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A literary difficulty in explaining Ireland: Tom Moore and Captain Rock, 1824

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Here is a text, a book called *Memoirs of Captain Rock*. It was published, in 1824, by the Longmans, in London. There is no author's name on the title page, but we can establish that the book was written by the lyric poet, Thomas Moore. How is the meaning of *Memoirs of Captain Rock* to be explored?[1]

Begin with George Cornewall Lewis's *Local Disturbances in Ireland*, and his oft-quoted outline of the main aims of 'the Whiteboy association': '. . . a vast trades' union for the protection of the Irish peasantry; the object being, not to regulate the rate of wages, or the hours of work, but to keep the actual occupant in possession of his land, . . . to regulate the relation of landlord and tenant for the benefit of the latter.'

A footnote explains: 'We use the term *Whiteboy*, in a general sense, to include all those disturbances and outrages which have been carried on not only by the Whiteboys, but also by the Rightboys, the Threshers, the Whitefeet, and Blackfeet, the Terry Alts, Captain Rock's men, &c., as it is the best known expression . . .'[2] In the early 1820s the term most often used for the Whiteboys was 'Captain Rock's men'.

Cornewall Lewis offers a brief history of the disturbances, taken from available printed sources. But the bulk of his book is a review of 'the evidence taken by several parliamentary committees', which enquired into their nature and causes. 'The Irish House of Commons resolutely abstained from instituting any enquiry into the causes of the tumults among the peasantry in the last forty years before the Union; nor was it till the year 1824 that the local disturbances in Ireland were made the subject of a systematic parliamentary inquiry.'[3]

Research on the 'Captain Rock' peasants has been summarized by O'Neill. For O'Neill, like Cornewall Lewis, Captain Rock's men are part of a continuous movement of agrarian rebellion from the late 18th century onwards. The key issue was *land*, more precisely *access* to land, though other issues and campaigns (opposition to grand jury cess, priests' dues, Church of Ireland tithes) fed the protest. Faction fights and feuds also played their part. Our knowledge is confused by the manner in which it comes to us: 'Rebellious peasants did not write memoirs detailing their objectives and strategies . . .'[4]

On faction fights, there is a provocative essay by Roberts on the 'Caravats and Shanavests' feud of 1802–11.

> To the authorities the feud was a total mystery. Indeed, it has never been satisfactorily explained. In part, this reflects the participants' remarkable code of silence, steadfastly maintained before all forms of authority, from parish priests to judges. But it reflects too the peculiar mixture of ignorance, indifference, and paranoia with which the Irish ruling class related to the world below them . . .[5]

So, the peasants did not write memoirs, and the ruling classes, who did write memoirs, and held debates in Parliament or gave evidence to Parliamentary enquiries, were afflicted by a kind of blindness.

Memoirs of Captain Rock is a neglected work. Quennell excised references to it from his edition of Moore's Journals, as being, I assume, not worth the bother of explaining. White thinks the book '. . . suffers from extreme haste in its composition, but as a statement of British misrule it is devastating. Why it is so seldom referred to in Irish books can only be explained by the tacit conspiracy to denigrate Moore's patriotism and confine his activities to drawing-room singing.'[6]

But *Memoirs of Captain Rock* is a problematic work. What Moore did not see is as important as what he did see, what he did not say as important as what he did say. It is only by examining the whole polemic, the reviews and the replies to *Memoirs of Captain Rock* that we can see what Moore has not seen and has not said. My method, then, is to use one text to throw light on another. These texts were published in 1824. Most were published in London. Intriguingly, given the title page of *Memoirs of Rock*, all the texts considered were published anonymously or pseudonymously.

There was, in this period, a miasma of anonymity. E.P. Thompson suffers 'a sense of double vision. Among the estate papers of nobility and great gentry there are the obsequious letters of . . . petitioners for favour. But in the state papers we seem to meet a society of creeps and informers'. 'In the press and public reviews the same wars of insinuation and character assassination took place under pseudonyms'.[7]

Sydney Smith, in 1839, looks back to the first decades of the century: 'The Catholics were not emancipated — the Corporation and Test Acts were unrepealed — the Game Laws were horribly oppressive, etc. etc.' It was '. . . an awful period for those who had the misfortune to entertain liberal opinions, and were too honest to sell them for the ermine of the judge, or the lawn of the prelate. . .' There was 'no more chance of a Whig administration than of a thaw in Zembla . . .'[8]

There were, then, genuine dangers in polemic. The careerist must watch his step. But there is also, in the anonymous polemic of the period an elaborate game going on. The second edition of Southey's *The Doctor* has a 'Portrait of the Author' with his back to the viewer. It was not until 1827 that Walter Scott owned up to the authorship of the *Waverley* novels. Guessing at authorship, listening to rumours, spreading them, being in the know, were somehow important.

Much can be taken for granted in what Raymond Williams calls the 'knowable community': there is a 'received and mutually applicable social and moral code'. 'But what is knowable is not only a function of objects — of what is there to be known. It is also a function of subjects, of observers — of what is desired and what needs to be known. A knowable community, that is to say, is a matter of consciousness as well as of evident fact.'[9]

What, then, was at last desired to be known about Ireland, in 1824? My approach to this polemic is guided by Williams, by de Man on 'blindness', by Macherey on the significant *silences* within a text.[10] And by Kress and Hodge, whose examples come, in many instances, from the late 18th and early 19th centuries. This passage from Edmund Burke they find so revealing that they quote it twice:

> Good order is the foundation of all good things. To be enabled to acquire, the people, without being servile, must be tractable and obedient. The magistrate must have his reverence, the laws their authority. The body of the people must not find the principles of natural subordination by art rooted out of their minds. They must respect that property of which they cannot partake . . .

The underlying proposition, that the people can indeed partake of that property, must, say Kress and Hodge, have been apprehended by Burke.[11]

Thomas Moore is remembered for his lyrics, though there is still little appreciation of his special skills. English literary criticism has difficulty with sung words.[12] As Moore found, it is difficult to extend the subject range of song lyrics, because of 'user resistance', and because there comes a point when the frail structure collapses under the weight of too heavy material. None the less, Moore has written a successful, performable lyric on the psychology of grief ('The Dead', a starting point for Joyce's short story). And, in later life, it was into lyric form ('the only work of mine likely to reach after times') that he put his criticism of O'Connell's methods.[13] We can expect insights from Moore, but they will come in forms that his talent finds congenial.

There are questions around Moore's *Irish Melodies*, the songs that purport to deal with Ireland's problems. Hazlitt complains:

> If these national airs do indeed express the soul of impassioned feeling in his countrymen, the case of Ireland is hopeless. If these prettinesses pass for patriotism,

> if a country can hear from its heart's core only these vapid, varnished sentiments, lip-deep, and let its tears of blood evaporate in an empty conceit, let it be governed as it has been. . . . Mr Moore converts the wild harp of Erin into a musical snuff-box.

But it is precisely because the songs are imprecise, offering no analysis or solution, that they are welcome both in English drawing rooms and Irish cottages. And they brought Moore financial independence.[14]

Hailed as Ireland's national bard, settled in England, Moore had for some time felt that he ought to address himself, at greater than lyric length, to the problems of Ireland. In 1816, he thinks about living for two or three years in Dublin, and 'undertaking a very voluminous work about Ireland (if properly encouraged by patres nostri — the Longmans)'.[15] Here Moore toys, but only toys, with the idea of 'field research'. In 1823, Moore's patron, and friend, Lord Lansdowne suggested that Moore accompany him to Ireland, to visit Lansdowne's estates in Kerry.

Kerry was then a centre of 'Rockite' activity. It might be hoped that the sanctity that surrounds a national bard would protect Moore, allow him to talk to a veritable rebellious peasant and learn, directly, something of the movement's aim and organization.[16] But Moore was a tourist, in Lord Lansdowne's train, staying at great houses, listening to rumours there: and unfitted by background and temperament for direct contact with peasants. In July 1823 he writes in his Journal, 'Saw at Collan, for the first time in my life, some real specimens of Irish misery and filth . . .'[17]

In August,

> O'Driscoll asserted that there was a regular organisation among the lower orders all over the south; that their oath was only 'to obey orders' and that instructions came from Dublin; that their objects were chiefly to get rid of their landlords and establish the Catholic religion. This, though coming from such authority, appeared to me exaggerated and incredible . . . John Scully disbelieves O'Driscoll's account of the organization of the people: says it is merely a war of the poor against the rich; condemns the new Tithe Bill . . .[18]

The realities of the peasants' organization, whatever those realities were, are hidden from Moore and he can see no way of enquiring into them. A modern historian leaps upon the declaration of Darby Browne, a Whiteboy, hanged at Waterford in 1762, that 'I acted one night among them as Captain, such as the May-boys have': the suggestion is that the pattern of rural customs shaped the Whiteboy organization. Moore notes of Hickey, hanged at Cork, 'This fellow was a sort of Captain Rock, and always wore feathers to distinguish him.'[19]

The poet's eye fixes on the image: feathers on a hat. Moore visits a Church of Ireland clergyman: 'The parson's own house, a waste and ruinous concern; and the embrasure in the hall door to fire through, speaking volumes for the comfort of his neighbourhood.' Moore made discreet enquiries as to how Lord Lansdowne was regarded as a landlord, and was relieved to learn he was well regarded.[20] In Kerry Moore met and talked with Daniel O'Connell, one evening when they were both the guests of the Earl of Kenmare: O'Connell was then planning the campaign that would lead to Catholic Emancipation.[21]

So much for the field research. On his return to England Moore began to read extensively in the history of Ireland. He has difficulty shaping his material. In October 1823 he has a 'clever thought'[22]: 'Have determined to change the plan of my Irish work, and make it into a "History of Captain Rock and his Ancestors," which may be more lively and certainly more easily done. But all I have already written, by this change, goes for nothing.' By the end of the year it is clear that he is writing 'Captain Rock's Memoirs'.[23] So, a rebellious peasant *is* to write his memoirs, or at least his memoirs are to be ghosted by the national bard.

There is pressure on Moore to produce his book in time for the coming debate in Parliament on Ireland. By March 1824 some of the material is already in proof. Moore showed Lord John Russell the proofsheets: Russell 'seemed much amused'. On 1 April 1824 Moore notes: 'Have been finishing the preface to "Captain Rock" these two mornings in bed, and hurried over some of it clumsily enough; took down the last copy to Longmans myself.'[24]

Memoirs of Captain Rock is a hybrid work, falling into no tidy literary category. It has a 'Preface, By the Editor': one of those joke prefaces that, by vouching for the authenticity of the 'manuscript', vouch for the joke.

'I little thought, at one time of my life, that I ever should be induced to visit Ireland.' The 'editor' is a timid Englishman, a member of a Society

> directed to the conversion and illumination of the poor, benighted Irish. . . . It was my lot to be singled out — as knowing more of Catholic countries than the rest, from having passed six weeks of the preceding summer at Boulogne — to undertake the honourable, but appalling task of Missionary to the South of Ireland.[25]

This is well done, a satire upon organizations like the London Hibernian Society (Chairman: Lord Lansdowne), even then flooding Ireland with free Bibles and tracts. Is there also a comment on Moore himself, journeying into the wild South?

