William Adams, *Op.Cit.*, p.p.344, 362; ; Kerry A. Graves, *Op.Cit.*, p.66.

Catholic priests encouraged their congregations to stop drinking, but on the whole, Irish Americans did not support the movement. Anti-Irish politicians used as ammunition the fact that the Irish represented a large percentage of those arrested for public drunkenness.²¹¹

The antipathy of Irish immigrants to reforms such as abolition, public education, and temperance played into the hands of nativists—individuals who believed that immigrants were somehow threatening to take over the United States. Many nativists focused on the Catholicism of the Irish as well as other immigrants and formed later secretive organisations whose goals were to prevent Catholics from gaining political and social influence in the United States.²¹² An emigrant of the 1831 rush wrote from Oswego, New York said:—“Let no person home imagine that a person cannot send a bad account home from this place. That is not the case, for they think too many of us are coming here.”²¹³ This is only one of many indications of an American reaction against new flood of laborers, with their somewhat barbaric customs of drinking and fighting; and the Irish immigration of these years was one of the causes for the formation of the Native American party in 1835.²¹⁴

Irish Catholics who arrived in a singularly concentrated wave in the mid-1800s, and who congregated in urban areas where the power of their votes could be effectively mobilised, burst on the American political scene with every intention not only of participating in political life but of getting something out of it as well. Having been excluded from effective access to political power in Ireland and having known the frustrations of the exploited, they were ready to make up for past deprivations and to make their influence felt as speedily as possible. In some ways, they were as politically sophisticated as they were culturally and economically unsophisticated. From the campaigns of Daniel O’Connell, who had led the movement for Catholic emancipation and repeal of the Act of Union in Ireland during the 1820s through the 1840s, many had already learned the skills of competition within the Anglo-Saxon political system, the art of confrontating politics, and the uses of compromise.²¹⁵

²¹¹ Karen Price Hossell, *Op.Cit.*, p.6; William Adams, *Op.Cit.*, pp. 361-363; Know-Nothing Party: <http://legal-dictionary.thefreedictionary.com/American+Party>. 01/03/2013, 12:37am.

²¹² Karen Price Hossell, *Op.Cit.*, p. 67. Further details are giving in: Know-Nothing Party: <http://legal-dictionary.thefreedictionary.com/American+Party>. 01/03/ 2013, 12: 37am.

²¹³ Quoted in: William Adams, *Op.Cit.*, p.180.

²¹⁴ *Ibid*, p. 180. Further details are giving in: Know-Nothing Party: <http://legal-dictionary.thefreedictionary.com/American+Party>. 01 / 03 / 2013, 12:37am.

²¹⁵ Marjorie R. Fallows, *Op.Cit.*, p.112; David T. Gleeson, *Op.Cit.*, p.94; PRONI: http://www.proni.gov.uk/index/exhibitions_talks_and_events/19th_century_emigration_to_the_north_america_online/the_promised_land/hospitals.htm

With regard to the division which occurred in 1848 amongst the Irish Nationalists at home, almost simultaneously with the phenomenal exodus of those years came the crash of the Young Ireland party. Their thrilling writings, in prose and verse, were yet ringing in the ears of the tens of thousands who were taking ship for another land. However, we can first call to mind the principle of that section of the Young Ireland party which has exercised so powerful an effect upon the Irish in America, and through them upon Irish politics at home. The result of the abortive insurrection of 1848 was to change the base of Irish revolution from Ireland to America. It was received with open arms by those Irish already settled there, a goodly section of the population, and eagerly espoused by the million and a half emigrants who had contemporaneously left the shores of Ireland. Many of them were soon joined in America by leaders from the abortive revolution of the Young Irelanders, who sought to mobilise Irish strength in America through the uniting issue of a free Ireland. And they had their own desperate need for jobs and for security in a strange and hostile urban environment, where local political power could work to their immediate advantage. Thus a new nation was formed, whose principal literature was hostile to England, whose heroes and martyrs were either political prisoners or executed felons, and whose every aspiration and hope was at variance with the established order of things in the land which they had left.²¹⁶

The best access we can have to the political creed of the Irish in America is the national literature of 1848. It was this which has kept alive the flame of Irish nationality with such intense fervour at the distance of three thousand miles; and in the journalistic writings of those Young Ireland days are to be found the mainsprings of all the Irish political movements, at home and abroad, which have been carried on since that time, including the entire programme of the Land League.

Some idea of the effect that the National press has had upon Ireland and America may be gathered from the history of the Nation newspaper which we pointed out to it in the second chapter. It gives the key to the influence over the Irish mind which has been exercised by that journal so successfully ever since its foundation, and the keynote to the tone of the whole of the National press up to a very recent period. The first number of the Nation appeared on the 12th of October, 1842, at a time when Ireland was heaving under the agitation of O'Connell, and when the Liberator was entering on the zenith of his popularity. It is difficult now to imagine what a tremendous power was wielded at once by this first creation of a national press. The aim of the Young Ireland was a revolution, and their object was the formation of a public opinion strong enough to result in a general rising. At this time the country was led by a man one of whose first principles was that no political change was worth

²¹⁶ Philip H. Bagenal, *Op.Cit.*, pp.108-110; Marjorie R. Fallows, *Op.Cit.*, p.112.

shedding a drop of blood, and for a time there was no attempt to put theory into practice.²¹⁷

The descent of the famine Irish on America also coincided with the development of a new American political style which would respond to ethnic needs through the politics of accommodation. With Andrew Jackson's presidency to America in the 1830s, the Democrats emerged as an enduring political party that would become the focus for Irish loyalties, and the era of the modern political "boss" was launched in burgeoning American cities. The "popularisation" of American politics under Andrew Jackson, himself the son of immigrants, gave Irish Americans an immediate opportunity to get involved in the political fray. Jackson's egalitarian rhetoric and that of his Democratic party attracted a growing number of Irish immigrants to their cause. Having seen the damage caused by "aristocracies" to the welfare of the "common man" in Ireland, the Irish immigrants were "ready-made Democrats." Thus, the party successfully courted the Irish vote with promises of continued liberal policies on immigration and naturalisation. Based on that, the Irish of the mid-1800s were the first to arrive in sufficient numbers and with sufficient political awareness to recognise that if they hoped to achieve either freedom for their homeland or security and influence in America they would do well to begin by winning the political power to make the rest possible. And the means to win that power was at hand, especially after the Democrats welcomed the Irish and seemed to accept their ethnicity without questioning their capability of integrating into American society.²¹⁸

