

latter are for the most part inclined to shake off the yoke. Special vexations have already spread an almost general disaffection among them. A trusty agent was sent the same day to the north. He brought back news that there are already 50,000 men trained to the use of arms, and ready to second the French, and that they had weapons for 15,000 men, and twenty guns at their disposal. They assured me that the disaffection against the government was general, and that the United Irishmen's Association daily increases in strength and extends over the whole surface of Ireland. They are all pledged to bring about a reform. This is the ostensible pretext, but the real aim is to sever the union with England. They are sworn never to abandon one another, to sacrifice all those who may be base enough to deceive them, and to have entire confidence in their chiefs. Several of them are already appointed and known. I was assured that most of them are celebrated for their talents and that all had large properties.

If we consider the civil and political state of the Irish people, there is no doubt that its unfortunate condition inclines it to resort to any means of emerging from it. Already several partial insurrections, fomented by the government, have failed to reveal the general plan concerted by the leaders of the insurrection. They are doing their utmost to restrain the passions of a constantly embittered people, in order to await the moment when they can display an imposing force, capable of destroying all that there is of English in the island. This is at last decided on. If General Hoche effects a landing Ireland is free, France has a faithful ally, and her natural enemy, the enemy of all nations, is struck off the list of nations. The English government, suspecting this, is circulating the following reflexions:—

‘If the French invade Ireland will they respect property, they who have never known how to respect their own? They are short of money and food. If they appear in this country they will leave nothing but famine and distress behind them.’

Such is what the adherents of royalty parade before the eyes of the people, but the firm conduct of the officers and generals satisfies me that property will be respected, and I hope that the means which have been furnished them will sufficiently vouch in the eyes of the Irish people for the good intentions of the French people and government. The persons with whom I have conferred tell me that with money alone they would be able to free themselves, and they have urged me to assure you that if the French troops could only subsist for two months without requiring anything from the inhabitants their efforts would not fail to be crowned with prompt and complete success.

CAPITAINE-ADJOINT MAC SHEEHY.

General Hédouville in forwarding this report stated that Mac Sheehy had landed the previous night near Paimpol, and that he was intelligent and educated, and seemed to have perfectly accomplished his mission. Mac Sheehy also drew up a journal, which is mostly a repetition of his report, but which contains the following passages:—

During the four days in London I remarked that all the women, even

in the highest ranks, were thorough democrats. Out of party spirit they wear their hair *à la Jacobine*. They openly exclaim against the measures of the king and the ministry. The Militia Bill is a great source of discontent in England. It obliges a great portion of the farmers and tradesmen to devote themselves to the handling of arms, and thus affects their dearest interests, rendering it impossible for them to make money, which is their sole idol. The yeomanry called out in the various counties are very numerous. Those quartered in the towns are lodged and fed, as also their horses, at the expense of the rich. This measure turns people against the government. The avarice of the king and queen, the fearful prodigality of their children, and the licentious conduct of all the members of the government have forfeited the confidence even of the most loyal. I conversed with several London merchants. All acknowledge that reform is necessary. Democratic pamphlets are just now read with greater eagerness than ever, and their teaching will not fail to be soon acted upon. The more the government tries to prevent their circulation the more they are read and meditated upon. The high price of provisions and the heavy taxes make the people cry out more than ever. Persons living in London have assured me that the taxes swallow up 90 per cent. of their income. The new taxes imposed since the budget were not yet known. Everywhere I heard praises heaped on the bravery of the French and the cause defended by them. Being one night at Covent Garden Theatre, and some persons having called for 'God save the King,' several voices exclaimed 'God save the people!' Their cries seemed the more significant as the king and royal family were present. . . . I remarked on the road [to Holyhead] that everything was as dear as in London, and that in Wales, where all was very cheap, the people are comparatively more distressed than elsewhere. . . . They [the United Irishmen] urged me to inform the French government that if it could induce the Spanish government to advance the money necessary for the first rising they would engage to repay it at a fixed date. . . . I left the same evening to rejoin Lewis in London, where I arrived on 4 Dec. I remarked nothing worth notice on the journey. During my absence Lewis had done his utmost in order to start with me as soon as I returned, but to no avail. For some months people have been unable to leave England, especially Ireland, without a passport from the duke of Portland or the lord-lieutenant of Ireland. The Guernsey route alone remained. Reilly had lived there at one time, and advised us to go, assuring us that we should find means of crossing [to France] without being examined.

An American vessel landed Mac Sheehy on 17 Dec. 1796 on the isle of Bréhat. He rose in the French army to the rank of general, and was killed at Eylau in 1807.

J. G. ALGER.