In the coach, on the way south from Dublin, the Missionary meets 'a very extraordinary personage', a talkative gentleman disguised in green spectacles and flaxen wig. The Missionary then visits 'an old friend, the Rev. Mr. — , whom I found comfortably situated in his new living, with the sole drawback, it is true, of being obliged to barricade his house of an evening, and having little embrasures in his hall-door, to fire through at unwelcome visitors'.[26]

One evening the Missionary wanders to the picturesque ruins of a celebrated abbey, near his friend's house. He finds himself 'in the midst of some hundreds of awful-looking persons — all arrayed in white shirts'. It is a meeting of Whiteboys. The Missionary is rescued by 'a tall man with a plume of white feathers in his hat', who turns out to be the disguised gentleman in green spectacles, who turns out to be 'the great CAPTAIN ROCK'. The Captain presents the Missionary with the Manuscript, his Memoirs: the reading of which convinces the Missionary 'that it is the Rulers, not the People of Ireland, who require to be instructed and converted'.[27]

After the timid Missionary we have the flamboyant Captain, and his Ancestors: who are, as *The Westminster Review* put it, 'a sort of abstraction of Irish riot'. Says the Captain, 'Discord is, indeed, our natural element; like that storm-loving animal, the seal, we are comfortable only in a tempest; and the object of the following historical and biographical sketch is to show how kindly the English government has at all times consulted our taste . . .' There follows one of the Latin tags with irreverent 'translation' that are a feature of the book: 'Quae regio in terris nostri non plena laboris?' or, as it has been translated by one of my family: —

Through Leinster, Ulster, Connaught, Munster,
Rock's the boy to make the fun stir![28]

Rock is thus an *emanation* of Irish violence, and Irish violence is a product of English misrule. Rock's Memoirs are divided into two Books, 'Of My Ancestors' and 'Of My Own Times'. Book The First tells the history of Ireland from the point of view of the Rock family. *Blackwood's Magazine* complains that here we have 'the least interesting portions of Irish history, drawn from the most obvious sources of information, repeated and reprinted even to satiety . . .'[29]

Some of this matter is leaden, though enlivened by the whimsical images that are a feature of Moore's prose: 'My unlucky countrymen have always had a taste for justice — a taste as inconvenient to them, situated as they have always been, as a fancy for horse-racing would be to a Venetian.' Moore's research is unremarkable, and at times he tries to make a virtue of the fact that 'I have relied almost exclusively upon English authorities . . .'[30] Throughout the book there are problems of tone. Often in the main text it is not clear whether Moore speaks with his own voice, as it were, or in the character of Captain Rock. And in the footnotes it is not clear whether it is Moore, Rock or the Missionary Editor who speaks.

There are times, admittedly rare, when things go well for Ireland: how should Captain Rock respond? *The Westminster Review* notes grave inconsistencies: 'He is represented as living and prospering solely by discord and anarchy, while the tone which he maintains throughout, is that of bitter indignation against the oppressors of

Ireland, and consequently against his best friends.'[31] The technical problems are those of the medieval authors of psycomachies, and Moore can only acknowledge them. He tries, indeed, to make a virtue of this necessity. Of 1782, the hope-filled days of Grattan, Captain Rock admits that he '. . . was ready, in the boyish enthusiasm of the moment, to sacrifice all my own personal interest in all future riots and rebellions, to the one bright, seducing object of my country's liberty and repose'.

But Captain Rock's father, old Rock, while sympathetic to Grattan, reminds the boy of political realities — '*Our work, believe me, will last longer than his*.' The Legislature and the established Church will ensure this. And elsewhere in his Memoirs Captain Rock acknowledges that, given the folly of the English government, there is no possibility that the Rock family will not thrive: 'Romanos rerum dominos, *gentemque togatum*.

> Law, peace, and justice, at our feet shall fall,
> And *the white-shirted race* be lords o'er all![32]

Moore's, or Captain Rock's, history of sequestrations, forfeitures and transfers of land from Catholic to Protestant must inevitably bring into question the very right of property in Ireland, the ownership of the land itself.[33] A little verse sums up:

> The Irish had long made a deuce of a clatter,
> And wrought and fought about *meum* and *tuum*,
> Till England stept in, and decided the matter,
> By kindly converting it all into *suum*.[34]

Now Moore baulks, and through a series of crab-like movements leaves, unresolved and unacknowledged, the question of *land*, and focuses instead on the issue of *tithes* paid to the Protestant Church of Ireland. Thus:

> To be ground down by a hard-hearted landlord was galling enough to the poor Catholic; but to have both body and spirit wasted away in thankless labour, in order to support in luxury the ministers of the religion, by which his own faith was proscribed, his children tempted to turn traitors, and himself chained down in misery and bondage — this indeed was a refinement in misery . . .

Old Rock, Rock's father, dies, '. . . wounded in a skirmish with some parish officers, who had seized the cow of a poor woman for Church Rates . . .'[35]

This redirection of emphasis is given form within the narrative element of the *Memoirs*. Our Captain Rock is born on the very day

> when Father Sheehy, the good parish priest of Clogheen, was hanged at Clonmel on the testimony of a perjured witness . . . This execution of Father Sheehy was

> one of those *coups d'etat* of the Irish authorities, which they used to perform at stated intervals, and which saved them the trouble of further atrocities for some time to come.

Nicholas Sheehy was hanged in March 1766, after protracted legal proceedings.[36]

Rock, being his father's tenth child, is christened Decimus, and dedicated by his father 'exclusively to the tithe department'. Old Rock is guided in part by a 'singular Prophecy' —

> which though little heeded by him in the time of his comfort and hope, he now clung to with that fondness of belief, of which a good Catholic, driven to despair, alone is capable. It ran thus:
>
> As long as Ireland shall pretend,
> Like sugar-loaf, turn'd upside down,
> To stand upon its smaller end,
> So long shall live old Rock's renown.
> As long as Popish spade and scythe
> Shall dig and cut the Sassanagh's tithe . .
> . . . So long the merry reign shall be
> Of Captain ROCK and his Family.[37]

Book The Second, 'Of My Own Times', follows events from 1763 onwards, and concentrates more and more on tithes. Church of Ireland tithes must, the reader is led to believe, be the main cause of Irish discontent. *The Westminster Review* takes this at face value: 'our author will make the topic of Ireland fashionable . . . we shall be asked by young ladies if we do not consider the conduct of the Irish clergy respecting *First Fruits* as exceedingly scandalous'. *Blackwoood's Magazine* is cross and weary: 'In vain it has been shown that the right to tithe is as the right to any other property — this writer is determined to regard it as a tax'.[38]

Moore has, in fact, dealt scornfully with the suggestion that tithes are property: '. . . the word *Property*, as applied to tithes, eludes the grasp of definition'. Special scorn is poured on the suggestion of 'Declan', the pseudonymous author of *Case of the Church of Ireland stated*, that each Parson is a Corporation: 'The vast "importance of a man to himself . . ."'[39] Criticism of tithes, and of tithe farmers and tithe proctors, leads, naturally, to criticism of the Protestant clergy.

> I have said that our Clergy are paid for not teaching six-sevenths of the population — but it will be seen . . . that they do teach us some notable lessons. Of uncharitableness and bigotry they have long set us examples, by denouncing us as idolators and infidels . . .[40] . . The potatoe, the sole sustenance of the wretched peasantry of the south, is also pressed into the service of the Church — and there is not a parson in that part of the country, who does not live by

the starvation of others. Imagination, indeed, can hardly bring together a more incongruous compound, than the lofty Churchman, at one moment exalting his brow in spiritual authority, and, at the next, stooping to ransack the potatoe-pit of the cottager:

> Quantum vertice ad auras
> Aetherias, tantum *radice* in Tartara tendit. *Virgil*

And again, in a lengthy attack on 'the new Tithe Bill of Mr. Goulburn' there is this: 'The potatoe-garden, too, that last boundary between the peasant and famine . . .' will 'be swept into the general mass of contribution, towards the further enrichment of the Protestant Church of Ireland.'[41]

Throughout the book Moore, or 'Captain Rock', has justified, in plain terms, the violence of the Irish peasantry. He describes the enclosure of Irish common land in the 18th century and, in a footnote, quotes Southey's *Book of the Church* to show that, 'in the reign of Edward VI there were insurrections in England from the same cause'.[42]

Old Rock sees himself as involved in a formal war:

> He could never, indeed, understand the horror that was expressed, at the occasional violences committed by him and his followers, in this desperate game between them and their masters. Regarding his situation as one of perpetual warfare, — there being always two camps in the country, that of the Government, and that of Captain ROCK, — he looked upon all the plunder and bloodshed on both sides, but as the usual and natural result of attack and reprisal between belligerents . . .

This outburst interrupts a detailed account of First Fruits and Church Rates: 'Is a country, thus treated, to be called "barbarous!", because it rebels? Say, rather, what name would it deserve, if it did *not* rebel?'

And finally, the disabilities under which Catholics still suffer are described: Captain Rock recalls that Emancipation was promised with the Union, but never granted.

> The Protestant Parliament was purchased with solid bribes — the Catholic People were won over with deceitful promises, and the Minister, glorying in his triumph over both —
>
> 'Gave Liberty the last, the fatal shock,
> Slipp'd the slave's collar on, and snapp'd the lock.'[43]

'Here ends the manuscript of the Captain.' The Missionary Editor tells us that the Captain had intended to continue the narrative from the Union to the present day, 'but the great press of political business which that measure brought upon him, left him but little leisure for the indulgence of literary pursuits'.[44] The present day is too problematic for Moore and his Captain.

Moore comes to it abruptly and quite briefly, but there is a sense in which Catholic Emancipation is the underlying, true theme of *Memoirs of Rock*. Church of Ireland tithes, for example, are an evil not simply because they oppress the Irish poor but because they compel the Catholic poor to support a religion not their own. Moore can now be placed in his political context. It is an English, or British, context, not an Irish one. In his Journals we see him amongst his reference group: Lansdowne, Russell, Devereaux ('the busy Catholic'), Eneas M'Donnell, Sydney Smith, the 'unholy alliance of nonconformists, Roman Catholics and anticlerical Whigs and radicals . . . poised to smash the Anglican monopoly of national and local government . . .'[45]

Memoirs of Rock ends with Moore's tribute to the 'remarkable code of silence' of the Irish peasants. Captain Rock is by chance arrested and brought to court:

> . . . there were, in the Court and in the Town, at the time, a large assemblage of ROCKITES — any one of whom could have identified our hero, so as to give the going judges the triumph of, at last, hanging the real CAPTAIN ROCK. But the only virtue, which the Irish Government has been the means of producing in the people, is fidelity to each other in their Conspiracies against it.

The Captain is not identified, 'and, being found guilty only of the transportable offence, namely, that of being out by moonlight, is at this moment on his way to those distant shores, where so many lads "who love the moon" have preceded him.' So, the emanation of Irish violence is sent to Australia.