Irish immigrants arrived in cities that often did not want them and did not have an infrastructure in place to take care of them. To address these problems, immigrants fell back on the tribal cohesiveness that had governed their rural communities in Ireland. While the Irish newcomers did not have status, they did have numbers, that allowed them to focus their power on a political level, almost exclusively through the Democratic Party. The resulting political organisations were the first of America's political "machines" organisations that used tight community organisation to take power over local government, and then used government patronage to maintain their power. The Tammany Hall machine in New York was the prototype for this style of politics.²¹⁹

²¹⁷ See: Philip H. Bagenal, *Op.Cit.*, pp.110-115.

²¹⁸ Marjorie R. Fallows, *Op.Cit.*, pp.112-113; David T. Gleeson, *Op.Cit.*, p.95; **PRONI:**
http://www.proni.gov.uk/index/exhibitions_talks_and_events/19th_century_emigration_to_the_north_america_online/the_promised_land/hospitals.htm

²¹⁹ Amy Hackney Blackwell and Ryan Hackney, *The Immigrant Experience in the United States:*

Grass roots political activity began first in the immigrant slums of every city where the Irish Catholics settled. Building upon a perception of a common fate which transcended their Irish village and county identities, they began to weave their transplanted folk values into a political style and structure that came to be identified as characteristically Irish. The politician was a pivotal figure in the complex pattern of loyalties that marked the Irish neighbourhoods a realist who was less concerned with abstract notions of public service and good government than with the practical concerns of keeping himself in office by building up a patronage system that would bind politician and constituent together in a web of mutual obligation and loyalty. Politics was a career open to the self-made man as were few others, and along with the priesthood and union leadership it became one of the most heavily travelled roads to success for the Irish. So began the hegemony of the Irish in urban ethnic politics a hegemony that would endure into this century and that would set patterns for other ethnic groups as they too attempted to acquire the leverage to affect political decisions and reap political rewards.²²⁰

Although its effects are visible, power is difficult to measure, for those who already have it wield it inconspicuously and with assurance, whereas those who are without it often seem heavy-handed and violent in achieving it, as did the Irish in those early years. Their enthusiasm for political roles, combined with their pragmatic view of politics as a system for the distribution of power rather than as an exercise in democratic principles, won them few friends among the Yankees whose power was on the wane. But the early acquisition of political power made possible relief for the destitute, protection from gross exploitation, occupational opportunity through patronage jobs and forms of both social and personal power at a time when they were not available by any other means.²²¹

4.4.4.1 The political nativist movement and Know-Nothings

The determination of Irish immigrants to find work and to succeed in their new land soon led many nativists to unite politically against the newcomers. Established society, made up of Americans who had come to the United States earlier and endured the immigrant experience generations before, did not want these new

<http://www.netplaces.com/irish-history/the-immigrant-experience/the-immigrantexperience-in-the-united-states.htm>. 05/03/2013, 02:20pm. For more details about America's political "machines" see: Robert McNamara, Tammany Hall: New York City's Political Machine Was the Home to Legendary Corruption: <http://history1800s.about.com/od/the-gilded-age/a/tammanyhall01.htm>. 06/03/2013, 04:00pm.

²²⁰ Marjorie R. Fallows, *Op.Cit.*, p.113.

²²¹ *Ibid*, p.113.

immigrants competing for their jobs. They did not want to pay for the education of yet more children or for the public services this new population needed, so, the nativists formed political groups that worked to keep immigrants, including the Irish, from positions of power.²²²

In March 1835, a crowd of Irishmen broke up a meeting of the middle-class nativist New York Protestant Association; three months later, crowds of up to five hundred Irish and natives battled for three days in and around the Five Points. More important, in the mid-1830s, nativism became a potential political force, fusing elite Protestant distaste for party politics and freshly arrived papists, Whig political ambition (a political party formed in 1834 to oppose the Democrats), and craft workers' republican fears of ecclesiastical despotism and economic dependence. The political nativist movement began in May 1835, in the wake of the Irish attack on the NYPA. A faction of the Whigs, in search of a popular issue and well aware that Tammany²²³ had a lock on the Irish and German Catholic vote, tried to offset their disadvantage by campaigning on a frankly xenophobic platform that called for stiffening the naturalisation laws and putting new restrictions on immigrant office holding. Thus, a group of New Yorkers organised a state political party, who dubbed itself the Native American Democratic Association. Association candidates, running on a platform that opposed Catholics and immigrants, with support from the Whigs. Declaring that the effect of foreign influence and intrigue, unless checked, would "prove the overthrow of this Republic," the association took to the hustings, the nation's first explicitly nativist political party.²²⁴

"The political ignorance of foreigners, their illiteracy, especially of the Irish section, their naturalisation frauds, their demoralising effect upon party politics, but especially their foreign associations and prejudices, were all themes of bitter denunciation and complaint."²²⁵ It may be easily imagined that by such appeals the Native-American party succeeded in arousing a good deal of public feeling on the subject of foreign immigration and naturalisation. It is certain that the Irish population, through their newspapers, were not slow to resent and reply to the attacks

²²² Timothy J. Palson, *Op.Cit.*, pp.57-58; Karen Price Hossell, *Op.Cit.*, pp. 67-68; Know-Nothing Party: <http://legal-dictionary.thefreedictionary.com/American+Party>. 01/03/2013, 12: 37 am.

