This paper will explore the use that the Nineteenth Century Anglo-Irish novelist, Charles Lever, made of Irish history in his works. Although Lever’s novels were enormously popular in their day (at one point, his sales rivalled those of Charles Dickens), they have subsequently fallen out of fashion. However, in more recent times, a number of attempts have been made to re-evaluate and to restore Lever’s reputation as a novelist. This paper will focus on the manner in which Lever’s Conservative and Unionist politics informed both his works and his interpretation of Irish history more generally. It will also trace Lever’s growing ambivalence about the character of English rule in Ireland and the influence that this disillusionment had on perhaps, his best novel, Lord Kilgobbin, first published in 1872.

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