A last note asks for the Missionary's discretion: '. . . having hanged so many dozens of *wrong* CAPTAIN ROCKS, they might possibly now take it into their heads to hang the *right* one'.[46]

Moore calls his Captain Rock the 'Chieftain', a reference to Celtic tribalism, or 'the bandit', 'my bandit'. At this time the preferred term, among the ruling elite, for actively rebellious Irish peasants was *banditti*: the Italian form was constantly used. 'Bandits' or *banditti*, the terms carries with it certain assertions, as Cornewall Lewis noticed. 'The persons who commit these crimes do not, like the bandits of Italy, or the London thieves, follow crime as a profession: they are merely called out by their brethren for the occasion, and when their task has been done, they resume their ordinary habits of life.'[47] Moore's 'bandit' is of the people: Moore has, fairly successfully, rehabilitated the word.

Ignoring, for the moment, Rock's ghostly attributes, the narrator of the *Memoirs* emerges as a literary creation of great charm. He has some aspects of Byron's Mediterranean heroes or Scott's Rob Roy. His flamboyant personality is like that of Nicholas Hanley, the original Caravat, hanged at Clonmel in the winter of 1805. He certainly draws on popular accounts of early 18th century Irish bandits like James Freney.[48] He is the kind of folk hero described by Hobsbawm in *Bandits*.

Blackwood's Magazine complains: 'It is scarcely possible that any reader should not, from the title of this book, be led to anticipate some account of the late insurrections in Ireland. Of this, however, there is not one word.'[49] This is true, but Moore can be defended. Like Cornewall Lewis, and O'Neill, Moore has not particularized the Rockites but, through the image of 'Captain Rock' sees the Rock outrages as part of a continuing Whiteboy movement. Moore could not study the realities of the peasant organization but built imaginatively on the scraps of information that appealed to him.

Moore's poetic imagination has put him in touch with the poetic imagination of the peasantry. Hobsbawm, at the end of the his study of real bandits, men who really lived, and died, says, 'The bandit is not only a man, but a symbol'. 'Bandits belong to the peasantry.'[50] In a sense, bandits are ghosts, emanations, personifications of peasant dreams. Moore created the symbolic bandit out of his struggle with the recalcitrant material of Irish history, Church of Ireland tithes and Whiteboy outrages.

Memoirs of Captain Rock was published on 9 April 1824. The entire first edition sold within the day. The Longmans issued a second edition on 12 April: 'no time for corrections,' Moore notes. There were a further two editions in 1824, a German translation in 1825.[51]

Praise came from Ireland. In May Moore receives a letter from Milliken, the Dublin bookseller: 'The people,' he says, 'through the country are subscribing their sixpences and shillings to buy a copy; and he should not wonder if the work is pirated.'

Later:

> Received, too, under Lord Lansdowne's frank, a letter from the Secretary of the Catholics of Drogheda, thanking me in their name for my "able and spirited exposition of their wrongs," &c. &c.: This is gratifying and satisfactory, as I rather feared the Catholics would not take very cordially to the work on account of some infidelities to their religion which break out now and then in it.

Moore perhaps has in mind Captain Rock's remark: '. . . our own Priests not suffering us to read the Bible'.[52]

That theme, of 'exposition of wrongs', in the letter from the Catholics of Drogheda, reappears in a song which survives in a chapbook printed in Drogheda in 1826. 'A New Song called Captain Rock' begins:

Come, Paddy, my hearty, a bumper,
To him who our wrongs has made known

The song praises the Chieftain, 'a meteor, eccentric and bright'. It looks briefly at Irish history before moving on to attack tithes and tithe-proctors. And the envoy is clearly, despite typographical errors, cobbled together from verses in Moore's *Memoirs of Captain Rock*:

Through Leinster, Ulster, Connet, Munster,
Rock's the boy to make the fun sir. [sic]
For, long as Ireland shall pretend,
Like sugar-loaf, turned upside down,
To stand upon her smaller end,
So long shall live old Rock's renown.[53]

The reader of *Memoirs of Captain Rock* will make better sense of that reference to 'old Rock', Rock's father. 'A New Song called Captain Rock' is a tribute to Moore and his 'Chieftain' from the plain people of Ireland.

The *Memoirs* were noted, praised or condemned, in all the major British newspapers and journals.[54] Moore enjoys his success. He notes the reviews and gossip about the reviews: 'Blackwood's Magazine men in favour (not withstanding their tone in print)'. He hovers on the edge of self-parody: 'Dined at Lord Fortescue's; sat next Lord Ebrington, who talked to me abundantly about "Captain Rock", as did also Sir J. Newport who never ceases praising it.'[55]

> A good deal of conversation with Lord Downshire, who said he thought it would do considerable good; that Englishmen, in general, knew nothing of the history of Ireland; that he, himself, brought up as a boy in England, was for a long time ignorant of everything relating to Ireland except that it was the place where his estates lay . . .

On the question of absentee landlords Moore remains resolutely blind.[56]

Moore, of course, feels entitled to expect support from the *Edinburgh Review*. In May he has a, fairly typical, discussion with Sydney Smith: '. . . went to breakfast at Holland House. Lord John and Sydney Smith there. Smith told me, in speaking of "Captain Rock" (which he had not yet read) that he once drew up a little manual of Irish history, much, as he conceived, in the same spirit and intention.' Smith's review does not appear till October, rather late to be useful. It begins: 'This agreeable and witty book is generally supposed to have been written by Mr. Thomas Moore; a gentleman of small stature — but full of genius . . .' The review is supportive, but, oddly, makes no mention of tithes.[57]

In April the *Westminster Review* account of the book had begun:

'When we heard that Mr. Moore was editing the Captain's life we hoped for such a Captain Rock as the author of Old Mortality might make . . .' The 'Blackwood's men' know that Moore is the author, but will not plainly say so:

> . . . thank God . . . that the author of this weak and very wicked book is an Irishman. Again, thank God that the writer who has given such offence and pain, who ridicules the distresses of the peasantry, while he justifies their crimes, and does what he can to perpetuate their ignorance, is a Roman Catholic.

Blackwood's quarrels with the method of the book: like Voltaire Captain Rock puts criticisms of religion within a fanciful tale, making a considered reply impossible.

> Who will fall out with Candide? Who will be fool enough to break his head against this Rock? . . . Yet is the form of such a fiction very convenient. An Irish poet, of some distinction, a few years ago, in an Eastern Tale, found the opportunity of expressing the violent party feeling of some of his countrymen; and lest the resemblance should elude the reader, it is carefully pointed out to him by a flattering note.[58]

The 'Eastern Tale' was, of course, Moore's *Lalla Rookh*. And that flattering footnote is remarkable. At that point in the *Memoirs of Captain Rock* Moore is quarrelling, still, with the 'Reverend Orange pamphleteer', Declan, and his *Case of the Church of Ireland stated*. In that work Moore finds a reference to one of his own lyrics and the joke is too good to leave alone:

> This Reverend pamphleteer has had the sagacity to discover some dark design against Church and State in the following lines of one of Moore's Melodies, which he has thus marked in italics in order to render the awfulness of the menace more striking: —
>
> Then blame not the bard, if in pleasure's soft dream
> He should try to forget what he never can heal;
> *Oh give but a hope — let a vista but gleam*
> *Through the gloom of his country, and mark what he'll feel.*
>
> This is like old Croaker, in Goldsmith's play, discovering a threat of arson in a love-letter: 'Blood and gunpowder in every line of it!'[59]

Who is speaking here: Rock, Missionary or Moore? That quatrain comes from the third stanza of one of Moore's most 'patriotic' Melodies: and here, in *Memoirs of Captain Rock*, he seems to be saying that it is ridiculous to invest the lyric with any real political ambition.

There is no sense in which Moore's authorship of the *Memoirs* is a secret. Before publication he discusses the project with Whig and with Catholic friends. After publication the discussions go on: 'June 28th. Had called in the morning on Devereaux, the busy Catholic, and found Eneas M'Donnell with him, who thanked me for the way in which I had mentioned his pamphlet in Rock. Sir H. Parnell, by the by, made the same sort of acknowledgement the other day for my mention of his speech.' The quotation from Henry Parnell in *Memoirs of Rock* goes: '. . . you may trace Ireland through the Statute-book of England, as a wounded man in a crowd is tracked by his blood . . .', an image whose stark power contrasts somewhat with Moore's horse-racing Venetian and his kin.[60]

Moore's authorship is common knowledge within Moore's set, and spreads thence through political and literary coteries. How and when that knowledge reaches a person defines that person socially and politically. This is the 'knowable community' in action.

In July 1824 Moore received a copy of 'the most elaborate reply to *Memoirs of Captain Rock*', a full-length book of 450 pages. Who has been 'fool enough to break his head against this Rock?' Moore writes: 'Received a copy of "Captain Rock detected"; suspect it to be by a friend of my Sister Kate's, O'Sullivan; tolerably abusive of me; but worse of Lord Lansdowne, which I regret for many reasons.' In August Moore writes: 'Had a letter from John Scully, informing that the author of "Rock Detected" is the Rev. Mr. Mortimer O'Sullivan, so that I guessed right. Expressed great admiration of "Captain Rock", which he says will do more for the fame of its author and the good of Ireland than any book that ever was published.'[61]

If *Memoirs of Captain Rock* 'suffers from extreme haste in its composition', we will not expect too great things of *Captain Rock Detected*, which was put together and printed in the few months from April to July 1824. I say 'put together' for, if *Memoirs of Rock* is a hybrid, *Rock Detected* demands another horticultural term: here is lengthy polemic grafted on to a fragment of narrative.

Captain Rock Detected is written, says its title page, by 'A Munster Farmer'. 'I cannot give my statement to the world, sanctioned by the authority of a great name; neither is it my ambition that it should be adorned with the graces of wit and eloquence.' The Farmer contrasts himself with the witty and over-erudite narrator of *Memoirs of Rock*.[62]

The Farmer's account of his family draws on the realities of Mortimer O'Sullivan's background: 'I belong to a family, in which the Protestant and Roman Catholic interests are so equably combined, that my poor neighbours say, "it would be as natural for me to go to church as to mass."' He is a magistrate but trusted by all sides. 'I live in the greatest amity with my poor neighbours; my tenants are few, but they are prosperous, and look on me, I believe, as a good landlord. I reside constantly in a disturbed district'. He is not an absentee. '. . . I offer myself, as the representative of that class of persons whose sentiments have not yet been heard, *the Farmers of the South of Ireland*.'[63]

O'Sullivan is, of course, a representative (later in his career formally a representative) of the class so strongly attacked by Moore, the Protestant Clergy of the Church of Ireland, the 'tithe-owners'. He must have found much of Moore's attack personally hurtful: as an ex-Catholic Protestant convert, a product of the Charter school at Clonmel, a friend and schoolmate of William Phelan, 'Declan', 'the Reverend Orange pamphleteer'. In *Rock Detected* O'Sullivan presents himself, pseudonymously, as a tithe-payer. But, in reality and in role, he is a person who actually lives, a Protestant, in Ireland, in fear of peasant outrage.