For more details about "Know-Nothings" see: Philip H. Bagenal, *Op.Cit.*, pp.53-56.

²²³ Tammany Hall, or simply Tammany, was the name given to a powerful political machine that essentially ran New York City throughout much of the 19th century. Amy Hackney Blackwell and Ryan Hackney, *The Immigrant Experience in the United States*: <http://www.netplaces.com/irish-history/the-immigrant-experience/the-immigrantexperience-in-the-unitedstates.htm>. 05/03/2013, 02: 20pm.

²²⁴ Sean Wilentz, *Op.Cit.*, p. 267.

²²⁵ Quoted in: Philip H. Bagenal, *Op.Cit.*, p.43.

of the Native-Americans, not only against their political status, but against their religion; and these literary skirmishes, combined with the acrimony of the platform, made the antagonism between Protestant and Catholic, American and Irish, tenfold more bitter and pronounced.²²⁶

The negative public opinion toward the Irish immigrants was displayed in local newspaper articles, which denounced the Irish for their detrimental impact on American society. Blamed for diseases, unemployment, low wages, and high rates of crime, the Irish could do nothing right in the eyes of the Americans. Editorial cartoons portrayed the Irish as violent alcoholics, with ape-like features and pointed to that their lack of education was given as the reason they remained crowded together in the decaying slums. Americans also took offense at the immigrants' nostalgia for their homes and family in Ireland and feared that the Irish could never truly become part of American society. This fear of national disloyalty was fueled by the actions of some Irish immigrants during the Mexican-American War (1846-1848). Approximately 25 percent of the troops recruited to fight for the United States were Irish, and another 25 percent were immigrants from other nations. During the war, between 100 to 150 soldiers, roughly one-third of them Irish deserted the U.S. Army and went to fight with a Mexican battalion, and the group became known as the San Patricios. The reasons for their desertion are not completely clear, but many historians point to the racism and discriminatory attitudes of the American troops toward the foreign-born soldiers, especially toward the Irish, and others note that the Irish may have felt an affinity for the Mexican people because of their shared Catholic faith, moreover, the Mexican government also offered higher pay or land grants for those who deserted, and survived, which would have been tempting to the immigrants who had joined the army to provide a steady income for their families.²²⁷

Public complaints against the Irish soon were championed in reactionary political campaigns. The most notorious of the political groups which the nativists formed it was the American Party, which was outgrowth of the nativist movement and its anti-Catholic stance and which quickly became famous as the "Know-Nothings." It was Founded in 1843, and got this name because they never admitted their real goal, which was to keep the Irish out of good jobs and political office and also because members were instructed to say, when questioned, that they knew nothing about its activities. The party tried to stop Irish Catholics from gaining political power by proposing laws that would have required immigrants to live in the United States for more than twenty years before they could become citizens. The Know-Nothings were

²²⁶ For more details about the question of naturalization in the United States see: Philip H. Bagenal, *Op.Cit.*, pp.38-45.

²²⁷ See: Kerry A. Graves, *Op.Cit.*, p.p.76-77.

soon joined by similar groups, including the Sires of '76 and the Order of the Star Spangled Banner, groups that shared a hatred of foreigners and Catholics. And also they promoted that all immigrants should be required to live in the United States for 21 years, rather than 5 years, before they could earn U.S. citizenship, since the legal requirement at the time was five years.²²⁸

Thus, in the question of foreign immigration and naturalization the American people, through their constitution, finally determined to throw open their gates of refuge to all the nations of the earth, merely as a matter of expediency, and for years the question of naturalization was a burning and dangerous one. Political parties divided upon it, the Whig party opposing and the Democrats supporting the proffered privileges of citizenship, but the objection to the foreigner, particularly, Irish element of the foreign population was not exclusively political. Below this was another objection which operated chiefly among the labouring classes. The great masses of the people had inherited from their ancestors the national English contempt for the Irish peasant. The Yankee labourer looked down, accordingly, with ineffable contempt on Irish labourer, a contempt which widened and deepened into hostility as the supply of labour from Ireland threatened more and more to lessen wages. In the South, also, the attitude taken by O'Connell on the Slavery question had excited the highest indignation. In this context, a New Orleans paper said: "The cry of Repeal is but a decoy to distract our attention from the fanatical and traitorous designs of the enemies of America, or rather of Americans....They aim at the destruction of our domestic institutions, and the supplanting of our slave labour by their own."²²⁹

The highest objection, however, to foreigners of Irish extraction lay deeper still, as the Native- American party was chiefly an anti-Catholic party. Thus, Catholic laws were passed in some cities, and Know-Nothing candidates won control of several state governments. The Irish emigrants, by the influence of their priests and their own religious instinct, were driven to settle near together, in neighbourhoods where they were within reach of a priestly guide and a church. They thus were a separate people, and appeared to the Americans incapable of ever being absorbed into the Protestant life of the country. Then the old traditional hatred of Catholicism led Americans to hold that the Roman Catholic religion was incompatible with republicanism, hostile to popular institutions, and they therefore looked suspiciously on a race which was both foreign and Catholic, moreover, the action of the Irish race, too, in their clubs and associations gave high offence. From time immemorial the

²²⁸Ibid, p.78; Timothy J. Palson, *Op.Cit.*, pp.57-58; Karen Price Hossell, *Op.Cit.*, pp. 67-68; Know-Nothing Party: <http://legal-dictionary.thefreedictionary.com/American+Party>. 01/03/2013, 12:37 am.

For more details about "Know-Nothings" see: Philip H. Bagenal, *Op.Cit.*, pp.53-56.

