said plantation might be undertaken, and upon the signification of his said late Majesty's earnest desire to further the said work, and upon tender of large privileges and immunities to invite them thereunto, certain persons of that city were employed to view the premises." See *The Skinners' Company versus the Irish Society*, pp. 88, 100.

The foregoing extract puts on record a curious and significant fact, to wit, that O'Cahan's country was offered to the city of London because of its being 'deserted,' or rather shunned, 'by other planters.' The question is here at once suggested—Why was the county of Coleraine thus avoided by English and Scottish undertakers? Not certainly because it was more barren, or barbarous, than other districts. On the contrary, it was admittedly amongst the most fertile and attractive in Ulster. This refusal, therefore, to be concerned with O'Cahan's country, on the part of sharp-witted undertakers, both English and Scotch, must have arisen from a fear that Sir Donnell might return to claim his own; and that even should he not, his clansmen, confessedly the most warlike in Ulster, could hardly be expected to become pleasant, or even practicable neighbours. This state of affairs had evidently led the King and his council to the conclusion that, since undertakers singly, or even in consorts, could not be induced to sit down anywhere between the Foyle and the Bann, the land must be occupied by a powerful party, such as the London corporation could easily throw across the channel. The citizens were much flattered by this favourable opinion of their greatness, as entertained, and even loudly expressed in high quarters, the first public move in the business being made by the King himself, who directed a printed copy of the 'Orders and Conditions' to be forwarded to the lord mayor, and to be accompanied with an intimation that the Sovereign would graciously accept assistance from the city, in the great project which he had really so much at heart.

This intimation was, of course, very gratifying to begin with; and the lord mayor could do no less than issue a 'precept' on the subject without delay to the masters and wardens of the twelve principal London companies. His mandate has been preserved in what is known as the *Irish Letter-Book*, and is headed—"The first generall instaunce of the proiect begunn 1° Julii, 1609." It is expressed in the following terms:—"Whereas, I have latelie received from the Lords of his Mat^ies^ most hon^ble^ Privie Counsaile a proiect for a plantation in Ireland, the Coppie whereof, together with a printed book, you shall receive hereunto annexed, with intimation of the King's most gracious favour and love to the cittie of London, to graunt unto us the first offer of so gracious an action, which is likely to prove pleasing to Almightie God, honourable to the Cittie, and profitable to the undertakers. These are, therefore, to will and require you presentlie to assemble together a competent number of the gravest and most substantiall of your Company, to consider advisedly of the said proiect, and of them to nominate fower men of most judgment and experience to join with like number of fower of every other of the Companyes of this Cittie amongst themselves to consider of and sett downe in writing such reasons, orders, demaunds, and other circumstances as are fitt to be remembered, required, or performed in the undertaking of so worthie and so honourable an action, and to certifie mee in writing, before the fifth day of this instant July, the names of such fower of your Company as you shall soe nominate and appoint, wherein you are not to faile in anywise. From Guildhall, this first of July, 1609."