One night, in the winter of 1822, the Munster Farmer sees some 300 armed men pass near his house. He watches these men visit his tenants: next day the tenants deny all knowledge of the incident. 'From this night, for a time, all freedom of intercourse with my tenantry was at an end; but it returned when a military detachment and a few police were stationed in the neighbourhood.'[64]

The Munster Farmer then offers . . . a manuscript:

> an extract from an unpublished work, communicated to me by a friend, . . . it will be found strongly descriptive of the state of the country. The chapter in which it occurs, is called 'The Ruin', and the incident, one which took place at that identical ruin, where the missionary biographer of Captain Rock was so perilously encountered.[65]

'The Ruin: A Fragment', follows the adventures of Ormsby, 'a young gentleman of college', in the country of the Whiteboys. There are many unresolved plot points in the 'fragment', and it may be that it is indeed part of a (projected?) longer work. O'Sullivan did produce at least one full-length novel.[66] Here the fragment usefully adds to the hulk of *Captain Rock Detected*: I say 'usefully' because, remembering *Blackwood's* strictures on the use of fiction in polemic, it would seem that what O'Sullivan has astutely realized is that, in polemic, an argument can be met with a counter-argument but a story must be met with a counter-story.

Our young hero visits a ruin, 'an abbey of high reputation in early times . . .' He is the secret witness of a meeting of armed peasants (*not*, as it happens, clad in white shirts: 'Some wore coats with green on the collars and the wrists; some wore the loose great coat, to which the Irish poor are accustomed; some had procured military caps . . .')[67]

The meeting is addressed by 'The General', a man whose 'head and face seemed to denote him a person of higher consideration than might be supposed connected with such confederates'. The General tells the peasants that open rebellion must be postponed: 'Thus speaks your government.' Some peasants object, but the General establishes his authority over them. When the gathering has dispersed Ormsby overhears the General reveal his true feelings to his lieutenant: '"There they go," said the General, "ruffians! who are cowards without the love of life . . . I was well pleased to night that they cannot penetrate my disguises . . ."'[68]

Next day, Ormsby visits a neighbour, Mr Hewson, who is initially presented as the worst sort of Irish 'gentleman'. Hewson refuses to pay money owed to a peasant, he attacks tithes. Hewson's opinions are criticized by another guest, Mr Stock. Hearing Mr Stock's voice Ormsby is convinced that Stock is the General:

> The person who spoke appeared taller than the General, his figure was more slender, and his face paler, and of a fairer colour, he wore powder, and had very little hair on the crown of his head, whereas the General appeared to have thick dark hair. But Ormsby well knew that such changes could be easily explained . . .[69]

Ormsby, and the reader, are puzzled to hear an entirely laudable defence of tithes from Mr Stock's lips. And, despite a lengthy aside, ('Tithes were a good topic with which to inflame the people's minds; but it could not be the design of the disturbers to proceed no farther than the removal of one grievance . . .') we remain puzzled. Agitators will agitate, I suppose: and Mr Stock having explained that tithes are property, begins to question the ownership of property, of land, in Ireland.

The company is now brought news of the killing of a neighbour, Colonel Raymond: '"He's shot, Sir! murdered outside his demesne wall!"' '. . . and now, for the first time, Ormsby thought his suspicions confirmed'. Stock displays some violent emotion, but not astonishment or horror: 'it was the expression of one who had laid a train and watched the explosion . . .' Ormsby, in confusion, accuses Stock, but is not believed. That accusation puts Orsmby's own life in danger. He has narrow escapes. Eventually, with the help of an informer ('"This is not a time," said Mr Hewson . . ., "that we can afford to be scrupulous . . ."'); some rebels ('supposed to be the murderers of Colonel Raymond') are ambushed. Of Mr Stock, 'The General', we hear nothing more, in the fragment as given to us.[70]

A ruin, a secret meeting, a disguised leader: the parallels to Moore's narrative, and the attempts to counter it are clear. O'Sullivan, for example, makes much of the suffering of the peasants from both their own rough justice and the formal justice of the state.[71]

The disguised leader is especially interesting. It is not clear, in Moore's narrative, why 'Captain Rock' should be travelling from Dublin to Limerick, disguised in green spectacles and flaxen wig. Despite his family's complicated history, Rock is a peasant of the peasants. 'The General' is of a superior social class, organizing and directing the peasant towards ends which are not their ends, and not in their best interests. He is part of some sinister organization, 'your government'.

'The General' is, of course, 'the man in the gig', that nefarious agitator, who appears again and again in the ruling élite's accounts of peasant and working-class protest. He appears in England in the early 1830s. Hobsbawm and Rudë quote witnesses who saw 'a stranger, dressed in shabby genteel, but of manners apparently above the ordinary class', 'two well dressed men in a green gig', near outbreaks of rick-burning. A police report discounts 'stories about strangers in gigs'.[72]

Cornewall Lewis considers the evidence of Major Warburton, a magistrate from Ireland, to the parliamentary committee in 1824: 'it relates to a person sent from Dublin, who came in a gig from Limerick . . . and was therefore of a class higher than those engaged in the Whiteboy unions'. Cornewall Lewis is sceptical.[73]

'The man in the gig' brings with him, in that gig, a mass of baggage. He denies any genuine political awareness among the peasantry. He asserts that the social relations between classes that exist in the open community are duplicated in the hidden world: in other words, those social relations are a universal constant. The Whiteboys elect a Captain from among their number, like the May-boys do? It cannot be that simple.

O'Sullivan's narrative needs 'the man in the gig', a sinister figure to counter the charm of Moore's Captain Rock. O'Sullivan's feeling is that there is a general, wide-spread conspiracy among the peasantry, a conspiracy directed and led by outside agitators towards a 'general rising'. However, in the rest of *Rock Detected*, in O'Sullivan's polemic analysis of the ills of Ireland, there is practically nothing to justify that feeling.

> A book has just appeared, entitled, 'Memoirs of Captain Rock,' which I think likely to have more circulation, and, in consequence, to be more extensively mischievous than any modern publication. . . . an attempt to prove, that, without the destruction of the establishment, and a repeal of the laws by which the Roman Catholics are affected, it is vain to expect tranquillity in Ireland. . . . My object is simple; to inquire whether the allegations contained in the Memoirs are true — that the riches of the Protestant church are the cause of that misery under which the Irish Roman Catholics are suffering.[74]

After that fragment of narrative *Captain Rock Detected* is shaped by *Memoirs of Rock*: O'Sullivan seeks the holes in Moore's argument.[75] As O'Sullivan writes, the news that Moore is the author of the *Memoirs of Rock* reaches him and is incorporated, sometimes untidily, into his text. A footnote tells a disparaging anecdote about Moore and Lansdowne. Later, a line of Byron's which refers to Moore is applied to the 'Missionary': a footnote clarifies the allusion.[76]

By page 307 the main text can tackle the question of Moore's authorship: 'This work has been attributed to Mr. Moore but (I am inclined to think) attributed to him by some "trick of the trade" . . .' The book contains Moore's beauties and his particular faults:

> those tinsel conceits . . . But I cannot think that he is the author . . . Mr. Moore travelled through a part of Ireland last year, with a nobleman, whose tenantry, if not the most wretched in the kingdom, are, I will venture to say, not less miserable than any other, and miserable *from causes far removed from those to which the pseudo captain would attribute our distresses.*' [Moore must have seen the real state of the case, and *he* would not] condescend to make himself the instrument for continuing the miseries of the Irish peasantry, and increasing the wealth of those who have been their oppressors.[77]

Earlier, O'Sullivan seems to take Moore's joke about the Missionary and the manuscript at face value: he attacks the Missionary, he quotes Captain Rock. It may be that I have imperfectly appreciated the 'Munster Farmer's' raillery. At times that raillery, though ponderous, is spot on. As he has made clear in 'The Ruin', O'Sullivan thinks that the attack on tithes is very convenient for the landlords, turning the peasants' attention away from the real causes of their distress. But why should Captain Rock, the protector of tenants, so collude with landlords? The Munster Farmer thinks, '. . . that the honest missionary was imposed upon, and that . . . some hanger-on upon a bloated aristocrat, . . . some echoer of his lord's phrases . . . having stolen a plume from my lady's waiting maid, went masquerading on summer's night', tricked the missionary and 'imposed upon him the articles of an aristocrat's creed, as the genuine memoirs of the real Captain Rock.'[78]

The Munster Farmer takes up Captain Rock's abandoned argument about property, the ownership of land. Let us

> restore to the rightful owner, *all lands, whenever granted, to which the title was founded in injustice.* I will make a fair bargain with the Captain – no purchase, no pay. If he will engage to establish me *in only one of my rights*, I will engage to pay him, on the day when I take quiet possession of my estate, five thousand pounds of good coined money . . . The lands of which I am now most anxious to possess myself, are, for the present, in the possession of the most noble the Marquis of Lansdowne . . .[79]

(This, by the way, is internal evidence that *Captain Rock Detected* was written by someone called O'Sullivan.)

'It is difficult to reason seriously with a man, who expects that the destruction of the church establishment can bring any permanent relief to the cottier tenants. The peasantry have no property — their landlords will not permit them to have any.'[80] Since tenants have no property tithes cannot bear directly upon them. But tenants *are* oppressed by rents.

To the landowners and the 'gentleman farmers', or middlemen, peasants are simply another kind of crop or herd.

> 'I do not keep my sheep for show,' said a gentleman to me, '. . . those are the best cattle that pay best for their feeding.' I need not say, that few Irish keep their tenants for show — their principle is with men as well as with cattle — those are most to be encouraged, who, from a given space of ground, return most rent, and they would think it just as unnatural to let a tenant save and hoard, as they would to leave their sheep for two years unshorn.[81]

The attack on the gentry, particularly on the absentee landowners, is effective. The absentees leave the field free to dishonest agents and rapacious tithe-farmers. In all the argument and legislation about tithes thus far the gentry have simply looked after their own interests — '*the natural protector of the poor man, abandoning his bounden duty, left him exposed* . . . .' Concessions in tithes by the Protestant Clergy have been pocketed by the gentry. The movement of capital out of Ireland in the form of tithes is as nothing compared with the vast sums leaving Ireland each year as rents to absentee landlords.

O'Sullivan offers a radical plan to promote peace. The British Constitution, in Ireland, is, as things stand, 'a mere fairy fiction'.

> Let the government consider Ireland as, at this moment, a *newly conquered country*. [Let the government enquire into the real causes of discontent, in particular into the conduct of the gentry.] I do not mean to say, that the Irish gentry, whatever their conduct may have been, should be deprived of their possessions; I wish to suggest only, that if they shall be found to have abused their power, and to be the real causes of the people's distress, *they should not be suffered to retain the ability of perpetuating grievances which their misconduct has occasioned.*[82]

This is not radical: it is revolutionary.

> Let no one say, that the government should not interfere with private property; let no one imagine, that if an inquisition be held on the conduct of the *Irish* gentry, the gentry of *England* are not secure. *The cases are essentially distinct.* The Irish gentry have acknowledged the right of the government to interfere with private property, by calling for its interference, not only with the property of the church as a body, but with that of the individuals of the clerical order.