²²⁹ Quoted in: Philip H. Bagenal, *Op.Cit.*, p.p.38, 46-47.

clan-ship of the Irish people has been remarkable, it was more than natural that in a strange land the feeling should be redoubled, and only natural, perhaps, that in the land of “bosses” these clubs should fall under the domination of individuals, and become objects of jealousy to the Americans.²³⁰

These remarks and others were printed at a time when the Repeal agitation of O’Connell was proceeding, and public demonstrations in his favor were being held in America. This was another source of criticism; the Native- Americans discerned in it a distinct violation of international law. They said: “the Repealers are guilty of an open and wanton violation of all principles of international law; and they recklessly provoked retaliation and war, as a consequence, from the British Government. They unceasingly agitate and prejudice the public mind, for no other reason than to promote their own selfish ends, and to gratify their own feelings of hostility against a friendly Government.”²³¹

From what has been stated it will be manifest that throughout the 1840s and 1850s, the Know-Nothings and other anti-immigrant parties such as the Native American Party and American Republican Party had some limited success. They pushed for laws that would prevent foreigners from getting jobs and from voting, with politicians often supported these groups. After all, citizens who blamed the Irish for the scarcity of jobs would not blame the politicians and vote them out of office. So, for a while, the Know-Nothings enjoyed political success, which indicated just how powerful anti-Irish and anti-Catholic feelings, especially, in Boston, where many Irish immigrants settled.²³² By making the Irish the scapegoats of many issues such as rising crime, crowded conditions in cities, and labor problems, the Know-Nothings fostered a mentality to isolate the Irish. Rather than force the public and elected officials to face up to the challenges of a growing population, centering on the Irish as the root of the problem provided a simple solution: “get rid of the Irish.” This tactic garnered support in some elections. Thus prejudice against Irish Catholics in the United States reached a peak in the mid-1850s with the Know Nothing party, which later broke up over the issue of slavery after they supported it, and most anti-immigration feelings cooled as the country became divided before the outbreak of the Civil War.²³³

²³⁰Ibid, pp.47-48; Malcolm Campbell, Op.Cit., p.51-52;Texts and Contexts: The Sadlier Archive, Anti-Immigrant Sentiment in Nineteenth-Century America: <http://xroads.virginia.edu/~HYPER/SADLIER/Prejudic.htm>. 14/08/2013, 09:30 am.

²³¹Quoted in: Philip H. Bagenal, Op.Cit., pp.49-50.

²³²See: Timothy J. Palson, Op.Cit., p.58; Karen Price Hossell, Op.Cit., pp. 68-69.

²³³For more details about Know Nothing Movement see: Kerry A. Graves, Op.Cit., pp.78-79; John Francis Maguire, Op.Cit., pp.444-446; Jay P. Dolan, *The Irish Americans*, pp.97-98; Philip H. Bagenal, Op.Cit., p.56; Irish Americans: <http://www.answers.com/topic/irish-american>. 16 / 04 /2013, 04:10.

4.4.5 Discrimination Leads to Violence

Irish immigrants hated being treated like second-class citizens in America. To break through this closed system, Irish gangs resorted to violence as a way to find jobs and gain political power, so, while some immigrants responded to their tough conditions by becoming cops, others chose an alternate path. The Irish mob sought to make money from the chaos of the United States' fast-growing cities. The Irish relied on old traditions of family and community loyalty, as well as a tradition of rural terrorism, so, the reputation of Irish as a community suffered too. The shipyards of Manhattan's west Midtown area, where many Irish labourers lived, became especially dangerous, as Irish gangs controlled every block of the neighbourhood and made sure any available jobs went to Irishmen. In time, the area would be labeled "Hell's Kitchen," however the Irish were not the only urban immigrant group to resort to gangs and violence, but they were well organised and used their gang system to encourage their neighbours to work together for a common cause. Discrimination and poverty had left many poor Irish immigrants desperate, needing some way to both provide for their families and gain a sense of power and belonging. Forming gangs was a way for immigrant men to gain power, protection and even self-respect. Starting in the 1840s, gangs sprang up as fast as tenements in Irish neighbourhoods.²³⁴

Gangs were able to obtain by force what their members could not get by themselves—for example, the right to own and run shops or to sell their wares on the street. The gangs did give the desperate Irish some power, but they used illegal and sometimes violent methods to do so. New York gangs such as the Dead Rabbits in the 1850s, for example, terrorised non-Irish shopkeepers with threats and intimidation. If the shopkeepers did not heed the threats, their merchandise might be destroyed or the shopkeepers might be injured or even killed by gang members. Eventually corrupt politicians began using the gangs to influence voters, and of the two major political parties in New York City, the Democratic Party, headquartered at Tammany Hall, gained the favour of the Irish immigrants. Irish gangs often harassed voters at the polling stations into supporting Tammany Hall politicians, in return, the politicians, once elected, passed laws that brought jobs and money to the gangs' communities. Often, rival gangs supporting the opposition party would do battle with the Irish

²³⁴Timothy J. Palson, *Op.Cit.*, p.p.45,58; Amy Hackney Blackwell and Ryan Hackney, *The Immigrant Experience in the United States*: <http://www.netplaces.com/irish-history/the-immigrant-experience/the-immigrant-experience-in-the-united-states.htm>. 05/03/2013,02:20pm; Robert McNamara, *The Five Points, New York's Most Notorious Neighborhood*: <http://history1800s.about.com/od/urbanconditions/p/fivepointsnyc.htm>. 05/03/2013,02:20 pm

immigrant gangs to disrupt elections or destroy the homes and businesses of the Irish community.²³⁵

Immigrant gang violence grew throughout the 1850s, as some Irish benefited from these troubled times by becoming active in politics and gaining legitimate power and employment. Thus by the 1850s, the Irish Catholics were already a major presence in the police departments of large cities, and the Tammany Hall government eventually lost power and was disbanded because of its corruption, but Irish control of New York City politics would last for decades. For most immigrants, however, the violent times led to anger and fear, which culminated in a fierce showdown between immigrant groups and nativists during the Civil War (1861-1865).²³⁶

In 1850, however, the "schools question," as it came to be known, was the central issue of Irish-American politics and one of the major issues in New York and Massachusetts.²³⁷ Such were some of the civil, political and religious troubles of the Irish during the period extending from the commencement of the naturalisation question, down to the Civil War, that they have left their marks to the present day.

4.5 Moving Toward Assimilation

After 1850 the Irish became the main source of new settlers, replacing the English and making up 44% of the foreign-born population in the United States. Despite their overwhelming rural origin (country folk, small farmers, cottagers, farm labourers,...) only a minority settled on the land. In 1850, almost 4 out of 5 newcomers settled in the more urbanised East coast states.²³⁸ The Hon. Edward Young, Chief of the Bureau of Statistics in Washington, stated that between 1820 and 1872, the aggregate number of immigrants into the United States is reported at about 8,000,000. Of these, 3,000,000 are accredited to Ireland. But that this proportion is too small is evident from the fact that, until within a few years past, when the strong current of German immigration began to set in, the great majority of all immigrants were Irish. Of course, there are given to Great Britain, not specified (as to nationality), 544,000 ; and, inasmuch as almost the whole immigration from Great Britain for many years was from Ireland alone, we may set down most of these as natives of that

²³⁵ Timothy J. Palson, *Op.Cit.*, pp.58-59; Kerry A. Graves, *Op.Cit.*, p.66.

²³⁶ Timothy J. Palson, *Op.Cit.*, p.59; James Patrick Byrne, Philip Coleman, Jason Francis King, *Op.Cit.*, pp.47-51. Further details are giving in: *Irish Americans*: <http://www.answers.com/topic/irish-american>. 16/04/2013, 04:10.

²³⁷ Texts and Contexts: The Sadlier Archive, Anti-Immigrant Sentiment in Nineteenth-Century America: <http://xroads.virginia.edu/~HYPER/SADLIER/Prejudic.htm>. 14/08/2013, 09:30 am

²³⁸ Denny Hatch, *Op.Cit.*, p.54.

island. The proportionate emigration from Ireland during this period was marked as follows: from 1820 to 1830, 27,106; 1831 to 1840, 29,188; 1841 to 1850, 162,332; 1851 to 1860, 748,740; 1861 to 1870, 650,000. Referring to the value of immigration to the United States, Mr. Young writes as follows:

“Deducting the women and children, who pursue no occupation, about 46 percent, of the whole immigration have been trained to various pursuits. Nearly half of these are skilled laborers and workmen who have acquired their trades under the rigorous system which prevails in the Old World, and come here to give us the benefit of their training and skill, without repayment of the cost of such education. Nor are the farm laborers and servants destitute of the necessary training to fit them for their several duties; while those classed as common or unskilled laborers are well qualified to perform the labor required, especially in the construction of works of internal improvement.” Young added: “Nearly 10 per cent, consist of merchants and traders, who, doubtless, bring with them considerable capital as well as mercantile experience; while the smaller number of professional men and artists, embracing architects, engineers, inventors, men of thorough training and high order of talent, contribute to our widely extended community not only material, but artistic, aesthetic, intellectual, and moral wealth.”²³⁹ With regard to the ages of these immigrants, only 25 percent, are under fifteen years of age, and less than 15 per cent, over forty, leaving upward of 60 per cent, who are in the prime of life at the time of their arrival, ready to enter at once into their several industrial pursuits. As to the proportion which subsists between the two sexes, it appears that, as might have been expected, the number of the males largely preponderates over the females.²⁴⁰ As for Ireland, the Irish census of 1851 showed a diminution of near 2,000,000 in the population of Ireland in the preceding ten years. In the years 1841 to 1850 inclusive the British emigration to America was 1,522,600 persons, of which certainly 1,300,000 were Irish. No other country has lost so high a proportion of its population to emigration, for today many times more Irish live outside their homeland than in it and there is scarcely an Irish family that does not have part of its lineage in America.²⁴¹

In 1850, at the height of the potato famine immigration, writer Orestes Brownson stated: “Out of these narrow lanes, dirty streets, damp cellars and suffocating garrets, will come forth some of the noblest sons of our country, whom she will delight to own and honour.”²⁴² Brownson was saying that as poor and

²³⁹ Quoted in: The Rev. Stephen Byrne, *Op.Cit.*, pp. 17-18.

²⁴⁰ See: *Ibid*, pp.18-19.

²⁴¹ Further details are given in: Census of Ireland, The census of Ireland for the year 1851, Part VI, General report, H.C,1856 [2134], p.p.12-14,53-54; Philip H. Bagenal, *Op.Cit.*, p.125; Marjorie R. Fallows, *Op.Cit.*, pp. 96-97.

²⁴² Quoted in: Timothy J. Palson, *Op.Cit.*, p.46; *Irish Immigrants in America during the 19th Century*: <http://www.kinsella.org/history/histira.htm>. 14/05/2013, 04: 35 pm.

miserable as the Irish immigrants who fled the famine were, they would one day become some of the most successful Americans. Their talent for unified action was perhaps the most useful skill the Irish had brought to America, and it would serve them in the years to come.²⁴³ Indeed, despite the struggles, many Irish immigrants prospered and made a good life in America. Irish immigrants bought houses, set up businesses, and sent their children to school, and they became leaders in business, education, and politics. Over time, as Irish Americans proved that they were hardworking and dependable, the old stereotypes faded. Gradually, too, the mutual suspicion that had fed anti-Catholic—and, by extension, anti-Irish—prejudice gave way to a measure of respect and tolerance, opening additional opportunities for the Irish and their American-born children and grandchildren, especially after the Civil War.²⁴⁴

During the Civil War a large number of "potato famine immigrants" were quick to join the union army, so, this war provided an opportunity for the Irish to prove their loyalty and worth as full American citizens and they began to make real political gains in the United States, where, the position of the Irish in America has in every way changed. They have been acknowledged as a power in politics, in religion, and society.²⁴⁵ Nativist tensions subsided, as conflicts over slavery and the Civil War took center stage in American politics. Massachusetts repealed its anti-Catholic laws during the Civil War out of concern for national security and unity. In that protracted and unparalleled conflict the Irish race proved once again their aptitude for war, and their personal valour on the field of battle. A few words, however, are necessary to indicate how great the inducements for Irishmen to enter the army were. First, there was the generous feeling of gratitude to the country that had received them into her bosom; and many for this reason gave up lucrative positions and sacrificed their interests to their patriotism. Then there was the natural feeling of excitement which leads a fiery and impetuous people to enlist in any great popular movement; and, finally, strongest of all was the desire to learn the use of arms and the science and art of war, with the hope of turning them at some future day to practical service in the cause of their native land.²⁴⁶ Thus, as the decades passed, the burden of dis-

²⁴³ Timothy J. Palson, Op.Cit., p. 46.