Since tithes are property, and since the Irish gentry have shown themselves more than willing to interfere with and indeed appropriate tithes, the gentry cannot argue that property is sacred. O'Sullivan's argument has taken him, by another route, beyond the point where Moore baulked, and he is not entirely happy. His main text seems to question the concept of rights in property. A footnote tries to make his position clear: '. . . it appears to me that the great question is this: Does the law protect all men in their rights, of whatever kind they may be? . . . surely the clergyman has a right to its protection.'[83]

Both Moore and O'Sullivan have been led, by logic and enthusiasm, to consider the question of the ownership of land in

Ireland. Both have shied away from the implications of the question. For Moore, and the groups to which he was allied, it is important to establish that tithes are *not* property, so that tithes and the church establishment can be attacked, while property, as understood by the Whigs, remains sacred. O'Sullivan tries to ensure that the concept of sacred, untouchable property protects tithes. He shows that any tampering with the concept of property is dangerous.

But he has also shown that property gives the gentry the ability to perpetuate grievances. If the main problem in Ireland is peasant distress, and if O'Sullivan's analysis of the cause of that misery is correct, he has, unwittingly, launched a coherent attack on the concept of property and the right of an owner to use his property as he wishes. The analysis will apply in England or anywhere: the gentry of England are not secure.

For O'Sullivan, tithes, Catholic emancipation, the transfer of tithes to the Roman Catholic clergy — all the supposed palliatives — are minor issues: they do not deal with the real cause of disturbance among the peasantry. 'It is from their *miseries* the danger of the country proceeds; they are impoverished, and of course, discontented. . . . Catholic emancipation might open places of honour or emolument to the Roman Catholic gentry; *but the peasantry might as well expect warmth from the stars* . . .'[84]

'And for their full relief what do I ask? I do not call for the return of the absentees; I do not call for English capital; *I demand only, that the landlords should join the government in giving some security that the tenant shall not be asked to pay more* THAN HIS FARM IS WORTH.' The people will then feel that their interests coincide with those of the government. As things stand, 'the peasantry are without hope, *except the hope of rebellion*'.[85]

Is there a place, in O'Sullivan's analysis, for the machinations of 'The General' and 'your government'? There is, within O'Sullivan, an association of ideas which, prompted by Captain Rock's remarks on the execution of Father Sheehy, he expounds in a fascinating section of *Rock Detected*. Of the beginnings of the Whiteboy movement in the 1760s he says '. . . whether these disturbances arose, naturally, out of the grievances which the people endured, and to a sense of which they had themselves awakened, or whether they were *excited by French intrigue*, I believe it is an indisputable fact, that France sent emissaries here to *foment them*'.

He quotes a 'tradition and the remembrance of old family papers' that French or Wild Geese agents were in Ireland at that time. Within a page tradition becomes proven fact:

> . . . no doubt whatever can be entertained, that, at the time of the Whiteboy disturbances, there were in this country men professing themselves accredited agents of the French government, whose employment it was to recruit for the Irish brigade, and who were, of course, mainly instrumental in keeping up and

in exciting a discontented spirit in the minds of the oppressed and suffering people.'[86]

Later, O'Sullivan begins a story of a Mr Sheehy, 'a gentleman of small property', and is prompted to deal, for once and for all, with Moore's account of the execution of Father Nicholas Sheehy. A footnote asserts that 'whatever were the merits of the case on which he suffered, *it is certain* that he was mainly instrumental in exciting the Whiteboy disturbances, . . . no man merited his death more thoroughly; even although of the specific charge upon which he was convicted he might have been innocent.'

O'Sullivan then continues the story of Mr Sheehy, the gentleman farmer or middleman. This 'innocent kind-hearted old man' was killed by a young tenant, who hoped thus to become directly a tenant of the landowner, and pay a lower rent: '. . . the murderer stood silently at his back, and with the heavy coulter of a plough beat in his skull, and repeated his blows until his benefactor was lying a mangled corpse upon the snow. — "Rock is the boy to make the fun stir!!!"'[87]

'The madman flingeth fire-brands and saith, "am I not in sport"'. O'Sullivan is outraged by the tone of *Memoirs of Rock*: the missionary '. . . has collected, within a portable compass, all the topics that can stir the blood of the uninstructed Irish; and this, in a new spirit of missionary heroism, *with perfect safety to himself*'.[88]

At one level O'Sullivan finds it difficult to believe his perception, that peasant disturbances are caused by present grievances, though that perception is presented in a heartfelt manner. It seems not to occur to him that his analysis could apply just as well to the Whiteboys of the 1760s as to the Rockites of the 1820s. And he is not able to find anywhere an acceptable candidate for the role of 'the man in the gig'.

The political and social message of the French Revolution has not been alluded to, has perhaps been avoided. Though Mr Hewson does say 'D — n, Paine, Sir, and all his adherents, and all republicans . . .' The Catholic clergy must not be seen as having authority or as a force for law and order: '. . . *it would be contrary to all right reasoning, to expect, that a priesthood, left dependent upon the lower classes for support, shall venture to oppose the political bias of the people who maintain them*'.[89]

O'Sullivan is loath to endow O'Connell and the Catholic Association with any real credibility. There is the beginning of the line of thinking that will lead, later in the century, to the Parnell trial: 'One might think that Captain Rock and Mr. O'Connell had divided their offices, and agreed (as the actors of old times), that one should perform the speaking part and the other the gesticulation . . .' But this is abandoned, as giving O'Connell too much significance. However, the Catholic Association may be used as a front by 'persons at work secretly in this country . . .' There is a power vacuum in

Ireland, '. . . the mass of the people . . . are continually heaving into new tumults, either from the efforts of some unseen agitator, or in consequence of their own wants and miseries . . .'[90]

But, apart from remembering that family tradition of Wild Geese agents, O'Sullivan cannot say who these agitators might be. Bowen comments on 'O'Sullivan's development from a perceptive and apparently eirenic convert parson of 1824–25 to the almost paranoic Ulster Orangeman of the post-famine years . . .'[91] In 1824, the seeds of paranoia were already there.

Old Rock, Captain Rock's father, is the archetypal Irishman, proud of his ancestors and of Irish history, hospitable, witty but given to melancholy, and 'a great believer in miracles . . . This, however, I look upon as the natural consequences of his political position. . . . it is a sort of *set off* for the slave against the insolence of his oppressor, to represent himself as worthy of the peculiar agency of Heaven.' 'Hence, miracles have been the weapon of every persecuted faith.' A Protestant Bishop in 1641, the French Protestants 'at the time of the Revocation of the Edict of Nantz', with their 'Little Prophets', and 'the Reformers in Queen Mary's reign', (as witness, a footnote tells us, Mr Southey's *Book of the Church*) all believed in miracles.[92]

Blackwood's Magazine seizes on that account of old Rock's beliefs to assert that the Roman Catholic Irish are particularly susceptible to the folly of believing in miracles and prophecies: see, for example, the material in Dr Pfeuffer's Memoir, and Pastorini's Prophecy.[93]

Charles Walmesley's *General History of the Christian Church . . . chiefly deduced from the Apocalypse of St. John* . . . was published in 1771, under the pseudonym 'Pastorini'. Walmesley was an English Roman Catholic bishop, who died in 1797. He was an all-round Catholic Newtonian, applying, like Newton, a system of reasoned exegesis to both the natural world and prophecy. Pastorini offered a Catholic interpretation of the Book of Revelation, designed 'to refute the common identification by Protestant millenarians of the Papacy with Antichrist'.[94] It also offered some comfort to persecuted English and Irish Catholics: it foretold that Protestantism would be destroyed or disappear in, or about, the year 1825. This prophecy by Pastorini aroused much interest in Ireland in the early 1820s. Popular versions and extracts sold well.

The name 'Pastorini' will be found, once, in *Memoirs of Captain Rock*. The Captain contrasts the Charter Schools with his own education in a 'Hedge School'.

> It is, however, a great mistake to say that the Irish are uneducated . . . The difference is not in the *quantity*, but in the *quality*, of our education. The Charter-schools having done their utmost to sicken us against Catechisms, and our own Priests not suffering us to read the Bible, we are driven between both, to

select a course of study for ourselves; and the line of reading most usually adopted is as follows: —

In History, — Annals of Irish Rogues and Rapparees.
In Biography, — Memoirs of Jack the Bachelor, a notorious smuggler, and of Freney, a celebrated highwayman.
In Theology, — Pastorini's Prophecies, and the Miracles of Prince Hohenloe.
In Poetry, — Ovid's Art of Love, and Paddy's Resource.
In Romance-reading, — Don Belianis of Greece, Moll Flanders, &c. &c. . .

'So educated, and so governed, is it wonderful that the ROCK FAMILY should flourish?'[95] The point is well made. Denied an organized Catholic education the Irish Catholics take their pick from the output of the popular publishers, the chap-books and the broadsides, and it is in with this material that Pastorini's Prophecy belongs.

Why does Moore make these, almost coded, references to miracles, prophecies, Pastorini and company? Robert Southey's *Book of the Church* was published at the beginning of 1824. Moore read it, swiftly, and incorporated quotations from it, as footnotes, into *Memoirs of Rock*. I take this as acknowledgement by Moore of Southey's arguments.

The Book of the Church is a sustained attack on 'the errors and crimes of the Romish Church' and 'Romish superstition', contrasted throughout with a separate, developing English tradition, which is calm, rational and orderly. History is completed and vindicated by 'the establishment of a Church pure in its doctrines, irreproachable in its order, beautiful in its form . . .'[96]

This contrast, between the superstitious Roman Church and the rational Church of England, lies behind much of the religious polemic in this period, in particular, of course, polemic leading up to the granting of Catholic Emancipation. To opponents of Emancipation, evidence that Roman Catholics were indeed peculiarly susceptible to the folly of believing in present-day miracles was in itself evidence that the Catholics did not merit full membership of the body politic.

Advocates of Catholic Emancipation had, then, to establish *either* that Catholics were not 'peculiarly susceptible' (Protestants believe in miracles and prophecies too), *or* that Catholics did not really believe in miracles and prophecies at all. Moore attempts to do both, taking up a position which is not as contradictory as it seems. Having established the Protestant belief in miracles, 'the weapon of every persecuted faith', he can assert that 'it is vain, therefore, to tell us that Folly confines herself to any particular creed — she is no such bigot, but, like Pope's Belinda, "shines on all alike" . . .'[97]

But Moore has also suggested that a belief in miracles arises out of the Catholic's 'political position', the belief is a set-off for the slave against the insolence of his oppressor. The problem, if there is one, can be solved by education and Emancipation: then, it can be assumed, Irish Catholics will take their place in the rational English polity. Daniel O'Connell's position, in public, before the parliamentary committee in March 1825, is similar: 'I think that no effect has been produced upon the lower orders of the Irish Catholics by the book called Pastorini's prophecies'. He stresses its importance to the Protestant polemicists: 'What we call the Orange party have put forward Pastorini on all occasions.'[98]

O'Sullivan, in *Rock Detected*, is, like Moore, interested in the output of the popular presses: '. . . about seven years since, a considerable change began to take place in the nature of the little penny tracts and ballads with which the itinerant pedlars were supplied'. Love songs were replaced by

> . . . stories of martyrs . . . deaths, and judgements and executions of obstinate heretics, and miracles performed in the true church were now in very general circulation. By one class of these productions, the animosity of the faithful was whetted against the b—y Protestants; in another, they learned how heretics ought to be treated; and the miracles lifted their minds high above the region in which missionaries could work to make them proselytes; and sustained them by a hope, that, at last, God would fight for them and exterminate their oppressors. At the same time prophecy, the constant resource of a depressed people, afforded them its consolations. Pastorini, circulated in various forms, verbally and in print, became a favourite study; and those who could not procure the book, but who were instructed in the principles of it, often gave the members of the Bible society hope of making converts, from the readiness with which they received the Testament, of which they scarcely read any part but the Revelations.[99]

One night, he joins what was in effect a study session, in a house near his gate. 'The book was Pastorini, but the comments were their own. They had no hesitation to speak to me on the subject. Their world was the country which they knew; and they could, accordingly, state where every event was to take place, and how everything was to be transacted, within one day's journey of the house in which they were reading.'[100] These students of Pastorini may have been threatening or teasing: it is all sinister to O'Sullivan. This study session is, of course, not unique: in such sessions up and down the country, even as O'Sullivan wrote, Moore's *Memoirs of Captain Rock* was being read.