²⁴⁴ Elizabeth Raum, *Irish Immigration in America*, 2008, p.105; Karen Price Hossell, Op.Cit., p. 64; Kem Knapp Sawyer, Op.Cit., p.6; Marjorie R. Fallows, Op.Cit., p.145; Amy Hackney Blackwell and Ryan Hackney, *The Immigrant Experience in the United States*: <http://www.netplaces.com/irish-history/the-immigrant-experience/the-immigrant-experience-in-the-united-states.htm>. 05/03/ 2013, 02: 20pm.

²⁴⁵ Kem Knapp Sawyer, Op.Cit., p.6; Texts and Contexts: The Sadlier Archive, Anti-Immigrant Sentiment in Nineteenth-Century America: <http://xroads.virginia.edu/~HYPER/SADLIER/Prejudic.htm>. 14/08/2013, 09: 30 am; Philip H. Bagenal, Op. Cit., p.59; Kerry A. Graves, Op.Cit., p.p.79,82. Further details are given in: Karen Price Hossell, Op.Cit., pp. 69-71 .

²⁴⁶ Philip H. Bagenal, Op.Cit., pp.135-137; Kerry A. Graves, Op.Cit., pp.15-18.

crimination decreased; Irish Americans became more accepted into the mainstream without losing their identity. By the time later immigrants arrived in substantial numbers, the Irish had already begun to move into positions of control in labour unions, politics and church organisation. In short, we can say that the United States gave the Irish immigrants opportunities that they would not have had in Ireland. Irish immigrants changed America, as they brought new ideas, a strong faith and the determination to make the United States a better place for everyone.²⁴⁷

Finally, it can be noted that in the post famine era; Irish America entered a new chapter in its history. Stretching from the 1850s to the early years of the twentieth century, this era reshaped and intensified the features of prefamine Irish America. Young, unskilled men and women entered the workforce, and before long they became a powerful voice in the labour movement. Having a deep sense of loyalty to the land of their birth, they would join forces with Ireland's nationalists as, together, they waged a long and at times violent campaign to gain Ireland's independence. settling in U.S. cities, the Irish would play a major role in shaping the politics of urban America. During these years the Irish attachment to Catholicism grew stronger, while their sons and daughters took on key leadership positions in the Church. This was the era that decisively shaped the future of Irish America.²⁴⁸

²⁴⁷Elizabeth Raum, *Irish Immigration in America*, 2008, p.105; Kem Knapp Sawyer, Op.Cit.,p.6; Marjorie R. Fallows, Op.Cit., p.145; Kerry A. Graves, Op.Cit., pp. 18-19; Amy Hackney Blackwell and Ryan Hackney, *The Immigrant Experience in the United States*: <http://www.netplaces.com/irish-history/the-immigrant-experience/the-immigrant-experience-in-the-united-states.htm>, 05/03/ 2013, 02: 20pm.

²⁴⁸ Jay P. Doland, *The Irish Americans*, p.p.79, 82-83.

Conclusion

For centuries, the United States has loomed in the Irish consciousness as the place to go for a new life. The United States offered the things that the Irish could not find at home: land, economic opportunities, and freedom from English control. With land resources vastly greater than those of Ireland, the United States seemed like a place of limitless possibilities for people who chafed under British rule. Therefore, one of the causes of Irish immigration to the United States were the English settlement in Ireland, where, parts of Ireland had been under English control since the middle Ages. In the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries large numbers of protestants from England and Scotland were settled in Ireland. Irish Catholics became tenants or were evicted from their lands, so they came to America since the 1600s.

The industrial revolution in Britain in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries meant that jobs were available in Britain, digging canals and railways, together with work in factories. It also meant that English textiles were able to underprice Irish goods, leading to further hardship in Ireland, so, this revolution contributed to the Irish Immigration to the United States, where by the 18th century the Irish immigrants began sailing to America in significant numbers. Most of them were Protestant from the North boarded ships in search of greater opportunity on the other side of the Atlantic. This mass movement transformed Irish society and played a significant role in shaping the American politics, religion, culture, and economics during the country's most formative years. It is quite evident that the Irish took a prominent part in the settlement of the original thirteen English colonies, and became an important element in the bulk of the Native American population. But most immigrants were indentured servants who eventually blended into the mainstream society.

However, the Irish movement to the United States during the early nineteenth century initiated the most important era of migration to America. For many, migration from Ireland to there had reasons that “pushed” people to look for opportunities to leave and also “pulled” them to a particular destination. The mixture of factors began the great nineteenth century Irish influx to the New World, especially, after the end of the Napoleonic Wars in 1815. Briefly these were an expanding population and economic recession in Ireland, and a Change in the Irish agriculture from cultivation to grazing, resulting in consolidation of estates and evictions of small tenant farmers. These factors along with the English need to develop new frontiers for trade together with an abundant supply of shipping,

capable of moving both the goods and the emigrants to the desired destinations. The five years that followed, years of wretched harvests and a depressed market, were a nightmare to all classes, so, one can say that the flood of emigration is a gradual growth since the peace of 1815. Thus because of a worsening of political situations and the economic troubles many Irish decided to leave the country in the hope of a better life somewhere else. Changes in social structures intensified the will to emigrate, where the end of the Napoleonic Wars caused widespread changes in Irish society and opened the flood-gates of poor Catholic immigration.