'At the time to which I allude, the peasantry were willing to converse freely on the subject of prophecies; they held the notion, that in the year 1825, or, according to some, in an earlier year, all things were to be restored; . . . they were only to "stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord".' Lately, the peasants are more reserved. Have they decided they will have to fight to see the prophecy fulfilled? 'They still continued to read and study the prophecies, as I learned from sure though incidental intimations, but they no longer freely conversed upon them.'[101]

O'Sullivan next considers other miracles and prodigies and the Catholic clergy's ambivalent attitude to them.

> The Protestants beheld, at first with scorn or pity, afterwards with alarm, this new ingredient thrown into the cauldron. They saw how the public mind was affected; . . . credulous persons yielded an assent to the absurd doctrines . . . men notoriously of infidel opinions, lent themselves to the popular delusion. It gave them [the Protestants] a convincing proof of the abject superstition in which the people were grovelling, and they began to entertain serious apprehensions of the consequences that might ensue, when multitudes assembled together under such a delusion, and with all the enthusiasms of character which it denoted.[102]

So O'Sullivan has some sympathy with Moore's view: 'prophecy, the constant resource of a depressed people'. Inevitably, he sees prophecy misused by his hidden agitator, the man in the gig. And he ends ('enthusiasms of character') with a plain statement of the dichotomy between rational Protestantism and superstitious Popery.

In the texts I have examined we are never offered only one example of superstitious Catholic belief: Protestant polemicists wish to prove folly, an inferior cast of mind. When Cornewall Lewis reviews this evidence he observes, '. . . a disposition to attribute insurrections of the peasantry rather to the mistaken religious zeal of the insurgent themselves than to the real cause, the oppression of their masters or landlords.' He gives examples from history, Gaul in 287 AD, Wat Tyler. He notes '. . . the efforts of a sectarian spirit to throw discredit on a heterodox form of religion, by imputing to it mischievous temporal effects'. Where there are no economical grievances religious excitement alone is not a driving force.[103]

Can this polemic material be used to show that the Captain Rock rebellion was a millennial movement? There are problems with the very word 'millennial' as it is emerging in Irish historiography.[104] 'Millennialism', strictly speaking, is the belief in the thousand-year reign of the returned Christ: the, often hidden, equation of the peasant's wish for land reform with the Christian's wish for the Millennium does justice to neither set of beliefs. And if, in 1824, we look for a society ripe for the acceptance of Millennialism it turns out to be, not peasant Catholic Ireland, but urban Protestant England. In 1824 Edward Irving preached his monster sermon, on the theme of the true missionary, whose commitment and zeal distinguish him from Moore's timid Englishman. In 1825 he preached his sermon on the Millennium. It was 'that decade from 1822 which saw the modern crisis of the Protestant Evangelical faith, a crisis which split the English religious world asunder. Irving was the central figure of that crisis and its principal cause.' In the end the fatal flaw in the rational Anglicanism of Southey, or in the moderate Evangelicalism of Wilberforce, is that they can seem lukewarm, this-worldy not other-worldy. What Irving brought to disrupt the complacency of Protestantism in the 1820s was his prophecy of the Millennium.[105]

It has been suggested that 'millennial beliefs' declined among the Irish peasants from about 1824 onwards: the energy previously directed into Millennialism was redirected by O'Connell and the

Catholic Association into the campaign for emancipation. In any case, Pastorini's prophecy was, as it were, stamped with a 'sell-by date': when Protestantism did not disappear in 1825 interest in Pastorini declined.[106]

And did those Irish peasants truly believe in Pastorini's prophecy? The question comes in too strong a form. 'Belief' in such prophecies is one way oppressed peoples tease their masters. The peasants certainly seemed to have formed study groups to discuss important texts. They obtained copies of the Testament from the Bible Society, to check sources. O'Sullivan says, 'Their world was the country which they knew'. The Catholic peasants needed land. Protestants owned the land.[107]

An Essay on the Principles of Population . . ., first published (anonymously) in 1798, shows, throughout its revisions, and despite developments in Malthus's thought, little interest in Ireland. An unsigned article in the *Edinburgh Review* of 1808 reads: 'Ireland's case affords so striking an illustration of the doctrines of which Mr. Malthus has advanced in the late *Essay on Population*, that we are surprised he did not enter into it more in detail.' The writer was Malthus himself, covertly encouraging the application of his theories to Ireland.[108]

In *Memoirs of Rock* Moore does consider 'the subject of Population', but in an oblique way. In his attack on the Protestant Bishops, he looks forward to a time

> . . . when, by the operation of causes, which seem as progressive as time itself, this people of Catholics whom they insult so wantonly, . . . who are, in spite of misery and Malthus, every hour increasing — shall . . . encroach still further on their sacred precincts — when this Church without a religion shall have left them a Church without a laity, and when one inquires, 'Where is the Protestant People of Ireland?' may receive nearly the same answer as that inspecting Colonel, who, on asking, 'Where is the Donegal Light Troop?' was answered by a solitary voice, 'Here I am, your Honour!'

'The rapidity, indeed, with which the proportion of Protestants to Catholics has diminished and is still diminishing, seems nothing less than a judgement . . .'[109] The decline in the Protestant population and the comparative increase in the Catholic is further argument for Catholic emancipation.

In his attack on Goulburn's Bill Moore has suggested that 'The potatoe-garden, too, that last boundary between the peasant and famine . . .' will be swept into the mass of contribution to the Protestant Church. But why is there famine in Ireland? And why is the potato-garden the peasant's last defence against famine?

Moore does not ever suggest, or come near to suggesting, that the absolute increase in the Catholic peasant population is in itself a problem, or a cause of problems. But that little phrase, 'in spite of misery and Malthus', shows, and is the only thing in *Memoirs of Rock* to show, that Moore was aware of the arguments.

Ireland's national bard cannot even hint that the hungry peasants of Ireland are mere superfluous population. The client of Whig landowners can find no polite way of dealing with the questions of rents, land use and land ownership in Ireland. Moore has left himself with no way of even beginning to tackle Malthus.

This, to O'Sullivan, is dishonesty: '. . . as the excessive population (excessive I mean in proportion to the means of employing them) is the great cause of our disorders, or rather the great preparative for them, I think it expedient to devote a short space to a consideration of the causes why our population so rapidly increases'. O'Sullivan, at this stage, is no straightforward Malthusian. He gives a quite anthropological account of the social, economic and, indeed, moral pressures tending towards early and fertile marriage, summarizing his arguments thus:

1. The landlords thought it, for their interest, that young men should marry.
2. The priests undertook to provide husbands for maidens.
3. The danger, to which girls were exposed, increased the anxiety of parents.
4. And the premature departure of youthful bloom, occasioned by bad food and hard labour, was another reason why early marriage became the fashion.[110]

O'Sullivan's account of moral pressures tending towards early marriage contrasts somewhat with Malthus's own moralizing. Malthus writes: '. . . the evils arising from the principle of population are exactly of the same kind as the evils arising from the excessive or irregular gratification of the human passions in general, and may equally be avoided by moral restraint.' This world is 'a state of moral discipline and probation' whose laws accord with the views of a benevolent Creator: and those laws, 'while they furnish the difficulties and temptations which form the essence of such a state, are of such a nature as to reward those who overcome them with happiness in this life as well as in the next.'[111]

O'Sullivan's vision is more down-to-earth. He continues: 'Against the influence of these and many other incentives, *there was positively no one check*. The landlords willingly beheld their land broken for the accommodation of a new race of beings . . .'[112] But why do the landlords think it is their interest that the young marry? Because, of course, peasants are simply another crop or herd. As long as the war continued high prices meant that high rents and large populations filled the landlords' pockets. And they 'would not learn from Mr. Malthus.' But when prices fell, 'it is almost incredible to think how generally the maxims of Mr. Malthus were understood. All at once the evils of excessive population were plainly seen; . . . personal interest had touched the eyes of all the Irish gentry . . .' They took back their land to farm it themselves. In effect, they replaced peasants with a more profitable crop.

'Then arose Captain Rock as the refuge of the distressed . . .'[113] Thus, O'Sullivan's explanation of the aims and methods of the peasants' organization is like that of Cornewall Lewis and O'Neill: though O'Sullivan sees recent economic processes leading to a resurgence of activity.

'Everybody knows, that the best way to improve the condition of the poor, is *to give effect, as Malthus says, to the desire of improvement*; and how to do this *without letting in some hope upon them, I am utterly unable to comprehend.*' O'Sullivan then develops the arguments that will become familiar later in the century: any improvement a tenant makes becomes the landlord's property and leads to an increase in rents, the absentee landlords leave a power vacuum in Ireland. To counter misery and Malthus O'Sullivan suggests, again, fair rents, let the peasants have hope, let them '*grow so familiar with comforts, that they would feel a dread and a shame of bringing children into a world where their portion is likely to be wretchedness . . .*'[114]

O'Sullivan fears the peasants, but he respects them. Towards the end of his book he describes them thus: '. . . a people increasing rapidly in numbers, and daily sinking into greater wretchedness, and yet possessing an energy and a freshness of feeling, in which their minds are strongly contrasted with the monotony of their miserable lives . . .'

'*The Irish poor will never bear famine with the patience of the Chinese*; and let those at the head of affairs weigh well the consequences likely to follow from the very rapid increase of such a people . . .'[115] It will, of course, be a Whig government, presided over by Thomas Moore's friend and editor, Lord John Russell, that stands 'at the head of affairs' when the Irish cottier class is destroyed in the Famine of 1845 to 1849.

Neither Moore nor O'Sullivan will ever stand at the head of affairs. Moore has shown himself more successful than O'Sullivan at producing a contribution to polemic that will appeal to the men who will do so. Meanwhile, Mortimer O'Sullivan struggled on, to be sneered at by Dickens.[116] And 'Captain Rock', Moore's Captain Rock, took on an independent life of his own, outside Moore's writings. That whimsical way of 'making known', so appreciated by the Catholics of Drogheda and the 'New Song called Captain Rock', was very attractive.

Thus there appeared regularly in 1825 and 1826 a weekly magazine, *Captain Rock in London, or The Chieftain's Weekly Gazette*, aimed at the Irish and Irish sympathizers in London. In the magazine 'Captain Rock's Memoirs' are continued: historical material with acid, humorous comment, in imitation of Moore. There are also items on Irish peasant customs, in an attempt to make them appear less strange and primitive. The magazine itself was defunct by 1827: in that year a collection of its articles appeared in book form.[117] At this time, of course, O'Connell was trying to establish a Catholic newspaper in London: the *Truth-Teller* was started in September 1824 and by 1825 was in financial difficulties. Later in 1825 Eneas M'Donnell was appointed the paid agent of the Catholic Association in London, to keep an eye on the London press and to reply to every calumny against Catholics.[118] It would seem that *Captain Rock in London* and the *Truth-Teller* were aimed at over-lapping readerships.

In 1833 there appeared *Captain Rock in Rome*, a guidebook to the city, interspersed with witty, but educative, chapters by the 'Captain'.[119] Thanks to Moore the very name 'Captain Rock' promised an entertaining but sympathetic exposition of Irish or Catholic issues.

Moore remained proud of his creation: the justifiable pride of one who anticipated Eric Hobsbawm. He writes of the christening of his son Russell, 'I am afraid he will be a chip of the old Rock, for he was laughing at the Parson all the time of the operation.' And, in 1833, when Moore returned to the study of Irish Catholicism with the *Travels of an Irish Gentleman in Search of a Religion*, his title page gives the author as, simply, 'the Editor of "Captain Rock's Memoirs"'. Inevitably, Mortimer O'Sullivan wrote a riposte: *A Guide to an Irish Gentleman in his Search for a Religion.*[120]

If Moore's Captain Rock is the distilled essence of Hobsbawmian bandit, and O'Sullivan's equivalent is the man in the gig, is there, somewhere, a 'real' Captain Rock? 'Captain Rock' is first and foremost a name written at the bottom of a threatening letter or notice. Townshend suggests that 'The adoption of a mythical leader's name — Captain Rock, Rory of the hill, Captain Moonlight — supplied the exiguous organizational framework required . . .' It is difficult to see how the *name* supplied the organization and the organization certainly existed prior to the choice of name.[121]

There were many such names, but there is a tendency for the authorities to become obsessed with one particular name at one particular time, partly as a matter of conversational convenience, but also because there is a further tendency to believe that there is one man, one ringleader, to whom that name properly belongs. And, as Moore and his Captain observe, they hang dozens of false Captain Rocks searching for the 'right' one.

This encourages the use of that one frightening name by organized groups or by disaffected individuals. When 'Jack Rock' was captured in May 1823 'the authorities were mildly relieved to find that the writer of this notice was only an adolescent journeyman weaver of Clonakilty who had "not long left school"'. As Thompson points out, these letters and notices must be read within a code: the writers choose the name and threats most likely to send the authorities into a panic.[122]

Like the unsigned article in a journal, the name 'Captain Rock' supports the letter-writer's threats with the prestige of a mighty organization. There may be, in fact, no such organization. Isolated acts of terror, separated in space and time and with specific local aims, can be made to seem connected, in the minds of the authorities, by the use of one name.

Eighteenth-century highwaymen, heirs to the rapparees, are often called 'Captain', and indeed so are the leaders of May-boys and similar folkloric groups. But the use of 'Captain' on threatening letters and notices seems also to refer to the British custom of retaining military titles in civilian life: Colonel Raymond in Mortimer O'Sullivan's narrative; Major Warburton, the magistrate; Captain Boycott, Lord Erne's agent in Mayo in the 1880s. Cornewall Lewis observes that, 'These mandates are often written in a style resembling that of a legal notice, and are, for the most part, signed by some imaginary name, such as Captain Right, Captain Rock, Captain Starlight, Captain Dreadnought, Lady Clare . . .'[123]

These letters and notices imitate the legal notices, the warrants, the writs, the eviction notices served on the peasants by the oppressors' minions and deemed to be of such significance by the oppressors. They assert the authenticity of the peasants' moral world, and its authority. But there is more than simple imitation here: there is parody. One silly document is matched by another. Thompson speaks of 'the grim and conscious humour of these letters'.[124] The role of humour, albeit bitter humour, in the psychodynamics of oppression is not sufficiently recognized. Moore's comedy of violence appealed to the people far more than O'Sullivan's shocked outrage: 'Rock's the boy to make the fun stir!'

It becomes impossible not to use the fearful name in personification. O'Sullivan says, 'then arose Captain Rock . . .' In 1881, as the British Cabinet pondered, Parnell said, '. . . if I am arrested, Captain Moonlight will take my place.' 'Captain Rock' is, then, a complex literary device, and is best understood as such. As with all literary devices, its power comes from the images and associations it creates in the mind of the reader.

Notes

1. Works much cited:
   MCR = *Memoirs of Captain Rock, the Celebrated Irish Chieftain, with some Account of his Ancestors. Written by Himself.* [by Thomas Moore] (Longman, London, 1824)
   CRD = *Captain Rock Detected: or, The Origin and Character of the Recent Disturbances, and the Causes, Both Moral and Political, of the Present Alarming Condition of the South and West of Ireland, Fully and Fairly Considered and Exposed: by A Munster Farmer.* [by Mortimer O'Sullivan] (Cadell, London, 1824)
   J = Thomas Moore, *Memoirs, Journal and Correspondence*, edited in eight volumes by Lord John Russell (Longman, London, 1853–6.). All quotations are from Volume 4.
   BM = *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*, **XV**, No. LXXXVIII, May 1824,

pp. 544–51. [possibly by John Anster: see Strout, *Bibliography of Articles in Blackwood's Magazine, 1817–1825* (Texas Technological College, Lubbock, 1959)].

WR = *Westminster Review*, 1, April 1824, pp. 492–504. [possibly by Peregrine Bingham].

ER = *Edinburgh Review*, **XLI**, 1824, pp. 143–53. [by Sidney Smith, see Smith, *Works*, Vol. I, Vol. IV (Longman, London, 1839–1840)].

My thanks to those who commented on early versions of this paper at the Department of Theology, University of Durham, 1984, and at the ACIS Conference, Dublin, 1987. My especial thanks to Maurice Colgan, James S. Donnelly Jr, Sheridan Gilley, Russell Murray, and Geoffrey Scott.

2. George Cornewall Lewis, *Local Disturbances in Ireland* (Cork, 1977: reprint of 1836 edition), p. 80, p. 79. Note that it was then the practice to punctuate according to spoken cadence, especially in informal texts, not, as we do now, according to grammar and sense units. The punctuation of the texts quoted in this paper, especially the use of commas, will appear odd to anyone not used to the written prose of the period.
3. Cornewall Lewis, p. x, p. 36.
4. James W. O'Neill, 'A Look at Captain Rock: Agrarian Rebellion in Ireland 1815–1845', *Eire-Ireland*, **XVII**, 3, (1982).
5. Paul E.W. Roberts, 'Caravats and Shanavests: Whiteboyism and Faction-Fighting in East Munster, 1802–11' in Clarke and Donnelly (eds), *Irish Peasants, Violence and Political Unrest, 1780–1914* (Manchester, 1983), p. 67.
6. Peter Quennell (ed.), *The Journal of Thomas Moore, 1818–1841* (London, 1964). One lone reference survives, p. 129. Terence de Vere White, *Tom Moore, The Irish Poet*, (London, 1977), p. 184.
7. E.P. Thompson, 'The Crime of Anonymity' in Hay, Linebaugh, Rule, Thompson, Winslow (eds.), *Albion's Fatal Tree* (London, 1977), p. 272. Thompson talks specifically about the late 18th century, but draws on material written as late as the 1830s, including the works of 'Rebecca', 'Swing' and 'Ludd'.
8. Smith, 1839, Preface, p. viii.
9. Raymond Williams, *The English Novel from Dickens to Lawrence* (London, 1974; original edition 1970), pp. 14–15.
10. Paul de Man, *Blindness and Insight* 2nd ed. (London, 1983), p. 106; Pierre Macherey, *A Theory of Literary Production*, trans. Wall (London, 1978); Terry Eagleton, *Marxism and Literary Criticism* (London, 1976), p. 35.
11. Gunther Kress and Robert Hodge, *Language as Ideology* (London, 1979), pp. 146–7, and pp. 124–5. Behind all this section of Kress and Hodge is Marcuse's *Negations*.
12. The only adequate study I know is Thérèse Tessier, *La Poesie Lyrique de Thomas Moore, 1779–1852* (Paris, 1976).
13. White, op. cit., pp. 75–6; p. 238.
14. White, op. cit., p. 74; pp. 236–7.
15. Wilfred S. Dowden (ed.), *The Letters of Thomas Moore*, 2 Vols. (Oxford, 1964), p. 399.
16. The painter, J.M.W. Turner, made the same point, jokingly, in 1835, in conversation with Moore: 'But Ireland, Mr. Moore, Ireland! . . . I have often longed to go to that country; but I am, I confess, afraid to venture myself there. Under the wing of Thomas Moore, however, I should be safe.' (White, op. cit., p. 240).

17. J., p. 103.
18. J., p. 106, p. 108. The 'new Tithe Bill' will soon become Mr Secretary Goulburn's Tithe Composition Act.
19. Maureen Wall, 'The Whiteboys' in Williams (ed.), *Secret Societies In Ireland* (Dublin, 1973), pp. 15–16, note p. 192. Michael Beames, *Peasants and Power: The Whiteboy Movements and Their Control in Pre-Famine Ireland* (Sussex, 1983), p. 64. For folk customs and organization see Alan Gailey, *Irish Folk Drama* (Cork, 1969) pp. 15–17; J., p. 117.
20. J., p. 112; Hoover H. Jordan, *Bolt Upright: The Life of Thomas Moore*, 2 Vols. (Salzburg, 1975), p. 369.
21. Jordan, p. 370; White, p. 182.
22. The phrase 'clever thought' comes from Abercromby, MP for Calne, who advises Moore further on the political slant of his book: the Rebellion of '98 was 'an event purposely brought about by the government' (J. p. 155).
23. J., p. 137; J. p. 155.
24. Pressure from Lord Darnley, for instance (J., p. 168); J., p. 163; J., p. 176.
25. MCR p. iii, p. v.
26. MCR p. vii, p. x.
27. MCR pp. xi, xii, xiii.
28. MCR p. 9.
29. BM p. 544.
30. MCR p. 20, pp. 56–7.
31. WR p. 504.
32. MCR p. 235, p. 238, p. 129.
33. For example, MCR, p. 141 onwards: 'As Property and Education are the best securities against discontent and violence, the Government . . . took especial care that we should be as little as possible encumbered with either.' There follows an outline of the Penal Laws regarding the purchase and lease of land.
34. MCR p. 65.
35. MCR pp. 150–1, p. 240.
36. MCR p. 155. There is an account of the Sheehy affair in Wall, op. cit., p. 15, and in Cornewall Lewis, op. cit., pp. 10–11.
37. MCR pp. 155–7.
38. WR p. 494, BM p. 547.
39. MCR pp. 203–4. In this section Moore relies on arguments put forward by English dissenters against English tithes; elsewhere he is anxious to distinguish between the Irish and the English tithe systems. As is the *Westminster Review*, which speaks of 'the abominable system of Irish tithes (which, be it observed, is a very different question from that of English tithes) . . .' (WM p. 498).
40. MCR p. 281.
41. MCR p. 305, p. 324.
42. MCR p. 148.
43. MCR p. 250, p. 275, p. 367.
44. MCR p. 367.
45. Sheridan Gilley, 'Nationality and liberty, protestant and catholic: Robert Southey's *Book of the Church*' in Stuart Mews (ed.), *Religion and National Identity* (Oxford, 1982).
46. MCR p. 371, pp. 375–6.
47. Charles Townshend, *Political Violence in Ireland: Government and Resistance since 1848* (Oxford, 1983) p. 15; Cornewall Lewis, op. cit., p. 183.