It deserves to be noticed, that the Passenger Act of 1819 put an end to the phenomenon of indentured servants. Henceforth, the Irish skilled artisans have begun to find own ways of finding the job and place of living in America. In the large scale, the slaves trade was abolished in England after Napoleonic Wars. One year after 1815 the signing of between Britain and the United States of America the true emigrant trade was openly launched in line with commercial intercourse. Such state of affair has been profitable for the Irish merchants who except for linen, salt, provision have always found a room for emigrates in the ship and to increase the profit of entire voyage consequently.

The growth of population in Ireland during the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries led to hunger and poverty, owing to families having limited lands, together with little industrial development in the country. The population in Ireland rose from 6.8 million in 1821 to 8 million in 1841, with the largest increase among poor cottiers. Inheritance dividing land among all sons, early marriage, and high fertility doubled their numbers fathers could no longer provide for every child, creating scores of young men and women with no alternatives but delayed marriage, permanent celibacy, or emigration. So by the 1830s the ethnic and religious makeup of emigration from Ireland to North America had markedly altered: Catholic immigrants had begun to exceed Protestants, and emigration had changed not just in culture but also in scale. Between 1815 and 1845 more than 800,0000 Irish people emigrated to North America. Conditions for those who remained behind in Ireland continued to deteriorate. As plots of land shrunk and the population grew, cotters came to rely increasingly on the potato. Potato had been a cheap, dependable crop, so, most Irish people counted on them as their main foodstuff. The Irish brought their dreams to America to run away from a nightmare back home, where beginning in 1845, a awful blight struck Ireland's potato crops, the problem only got worse in 1846, nearly half of the crop was lost and in 1847, the entire crop rotted. The British, who had ruled Ireland for centuries, made the situation worse by failing to send adequated aid. Despite assistance from public and private sources, many Irish starved or died of famine-related diseases between 1846 and 1855, the most during "Black '47." Those who could raise the money bought tickets to America. Between 1845 and

1855, about 1.8 million Irish people left Ireland for America. Most had little choice, if they stayed in Ireland, they would starve. Thus, the famine had clearly depicted the living conditions of the poor in Ireland, and how they criticized the government which had to change their situation. So, after the Great Famine struck the potato fields of Ireland in the 1840s, Irish immigration to America took on a strikingly different character.

The motives governing most famine emigrants were qualitatively different from those which had inspired earlier departures. In the previous Famine decades emigrants sought "independence," economic improvement, in a land fabled for opportunity and abundance. During the Famine, however, most emigrants aspired merely to survive, they wanted also to get out of Ireland to be to better off than staying at their home. In this context, we agree with Robert Kennedy's study of Irish emigration patterns, "The Irish: Emigration, Marriage, and Fertility", points clearly that, as the final "convincer," the famine was a chief "push" factor driving people from rural areas of Ireland; yet he points out that other "push" factors were not insignificant: the narrowing opportunities in industry just prior to the famine, which forced artisans either to emigrate or to return to the land; the squeezing out of unprofitable farms and the eviction of tenant farmers, which left the ten-acre farmers in a relatively worse position and without opportunity to advance themselves; and the loss of hope that any major reform was possible. As for the "pull" side were the exaggerated stories of high living standards in America, and the steady flow of passage money from relatives already in America. Even after the famine, when the pressure on rural areas was relieved and farm production began to return to normal, the pattern of emigration continued to draw so many thousand in each decade away from their families.

The Irish migration to the United States continued at a high rate even after the potato famine had subsided, due mainly to economic conditions, continuing religious discrimination, evictions from farmland and the conflicts caused by these in Ireland. So, as the conditions in Ireland worsened, the hope for a new life in America became a reason to survive and dream to escape and redemption from these conditions, however, the most Irish did not know how difficult it would be to escape Ireland.

Most emigrants, during the period 1800-1850 were lower class rural Catholics, however, they were not the very poorest, even the famine emigrants, as the some depicted. On the other hand, there were several factors helped the many of Irish to immigrate to the United States during this period. Firstly, the improvement in methods of transport and communication facilitated their leaving. Secondly, they could use the roads and railways to get to their port of departure more easily. They could also cross the sea to leave from a British port, usually Liverpool, on one of the

numerous steamships. And finally, the vast and rapid development of the emigrant trade to North America. Some were assisted by their landlords and many more received prepaid tickets or remittances from friends and relatives already in the United States. Thus many Irish came to America during the famine after they became homeless and weakened from hunger, many fell ill with “famine fever.” The ships that carried the Irish immigrants were sometimes called “coffin ships”, because so many of them died on the journey. But one of the most popular misconceptions of Ireland’s Potato Famine is that the majority of the deaths were caused by starvation. In fact, the majority of casualties were the result of the fever and diseases that spread among the emigrants that crowded the seaports, trying to escape the Famine.

Upon arrival in the new world, many of the early Irish migrants settled in the back country as farmers. Many later migrants, driven out of Ireland by the potato famine of 1845, tended to settle in the large cities, and they made up the largest part of all foreigners who entered the country, where, from the countryside began a flight from hunger that did not spend its force until 1854. It is prominent that such a mass influx was unprecedented in Irish history and was never to be repeated, even though emigration from Ireland would continue throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Therefore we may conclude that as migration to the United States became the way to escape the economic troubles and deteriorating living standards in Ireland, kinship networks were set up to facilitate migration. It was uncommon that an Irish person would migrate alone. Large numbers of peasants travelled in groups related by blood or from the same area in Ireland. Most of them either arrived in family groups or quickly established ties once they are settled; although desperately poor in some cases, the Irish banded together in family, town, and kin networks to bring in enough money to support themselves. So, Irish immigrants tended to create Irish neighborhoods within American cities, where newcomers felt most comfortable with other Irish people. New York, Boston, Philadelphia, Chicago and New Orleans were favorite places for Irish immigrants to settle.

Irish Catholics also dominated immigration to Southern cities before the Civil War (1861–1865); New Orleans was the second-largest port of arrival after New York by 1850. However they tended to be intimidated by the prospect of farming in the vast and unpopulated lands of rural United States, which bore little resemblance to the close-knit farming communities they'd known back home. Instead, they sought the apparently more profitable work of building U.S. cities. But they were forced to live under awful circumstances with poor sanitation and lack of space. This research has confirmed that the working class lived under abject poverty as most of them had to squeeze the whole family into a small room with substandard sanitary conditions leading to fatal diseases such as cholera, typhoid.

The great wave of Irish immigration happened at a time of great growth in U.S. cities and industries. Most Irish immigrants arrived in America without money and most of them were uneducated and unskilled, so at first they could only take on menial tasks, but hard work in the United States was better than starving in Ireland. They took any jobs they could find, often working long hours for low wages, for instance, men dug canals, built railroads, and worked in mines, and they quickly developed a reputation as hard workers. Irish women often worked as servants, others worked in factories, like cotton mills. Dangerous work, poor nutrition, and crowded housing led many to an early death.

Religion and faith provided support for struggling immigrants. Irish immigrants attended Catholic churches; they also set up Catholic schools and aid societies to help new arrivals. Although nominally Catholic, the majority of the Irish immigrants knew little or nothing of church dogma and practices and could not be expected to follow the church's lead on all social issues; despite determined efforts by the parish clergy, religious indifference remained far more prevalent in the Irish neighborhoods than piety. The most educative means that the church developed in the United States was the parochial school. It has become, for better or worse, the feature of American Catholicism and it remained the principal institution for handing on the faith. In searching for the reason why Catholic schools began? The problem was that public schools transmitted a clearly Protestant culture, where as formal education became more ingrained in the national culture and Protestantism shaped the moral content of this education. Another reason for the origin of Catholic schools was the ethnic consciousness of the immigrant community. While it may be true that ethnicity was a factor in the organization of Catholic schools for some immigrant group, this was certainly less true for the Irish. The cultural divergence between them and the Americans was not so great as with other groups: for one thing, they spoke the same language, which alone was an important bridge between the two cultures; furthermore, the Protestant Irish integrated into American society, and many Catholic Irish felt at home in public schools. For the Irish the critical issue was not ethnicity but religion and anti-Catholic bias of nativist America. Thus, the importance of formal education, the rise of the common school, and ethnic consciousness all helped to prepare the way for Catholic schools in general, but the alliance of public education and Protestantism became the decisive point on which the issue turned and ultimately forced Catholics to organize their own separate educational system.

Various charitable and social organizations supported the Irish settled into American life, while such financial societies as New York's Irish Emigrant Savings Bank (established 1851) assisted immigrants by sending money back home. The most important institution was the Catholic Church, which created a national network of churches, hospitals, schools, and orphanages. Irish priests, such as New York's

Archbishop John Hughes (1797–1864) and Charleston's Bishop John England (1786–1842) dominated the hierarchy and shaped the course of American Catholicism. On the local level, the parish church served as the center of Irish American life, becoming the means of both preserving ethnic culture and Americanizing immigrants.

All these efforts were Very important to help the new Irish emigrants in United States who were not really welcomed there. Because they were Catholic, largely poor, unskilled and unfamiliar with urban life. They have not increased in popularity as a section of the American population, principally because they have always persisted against their own interests, in keeping up their distinctiveness of race and religion in a manner antagonistic to the great mass of the American people. Their bands, their societies, their newspapers, and their foreign politics, all very well when unobtrusive, have from time immemorial been distasteful to the undemonstrative and more puritanic or native-American. Not surprisingly, native-born Americans did not always welcome Ireland's refugees, where because of Priding themselves on their British ancestry and their protestant faith, most Americans believed that the immigrants' poverty resulted from laziness, immorality ignorance and superstition. Thus the famine Irish were met widely with bigotry and hatred, for instants, anti-foreign and anti-Catholic mobs attacked convents and Catholic schools throughout the Northeast. Riots erupted in Philadelphia and New York, where many Irish migrants experienced discrimination in the United States both as Catholics and as Irish. The Irishman has long been taught to look upon America as the refuge of his race, the home of his kindred, his feelings towards it are those of love and loyalty, but when he lands, his great expectations are sometimes checked. He often finds himself slighted as a man, and his people despised as a race, and this not by any means directly, but indirectly. The more modern Americans, however, have accepted facts, and, with the well-known ingenuity of the race, have turned the Irish population to good advantage. But the Americans are still jealous of the political power of the Irish race that is planted in their midst, there is also in some quarters a religious-born fear and distrust of that Catholic Church which has been built up by means of the Irish population to its position of wealth and influence at the time. However, Irish-Americans became rapidly successful in politics and no other immigrant group made its influence felt in political life more effectively than the Irish. A generation after the Famine period they dominated many local political scenes and soon moved to state and national politics.

Moreover, Irish immigrants played a crucial role in building America's transportation system and in harvesting the nation's natural resources. Although during the early and mid-nineteenth century most Irish immigration, especially famine refugees, were poor, unskilled and ill-educated but they had physical strength.

Many employed that strength constructing the nation's roads, canals, docks, levees, and railroads. The experiences of the Irish in America made them band together and work as a group to find success in different fields. Thus being patient and determined, Irish immigrants worked hard and made a place for themselves in America. Many first-generation immigrants died young—from exhaustion and illness in the years immediately following the famine—but they passed on to their children their determination; these young Irish Americans combined that determination with the opportunities the new land presented to make America their home. The Irish eventually became a part of the American mainstream, this was partially due to the influx of more immigrants, but it was mostly due to economic progression. Their service during the Civil War also assisted the Irish gain respect and acceptance. So, we can say that the relations between the Irish community and the rest of the American society generally improved after the 1860s and the children of early emigrants, especially, famine emigrants moved upward faster than their parents.

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