48. Roberts, op. cit., pp. 68–70; Beames, pp. 22–3.
49. BM p. 545.
50. E.J. Hobsbawm, *Bandits* (London, 1972: original edition 1969), p. 127, p. 130.
51. Jordan p. 374; J. p. 176, p. 327. I have examined all four editions of *Memoirs of Rock* and, as far as I can see, Moore never made any corrections.
52. J., p. 181; MCR p. 187.
53. A copy of the chapbook has survived in the Douce Collection, in the Bodleian Library, Oxford.
54. Jordan, pp. 374–84 gives an outline of the response.
55. J., p. 183, p. 206. Nothing haunts students of Moore more horribly than Byron's remark: 'Tommy loves a Lord' (White, op. cit., p. 118).
56. J., p. 185.
57. J., p. 194; ER p. 143.
58. WR p. 492; BM p. 544.
59. MCR p. 258.
60. J., p. 206; MCR p. 368.
61. Jordan op. cit., p. 384; J. p. 210, p. 224.
62. CRD p. 1.
63. CRD p. 2, p. 3, p. 4.
64. CRD pp. 11, 12.
65. CRD pp. 23, 24.
66. *The Nevilles of Garretstown*, 3 Vols. (London, 1860) published anonymously, and posthumously, in 1860.
67. CRD pp. 31, 38. To anticipate: that coat with green cuffs might be the uniform of Regiment Bulkeley or Regiment Lally of the Irish Brigade.
68. CRD pp. 40, 41, 52, 54.
69. CRD p. 67.
70. CRD p. 83, p. 111, p. 88.
71. In the complaints of the peasants to 'The General' (CRD pp. 43–44).
72. E.J. Hobsbawm and George Rudë, *Captain Swing* (London, 1969). All of Chapter 12, 'Who was Swing?' is relevant. The quotations come from the notes, pp. 239–40.
73. Cornewall Lewis, op. cit., pp. 131–3. None the less this sort of evidence was so pervasive that Cornewall Lewis postulates the existence of some more widespread secret society, which he calls 'Ribbonism'. Cornewall Lewis's distinction between Ribbonism and Whiteboyism is discussed and criticized by Townshend, op. cit., pp. 14–24. Joseph Lee, 'The Ribbonmen' in Williams, op. cit., sees the Ribbonmen as, as it were, a perfectly ordinary Whiteboy movement. Beames, op. cit., pp. 144–5, would offer support but little comfort to O'Sullivan.
74. CRD p. 120, p. 122, p. 123.
75. O'Sullivan's own incongruities arise out of his position within the 'native/settler' duality: see Frantz Fanon's *The Wretched of the Earth*, trans. Farrington (London, 1967: original edition 1965) and Jean-Paul Sartre's introduction to that book. As an ex-Catholic with a Gaelic name, O'Sullivan does not fit tidily into that duality. None the less Fanon is a good guide to the psychodynamics of oppression: compare, for example, Old Rock's defence of his 'war' with Fanon op. cit., p. 73.
76. CRD p. 196, p. 201. The anecdote is referred to thus: 'The missionary may perhaps have heard how a peer and a poet made rather a hasty exit from

Killarney last year . . .' The peer withdrew suddenly 'without seeing his tenants'. Was some sort of confrontation between tenants and landlord thus avoided?

77. CRD pp. 307–9.
78. CRD pp. 127–8.
79. CRD p. 133.
80. CRD p. 143, p. 148.
81. CRD p. 149.
82. CRD p. 169, p. 364, p. 352, pp. 356–7.
83. CRD pp. 353–4.
84. CRD p. 418, p. 421.
85. CRD p. 419, p. 422.
86. CRD pp. 316–17; O'Sullivan's novel, *The Nevilles of Garretstown*, is a working out of this association of ideas, showing how well-meaning Catholic gentry are beguiled by Wild Geese agents.
87. CRD p. 345, pp. 347–8.
88. CRD p. 199
89. CRD p. 72, pp. 258–9.
90. CRD p. 234, p. 407, pp. 403–4.
91. Desmond Bowen, *The Protestant Crusade in Ireland 1800–70* (Dublin, 1978), pp. 121–2.
92. MCR p. 247, 248. Moore, here, refers back to MCR p. 94: 'We see by this, too, that Protestant bishops occasionally can rival even Catholic ones in their deglutition of the miraculous.'
93. BM p. 547.
94. Maurice Colgan, 'Prophecy against Reason: Ireland and the Apocalypse', *British Journal for Eighteenth Century Studies*, **8** (1985) p. 210. Walmesley's Antichrist was, or will be, Muslim: he will come from Crim Tartary, establish an international empire, and persecute Christians until he is defeated by Christ at Armageddon. For an introduction to Pastorini see Geoffrey Scott, 'The Times are fast approaching: Bishop Charles Walmesley O.S.B. (1722–1797) as Prophet', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, **36**, No. 4, (October 1985). Scott believes that supporters of the British Government in Ireland spread conservative versions of Pastorini to counter the message of the French Revolution.
95. MCR pp. 187–8.
96. Robert Southey, *The Book of the Church*, 2 Vols. (London, 1824), pp. 1–2.
97. MCR p. 249.
98. Quoted, p. 110 by James S. Donnelly, Jr, 'Pastorini and Captain Rock: Millenarianism and Sectarianism in the Rockite Movement of 1821–4' in Clarke and Donnelly (eds.), *Irish Peasants*. Donnelly calls O'Connell's statement a 'remarkable series of half-truths'.
99. CRD pp. 282–3.
100. CRD p. 283.
101. CRD p. 284. Donnelly gives examples of such 'intimations', which, in effect, involve members of the élite spying upon their servants and tenants.
102. CRD pp. 287–8.
103. Cornewall Lewis op. cit., p. 141.
104. For the assumptions, see Clark and Donnelly, op. cit., p. 33. For a critique, see Hillel Schwartz, 'The end of the beginning: Millenarian Studies, 1969–75', *Religious Studies Review*, **2**, No. 3, (July 1976).

105. Sheridan Gilley, 'Edward Irving, Prophet of the Millennium', unpublished paper, (University of Durham, 1984), p. 1; David L. Edwards, *Christian England*, 3 Vols. (London, 1984), Vol. 3, p. 168. Gilley also mentions J.N. Darby, the founder of the Plymouth Brethren: 'It is Darby's idea of the "rapture" which is on the lips of Ronald Reagan . . .' I place Irving here, in 1824, alongside Walmesley/Pastorini because Irving offers yet another interpretation of *Revelations*, but an interpretation with far more profound consequences.
106. Donnelly, op. cit., p. 136; Colgan, op. cit., p. 10.
107. In his introduction to Fanon, Sartre tells us that the native is a 'sly-boots'. '. . . the fact that the rich and governing and rent-receiving class is almost exclusively Protestant, and the poor and subject and rent-paying class is almost exclusively Catholic, naturally gives a religious tinge to the disturbances in question'. (Cornewall Lewis, op. cit., p. 126).
108. Quoted, p. 75, by Cormac Ó Gráda, 'Malthus and the pre-famine economy' *Hermathena*, **CXXXV**, (Winter 1983).
109. MCR pp. 256–7, p. 257.
110. CRD p. 318, pp. 322–3. Such anecdotal evidence is puzzled over by Joel Mokyr, *Why Ireland Starved: A Quantitative and Analytical History of the Irish Economy, 1800–1850* (London, 1983): 'One of the more difficult phenomena to explain is the persistent contemporary opinion according to which the Irish married extremely young. Well-informed contemporaries . . . repeated these views. And yet they seem to be based more on myth and prejudice than on facts'. (Mokyr, op. cit., p. 37).
111. Thomas Malthus, 'A Summary View of the Principle of Population' in Frank W. Notestein (ed.), *On Population* (New York, 1960), p. 59. A perverse sense of tidiness leads me to quote from this, an essay Malthus contributed, unsigned, to the 1824 supplement to *Encyclopaedia Britannica*: that essay was republished in a slightly shorter form in 1830.
112. CRD p. 323, Ó Gráda, op. cit., (p. 76) writes 'Economic views that today would be regarded as hard-line Malthusian had quite an innings in prefamine Ireland. Against all proposals for betterment, somebody was bound to raise the bogey of population.' This is precisely what O'Sullivan does *not* do.
113. CRD p. 324, p. 325.
114. CRD p. 327, p. 332.
115. CRD p. 404, p. 376. On p. 418 there is a (submerged) image of the peasantry as being like some Leviathan: '. . . whenever they shift their weary side, the whole island trembles!'
116. Anyone whose surname is O'Sullivan will recognize the origins of 'Mr. Mortimer O'Silly-one' in 'The Ladies' Societies', *Sketches by Boz*, the first edition of 1836. The reference is too precise, and dates quickly: Dickens changed it in later editions. The original sketch in the *Evening Chronicle* of 1835 refers to 'Mr. Somebody O'Something, a celebrated Catholic renegade and Protestant bigot. . .'. See, p. 47, John Butt and Kathleen Tillotson, *Dickens at Work* (London, 1968: original edition 1957).
117. Some odd copies of *Captain Rock in London* survive in the Bodleian Library, Oxford. The 1827 collection is *Captain Rock, or The Chieftain's Gazette For the Year 1827* (Dublin, 1827): a copy survives in the library of Douai Abbey, Berkshire.
118. Arthur Aspinall, *Politics and the Press, 1780–1850* (Brighton, 1973: original edition 1949), pp. 323–4.

119. *Captain Rock in Rome, Written by Himself in the capital of the Christian World*, 2 Vols. (London, 1833).
120. O'Sullivan, 1833. O'Sullivan was answered, anonymously, by *A Lanthorn for the Rev. Mortimer O'Sullivan's Guide to an Irish Gentleman in his Search for a Religion*.
121. Townshend, op. cit., p. 23: this is one of the few moments when Townshend's elegant prose is not distinguished by absolute clarity.
122. Donnelly, op. cit., p. 118; Thompson, op. cit., 1977, p. 279.
123. These interconnecting themes are discussed by Beames, op. cit., p. 64, p. 100. Cornewall Lewis, op. cit., pp. 178–9.
124. Thompson, op. cit., 1977, p. 279.